

Rocketman
by
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(Based on, the life of Elton John)

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INT. CORRIDOR, HOSPITAL. DAY.

Endless corridor. A few vacant patients stumble their grim way through the grey institution.

A legend comes on the screen: "Chicago, USA"

Suddenly, they turn as they hear a voice.

VOICE (ELTON)
Out the fucking way!

They look to see ELTON JOHN in a skin tight, sequinned, velour cat suit, complete with a halo of coloured feathers and enormous stained-glass spectacles, stumbling up the corridor. He looks like complete shit he hasn't slept in several weeks. He pushes his way into a therapy room.

INT. THERAPY ROOM. THE SAME.

ELTON is perched nervously on a cheap plastic chair, sweating profusely. The other addicts sit in their drab institutional uniforms staring in amazement at ELTON who looks decidedly nervous, unshaved. An oily male NURSE joins the circle.

NURSE
OK, guys. Shall we begin?

The NURSE turns to ELTON. Everybody stares. ELTON is clearly uncomfortable at going first.

ELTON
My name is Elton John.
(long pause)
And I am an alcoholic.
(pause)
And a cocaine addict.
(pause)
And a sexaholic.
(pause)
And a bulimic.
(pause)
And I have problems with marijuana,
ecstasy, amphetamines, prescription drugs
and shopping.

The group look at ELTON incredulously. ELTON blinks nervously behind his enormous glasses. An awkward silence. Then an OLD LADY speaks:

OLD LADY
Honey, what did you say your name was?

Cue: The frantic piano break from Pinball Wizard.

EXT. COUNCIL ESTATE, PINNER. DAY.

"Pinner, England"

We fly over the endlessly uniform houses and gardens of English suburbia down into an endless, tree-lined avenue in the middle of the street, we catch up with a tiny child pedalling as fast as he can down the middle of the street of manicured hedges making the noise of a space-craft taking off - it builds to a deafening roar accompanying the frenetic piano on the soundtrack. As he swerves off the road and into the drive way of a drab, unprepossessing house he turns to the camera and we see the face of young Reggie. We hear a voice call:

SHELIA (O.C.)
Reggie! Reggie!

Title: "ROCKETMAN".

INT. IVY'S HOUSE, PINNER HILL ROAD. THE SAME.

An archetypal suburban scene. GRANDMA is in the kitchen cooking. GRANDAD is asleep under a newspaper. A depressed budgie lolls in its cage. A photo of Dad is on the top of the piano in RAF uniform. The Andrew Sisters are crooning in the background as SHELIA (Mum) attacks the carpet of the living room with a mechanical carpet sweeper.

REGGIE
Mum. When is Dad coming home?

SHELIA
We don't know for certain, Reggie. But it could be any day now.

REGGIE
Are you sure I've actually met him?

SHELIA
Yes, love. You were just too young to remember.

REGGIE
But you'll send him up if I'm in bed?

SHELIA
For godsake, Reggie, can't you give me five minutes peace and quiet.

She picks REGGIE up and pops him on the PIANO STOOL as she sweeps underneath him. REGGIE looks round the room. He sees GRANDMA in the kitchen. GRANDAD snoring under his paper. The budgie twittering in its cage. SHELIA'S bottom pokes upwards as she cleans under the sideboard.

REGGIE'S ears perk up as the radio plays : The Skater's Waltz. As REGGIE sways to the music he looks at the piano keyboard. As it lilts on in the background REGGIE tries a note - remarkably it is in tune. REGGIE plays the note again and adds two more. Again they are exactly in tune with the music on the radio. He looks around. No one seems to be paying any attention: SHELIA is still under the sideboard. IVY is busy at the stove. REGGIE prepares himself for the sequence to come round again and this time plays a the whole section of melody along with the music, perfectly in tune, he ends with a low note with his left hand.

Bong!!! Suddenly the world seems to stop. The budgie, frozen on its perch stares boggle eyed at REGGIE. GRANDMA looks in from the kitchen. Perhaps outside cars screech to a halt, in Parliament Square people stop dead and crane curiously in the direction of Pinner, the whole of London at a standstill. Back at home, Grandad looks up from his paper.

GRANDAD

Reggie!?

MUM has not noticed. She turns round to see what all the fuss is about.

REGGIE

Did I do something wrong?

INT. REGGIE'S BEDROOM. NIGHT.

REGGIE is in bed, humming the Skater's Waltz. We see another picture of his father this time with a gleaming trumpet. GRANDMA comes in. She pops a sweet into his mouth and kisses him and turns the light out.

GRANDMA

Night, night, love.

INT. FRONT ROOM. NIGHT.

Late night. SHELIA sits knitting with GRANDMA in front of the fire. Suddenly, the doorbell rings. SHELIA looks up at GRANDMA with a "Who can that be?" look.

INT/EXT. FRONT DOOR. THE SAME.

SHELIA opens the door. There is STANLEY, Reggie's Dad, dressed immaculately in his RAF uniform, kit bag at his shoulder.

STANLEY

Do you want to buy an encyclopedia?

SHELIA

Stanley!

She kisses him. He comes in and puts his kit bag down.

STANLEY

You've put on a bit of weight love.

SHELIA

Come in. Reggie's just gone to bed.

She heads for the stairs.

STANLEY

I'll see him in the morning. Put the kettle on, luv. I'm parched.

Stanley heads down the corridor to the sitting room.

INT. LANDING UPSTAIRS. THE SAME.

In the shadows Reggie is standing in his pyjamas, sad and disappointed.

INT. BACKROOM, IVY'S HOUSE. DAY.

STANLEY, SHELIA, GRANDAD, and REGGIE sit at the table expectantly. STANLEY looks very stiff and formal. GRANDMA puts a roast chicken on the table. REGGIE smiles with glee.

STANLEY

Hands off the table.

This doesn't register with Reggie who is still overawed by the prospect of the chicken and a complete family.

STANLEY (CONT'D)

I said: "Hands off the table."

Reggie withdraws his hands - the smile wiped off his face.

STANLEY (CONT'D)

And sit up whilst you're having your meal, Reginald.

STANLEY proceeds to carve the bird, in silence. All the fun has been sucked out of the occasion. REGGIE is served last with a very small amount of chicken. They eat in silence. GRANDMA sneaks REGGIE a piece of her chicken and winks at him.

INT. BACKROOM, IVY'S HOUSE. DAY.

Reggie watches his father as he takes a record out of its sleeve. Meticulously cleans it, places it carefully on the turn table and it starts to play. It is jazz.

REGGIE

Dad, is it true you can play the trumpet?

STANLEY

Reginald. I am listening to my records.

As STANLEY listens to the record Reggie, unseen by STANLEY, goes under the sideboard and gets the trumpet from its case and proudly presents it to his Dad.

REGGIE

Please, Dad, will you play me a tune?

He leaps up snatching the trumpet from Reggie.

STANLEY

Who said you could touch that?

Never. Ever. Touch anything of mine without asking.

Stanley carefully puts the trumpet back and turns to look at Reggie. Reggie is looking at his father tears in his eyes. Stanley is shocked by Reggie's plaintive plea. STANLEY stands lost at what to do. For a moment REGGIE thinks his Dad will take hold of him, but when he doesn't Reggie runs out into the back garden.

INT. GREENHOUSE, GARDEN. DAY.

REGGIE crying alone. GRANDMA comes in with a plate of fairy cakes. She sits down and lights a cigarette. REGGIE takes a cake.

REGGIE

Why does he hate me Grandma?

GRANDMA

He doesn't hate you, he doesn't know how to love people properly. It's not something everybody knows how to do.

REGGIE

I wish I was somebody else.

GRANDMA

How can you be somebody else? You haven't even learnt to be yourself yet.

REGGIE

What do you mean?

EXT. PINNER HILL ROAD. DAY

REGGIE and GRANDMA march along past privet hedge after privet hedge. REGGIE is smartly dressed in his peaked cap, short trousers and little blazer. He is carrying a leather bag. They finally stop at a gate to a nondescript house. GRANDMA takes a coin from her pocket, gives it to REGGIE and wink. Reggie walks up the garden path.

INT. MUSIC TEACHER'S HOUSE. DAY.

REGGIE seated at the piano, still in his cap. He is too small to reach the pedals and his legs dangle over the edge of the stool. A little girl of Reggie's age peeps through the doorway as the PIANO TEACHER sips a cup of tea.

PIANO TEACHER
Leave us alone, Susie.

EXT. MUSIC TEACHER'S HOUSE. DAY.

As Reggie is leaving he sees Susie in the garden.

SUSIE
Hi.

REGGIE
Hi.

INT. IVY'S HOUSE, PINNER HILL ROAD. DAY.

Reggie practising the melody line from the Warsaw Concerto. Bum note after bum note. STANLEY, trying to read his paper, gets more and more irritated by REGGIE's mistakes until he can take no more gets up and goes out to another room. REGGIE looks up as the door slams shut.

INT. CORRIDOR/ BEDROOM, IVY'S HOUSE. NIGHT.

STANLEY, in his pyjamas, walks past REGGIE's room. He hears a murmuring sound and stops in his tracks. He peers through the crack in the door, and sees REGGIE with an expression of extreme concentration moving his hands vigorously beneath his blanket, as he moans ecstatically. Dad is horrified. He throws open the door. REGGIE looks up, startled.

STANLEY
What the hell are you doing in there?

REGGIE
Nothing, Dad.

STANLEY
Keep your hands outside the blanket. And
get to sleep.

STANLEY closes the door, leaving the frightened REG alone. After a moment, REGGIE carries on quietly, we pan down to see his hands, he is miming playing the piano as he hums the Warsaw Concerto. He becomes more and more animated and the sound of a real piano accompanies his miming. Then REGGIE stands on the bed - literally rising to the theme he points like a conductor to bring in a string section. **Miraculously we hear a string section join him**, now as REGGIE plays, like the Sorcerer's Apprentice he summons up more and more instruments to accompany him. Soon a whole orchestra is playing along with Reggie. Then Suddenly the door opens. REGGIE stops in his tracks, looking up, terrified that it is his father. But it is OK - it's GRANDMA. She has a cake.

GRANDMA
Just in case you get hungry, lover.

She kisses him and goes out as if nothing was out of the ordinary. AS SHE LEAVES WE SEE THE ROOM IS PACKED FULL WITH A REAL LIFE ORCHESTRA IMPLAUSIBLY SQUASHED TOGETHER. FLAUTISTS ON TOP OF THE WARDROBE, A DOUBLE BASSIST BEHIND THE DOOR. THEY WAIT IN SILENCE UNTIL SHE GOES. REGGIE TAKES A BITE OF THE CAKE then raises his hands to start the orchestra again, as we cut to:

INT. PIANO TEACHER'S HOUSE. DAY.

REGGIE playing the Warsaw Concerto effortlessly for real on the piano but as we pull out we see Reggie is now older. He finishes the piece with a flourish. The little girl, Susie, is now somewhat bigger and applauds dotingly from the door. The piano teacher turns round to her.

PIANO TEACHER
You are supposed to be upstairs.

SUSIE smiles at REGGIE and then disappears. REGGIE looks up at the TEACHER.

PIANO TEACHER (CONT'D)
I know this is going to sound a bit weird
but I think there's something you should
really consider....

CUT TO:

KITCHEN: Mum ironing.

MUM
The Royal Academy of Music!?

She burns a hole in a shirt with the shock of it all.

CUT TO:

GARDEN: Dad trimming his roses. He cuts off a bud.

DAD
Is this your idea of a joke, Reginald?

REGGIE
It's only on a Saturday.

EXT. MARYLEBONE ROAD, LONDON. DAY.

REGGIE with GRANDMA. They look across the road at a sign saying: Royal Academy of Music. REGGIE looks distinctly nervous.

GRANDMA
Listen to me. You go in there and become who you want to be. You don't want to be stuck in Pinner all your life..

REGGIE
What's wrong with Pinner?

GRANDMA
Trust me, Reggie. People will like you when they hear you play the piano.

GRANDMA gives him some change.

GRANDMA (CONT'D)
Bus fare home.

INT. ROYAL ACADEMY. THE SAME.

Reggie is dwarfed by the dusty surroundings. A bearded student walks by with a double bass in a case. Students all looking very much like Pete Seeger in duffle coats and beatnik hats bluster past with purpose. REGGIE looks around, awed and bewildered, then his ears prick up as he hears the sound of a piano starting a tune.

INT. PRACTICE ROOM, ROYAL ACADEMY. THE SAME.

HELEN PIENA is playing a piece by Mozart. Reggie wanders into the room transfixed by the music. He looks around as Helen plays the piece unaware that he is there. Suddenly she notices him and stops playing.

REGGIE

Sorry.

HELEN PIENA

Ah. You must be Reginald.
Excellent. Please, sit down. Did you
bring something to play for me?

REGGIE

I didn't know I had to.

HELEN PIENA

Is there anything you could play. So I
can get a sense of where you are up to?

REGGIE

Well what about the one you were doing
when I came in.

HELEN PIENA

Mozart's Fifth Piano Concerto in C!?

REGGIE

Sure.

He sits down, prepares then plays the opening chord. One
note is out. He blushes. He plays it again, this time
correctly, then plays the Mozart piece note perfect.
Suddenly stopping mid-phrase exactly where she left off.

HELEN PIENA

Go on.

REGGIE

I can't. That's as far as you got up to.

HELEN looks amazed that REGGIE has played it by ear. Then
He beams a very cheeky smile, but HELEN does not smile
back.

HELEN PIENA

You might have a very good memory,
Reginald, but we have an awful lot of
work to do. Sit up. Hands. Now start
again.

His smile drops.

EXT. ROYAL ACADEMY. THE SAME.

REGGIE walks out on his own into the busy street feeling
rather pleased with the world.

EXT. OXFORD STREET. THE SAME.

REGGIE stands at a bus stop next to a TV store. He stares at the televisions, suddenly his eye is caught by a figure playing a guitar, sound is coming out of the shop. It is singing like he has never heard before. A small crowd has gathered to watch the singer on the TV in the shop window. Reggie stands looking at Elvis shaking his hips as he sings "Hound Dog" - he cannot believe his eyes. The song finishes. Reggie is open mouthed.

REGGIE

Who was that?

REGGIE looks up and a TEDDY BOY is standing next to him.

TEDDY BOY

Elvis Presley, innit.

WOMAN

I think he should be banned.

REGGIE

I thought he was amazing.

The TEDDY BOY winks at REGGIE and saunters off down the street. REGGIE, still in shock, watches the teddy boy fascinated by his insouciance and raw sexuality - a couple of girls swoon as Elvis dances to the accompaniment of the intro to **Crocodile rock**. Reggie clocks that musicians can be sexy and adored. The bus comes and REGGIE dances up the steps to the sound of his older self singing : "La, la, la, la..."

INT. REGGIE'S BEDROOM. NIGHT.

REGGIE takes out an exercise book. It is a diary with several columns of lists. There is a list of "tunes learnt" and now he starts another one: "Records to purchase" - he writes carefully: "Elvis Presley - Mystery train."

INT. BACKROOM, IVY'S HOUSE. DAY.

Same old scene: GRANDAD asleep, GRANDMA cooking in the kitchen, SHELIA dusting. Reggie comes in. He takes a record out of it's cover - and With great reverence he puts it on the turntable and fires the old machine up. The record falls onto the turntable and the needle hits the groove: "Mystery Train" by Elvis Presley. The china on the shelves rattles, GRANDAD wakes with a jolt almost swallowing his false teeth. STANLEY and SHELIA rush in to see what's going on.

SHELIA

What the hell is this?

REGGIE
(enthusiastically)
It's rock and roll, Mum.

Dad grabs the record and takes it off the turntable.

STANLEY
It's bloody murder. Where did you get this?

REGGIE
I bought it. With my pocket money.

STANLEY
You paid for it!? I'm not having rubbish like this in this house.

REGGIE
It's not rubbish, Dad. It's musical.

STANLEY
George Shearing's musical. Glen Miller's musical. This is just bloody noise.

REGGIE
Give me it back, Dad.

REGGIE tries to grab the record but STANLEY smashes it into the bin and storms off followed by SHELIA remonstrating with him. REGGIE gets the record out of the bin, it has broken in half.

GRANDMA
Actually, I quite liked it.

She comes up to him, wipes the flour from her hands and dips into her apron. She pulls out a few coins.

GRANDMA (CONT'D)
There you are, son. Get yourself a new one. But for godsake play it when he's out.

Start of **Crocodile Rock**, starts up where it left off.
"La, la, la, la, la, la..."

EXT. PINNER HIGH STREET. DAY.

Little Reggie walks up to a Barber's Shop with a red and white pole. He looks up and goes in. "La, la, la, la, la..."

CUT TO:

Reggie comes out with a D.A. Hairstyle. "La, la, la, la, la, la, la..." He walks proudly down the street. He passes two lads, thinking he looks really cool.

LAD

Fatso.

This bursts Reggie's bubble but he gamely ignores it.

EXT. STREET IN PINNER. DAY.

The intro to Crocodile Rock carries on as Reggie and Susie are walking to school.

SUSIE

Is it true you're going to be a concert pianist when you grow up?

REGGIE

I don't really know. I think I'd rather be a world famous pop musician adored by millions of people.

SUSIE

My Mum says you were born to be a concert pianist.

REGGIE

But I don't want to be what I was born as. I'd rather be something else. I mean, what would you be if you had the chance?

SUSIE

Your girlfriend.

REGGIE

What!?

SUSIE

Will you let me? Just for a bit. I'll promise not to kiss you.

REGGIE

OK, then.

The musical intro has reached the point where the singing starts and REGGIE turns to the camera and sings:

REGGIE (CONT'D)

I remember when rock was young/ Me and Suzie had so much fun...

EXT/INT. VARIOUS LOCATIONS ALL OVER LONDON. DAY.

It is summer. REGGIE is singing as he takes SUSIE across London. First we see them holding hands on top of a red double decker bus:

SUSIE
Holding hands...

CUT TO:

Then in Trafalgar Square, sun shining. They are both covered in pigeons.

REGGIE
And playing in the sun.

SUSIE AND ELTON
We were hopping and boppin'// till the day was done.

CUT TO:

Woolworths record store. SUSIE looks lovingly at REGGIE, but REGGIE looks lovingly at the picture of Jerry Lee Lewis on the cover of the record. REGGIE, still singing to camera:

REGGIE
(singing)
But the biggest kick I ever got -

CUT TO:

School hall. REGGIE is playing the piano on the stage as if he were Little Richard as other kids play outside.

REGGIE (CONT'D)
(singing)
Was doing the thing called the crocodile rock/ while the other kids were rocking round the clock/ I was hopping and bopping to the Crocodile Rock..

Susie looks on admiringly. Then a teacher comes in to stop REGGIE. He closes the lid, crestfallen.

CUT TO:

REGGIE and SUSIE on Primrose Hill. It's a sunny day full of picnic-ers, and people lolling about in the sun. It seems everyone is a Rock and Roller. REGGIE sings to camera:

REGGIE (CONT'D)
(singing)
Well, crocodile rocking is something shocking and your feet just can't keep still...

Suddenly everyone starts to join in a massive choreographed dance. It's a technicolour 'Summer Holiday' London:

REGGIE (CONT'D)

I never knew me a better time and I guess
I never will. But oh lordy mama on Friday
night when Susie wore her dresses tight/
Oh man, it was out of sight.

THE CROWD

La..la..la..la..la...Laa...etc

As everyone is dancing and singing, REGGIE grabs SUSIE's hand and they run away from the dancing revellers. Full of the glee of youth race down the hill, hand in hand, as fast as they can go - the panorama of London beneath them. REGGIE breaks away as he sings the "la,la,la" chorus, SUSIE chases after him. Then suddenly REGGIE stops dead. The music stops with him. Infront of him is a middle aged couple holding hands. Susie races up behind him, slowing down as she sees what he sees. It is SHELIA and another man. Shelia turns round and sees Reggie staring.

SHELIA

Reggie!

REGGIE

Mum!?

SHELIA

Oh Reggie.

The man (FRED) breaks the embarrassment by wiping his hand and presenting it to the stunned Reggie.

FRED

Sorry. I'm Fred. Pleased to meet you,
son. I've heard so much about you.

FRED shakes his hand.

FRED (CONT'D)

Who's this?

REGGIE

(embarrassed)

This is my girlfriend. Tho' we don't
actually kiss or anything.

SUSIE looks equally embarrassed.

INT. EAST END CAFE. DAY.

SHELIA and REGGIE sit alone in a little booth.

SHELIA

I didn't mean this to happen. I met Fred
last time your Dad was away.

REGGIE
Do you love him?

SHELIA
Yes. I think I do.

REGGIE
So you don't love Dad anymore then?

SHELIA
No, Reggie. Not any more.

REGGIE
Neither do I.
Are you going to marry Fred then?

SHELIA
I don't know what I'm going to do.

Pause.

REGGIE
I would if I was you.

Cue: the "La, la, la, la, la, la.." section of CROCODILE ROCK as we cut to:

EXT. REGGIE'S HOUSE. NIGHT.

The long fade out of Crocodile Rock plays over this whole scene. THE CAMERA is outside the house looking through the window. REGGIE is crouched terrified in the corner as we see the dumbshow inside. SHELIA delivering the bad news, STANLEY shouting. SHELIA is weeping on the settee as STANLEY storms out of the room and goes upstairs. The camera cranes up the side of the house so we see Stanley stomping upstairs to the bedroom. As he packs a suitcase the camera pulls out to see the house amongst the others in the street. Dad descends the stairs and throws open the front door. All the time the carefree "La, la, la, la, la.." music plays in ironic contrast to the traumatic dumbshow. Stanley storms out and Reggie appears at the door. As the "la, la, la, la, la..." singing fades out the ambient noise of the street brings us back to reality. Stanley storms off down the street past the camera, REGGIE runs after him:

REGGIE
Dad...

Stanley turns.

STANLEY
I wish you'd never been born.

Reggie stops dead, Dad carries on down the street. We see the hurt on REGGIE's face. **CROCODILE ROCK COMES TO A CLOSE.**

EXT. FROME COURT. DAY.

Reggie, Shelia and Fred carry stuff into a 1930's block of flats.

INT. FROME COURT. THE SAME.

Reggie is putting up posters of his favorite musicians in his new bedroom. Fred comes in and looks at Reggie's work admiringly. Reggie stares at him. Fred is nervous, looking for acceptance.

FRED
So what's all this about you wanting to
be a musician?

INT. NORTHFIELD'S HOTEL. DAY.

A run down hotel bar. It has seen better days. A seedy **BARMAN** coughs into a glass he is cleaning. **FRED** appears at the bar.

BARMAN
Can I help you?

FRED
Yes. I understand you have music on of a
Friday.

BARMAN
Oh yes, very popular. Book the acts
myself.

He nods towards a poster for the Russ Goodbody Trio.

FRED
Well, I wondered if you'd be interested
in the greatest musical talent ever to
come out of Pinner. Rock and Roll.
Country and Western. You name it.

BARMAN
How much?

FRED has not thought this through.

FRED
I dunno. A pound?

BARMAN

Ten shillings and the first drink on the house.

FRED

But he doesn't drink. Do you, Reg?

Fred looks down at Reg who has been obscured by the bar. The Barman looks in horror at REGGIE.

BARMAN

Who? Billy Bunter?!

FRED

Alright, five shillings and a lemonade.

EXT. NORTHFIELD'S HOTEL. NIGHT.

A home-made sign in the window says: "tonite: Reginald Dwight and an all meat raffle."

INT. NORTHFIELD'S HOTEL. THE SAME.

People are milling round. It is a noisy, smoky Friday night in the local boozier. SHELIA and FRED are done up posh. REGGIE is wearing a blazer and tie with his quiff slicked down. He looks decidedly nervous. He walks onto the little stage and sits at the piano. The microphone is too high for him so he has to lower it. IVY winks at Reggie and puts her thumb encouragingly. There is instant feedback through the microphone. This gets everybody's attention. REGGIE looks sheepish.

REGGIE

Hello.

No one is impressed and they go back to their drinking.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

This first tune was made famous by an artist I have a great deal of respect for. Mr Marty Robbins.

No one takes any notice. REGGIE starts playing "Streets of Laredo" underneath the clatter of beer glasses and chattering, which gets louder as he starts singing. REGGIE looks despondent. FRED signals his encouragement. But a BRUISER puts his pint down on top of the piano right in REGGIE's face and continues talking loudly to his friend. This is enough. REGGIE stops.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

Excuse me. You can't put that on there.

He takes the beer and hands it back to the man.

BRUISER

Why not?

REGGIE

Cos it'll get knocked over.

Before the man has a chance to reply Reggie bangs the piano in a wild frenzy, playing the first chords to Saturday Night's Alright (For Fighting). It is really loud. REGGIE starts singing:

REGGIE (CONT'D)

"It's getting late have you seen my mates..."

Suddenly REGGIE has got everybody's attention. As somebody turns to watch REGGIE they knock over a woman's beer. Push leads to shove. Honour is at stake. Her boyfriend stands up. He is enormously tall and glowers down at the person who pushed his girlfriend. In a second a fight has broken out, people are flying across the room, glasses are smashed chairs are thrown. REGGIE keeps on singing.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

"Ma tell me when the boys get here/It's seven o'clock and I want to rock/ wanna get a belly full of beer/.."

A body flies over the piano and Reggie has to duck. He is really letting go and playing brilliantly. SHELIA and FRED are in the middle of the chaos with their gin and tonics still smiling encouragingly at REGGIE.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

"My old man's drunker than a barrel full of monkey's/And my old lady she don't care/My sister looks cute in her braces and her boots/ A handful of grease in her hair"

Someone bumps into FRED and he turns round and whacks them then turns back to SHELIA and puts his arm around her as if nothing was happening. Two men are now on top of the piano fighting. Ivy hit someone with her handbag. Reggie has to dive this way and that to avoid being hit but keeps on playing without missing a beat.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

"So don't give us none of your aggravation/ We've had it with yer discipline/ Saturday night's alright for fightin'/ Get a little action in"

Suddenly someone has a chair and is about to crash it down onto the piano when Reggie leaps out of the window.

EXT. STREET. NIGHT.

As REGGIE emerges from the pub he is clearly in a dreamworld. REGGIE is singing the song in the middle of a riot - it's a sort of mods and rocker's Quadrophenia pitched battle - all done in dance. He runs across the street over the tops of cars - he boots someone who tries to attack him, whilst, of course, singing in perfect time.

REGGIE

"Get about as oiled as a diesel train/
Gonna set this dance alight/ Cause
Saturday night's alright for fightin'/
Saturday night's alright, alright,
alright"

REGGIE escapes the riot by swinging up onto the awning of a shop and climbing through the open window of a flat above.

INT. FLAT. THE SAME.

A man in a string vest is having an argument with his young wife hair in curlers and a slip: all very "Saturday Night, Sunday Morning". They start throwing crockery at each other. REGGIE is in the room - still singing; he ducks as a plates flies above his head. He rushes to the piano in the corner of the room and plays as he sings:

REGGIE

"We're packed pretty tight in here
tonight/ I'm looking for a dolly who'll
see me right/ I may use a little muscle
to get what I need/ I sink a little drink
and shout she's with me.."

Reggie leaves the piano and runs through the flat as the two characters chase each other round. He runs into a bedroom only to see the kid who shouted 'Fatso' at him - Reggie leaps out of the window onto the roof of the outside loo and leaps into the alley at the back of the houses.

EXT. BACKLANE. THE SAME.

As REGGIE runs down the back lane as if in Quadrophenia, he looks along to see a gang of lads who start running towards him. He turns and runs the other way, running through the shadows still singing, chased by the gang:

REGGIE

"A couple of sounds that I really like/
Are the sound of a switchblade and a
motorbike/I'm a juvenile product of the
working class/ who's best friend floats
in the bottom of a glass"

He runs out of the alley and sees the brightly lit pub.
He runs in through the door.

INT. PUB. NIGHT.

He dives across the bar and lands on the piano stool and without missing a beat he plays. There is a little band with him. He is still singing, but now the whole of this pub are with him bouncing along to his performance. When Reggie turns to camera we realise he has aged several years and is now a young man. He is playing with great confidence, wowing the pub audience.

REGGIE

"So don't give us none of your
aggravation/ We've had it with yer
discipline/ Saturday night's alright for
fightin'/ Get a little action in"

SHELIA and FRED look on admiringly, still drinking gin and tonics their clothes now mid-sixties rather than late fifties. Everyone cheers at Reggie who beams back at them. REGGIE comes off stage to FRED and SHELIA.

SHELIA

To be quite honest - I think you could do
with a bit more practice, luv.

Reggie's face drops.

EXT. ROYAL ACADEMY. THE SAME.

REGGIE yawns as he crosses the street. He passes some really cool looking teenagers in the most modern gear, he hesitates and looks after them yearningly. He walks up the front steps.

INT. ROYAL ACADEMY. THE SAME.

REGGIE walks up the corridor. Somehow now it seems stuffy and boring. The other students seem rather square. He walks up the corridor listening to people practicing scales. He starts to slow down as he nears his classroom door. A fusty looking professor in a cardigan comes out of a classroom.

PROFESSOR

Morning, Reginald.

The Professor goes into another room. Reggie stops dead. The noise of students practising scales becomes a cacophony in his head. He turns and walks the other way. He is not going to his lesson.

INT. PRINCIPAL'S ROOM, ROYAL ACADEMY. DAY

REGGIE sits looking sheepish at HELEN PIENA and the PRINCIPAL.

PRINCIPAL

Are you completely sure you don't wish to carry on? You do realise you have a guaranteed place to study here full time.

REGGIE

I'm sorry, Professor Braithwaite. It's just don't think it's for me.

HELEN PIENA

But Reginald, you will be throwing away an important musical career.

REGGIE

It's not that I don't love music. There's nothing wrong with Mozart and Bach. It's just if Beethoven was alive today, he'd be playing Rock and Roll. Wouldn't he?

Intro to "Roll over Beethoven" by Chuck Berry into:

INT. CAREERS ADVICE CENTRE.

REGGIE on chair. A balding man in an ill fitting suit looks at him disparagingly.

CAREERS ADVISOR

Music?! That's a toughy.

He looks through his file of cards.

CAREERS ADVISOR (CONT'D)

We've got a job selling pianos in Leytonstone.

REGGIE

I was thinking more of something in the music industry itself, actually. I do a bit of performing.

CAREERS ADVISOR

Performing?

REGGIE

You know. Pop, Jazz, Rock and Roll.

CAREERS ADVISOR
 Rock and Roll?! Aren't you a bit...
 "square"?

Close up on the offended Reggie.

CAREERS ADVISOR (CONT'D)
 I'll see what I can do.

EXT. SOHO. THE SWINGING SIXTIES. DAY.

REGGIE comes out of the tube at Tottenham Court Road. The Kinks: Dedicated Follower of Fashion, playing on the soundtrack. He is dressed in swinging sixties chic. He walks down Denmark Street - London's Tin Pan Alley, with its music publishers and guitar shops. Poster's for the Beatles and the Stones. He stops at a doorway. It says Dick James Music.

INT. DICK JAMES MUSIC. THE SAME.

In the reception a very Mary Quant receptionist is at the desk and ignores Reg who stands looking at the posters of The Beatles. Photographs of John Lennon shaking Dick Jame's hand. Gold records etc. Reggie tries to look very cool and important. But is clearly overwhelmed that he is at the heart of the British music industry.

MARY QUANT GIRL
 Can I help you?

REGGIE
 Yeah. Reginald Dwight. I've, erm, come about the job.

MARY QUANT GIRL
 Sorry. What did you say your name was?

INT. ROOM. DAY.

A man looks at Reggie.

MAN
 But do you have any qualifications?

REGGIE
 Well, I've got grade 8 piano, and I've done seven years at the Royal Academy.

MAN
 OK. Start at once. The kettle's over there. Mines two sugars, Bert has his black. There's a pile of stuff to take to the post office.

Pull out to see that they are in a warehouse.

EXT. KINGSWAY. DAY.

REGGIE in a brown warehouseman's overall, wheels a barrow of mail down the street looking at the pretty young things of swinging London. He passes a card in the window of a music shop - band members wanted. He writes down the number.

INT. CHURCH HALL. DAY.

A band of pretty boys on stage. The drumkit bears the logo of "bluesology". They are doing a pretty bad version of What d'I Say. REGGIE walks into the hall and peers at them through the darkness. The singer/guitarist looks down to see REGGIE.

REGGIE

Hello.

LEAD SINGER

Can we help you?

REGGIE

I've come about an audition.

They all look at him disparagingly.

LEAD SINGER

What d'ya play?

REGGIE

Piano. And I sing a bit.

LEAD SINGER

Piano's went out years ago. Sorry mate we're a rhythm and blues band.

REGGIE

But it said you were looking for a keyboard player.

Arnold comes out of the shadows. He is a Jewish Spiv.

ARNOLD

Hold yer 'orses, boys. Give the lad a chance. You think you can play organ?

CUT TO:

REGGIE looks at the organ. He's never seen one in his life.

REGGIE

I suppose I could have a go.

He presses a few buttons. It doesn't go well. He starts sweating, managing to get a sound. It's awful. He desperately presses some buttons then suddenly he lets rip and improvises a wild Jimmy Smith style impersonation and sings an improvised holler-type blues. The band are obviously blown away but rather threatened by Reggie's musicianship. Reggie looks up unaware of how impressive he's been.

ARNOLD

Fackin' 'ell, son. Two quid a gig, pack yer own instruments. Start tomorra - you're backing Wilson Pickett in Swindon.

REGGIE

Wilson Pickett. Doesn't he have his own musicians.

ARNOLD

You don't think they fly that lot over to play the Cunt and Compass in Canning Town.

He hands Reggie some pills.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

You'll need these.

REGGIE

What are they?

ARNOLD

Keep you awake when you're driving the van back. It's all fried eggs and amphetamines in this game sunshine. Now fuck off out of it. I'll see you tomorra.

Reggie toddles off throwing the pills away.

LEAD SINGER

Fucking hell. I can't believe he's hired that dork.

INT. HAMMER AND NAILS CLUB, SWINDON.

The band are setting up. Reggie sets up his organ. The guys stick a huge speaker right in front of him. Reggie looks perplexed, he sets up his mike. The lead guitarist comes up.

LEAD SINGER

Sorry, mate. You won't be needing that.

CUT TO:

The band are playing In The Midnight Hour. Wilson Pickett out front singing like a pro.

Elton is playing some great organ and looking to be acknowledged but can't even see the audience from behind the speakers. He is decidedly pissed off.

Montage - as In The Midnight Hour carries on:

Reggie carting the gear out to the van.

Reggie in an all night caff. He is given a plate of grease with two eggs floating in it.

Reggie clocks on in the warehouse and yawns.

Another night. Another dive.

Reggie playing behind another speaker.

Reggie packing away his organ as the other guys are surrounded by dolly birds.

INT. FROME COURT. MORNING.

Shelia and Fred are at the breakfast table, smoking away. REGGIE comes in from his all night gig and sits down morosely, throwing his NME on the table.

REGGIE

I'm giving up.

SHELIA

What do you mean - you're giving up. You haven't even done anything yet.

REGGIE

Its ridiculous. What was I thinking of? I'm a half-blind, gingerhaired, fat boy from Pinner. Look at my hands they're like a midget boxers.

SHELIA

It's alright, luv. Stanley'll get you some work on the buildings.

FRED

For Reggie!?
Anyway, you can't go working on the buildings Reggie. You're an artist for christsake.

REGGIE

I don't want to be an artist. I want to be something useful.

FRED

Hang on a minute. Sod being useful. I fought a bloody war so you could wear loon pants and prance around expressing yourself. If you think I'm having any step-son of mine running round like a brickie's apprentice you've another thing coming.

REGGIE is stunned by FRED's response.

FRED (CONT'D)

Here. What about this?

He points at an advert in the NME.

FRED (CONT'D)

"Wanted. Talent. Artistes/ composers/ singer musicians." You're an artiste, aren't you. What the hell are you waiting for. It's the Sixties. It's Peace, Love and How's your father. For christsakes show a bit of gumption.

REGGIE looks at his mother, who seems unconvinced.

SHELIA

Well if you want my advice maybe you should stick with your instincts, Reginald.

INT. BEDROOM. DAY.

GRANDMA appears.

GRANDMA

I think Fred is right. Take no notice of your Mum. You can do this, Reggie.

REGGIE

But who's ever heard of a rock star called Reginald Dwight?

GRANDMA

Well if you don't like your name: change it. Isn't that the whole point of all this rock and roll. People pretending they're somebody else?

REGGIE

But who will I be?

GRANDMA

Fuck them, Reggie. Be who you want.

INT. RAY WILLIAM'S OFFICE, MAYFAIR. DAY.

Elton's transformation from geeky Elton to a wilder version of himself. Ray Williams a blonde Adonis of 21, has his feet on the desk as he interviews Elton.

RAY
So you play in a band. Cool.

REGGIE
Yeah, we play backing for soul singers who come over from America.

RAY
Where do you play?

REGGIE
You know all over: Swindon, Barton le Roux, some nights we play five gigs in three different places.

RAY
And you sing as well.

REGGIE
Not really. They stole my mike for the bassist. But I have performed solo.

RAY
Solo! What sort of stuff are we talking?

REGGIE
A bit of pop, a bit of country and western.

RAY
Country and Western?

Ray is unimpressed.

REGGIE
I'm a very big fan of Marty Robins. Shall I play some.

RAY
OK. I suppose.

REGGIE goes to the piano. And starts The Streets of Laredo.

RAY (CONT'D)
OK. Thank you.

REGGIE
There are another seven verses.

RAY
I think I've heard enough for now. Thank
you , erm - what did you say your name
was.

REGGIE
(hesitates)
Elton. Elton John.

RAY
Nice name. Well, it's been really cool to
meet you...

Ray shakes his hand ready to usher him out.

REGGIE
Wait a minute. You haven't asked me about
songwriting.

RAY
You write songs?

REGGIE
Well, not exactly. But I'd like to.

RAY
So you don't write songs.

REGGIE
Well, I'm good at tunes but I never seem
to know what to write about.

RAY
Look if anything comes up we'll give you
a call.

REGGIE
Please give me a chance.

It's clear Elton is not going to give up, so thinking
quickly Ray searches for something which will get Reggie
out of the office. He sees some papers on his desk and
has a brainwave.

RAY
Look, these came from some kid in
Lincoln. Why don't you set them to music
and then you'll be really famous.

Ray ushers Reggie out.

REGGIE
But...

RAY
It's been a real pleasure to meet you,
erm....

REGGIE

Elton.

RAY

Remember. Stay cool.

EXT. CARNABY STREET, LONDON. DAY.

Reggie looks at the pile of handwritten lyrics: The Year of the Teddy Bear, The Swan Queen of Laughing Lake, Tartan Coloured Lady and A Dandelion Dies in the Wind. He finds the covering letter. He sees the name and address: "Bernie Taupin, Matkin Farm, Owmbly-by-Spital, Lincolnshire".

INT. LANCASTER GRILL, LONDON. DAY.

An inauspicious cafe off Tottenham Court Road. Elton is there early. He looks at his watch. He is wearing a Sixties t-shirt, a fur jacket, tight pants and his hair is long. He has the lyrics with him. He sits with a cup of tea. Elton watches the people coming in. Various young men walk by and he looks expectantly, but it is quickly evident that they are meeting other people.

WAITRESS

Anything else?

ELTON

I think I better have the bill, please.

Then through the door comes someone in exactly the same t-shirt and fur jacket and tight pants. Someone who could almost be a mirror image of Elton. He looks around and sees Elton.

BERNIE

Elton? Elton John.

ELTON

Yeah. Well, that's my stage name, actually. My real names Reg.

BERNIE

I prefer Elton John. Sorry, I'm late, the fucking train got stuck in Grantham.

ELTON

Please, sit down.

Elton and Bernie sit in a booth seat opposite each other. Neither knows what to say but they have instantly connected.

BOTH

I, erm..

ELTON

Sorry..

BERNIE

No, go ahead..

ELTON

No you go ahead.

BOTH

I was just going to..

ELTON

Well, I like your lyrics.

BERNIE

I liked the tape you sent me. I think we could make a real go of this. I mean to be quite honest. All I ever wanted to do was to write lyrics. Well, and be a cowboy. I know it's a bit embarrassing but I'm a bit of a fan of Country and Western.

ELTON

Me too. I know all the words to Streets of Laredo. And you're serious about moving down.

BERNIE

Yeah, I wouldn't exactly say I fitted in where I come from. But I always thought I'd find someone who understands me. That's what I like about your tape. Something just clicked. Anyway, I'm not gonna get famous sitting up there on a farm am I.

ELTON

But where will you live?

BERNIE

I dunno. Perhaps we can get a place together. Somewhere we can write.

ELTON

Wow that would be fantastic.

BERNIE

Maybe we could write something this afternoon.

ELTON

Actually, I've got a gig tonight playing for Long John Baldry. I suppose you could come with me.

BERNIE

I'm in. Goodbye hayricks and sheep-dips.
Hello the highlife, glamour and
sophistication. Where you playing
exactly?

ELTON

Leeds.

EXT. DINGY STREET IN LEEDS. DAY.

A dirty run down street in a dark Northern town. Elton
and Bernie get out of the van with the rest of the
Bluesology. They see a sign outside a very run down club.
"Tonight, one night only, Long John Baldry supported by
Bluesology". Bernie looks in dismay.

INT. HORRIBLE CLUB, LEEDS. THE SAME.

It is a dump. Bernie is not impressed.

BERNIE

What a fucking dump.

Suddenly a very tall man in an immaculate suit appears at
his shoulder.

LONG JOHN BALDRY

"Squalor is the only true glamour".
Baudelaire.

BERNIE

What?

LONG JOHN BALDRY

You must be Elton John. I hear you're
very good with your organ.

BERNIE

No, he's Elton John. I'm just a lyricist.

LONG JOHN BALDRY

Well, we can't all be Liberace. Long John
Baldry. And they do not call me that
because I'm bald. I think you look like a
Nancy.

BERNIE

Hang on a minute?

LONG JOHN BALDRY

Oh, you all get woman's names, dear.
You're definitely a Nancy and he's a
Phyllis. We're wasted on Leeds
sugarbears. Drink anybody.

Long John brandishes a bottle of wine. He fills a glass for Elton then LONG JOHN BALDRY whispers to the lead guitarist.

LONG JOHN BALDRY (CONT'D)
For fucksake, stick him behind a speaker.
We don't want to scare the horses.

CUE: "Let the Heartaches Begin".

CUT TO:

The club is now full. The band playing the intro to the song. Elton is behind a speaker but manages to look out at Bernie who is eyeing up a very tall woman in a very short skirt. Elton finds himself drawn to Bernie and not the girl to us the song seems to speak about ELTON's perhaps unconscious longing for BERNIE as he falls in love:

LONG JOHN BALDRY (SINGS)
(CONT'D)
"I can hear the guitars start to play and
very soon they say I was a fool to turn
my love away and with each glass of wine
I feel a glow and very soon I know I was
a fool to let my baby go."

As Long John sings Elton looks out to see Bernie now chatting to the girl, she is laughing, he is smiling and being very charming. Elton is getting increasingly jealous. Elton tries to concentrate on his playing but is drawn back again and again to the dumbshow of Bernie and the girl.

LONG JOHN BALDRY (CONT'D)
"So let the heartaches begin I can help
it I can't win I've lost that girl for
sure tears won't help any more Let the
heartaches begin I can't help it I can't
win. I've lost that girl for sure now
she's gone I can't hold back the tears
anymore."

CUT TO:

The end of the set. Elton comes off stage and goes over to Bernie who is now talking very intimately to the girl.

ELTON
Hi. Bernie.

BERNIE
Oh hi. This is Linda. Linda, this is
Elton John.

LINDA

Wow. You're the one on the organ.
I just loved your playing. I have a thing
about keyboard players.

She has turned her entire attention from Bernie to Elton,
much to Bernie's instant chagrin. She twists a finger in
Elton's hair.

LINDA (CONT'D)

And you have such beautiful hair.

Elton is completely surprised anyone is interested in
him.

ELTON

Thank you. Actually, I'm going a bit bald
on top ...

Suddenly, a midget arrives.

MIDGET

Hey, Fats, you realise she's with me.

LINDA

Oh go away Arthur, we're talking about
art.

The Midget is put in his place. Linda, once again turns
her full attention to Elton.

LINDA (CONT'D)

And I think we're going to get along
very, very well.

Elton looks across at Bernie, terrified for his very
life.

ELTON

But what about Arthur?

Linda knocks back her drink.

LINDA

Fuck him, Elton. Believe me, darling,
it's definitely not true what they say...

INT. TOILETS. THE SAME.

Bernie and Elton argue as they both take a piss.

BERNIE

It's not fair - I saw her first.

ELTON

Look, it isn't my fault. I didn't have
any choice in the matter.

BERNIE

But you didn't have to agree to move into a flat together.

ELTON

How else are we going to afford a place? You heard me. I told her I'm not going anywhere without you.

BERNIE

And she's really going to pay for it all?

ELTON

Apparently she's some sort of heiress.

Arthur appears in high dudgeon.

ARTHUR

Her Dad made a fortune in pickled onions, you fucking bastard.

Elton and Bernie turn round and see Arthur, completely drunk, standing with a broken bottle ready to cause trouble. Someone rushes in through the door and knocks him over. Elton and Bernie run off.

EXT. FURLONG ROAD, ISLINGTON. DAY.

Bernie and Elton with their suitcases, sleeping bags and boxes of records. They look at the run down street in Islington.

BERNIE

Is this it?

ELTON

Apparently, it's going to be the new Chelsea.

Linda pulls up in cab. She gets out in an elaborate outfit with two small dogs on leads. Elton and Bernie look in horror at the dogs.

ELTON (CONT'D)

You never mentioned anything about dogs.

LINDA

I don't go anywhere without Livia and Bertie.

INT. FURLONG ROAD, ISLINGTON. NIGHT.

They pour champagne into mugs.

LINDA

Here's to us.

BERNIE
And the dogs.

LINDA
I had included them anyway. Chin, chin.
They drink.

ELTON
So this is it. The swinging sixties.

BERNIE
Come on then, let's get our records out.

LINDA
Oh, god. You can't play music in the
flat. Livvy has sensitive ears.
Bernie looks in horror at Elton.

LINDA (CONT'D)
Anyway, I had some other activities in
mind.

ELTON
But we have to be able to play our
records.

LINDA
Elton! Come on my sweet-pea, time for
beddie-byes. You can show me your
intricate finger-work.

ELTON
But it's only nine thirty.

Linda smiles a lascivious smile. She grabs Elton by his
collar and pulls him towards the bedroom. Elton looks
back in horror as Bernie is left with the champagne.
Livvy licks Bernie's face.

LINDA
(off)
Livvy. Bertie.

The dogs leave Bernie and run off to Elton's room.

INT. BEDROOM. NIGHT.

Linda in bed.

LINDA
Come on big boy.

A look of terror on Elton's face.

INT. FURLONG ROAD, ISLINGTON. DAY.

Bernie and Elton. In the kitchen. Elton is setting his organ up.

BERNIE

So come on, what's she like?

ELTON

What's what like?

BERNIE

In the sack. Spill the beans.

ELTON

To be quite honest, I'm not exactly sure if I'm doing it properly.

BERNIE

What do you mean. Not doing it properly?

ELTON

I'm sure it'll get better with a bit of practice. Besides the important thing is we're together. Being here with the space to write without any distractions?

Just as Elton has spoken we hear Linda scream from down the corridor.

LINDA

Livvy!!! Livvy!!!

Suddenly, Linda runs into the room dressed only in a towel, curlers in her hair.

LINDA (CONT'D)

Oh my god.

She looks down at Livvy, Elton and Bernie do likewise. They stare at Livia who is taking a piss onto Elton's amplifier.

LINDA (CONT'D)

What are you thinking? She could have been electrocuted.

Linda picks the dog up, kisses it and walks away in a huff. Bernie and Elton are left to survey the puddle of piss.

INT. A CLUB. NIGHT.

Close up of Bernie.

BERNIE

Married!?

Close up of Long John Baldry.

LONG JOHN BALDRY
Married!? You must be joking, Elton.

BERNIE
You've got your whole life ahead of you.
What about rock and roll? What about the
hot chicks? And cocaine orgies? What
about me and you, Elton?

ELTON
Oh it's alright, she says you can stay
for the time being.

LONG JOHN BALDRY
You can't get married. You're a fat
raving queen, sugarbear.

ELTON
No, I'm not.

LONG JOHN BALDRY
Of course you are.

ELTON
How can I be I've got a girlfriend.

LONG JOHN BALDRY
Darling, that never stopped anybody.

ELTON
But I've promised now. It'll break her
heart.

LONG JOHN BALDRY
A. I am not convinced she has one. And B.
You will ruin both your lives if you go
through with this.

ELTON
So what am I going to do? She'll bloody
well kill me.

LONG JOHN BALDRY
My advice is to get completely,
irredeemably and irretrievably shitfaced.

Long John passes Elton a bottle.

EXT. FURLONG ROAD, ISLINGTON. NIGHT.

Elton and Bernie completely "shitfaced". Elton hiccups.
Bernie says "Shhh". Elton hiccups again and they think
this is the funniest thing ever to happen to humanity.

They stagger to the door and a whole routine develops about finding the key, inserting it in the lock without waking Linda. Elton proceeds to hiccup throughout. Elton and Bernie have become Laurel and Hardy. Just as they are about to make a concerted attempt to put the key in the lock, Elton hiccups again. Bernie chastises Elton:

BERNIE
Sssssssshhhhh!

ELTON
Shhhhhhhhhhh!

Elton holds the key in a stealthy manner approaches the lock and falls over the bin. They both burst into hysterics of trying to contain the hysterics. Bernie tries to help Elton up but Elton pulls Bernie down, they both laugh hysterically. They cannot get up. They are laughing more and more till they both can't speak and tears are rolling down their cheeks. Elton gasps for breath in the middle of the rubbish - then suddenly a wave of clarity comes over him.

ELTON (CONT'D)
I love you, Bernie.

Bernie stops laughing and looks in Elton's eyes. It is a real moment of emotion, we are almost half expecting Elton to kiss Bernie. Elton hiccups again and breaks the mood.

BERNIE
You are going to tell her. Aren't you?

Suddenly the door opens. Linda is in her nightdress. Both Bernie and Elton sit up like two schoolboys ready to be told off, but Linda completely disarms them by looking doe-eyed at Elton.

LINDA
Oh, my poor sweet diddums. What has he done to you?

Elton looks in despair at Bernie as Linda's arms surround him and he is led away. Bernie is left on his own in the garbage.

INT. BERNIE'S ROOM. DAY.

Bright morning sunshine streams through onto Bernie. He opens one eye and wakes up still dressed with a horrendous hangover. He clambers out of bed.

INT. CORRIDOR, FURLONG ROAD. THE SAME.

Bernie staggers along the corridor, passing the kitchen, and into the bathroom. He takes a piss without closing the door, we can hear a sharp hiss coming from the kitchen but Bernie is too hungover to notice. He flushes the loo and heads back up the corridor glancing into the kitchen then walks on, then realises what he has just seen and does a double take.

INT. KITCHEN. DAY.

Bernie's POV: Elton is lying on the floor with his head in the gas oven, on a pillow, with the gas on. The window is wide open.

BERNIE
What are you doing?

ELTON
Go away. I'm trying to kill myself.

BERNIE
(of the pillow)
What's that?

ELTON
I didn't want to hurt my head.

BERNIE
But the window's open.

ELTON
I know, it absolutely stinks.

Bernie closes the window.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
You can't kill yourself. What about our joint publishing deal.

ELTON
It's alright, I've left everything to you.

Bernie picks up a Will scribbled in biro as Livvy runs in and starts licking Elton's face.

BERNIE
Even the Jefferson Airplane albums?

Linda appears at the door.

LINDA
What are you doing?

BERNIE
He's going to kill himself.

LINDA
Oh for godsake, what about the wedding?

Elton sits up bumping his head.

ELTON
It's all off. I'm never going to marry you.

LINDA
But I've sent the invitations to the printers. And I'm pregnant with your baby.

ELTON
No, your not. We've never even had sex properly.

LINDA
Haven't we?

ELTON
We haven't got a proper relationship at all. I wouldn't marry you if you were the last person on earth.

CLOSE UP on the shocked and horrified Linda. Then, like a dam bursting she lets out a scream of rage. The whole house seems to shake. Elton looks at Bernie.

BERNIE
Oh shit.

ELTON sings to the camera

ELTON
When I think of those East End nights/
Muggy nights curtains drawn in the little
room downstairs/
Prima donna lord you should have been
there/ sitting like a princess perched in
her electric chair/ and it's one more
beer and we don't hear you anymore..

Bernie enters the shot and pulls ELTON away.

EXT. FROME COURT. EVENING.

The song continues

ELTON

We've all gone crazy lately/ my friend's
out there rolling round the basem,ent
floor/ Someone saved my life tonight
sugarbear, almost had your hooks in me
didn't you dear/ you nearly had me roped
and tied/....

A speeded up shot where Fred arrives with a tiny Morris
Minor van. Elton and Bernie load up the boys possessions
Linda throws things at them from the flat. They finally
get in and drive off - things falling off into the
street. Linda left cursing in the middle of the road.

ELTON (CONT'D)

Butterflies are free to fly, highway,
bye bye.

INT. SITTING ROOM. FROME COURT. NIGHT.

ELTON and BERNIE sit on a sofa together.

SHELIA

I don't know what was so wrong with her?

BERNIE

Thanks for letting me stay, Mrs Dwight.

SHELIA

Well, I had no choice. Maybe now you can
get a proper job. I'm expecting 'board'.

SHELIA goes out. FRED winks at ELTON and BERNIE.

FRED

Take no notice of her. You can stay here
as long as you want to. Night, night.

INT. ELTON'S ROOM. FROME COURT. NIGHT.

Elton on the bottom bunk watches Bernie get undressed and
climb up above him.

BERNIE

Night night.

We focus on ELTON's face, full of longing.

INT. DINING ROOM, FROME COURT. DAY.

Elton reading the paper. Bernie, in his dressing gown,
scribbling amongst the debris of a full English
breakfast. SHELIA comes through with a fresh pot of tea.

SHELIA
Will you please get dressed, Reggie.

ELTON
Elton.

SHELIA
I don't mind you staying but I can't have
you moping round here all day.

ELTON
But we're writing a song.

SHELIA
If you're not dressed and out of here in
thirty minutes. I will turf you out
myself.

BERNIE
I think I better get a shave.

BERNIE puts his pad on the table. He yawns and gets up. We follow him down the corridor into the bathroom and he prepares his things to shave. In the dining room ELTON picks up BERNIE's lyrics. He starts to read them, then sits down at the piano. He starts playing.

INT. BATHROOM. THE SAME.

BERNIE is shaving. He hears the opening chords to Your Song. It is tentative and broken. Elton sings a line, then repeats it and then starts playing it.

INT. DINING ROOM, FROME COURT. DAY.

ELTON is composing Your Song. He goes slowly line by line, but when he gets to the chorus he has gained a fluency of expression than just allows the song to flow.

By the time he's started the second verse, Bernie is in the doorway half shaven, listening, stunned by what he is hearing. Elton now has the tune for the verse and sings it brilliantly, **we realise that BERNIE's lyrics are a platonic love song to ELTON but ELTON's emotional singing is a directly to bernie.**

BERNIE stands stunned and moved. Though ELTON is still shaky and makes mistakes. In this fragile state 'Your Song' is even more nakedly emotional. A direct expression of ELTON loneliness and longing.

Now he has the tune, ELTON sings the second chorus with real passion. He gets to the end and stops. He suddenly turns realising Ivy is watching from the door. Reggie looks at her embarrassed that she have witnessed such a personal moment.

IVY

Oh Reggie.

Everybody knows this is a life changing moment when something's come together.

INT. BEDROOM. NIGHT.

Bernie and Elton sit listening to a tape of Elton singing Your Song. Elton puts his hand on Bernie's knee. BERNIE puts his hand on ELTON's.

BERNIE

Look, I'm sorry, that's never gonna happen.

ELTON takes his hand away.

INT. DICK JAMES'S OFFICE. DAY.

Gold discs. Photos of Dick and the Beatles. A plaque saying : "the luckiest man in Showbusiness". Ray Williams, Elton, Bernie all look anxiously at Dick James as they play him the tape of 'Your Song'.

DICK JAMES

Bloody brilliant. The best song I've heard since Maxwell's Silver Hammer. On behalf of Dick James Music Incorporated I hereby offer you an exclusive world wide publishing deal for which you keep a full fifty percent of the publishing. Plus ten pounds a week, advance.

ELTON

Ten pounds.

DICK JAMES

And I've asked Ray here to organise a tour.

RAY

I always knew you were a genius. I've booked a little folk club in America.

BERNIE

America!

ELTON

A folk club! Hang on a minute. I've played the Civic Hall, Bradford with Major Lance.

INT. TWA ECONOMY CLASS. DAY.

ELTON, BERNIE and RAY, with NIGEL and DEE, strap themselves in to the very tight seats in economy. Bernie is dressed like a cowboy, he looks out the window at America beneath him..

ELTON

I can't believe I've agreed to this. It's the worst fucking idea I've ever heard in my life.

BERNIE

At least we can go to Tower Records.

ELTON

All I'm saying is the last thing on God's earth I want to be is a fucking folk singer.

Bernie notices they are now flying over land.

BERNIE

Look Elton. The Land of the Free. Can you believe it.

INT. LAX. DAY.

ELTON, BERNIE, and the others, wander through the terminal looking very dazed. No one seems to be there to meet them. Suddenly, an over enthusiastic man runs up to Bernie. It is NORM WINTER the "hyper" from hell.

NORM

Hey, you. Hey, you must be Elton John!

BERNIE looks at the guy bleary eyed.

BERNIE

No, actually he's Elton John. I just write the lyrics.

NORM turns to ELTON.

NORM

Hi, Norm Winter. I'm promoting your tour. Honoured to meet you.

ELTON

Tour? I thought we were only playing two gigs.

He takes ELTON's bags. Commandeers a trolley from a passing passenger and collects ELTON and BERNIE's things and starts pushing it towards the exit.

NORM

Believe me. You are one of those guys you get your dick out for and slap it on the table. I thought I'd lay on some special transport.

EXT. LAX. DAY.

ELTON comes out of the terminal and sees a red double decker bus, with "Elton John has arrived" on the side. Norm takes the bags and starts to get on board.

ELTON

It's a double decker bus!

NORM

Cool, huh?

INT. THE BUS, LAX, THE SAME.

Elton et al get on the double decker bus.

NORM

We have to go the long way cos it's a bit too high for some of the hung over traffic lights, but I thought it would be a real gas.

He bangs on the window, indicating the driver to start. We hear the sound of him trying to start the damn thing up, but the engine just whirrs over.

NORM (CONT'D)

Don't worry, I'm in the AAA.

EXT. LA FREEWAY. DAY.

Elton et al look out the windows of the double decker bus

EXT. TROUBADOUR. DAY.

The bus pulls up outside the Troubadour. Elton and Bernie get out and look at the club, it looks like a real dump.

NORM

Awesome, isn't it?

A bum is panhandling outside. They walk past and go in.

INT. TROUBADOUR. THE SAME.

Inside it is even less auspicious. Elton looks around in disgust. Bernie spots a couple of girls drinking at the bar.

ELTON

I've played bigger places in Pinner. Who is this guy?

RAY WILLIAMS

Elton, he's is the best fixer on the whole West Coast.

ELTON

He's an irritating fucking moron.

RAY WILLIAMS

Calm down. It's all going to be cool.

NORM

Let me show you guys backstage.

BERNIE

I'll join you later. I'm just going to grab a beer.

Elton et al go off. Bernie sidles up to the bar, he smiles at the chicks. The chicks smile back.

CHICK

You must be Elton John.

BERNIE

No, I'm the one who writes the lyrics.

CHICK

Oh.

Bernie's face drops with the brush off.

INT. DRESSING ROOMS. THE SAME.

Elton and the band all squash into one tiny dressing room.

ELTON

We fly six thousand miles to get picked up on the number 27. Now we're stuck in some fleapit the size of a cake tin to play for six people and a dog. We shouldn't be here, I should be at home with Bernie, writing new material.

RAY WILLIAMS

Calm down, Elton, Norm just told me Neil Diamond and some of the Beach Boys are coming.

ELTON

Neil Diamond, my arse.

Bernie comes running in.

BERNIE

Jesus Christ, Elton. You won't believe it. Neil fucking Diamond's at the bar.

ELTON

How did you know it was him?

BERNIE

He's talking to Leon Russell and half of the Beach Boys. It's absolutely packed, Elton. The whole of LA's out there.

ELTON

Oh Jesus fucking shit.

INT. STAGE. THE SAME.

Bernie and Elton peer from backstage at the audience. It is absolutely jam packed.

ELTON

There is no way I'm going in front of that crowd.

BERNIE

But a minute ago you wanted to go home because there was nobody watching you.

ELTON

But these are the geniuses of American music. When they hear me they'll tie me to a chair and break my fucking fingers.

RAY

Elton, they're going to love you.

INT. THE AUDITORIUM. THE SAME.

It's packed. The crowd are growing restless.

INT. BATHROOM. THE SAME.

RAY WILLIAMS is standing outside a cubicle trying to coax ELTON out.

ELTON
I'm not coming out.

RAY WILLIAMS
Think of the money.

ELTON
(from inside)
A hundred fucking dollars!?

RAY WILLIAMS
Think of the embarrassment. I don't know.
Think of England!

Elton pops his head out.

ELTON
I can't go out there - what if it doesn't
work. What will my life have been for?

He looks green around the gills. He quickly disappears
behind the closed cubicle door. We hear him wretch. He
goes into the cubicle and drags ELTON out.

NORM
I paid your fucking airfare - now get out
there and play you Limey arsehole.

INT. AUDITORIUM. THE SAME.

BERNIE smiles at two 'hot' chicks. They don't react.

INT. BACKSTAGE. THE SAME

Close up of ELTON in the half light, just before he comes
on stage. He is sweating, ill and terrified by the
ordeal. We hear a voice of the MC announcing:

MC
And now the person you've all been
waiting for. All the way from England...

ELTON looks decidedly ill.

MC (CONT'D)
Elton John.

Huge applause. We follow ELTON in slow motion as he goes
on stage looks at the crowd. He looks out at the audience
they seem a vast blur. The applause echoing. Elton sits
at the piano. Close up.

ELTON
Er. Well. Erm. It's, er, great to be
here. And erm I thought I'd start with a
slow one.

ELTON starts to play the intro to Skyline Pigeon, the audience don't seem to be paying much attention. People are talking, beer glasses clink. As the intro goes on Elton gets more and more disconcerted that it is already going down the tubes. His attention is caught by the two 'hot chicks' talking animatedly right beside him. Beer glasses clink exactly like they did in the pub in Pinner. Suddenly he stops, obviously pissed off.

ELTON (CONT'D)

Right! If you can't concentrate properly
maybe you'll bloody well listen to this.

He kicks the piano stool off the stage and launches into a maniac version Bad Side of the Moon. All his anxiety and anger is suddenly channelled into the number. Elton is leaping about, almost seems to be flying in mid air as he plays with electrifying abandon.

ELTON (CONT'D)

It seems as though/ I've lived my life/
on the bad side of the moon/ to stir your
dregs in sickness still/ without the
rustic spoon/ common people live with me/
where the light has never shone/

The crowd are going wild, the 'hot chicks' are dancing wildly - Bernie sidles up to them. Leon Russell is smiling broadly. Elton is in full stride and it is clearly a performance of a lifetime.

ELTON (CONT'D)

and the hermits flock like hummingbirds/
to speak in a foreign tongue/ I'm a light
year away/ from the people who make me
stay/ sitting on the bad side of the
moon.

Elton has raised the roof. He repeats a phrase again and again the whole club is bouncing as one. He encourages them to join in, driving the crowd to wilder and wilder appreciation. Finally, he ends on a huge note, then almost remembers himself again as he has been so engrossed in the number. For a split second he looks out to the stunned crowd - we are back to slow motion again. Then suddenly they start to cheer.

ELTON (CONT'D)

Good grief!

The cheers are wild. Elton is simultaneously stunned and delighted at the reaction. Staring at the crowd - almost in shock at what he was capable of and the reaction it has caused. It's a life changing moment that seems frozen in time. Suddenly he comes to.

ELTON (CONT'D)
OK. Let's get fucking started.

INT. BACKSTAGE. THE SAME

The insanity back stage after the gig. ELTON is mobbed. He makes his way along the corridor to the dressing room pushing his way through throngs of people, assisted by the delighted NORM. Leon Russell and Neil Diamond shake his hand as he passes.

LEON RUSSELL
You were incredible. Really incredible.

NEIL DIAMOND
Unbelievable. You're gonna be huge kid.

Overwhelmed ELTON makes his way to into the dressing room Norman shuts the door. ELTON hugs Bernie.

ELTON
Bernie. We did it! We fucking did it! A nobody from Pinner and the Farmboy.

Over BERNIE's shoulder he sees one of the 'hot chicks' drinking a beer.

BERNIE
Elton. I'd like you to meet Judy.

MANDY
You were amazing. Absolutely amazing. And the words are so cool as well.

MANDY grabs BERNIE's arm.

ELTON
Thank you.

ELTON is crestfallen that their private moment of triumph has been usurped by BERNIE picking up JUDY.

RAY WILLIAMS
Enough of the sentiment. Now let's get this party started.

RAY opens the dressing room door and people team in engulfing ELTON

INT. MOTEL CORRIDOR. NIGHT.

ELTON and BERNIE are wrecked they stagger along the corridor and stop outside the doors to their rooms.

BERNIE

So I was thinking maybe tomorrow we could all drive out to the desert. You know, take a bit of time out.

ELTON

The desert!? What the hell would we want to go there for?

BERNIE

It's what you do. It's space. It's America.

ELTON

I don't want space. I thought we were going to go to Tower records.

BERNIE hesitates.

BERNIE

Actually, I've already promised Judy. Ray and I have hired a car.

ELTON

'Ray' and you have hired a car!? What about me?

BERNIE

That's what I'm saying. We want you to come along.

ELTON

To be the gooseberry?

BERNIE

It's not like that.

ELTON

I don't want to go to the desert with Ray and Judy. I thought we were a team Bernie. I thought we were going to hang out - together - like we do in London.

BERNIE

Come on, Elt. You know how it is.

ELTON

Yeah. You two fuck off and leave me as soon as you get a sniff.

BERNIE

Elton, don't be like this.

ELTON

It's alright. Go on go to the desert - see what it's like. But I'll tell you this much. There isn't anything there!

ELTON goes into his room and slams the door.

BERNIE
Elton. Elton.

BERNIE turns and goes into his room. The first chords of Tiny Dancer play.

EXT. MOTEL. DAY.

RAY and BERNIE meet JUDY and her friend. They climb in the open topped car.

ELTON
Blue Jean baby / LA lady / Seamstress
for the band

INT. MOTEL ROOM. DAY.

Elton in the half light of the room looking through the curtains as the car drives away. He sings, alone:

ELTON
Pretty eyed, pirate smile/

EXT. DESERT. DAY.

The car racing along a desert road.

ELTON
(soundtrack)
You'll marry a music man

EXT. DESERT. DAY.

The car parked in the desert. BERNIE and JUDY running around in the sand laughing and dancing.

ELTON
Ballerina/ You must have seen her dancing
in the sand.

EXT. SUNSET STRIP. DAY.

Elton alone walking into Tower Records, aimless and lonely.

EXT. JOSHUA TREE. DAY.

Bernie and Judy walk hand in hand away from Ray and the other girl.

SONG

And now she's in me, always with me, Tiny
Dancer in my hand.

EXT. SUNSET STRIP. SUNSET.

Elton walks alone along Sunset carrying bags of records.
A hippie is shouting. He walks past crowds of
evangelists. Cars fly by as he sings straight to camera.
He is a picture of loneliness.

ELTON

Jesus freaks/ Out in the street/ Handing
tickets out for God/

EXT. JOSHUA TREE. THE SAME.

As the sun goes down BERNIE and JUDY sit and watch the
magnificent sunset. As in the song, JUDY laughs and puts
her head on BERNIE's shoulder.

SONG

Turning back/ she just laughs.

EXT. SUNSET STRIP. NIGHT.

ELTON still walking, alone, without his bags but still
singing straight to camera.

ELTON

The boulevard is not that bad.

He walks into the Troubadour.

INT. TROUBADOUR. THE SAME.

It is empty. ELTON walks onto the stage. He takes a piece
of paper from his hand. It's the lyrics to Tiny Dancer.
He starts playing. We realise he is writing the song we
are hearing.

ELTON

Piano man/ He makes his stand/ in the
auditorium.

It's an almost iconic image of the maudlin guy alone at
the piano.

EXT. DESERT. NIGHT.

BERNIE looks at JUDY singing by the light of a fire.
However, Ray's girlfriend catches his eye.

ELTON
Looking on/ She sings the songs/ the
words she knows/ the tunes she hums.

INT. MOTEL ROOM. NIGHT.

Looking down on ELTON alone in bed, sings directly up to
the camera above him.

SONG
But oh how it feels so real lying here
with no one near/ only you ..

EXT. DESERT. NIGHT.

BERNIE and the JUDY lying naked, wrapped in a blanket.

SONG
..and you can hear me, when I say softly,
slowly.

BERNIE whispers to her.

INT. MOTEL ROOM. NIGHT.

Elton rolling uncomfortably on the bed unable to sleep.
He sings:

ELTON
Hold me closer tiny dancer.

EXT. DESERT ROAD. NIGHT.

The open top car with the two couples passing other cars
in the dark.

ELTON
Count the headlights on the highway.

INT. MOTEL ROOM. NIGHT.

ELTON singing alone in bed.

ELTON
Lay me down in sheets of linen

INT. MOTEL ROOM. NIGHT.

Bird's eye view of a bed. BERNIE and JUDY upon it into
endless sheets which seem to envelop them. It is a
fantasy image, almost magically Elton rolls onto the
space they have been and stares up at the ceiling.

ELTON
 You had a busy day today / Hold me closer
 Tiny Dancer/ You had a busy day today.

As the song ends, the final image is of Elton alone, he curls into a foetal position.

INT. CLUB. NIGHT.

ELTON comes on stage. We see the crowd go wild, we see Elton smiling and singing, rocking out, but only hear Song for Guy. Somehow we are in the quiet state of Elton's loneliness disconnected from the frenzied world around him.

INT. BACKSTAGE. THE SAME.

A familiar frenetic scene. Again we are still in Elton's disconnected bubble - Song For Guy still playing. People are shouting at ELTON. ELTON makes his way along a corridor as people clamor for him: asking him to sign things, fawning over him just as before. Suddenly the music breaks off and we are plunged into the hysteria. It is a full on assault of the senses. ELTON looks shellshocked by the attention, NORM is trying to usher Elton through the people, but they are overwhelming him. Suddenly a hand grabs him thrusts him into a dressing room.

INT. DRESSING ROOM. THE SAME.

The mystery hand locks the door. ELTON breathes deeply relieved to be out of the mayhem. He looks at a very straight looking man in a three piece suit. He speaks in a Glaswegian accent:

JOHN REID
 So, how does it feel to be this week's
 messiah?

He uncorks a bottle of Dom Perignon.

ELTON
 Who the hell are you?

JOHN REID
 John Reid. Recently of Motown Records.
 Very pleased to meet you.

ELTON
 What are you doing in my dressing room?

JOHN REID

I thought you might need some assistance.
Haven't we " always depended upon the
kindness of strangers".

JOHN carefully pours two glasses of champagne.

ELTON

I beg your pardon?

JOHN REID

It's a quote. Tennessee Williams.

ELTON

Who?

JOHN REID

Some old puff. I know it all seems a bit
overwhelming at first.

John hands Elton the glass of champagne.

JOHN REID (CONT'D)

Dom Perignon. 63. Particularly good. But
something tells me you're going to get
used to it.

There is banging on the door. Ray Williams is calling
"Elton! Elton!"

JOHN REID (CONT'D)

I predict within two years you'll be the
best selling artist in America. You just
need a little help in believing in
yourself. That's where I come in.

He raises his glass and knocks back the champers.

ELTON

So you like the material?

Now the banging on the door is out of control.

BERNIE

(off)

Elton. Open up. It's me.

JOHN REID

Not quite as much as the singer.
Come on. Let's get out of this madhouse.

John turns throws open the window and steps out onto the
fire escape.

JOHN REID (CONT'D)

Coming?

EXT. FIRE ESCAPE. NIGHT.

It is raining. ELTON starts to head down. JOHN stops him.

JOHN REID
We're not going down.

EXT. ROOF TOP OF THE THEATRE. THE SAME.

ELTON and JOHN drink champagne in the rain looking over the panorama of San Francisco Bay.

ELTON
Do you really think I'm gonna be the best
selling artist in America?

JOHN REID
You could be anything you want to be.
Trust me.

ELTON
Why should I do that?

JOHN REID
Do you want to be the nice little boy
from Pinner all your life?

They stare at each other. JOHN grabs ELTON and kisses him. Flashing neon lighting them.

ELTON
Let me sleep on it.

Elton passionately returns the kiss.

Cue the piano intro to:

INT. HOTEL BEDROOM. MORNING.

Overhead shot of ELTON in bed with JOHN REID. He opens his eyes and smiles up at the camera. JOHN is already awake, smoking a joint. Mellow plays:

ELTON
Cool grass blowin' up the pass/ don't you
know I'm feeling mellow/ I love your
Roman nose/ the way you curl your toes/
Baby, it makes me feel so mellow./

The camera slowly rises up as Elton melts into a stoned smile, in the morning half-light of the hotel room. The song carries on as ELTON snogs JOHN:

SONG (MELLOW)

It's the same old feeling I get/ when
 your stealing back into my bed again/
 with the curtains closed and the window
 froze / by the rhythm of the rain

EXT. GOLDEN GATE PARK. DAY.

ELTON and JOHN blissed out amongst the day-glo hippies.
 ELTON sings to the camera.

ELTON

You make me mellow/ I make you mellow/
 Rockin' smooth and slow/ Mellow's the
 feeling that we get/ Watchin' the coal
 fire glow. You make me mellow/ I make you
 mellow/ Wreckin' the sheets real fine/

EXT. THE CASTRO. DAY.

ELTON and JOHN walk through the streets happily watching
 the passersby. Gradually we realise that everyone they
 pass is gay.

ELTON

Heaven knows what you sent me Lord/ But
 God this is a mellow time.

Now the song carries on as 'soundtrack'

Going down to the stores in town/ gettin'
 all the things we need/

EXT. CAFE IN THE CASTRO. DAY.

Elton and John at a café served by a clone.

SONG

don't forget the beer, my little dear,/
 it helps to sow the mellow seed.

INT. AIRPORT. EVENING.

ELTON and JOHN say goodbye, discretely. Whilst BERNIE
 does the same to his latest girlfriend. The song plays
 out over the dumbshow.

SONG

And it can't be bad/ All the love I've
 had/ coursing through my life/

INT. AIRPORT. DEPARTURES. THE SAME.

ELTON looks back along the long departure corridor and sees John watching.

SONG
down in the pass/ where the wind blows
fast/ and mellow's a feelin' right.

INT. PLANE. THE SAME.

ELTON and BERNIE sit side by side both happy to have found love on the trip.

SONG
You make me mellow, I make you mellow..

EXT. PINNER. EVENING.

A cab pulls up outside of his Mum's house. ELTON and BERNIE get out. It's raining.

SONG
Rocking smooth and slow..

INT. BEDROOM. NIGHT.

"Mellow" comes to an end. ELTON and BERNIE in their bunks.

BERNIE
Elton, who was that weird Scottish guy
you were hanging out with in San
Francisco?

ELTON
Nobody. Just some bloke who works for
Motown.

BERNIE
Pity. I thought maybe you might have
found somebody too.

Pause.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
Elton. It's alright. I know.

ELTON
You won't tell anybody will you?

BERNIE
Didn't you make any plans to see him
again?

ELTON
Well, no. He lives in America.

BERNIE decides to let it lie.

BERNIE
Don't worry, you'll find someone, Elton.

There is a noise at the window. ELTON gets out of bed a stone raps against the glass. He looks down out of the window. There is JOHN REID holding up a copy of Billboard magazine.

JOHN REID
Have you seen the sales figures?

"Honky Cat" starts playing.

ELTON
What the hell are you doing here?

JOHN REID
Stop asking stupid fucking questions. Why do you think I'm here?

Shelia puts her head out of the next window along.

SHELIA
Excuse me. Language.

EXT. PRIMROSE HILL. NIGHT.

Elton and John share a glass of champagne as they look down over London.

ELTON
I don't understand. You've come to live in London?

JOHN REID
I've come to be with you, fucking idiot.

ELTON
To "be" - with me?

JOHN REID
Be. Live - whatever you want to call it. What did you think I meant?

ELTON
Do you think it's, you know, "alright".

JOHN REID
Who should we ask? The Pope? Your Mum? Elton. Have you any idea what's happening to you. You're going to be a millionaire before April 17th.
(MORE)

JOHN REID (CONT'D)
 You're Captain Fantastic. You can do
 whatever you fucking well like.

John points at the City lit up against the night.

JOHN REID (CONT'D)
 Look, here's the whole of London. What do
 you want?

ELTON
 I dunno.

JOHN REID
 Anything.

ELTON
 A flat off the Edgware Road.

JOHN REID
 And...

ELTON
 A Rolls Royce?

JOHN REID
 And....

ELTON
 Some modern art?

JOHN REID
 And

ELTON
 A football team.

JOHN REID
 And...

Elton is getting the picture.

ELTON
 (hesitates)
 You.

JOHN REID
 See. It's easy as pie.

ELTON
 And it won't affect my career.

JOHN REID
 It's 1971. Live life like you want to.
 Let me deal with the rest.

ELTON
 What do you mean?

JOHN REID

Look - I've been round the block. I'm not about to let anybody fuck you. Well - apart from me.

He grins. Cue: Honky Cat.

INT. BACK OF A LIMO. DAY.

Intro to Honky Cat playing over: ELTON and JOHN REID in the back of limo. Elton in a fantastic stage outfit.

INT. CHESTERTON'S ESTATE AGENTS, MAYFAIR. DAY.

Honky Cat plays over: ELTON walking into a very posh estate agents with JOHN REID. They sit down at a desk. An elderly couple in tweeds stare horrified at Elton's appearance. A middle aged, stuffy Estate Agent joins ELTON and JOHN REID, obviously disconcerted by their presence in this bastion of propriety. *The music abruptly stops.*

ESTATE AGENT

Can I help you?

JOHN REID

We'd like to buy the penthouse you have for sale just off the Edgware Road.

ESTATE AGENT

And may I ask which of you two young gentlemen is interested in this property?

JOHN REID

We're buying it together.

ESTATE AGENT

I see. You do realise it is on the market for a hundred thousand pounds. Have you made arrangements for a mortgage for such a large amount?

ELTON

No. Not really.
We thought we'd pay cash.

JOHN REID puts his briefcase on the table. They open it. It is full of money. ELTON smiles broadly. Philadelphia Freedom re-starts carries us into:

EXT. WATFORD CITY FOOTBALL CLUB. DAY.

ELTON gets out of his Rolls Royce and shakes hands with Watford's manager.

EXT. THE PITCH, WATFORD CITY. DAY.

ELTON lines up with the team and manager. They shake hands for a photo-op.

MANAGER

We are very proud to have Elton as chairman of the board. He's a really straight guy.

Elton winks into the camera.

ELTON

(SINGING)

When I look back, boy I must have been
green/ boppin in the country fishin in
the stream/ looking for an answer trying
to find a sign until I saw these city
lights, honey I was blind...

CUT TO:

INT. BATHS, WATFORD UNITED. THE SAME.

ELTON is in the baths with the entire team. They are all drinking champagne. ELTON smiles to camera and sings:

ELTON

(SINGING)

Get back honky cat better get back to the
wood but I quit those days and those red
neck ways mmmmm change is gonna do me
good..

We see JOHN REID at the back with his arm around another man. We follow JOHN REID's wondering eye throughout this section.

INT. PENTHOUSE, WATERCOURT. DAY.

ELTON and JOHN REID are doing the housework as Elton sings.

ELTON

You better get back Honky cat living in
the city is where its at/ its like trying
to find gold in a silver mine it's like
trying to drink whisky from a bottle of
wine./ Well I read some books and I read
some magazines/ about those high class
ladies down in New Orleans/ And all those
folks back home said I was a fool/ listen
leave him alone is the golden rule..

ELTON hovering in one of his 70s stage suits with a pinny over the top. JOHN REID in an immaculate three piece suit also with a pinny and feather duster. Their flat is modest but full of ultra-modern 70s design.

BOTH

Get back honky cat better get back to the wood but I quit those days and those red neck ways mmmmm change is gonna do me good..

The door bell rings. They take off their pinnies.

ELTON

I 'm not sure I can do this.

JOHN REID

It's alright. Just do exactly as we said.

ELTON

You have no idea what she's like.

JOHN REID

Elton, you're a grown man, you're an international superstar. Just put it on the table. What could she do to you?

The doorbell rings again. ELTON goes to answer the door. He opens it. SHELIA and FRED are there.

SHELIA

I thought we'd got the wrong flat for a second.

She pushes past curious to look around. FRED has a bottle of wine he gives it to ELTON and hugs him.

SHELIA (CONT'D)

It's a bit smaller than I imagined.

ELTON goes to join SHELIA who is looking around the flat.

SHELIA (CONT'D)

I don't like that.

ELTON

We had it imported, from Italy.

SHELIA

It's very 'modern'.

She shakes her head in disapproval.

SHELIA (CONT'D)

But if it makes you happy...

She is now sitting on the sofa lighting up a ciggie.

SHELIA (CONT'D)
What's that monstrosity?

ELTON
That's a Francis Bacon.

SHELIA
It'd put me right off my food.

FRED is sitting in a suspended egg chair, like a kid, enjoying himself.

FRED
I quite like it.

SHELIA
Fred.

CUT TO:

SHELIA, FRED and ELTON sat at the table. JOHN REID brings food.

JOHN REID
Duck a l'orange.

SHELIA
None for me. Thank you.

ELTON
John cooked this himself.

SHELIA
I know but it's foreign, isn't it. It doesn't really agree with me.

ELTON
Just try a bit.

JOHN REID
It's not a problem. I'll rustle up an omlette or something.

SHELIA
Oh really, don't got to any trouble.

JOHN REID
Not a problem at all.

JOHN smiles. He indicates to ELTON to talk to his mother as he goes to the kitchen area.

SHELIA
What a very nice young gentleman. Even if he is Scottish.
(MORE)

SHELIA (CONT'D)
Isn't a bit unusual sharing a house with
your manager, Reggie?

ELTON
Elton. Actually, it's working out fine.

SHELIA
Has he got a girlfriend?

ELTON
No. Well, not that I am aware of?

SHELIA
That's a surprise. He's very dishy.

JOHN REID is behind SHELIA indicating that ELTON should
address the issue.

SHELIA (CONT'D)
Very nice hair. You're really starting to
go bald now aren't you.

JOHN REID to the rescue.

JOHN REID
More wine?

SHELIA
Ta, love.
Very nice boy. Knows how to treat the
ladies.

JOHN REID
Elton has something important he'd like
to tell you.

SHELIA
Really!

ELTON
No I haven't.

SHELIA
Come on Elton, spill the beans.

ELTON
I don't know what he meant.

JOHN REID
Elton's supporting Liberace this evening
and he thought it was a good opportunity
to say something important.

ELTON
No. I'm, well, we're thinking of getting
a dog.

INT. LIMO. NIGHT.

Elton and John Reid are in the back of a limo.

JOHN REID

Why didn't you fucking tell them. The whole point of the dinner.

ELTON

I couldn't face it.

JOHN REID

That's your whole fucking problem. You're scared. A fucking timid Mummy's boy. What's wrong with you.

ELTON

You don't know what she's like.

JOHN REID

But you said you'd do it. Did you ever think, maybe, just maybe it's important to me. But I don't fucking count in the wonderful, fucking zipless world of Elton John. I just do the deals and arrange the gigs and run the 150 people organisation and then come home and wipe your fucking arse for you.

ELTON

Stop the car.
Stop the car!!!

JOHN REID

Where you going.

ELTON

OK you want me to tell my Mum. I'm going to tell her.

JOHN REID

Elton, you are due on stage in front of five thousand people in less than an hour.

ELTON

Well fuck them. Fuck you. If it's so fucking important to you.

JOHN REID

Get back in the car.

ELTON

No.

ELTON marches across the road.

JOHN REID
You are getting back in this fucking car.

ELTON
You go and play to five thousand people.
Taxi.

A car comes along the street preventing JOHN REID from getting across the road to stop ELTON getting into the cab which has pulled up. ELTON gets in and the cab drives off.

INT. FROME COURT. THE SAME.

Shelia and Fred are sitting down to watch the telly. "Liberace at the London Palladium". The phone rings.

SHELIA
Hello?

INT. ELTON'S FLAT. NIGHT.

Elton is crouched on the floor with the phone, a half drunk bottle of Jack Daniels in his hand. He takes a swing.

ELTON
Mum. It's me.

SHELIA
Reggie? I can't speak to you know. You're about to be on the telly.

ELTON
Mum, listen to me.

SHELIA
You'll have to hurry up. It's already started.

ELTON
Mum. I am ringing you.

SHELIA
We're going to miss your bit.

ELTON
You're not missing anything. How can you be missing me, I'm talking to you here, now. I'm not at the Palladium.

SHELIA
Oh for christsake. Turn that down Fred.

ELTON

ELTON (CONT'D)
Mum. I'm gay...

SHELIA
What did you say?

ELTON
I said I'm gay.

Silence.

ELTON (CONT'D)
Mum.....Mum?

Finally,

SHELIA
Is that it? For godsake, Elton, we worked that out years ago. It's not something we like to mention.

ELTON
You knew?

SHELIA
For a minute I thought you'd got back together with that awful Pickled Onion girl. Thanks for the supper, love, but I have to say, that duck's been rifting up on Fred something rotten.

ELTON hears the door.

JOHN REID
Elton?

ELTON
I have to go.

JOHN REID
Elton.

John Reid comes in.

ELTON
It's done. I told them.

John Reid punches Elton in the face.

JOHN REID
Don't you ever fucking do that again.

JOHN turns and walks out.

ELTON
Where you going?

JOHN REID
To fuck somebody else.

EXT. HOUSE, SUBURBIA. DAY.

ELTON limo stops in a drab suburban street. ELTON gets out with a huge bunch of flowers. He looks completely out of place. The local kids playing on the street look at him in amazement.

KID
Hey, aren't you Elton John?

ELTON checks the address on a bit of paper and walks down the path of the down-at-heel suburban house. He rings the doorbell and waits.

The door opens and STANLEY looks at ELTON in shock. Elton waits for his father to say something but he just looks.

ELTON
Dad.

STANLEY
Jesus, Reggie. I suppose you better come in.

INT. STANLEY'S HOUSE. THE SAME.

ELTON SITS IN A SMALL ARMCHAIR WHILST STANLEY SITS ON A SOFA. ELTON sits in a small armchair whilst STANLEY sits on the sofa. We see ELTON over STANLEY's shoulder. He is clearly very uncomfortable.

ELTON
I'm about to go on my first World Tour and I just thought it was time to see you, you know, just to say - there are no hard feelings.

STANLEY
It's alright. You know things really worked out the second time round. To be quite honest leaving you and your Mum turned out to be the best thing I ever did.

ELTON
Not everybody gets a second chance, Dad.

We see the scene from ELTON's angle and see that STANLEY is tucked up on the sofa with two young boys, GEOFF and STEPHEN. ELTON looks at the warm, idyllic picture of a father with his sons.

STANLEY

Well, now we've broken the ice once your back off this tour we can all get together. One big happy family. We've got nothing against queers or anything, Reginald.

ELTON

Actually, I'm not Reggie anymore. Didn't you ever think of contacting me? All those years?

STANLEY

Well, to be quite honest. I was a bit busy with the new job and everything. But we've got a few of your records, though. Don't we boys. Admittedly they're not my cup of tea. More of a jazz man, myself.

GEOFF

Are you really worth twenty-five million quid?

STANLEY

He's a cheeky little monkey, isn't he?

STANLEY roughs up GEOFF's hair and kisses him affectionately. We see ELTON is almost in tears.

ELTON

You know all I ever wanted was for you to hug me.

STANLEY

(avoiding the subject)

Stephen's quite a footballer, aren't you, Stephen. And Geoff too, actually. We usually have a kick around on a Sunday. Don't we boys.

ELTON

(standing up)

Look, I think I better be off.

STANLEY

Please - please stay for tea.

STEPHEN

I thought you said we could go to the chippy.

ELTON

No I'm on my way to the airport. It was very nice to meet you - all.

STANLEY

Well, at least sign an album. Boys.

The boys runs into the next room to get an album.

ELTON

Why didn't you love me, Dad?

STANLEY is shocked. He has no answer. The two men look at each other. ELTON in tears. The moment is broken as STEPHEN runs in.

STEPHEN

Found one.

Stephen gives the album to his Dad. Dad hands it to Elton giving him a pen from his pocket.

STANLEY

Here. Put "to Arthur" - he's the bloke I work with. He's quite a big fan.

Elton is heartbroken but signs anyway.

GEOFF

That'll be worth a few bob, now.

EXT. THE DOOR, STANLEY'S HOUSE. THE SAME.

ELTON at the door. STANLEY with the boys.

STANLEY

Well, it was very nice of you to pop by.
See you then.

STANLEY does not offer a hand or a hug. ELTON stands there awkwardly. ELTON turns and walks up the garden path. STANLEY shuts the door, beyond.

INT. DRESSING ROOM. NIGHT.

ELTON looks in the mirror. He puts on a pair of glasses, he doesn't like what he sees, he puts on another and another till he tries a crazy over-size pair of glasses. He examines his receding hair. He puts on a hat. That is no good - he puts on a ludicrous head dress. He is burying himself behind the costume.

INT. BACKSTAGE, THE SAME.

ELTON comes out of the dressing room in his outrageous costume. BERNIE looks at him.

BERNIE

You're not going on dressed like that.

ELTON walks off down the meandering corridors BERNIE rushing to keep up.

ELTON
Of course I fucking am.

BERNIE
You're allowed to just be yourself, you know.

ELTON
People have paid good money. Nobody wants to see Reginald fucking Dwight.

ELTON swans off. JOHN REID smiles at BERNIE as if to say 'what can you do?'. BERNIE does not smile back.

INT. STAGE. THE SAME.

ELTON starts a wild piano solo with the Pinball Wizard riff. He screams wildly into the camera. The crowd go wild.

PIANO SOLO MONTAGE: INT. VARIOUS THEATRES. DAY / NIGHT.

Another theatre, another wild costume. The piano solo continues seamlessly. Now he is in a hotel bar standing at the piano. Now he is at a soundcheck in a huge empty hall.

The solo gets more and more complicated and virtuosic. He is in the Pinball Wizard enormous platform heels. Playing like a demon, grinning madly. Now he is in a dressing room, naked - still playing the solo, then it gets more and more wild and surreal. He's playing a tiny toy piano in the middle of an empty ball room, he's on STARSHIP ONE - his plane full of white shag pile carpets and a big piano. It is a bravura sequence of editing.

It feels, in the course of one solo, he is pushing himself further physically, imaginatively and musically. Now he is in a TV studio, on the back of a truck on an LA freeway, back in STARSHIP ONE - he starts to float, JOHN REID and the whole band start to float in zero gravity, bottles of Jack Daniels, globules of bourbon drift round the plane as ELTON bashes away at the piano mid-air. All the while John Reid is signing contracts and officiating in the background - supplying drink and drugs to keep the whole ship afloat.

Finally, ELTON crashes down on the last few chords, again and again and again. Each time we cut to him at a different piano, in a different venue. (Perhaps he downs a shot of Jack Daniels before each chord?) It should feel like a groundhog day, a stuck, repeated record. After every beat he signs an autograph in a different city, fan after fan, the suddenly John Reid gets him to sign a contract, perhaps more than once. He is signing his life away amongst giving his all at the piano.

The one solo has taken us through a whole World Tour. He plays the final chord - then leaps up and bows to the audience.

Then we jump cut to him, bowing again, and again in different venues. He smiles, he is exhausted, he seems more and more tired, his fingers are bleeding. Bow after bow after bow till finally he collapses.

EXT. HOLIDAY INN SOMEWHERE IN INDIANA. NIGHT.

A long anonymous corridor. ELTON staggers along on his own. Tired, exhausted, legless. He bounces off the walls. He tries to get the key in the door and staggers into his room.

INT. BEDROOM. HOLIDAY INN. THE SAME.

Elton falls onto the bed and is out cold.

INT. BEDROOM, ELTON'S HOUSE. L.A. DAY.

ELTON wakes with a start. He is sweating. Disorientated.

INT. CORRIDOR, ELTON'S HOUSE, LA. THE SAME.

ELTON walks out of his room - a maid is dusting.

ELTON
Excuse me. Where am I?

MAID
This is your house, Mr John.

ELTON seems even more perplexed.

EXT. ELTON'S HOUSE, LA. BRIGHT DAY.

ELTON walks out to the poolside. Bright sunshine. JOHN REID is in his trunks surrounded by a coterie of young men. He smiles nonchallantly at ELTON.

JOHN REID
Morning.

ELTON
Where are we?

JOHN REID
LA. You're playing the Dodger's Stadium.
You've invited some people over from
England. You hired a plane remember?

ELTON
What kind of people?

INT. JUMBO JET. DAY.

SHELIA and IVY and FRED and a whole plane load of people from ELTON's past. All in 'Elton at the Dodger's' T shirts. They are all cheering as ELTON's music is being played in the cabin. Champagne is flowing freely, cigarettes are being smoked liberally.

EXT. AIRPORT. DAY.

The plane arrives. ELTON on the tarmac is looking terrible. SHELIA and FED come down the stairs as if they were Royalty. A TV crew is filming it all. ELTON hugs SHELIA prefunctorily.

SHELIA
You remember the Andersons from next door, don't you.

Elton looks to see a middle aged couple he has no recollection of. A row of limos is lined up to take everyone to ELTON's.

INT. LIMO. THE SAME.

ELTON is in mortal horror as SHELIA and FRED marvel at the facilities in the back of the limo.

SHELIA
Look at this. A television. And a bar.
Look they've even got ice, Fred. And look at this. You don't even have to wind the windows.

Shelia presses a button that makes the windows go up and down. She presses it up and down. The darkened glass goes up and down revealing the rows of palms outside.

ELTON
Mum will you not do that.

SHELIA presses the remote control and switches on the TV.

NEWS REPORT
50,000 fans are expected to attend the biggest gig Los Angeles has ever seen.

We see a picture of ELTON in an outrageous costume.

SHELIA
Do you really have to dress like that, Reggie.

ELTON

Elton.

SHELIA

You can see you're going bald.

He grabs the remote control and switches it off.

ELTON

Mum I am the number one recording artist on both sides of the Atlantic. I am personally, personally responsible for 5% of all record sales on the entire planet. I have flown you on a jumbo jet that I hired to come and see me play the biggest gig this year in America - and you are still criticising me.

SHELIA

You might be a rock star to some people but to me you are just an overweight child.

Cue the piano introduction to: 'I Think I'm Gonna Kill Myself.'

INT. ELTON'S HOUSE. DAY.

BERNIE arrives at the house, dressed in cowboy gear. He sees the front door is open and he tentatively ventures inside. He sees a huge party is in full swing. Everybody from the plane is there. SHELIA, IVY and FRED are all by the pool in their swimming costumes, having the time of their lives. We follow BERNIE. He sees JOHN REID snogging a young man then walking through the party filling people's glasses as 'mein host'. Everyone is having the time of their lives. Old friends, and neighbours from Pinner are covorting with LA hipsters and record company people. BERNIE walks through the party like a ghost. BERNIE walks inside. Some people are raiding the fridge. Every nook and cranny is filled with people enjoying the thrill of being in a rock star's home.

INT. ELTON'S LIBRARY / THE POOL. THE SAME.

In the dark recesses of the house. ELTON on his own. He is lining up a row of pill bottles, he looks up to camera and sings:

ELTON

(singing)

"I'm getting bored/ being part of mankind/ there's not a lot to do no more, this race is a waste of time.

He pours a beaker full of Jack Daniels.

CUT TO:

People running round the pool having a great time.

ELTON (V.O.) (CONT'D)
(singing)
People rushing everywhere/

Cut back to ELTON's distainful look to the camera:

ELTON (CONT'D)
(sings)
swarming round like flies/ think I'll buy
a forty four/ give em all a big surprise.

The song becomes a number where we see ELTON in reality smashing up his room. But in fantasy doing a soft shoe dance number. During all of which he makes his suicide attempt.

ELTON tries to get the top off a bottle of sleeping pills - it is not easy.

ELTON (CONT'D)
(singing)
Think I'm gonna kill myself/ Cause a
little suicide/ stick around for a couple
of days/ what a scandal if I died.

Finally ELTON gets the top off the bottle - takes a slug of Jack Daniel's then pours some pills into his mouth - it's clear he's not actually swallowed enough to do any damage as most of them spill out of his mouth onto the carpet.

ELTON (CONT'D)
(singing)
Yeah, I'm gonna kill myself/get a little
headline news/ I'd like to see what the
papers say about the state of the teenage
blues.

It has left a terrible taste in his mouth - he spits more pills out and washes the taste away with another shot of bourbon. Realising that he has defeated the object of his suicide attempt he eats a last solitary pill.

cut to:

Back at the pool - everyone enjoys themselves with no knowledge of the impending tragedy. Then back to ELTON singing as he stuffs more pills into his mouth.

ELTON (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 A rift in my family/ I can't use the car/
 I gotta be in by ten/ who do they think
 they are.

CUT TO:

Elton comes into the corridor. He looks distinctly woozy. He tries to steady himself. As the chorus starts again, Elton lifts his arms into a camp position and starts to tap dance. He is absolutely brilliant.

ELTON (CONT'D)
 (singing, to camera)
 Think I'm going to kill myself/ cause a
 little suicide/ stick around for a couple
 of days/ what a scandal if I died.

He tap dances up the corridor towards the camera, then in the "tap break" leaps onto a dresser in the corridor and kicks down a vase of flowers. He taps on top of the old wooden dresser then starts to tap up the walls. **Miraculously, he is able to dance up the walls just like Fred Astaire in "A Royal Wedding"**. As he dances towards the camera he starts to dance on the ceiling.

The music stops dead and Elton's dance slows down to a morose stop. He looks giddy and slides down the wall to the floor. He gets up and staggers along the corridor and throws open the door at the end.

EXT. POOL. DAY.

Everybody looks up to see ELTON appear as the doors on the balcony smash open. [Is it possible that he does a rip-roaring performance of Susie (Dramas) the next song on the album, bows then...]

ELTON
 And for my next trick - I am going to
 drown myself.

He climbs onto the railings and does a magnificent swan dive into the pool. He hits the water with a massive splash and sinks like a stone. Everybody stares at the pool in silence. He doesn't come up. SHELIA looks up from her lounge, where she is lying in a swimsuit. She lifts up her sunglasses.

SHELIA
 I suppose that means we have to go home
 then.

INT. POOL. THE SAME.

ELTON in the pool, sinking slowly to the bottom. The pool is unfeasibly deep. As he sinks pills float out of his mouth like bubbles. He sinks further and further to the bottom of the pool as the intro to Rocketman plays. ELTON is now on the bottom of the pool. He is curious to find a tiny figure dressed in an astronaut's spacesuit playing the introduction on a tiny toy piano. The tiny figure looks up at ELTON, it is young REGGIE - the piano keys reflecting on his helmet like a huge smile.

REGGIE

She pack my bags last night pre-flight/
zero hour nine a.m.

The singing is muffled by the space helmet. But now we are inside the space helmet with REGGIE and the singing is fine

REGGIE (CONT'D)

And I'm gonna be high as a kite by then
I miss the earth so much I miss my wife
It's lonely out in space
On such a timeless flight

ELTON and REGGIE are floating in the pool as if they are floating in outer-space. The older ELTON amazed to be there.

REGGIE/ ELTON

And I think it's gonna be a long long
time/ till touch down brings me round
again to find/ i'm not the man I think I
am at all/ O no no no, I'm a Rocketman/
Rocketman burning out his fuse up here
along -

Suddenly to ELTON's surprise he is hauled upwards and shoots out of the pool. He finds himself dangling over the pool, hooked to a crane. Everybody looking up at him.

REGGIE/ELTON

Mars ain't the kind of place to raise
your kids/ Infact it's cold as hell/ And
there's no one there to raise them if you
did/

He is rushed through the crowds - JOHN REID pushing people out of the way - to an ambulance. People are clamouring to get to ELTON but the doors are slammed shut and the ambulance pulls away.

INT. AMBULANCE. THE SAME.

ELTON in the ambulance wired to machinery. He looks up to see REGGIE is sitting in there with him.

ELTON/ REGGIE
 And all this science I don't understand
 It's just my job five days a week
 A rocket man, a rocketman

ELTON has a seizure and the paramedics attend to him.

EXT. WHAT SEEMS TO BE A HOSPITAL. THE SAME.

ELTON's ambulance pulls up. Paramedics run to the vehicle and open the doors. As they spring open we see ELTON now fine dressed in his Dodger's Stadium attire. He leaps out of the ambulance with his bat and runs.

EXT. DODGER'S STADIUM. THE SAME.

What appeared to be the entrance to the hospital turns out to be the entrance to backstage.

ELTON/ REGGIE
 And I think it's gonna be a long long
 time/ till touch down brings me round
 again to find/ i'm not the man I think I
 am at all/ O no no no, I'm a Rocketman/
 Rocketman burning out his fuse up here
 along -

ELTON runs backstage as his singing on the soundtrack sings over. He runs onstage. The crowd goes wild. As he runs someone from the crowd throws a ball. Elton swings his bat and hits it into the crowd.

As ELTON plaintively sings the play out to Rocketman glide just over heads of the thousands and thousands of people in the crowd. Some people we pass are actually above camera level as they are sitting on each other's shoulders. There are people singing, people crying, people talking, people enraptured, people dancing, people stoned, even some Elton look alikes. It is an endless sea of people. The camera surveys them all, flying inches above their heads, till the song dies out to silence.

We hear only the wind rush as fly in silence towards the back of the crowd to see FRED, IVY and SHELIA. Finally, we reach her. She is in tears. We stop on her astounded face. We cut back to ELTON staring out at the enormous crowd. When we reverse the shot - it is night. We look over little REGGIE'S shoulder - he is staring out at the vast crowd the whole stadium is lit by lighters as the camera pans up it is impossible to know where the lighters stop and the stars of the night sky start -

ELTON
 And I think it's gonna be a long long
 time...

The stars suddenly become pixels of light on a screen and we have cut through time to Mum watching the scene on TV. REGGIE looks out at her from his helmet on the TV - but as we pull back we see he is inside a space module far out in space looking down on the world. We see his little face peeking out of the porthole.

ELTON (CONT'D)

And I think it's gonna be a long long time..

Then interference on the screen. When we cut back we are inside the spaceship. Now it's ELTON in the spacesuit floating in space a cocktail in his hand, a big smile on his face - we pull out to see four gorgeous 'Bel Ami' guys in swimming trunks floating beside him. We pull out to see them floating happily in the spacecraft.

INT. ROOM. LA. DAY.

Bernie visits Elton who is in his dressing gown - just woken up.

BERNIE

Are you OK?

ELTON

Really I'm fine. I just need a drink.

He pours himself a Jack Daniels.

BERNIE

It's ten o'clock in the morning, Elton.

Elton shrugs and carries on.

BERNIE (CONT'D)

It's strange isn't it. At the start all you want to do is to get out of obscurity. But when you get there all you want to do is to get out of the fucking limelight.

ELTON

I don't know what you're on about. I love the limelight.

BERNIE

Elton. You tried to kill yourself in front of your entire family. You don't have to prove anything to me.

ELTON

I'm not trying to prove anything. It was just a little aberration.

BERNIE

It used to be just the two of us then it was you, Nige and Davey. Now there's busloads of people just to do the music. It all just adds to the pressure.

ELTON

Honestly. Don't worry. I'm absolutely fine. There is absolutely nothing I can't cope with.

INT. DARKENED ROOM. LA. DAY.

ELTON has his hand across his face.

SHELIA

I have NEVER been so embarrassed in my entire life.

ELTON, seriously hung over, is shielding himself from his mother's verbal assault.

SHELIA (CONT'D)

What on earth will the Andersons think?

ELTON

I don't care what the Andersons think.

SHELIA

Exactly. Do you think about anybody? I worked my fingers to the bone for you - and Bang - that's it. Kill yourself. Did you think about what would happen to me. Did you think about Fred. Did you think what was going to happen to us. We were just getting used to a bit of the high life.

ELTON

Is that all you have to say?

SHELIA

Well the seats weren't very good - we could barely see you, Elton.

ELTON

Get out.

SHELIA

I beg your pardon.

ELTON

Get out. This is my house. This is my life. I want you to leave.

SHELIA

You can't do that. You invited us here,
Reggie.

ELTON

I AM NOT REGINALD DWIGHT!
I AM ELTON FUCKING JOHN.
Who the hell would call their son
Reginald Dwight? I'm a rock and roll
superstar. I don't want to live my life
in black and white. I don't want your
fucked up frigid fifties ideas about
sexuality. I'm sick of running away from
who I really am. I don't want to hate
myself. There's nothing wrong with
success or sex or pleasure. I want
everything and I want it now. I'm gonna
have my cake and eat it - on platform
heels, in day-glo pink, in front of
everybody. I am gonna fuck everything
that moves, I'm gonna take every drug
known to man and I'm gonna enjoy every
fucking minute of it.

IVY

To be fair Elton. I've been for you all
along.

But Elton has turned to the camera

ELTON

I used to be a rolling stone, you know,
if the cause was right..

He walks out of this room and is straight into a party in
a hotel room (or maybe this is Woodside - so we set up
the location). Seventies hippies and really cute guys all
dancing. ELTON kisses a Blonde, blue eyed boy who follows
him round the party like a lap dog. ELTON quoffs a
Martini, takes a joint as he sings his way through the
mad throng..

ELTON (CONT'D)

I'd leave to find the answer on the road/
I used to be a heart beating for
someone...

ELTON turns to the Blue eyed Blonde gives him a Rolex
watch then pushes him away and walks through another door
- the Blonde tries to follow him but a minder is in the
way, ELTON has already gone into the next room...

ELTON has walked into another party this time but now
it's disco - everyone is dancing - it's the late 70s -
ELTON takes the hand of a Blue eyed Blonde drags him
through the throng - it's Studio 54 in its heyday.

ELTON (CONT'D)
 But the times have changed/ the less I
 say the more my work gets done..

A huge mound of cocaine arrives on a silver platter,
 ELTON is given a silver straw. He takes a snort.

ELTON (CONT'D)
 Cause I live and breathe this
 Philadelphia Freedom...

ELTON drags the Blonde onto the dance floor before he
 gets a sniff of the coke. The whole place is mad - a
 unicorn walks by with a naked Bianca Jagger on it - ELTON
 is signing and dancing in the throng:

ELTON (CONT'D)
 From the day that I was born I've waved
 the flag -

Now everyone dances in synchronisation -

ELTON (CONT'D)
 Phila delphia Freedom too me knee-high to
 a man..

ELTON gets on his knees - a huge naked man wearing an
 Village People Indian Chief head dress appears next to
 him:

ELTON (CONT'D)
 Yeah have me peace of mind my Daddy never
 had...

ELTON smiles to the camera, turns to the guy - ELTON
 finds he is perfectly positioned, at crotch height. The
 crowd close in as ELTON goes to work. The crowd part to
 reveal ELTON singing straight to camera:

ELTON (CONT'D)
 Oh Philadelphia Freedom shine on me...

As he sings he is in a golden halo - we pull out to
 reveal it is a 20 man golden shower, ELTON singing
 delightedly into the camera. The crowd close in on ELTON
 singing like a door closing

Lift doors open, ELTON appears in the lift on his knees -
 a Blonde young man preserves his modesty. ELTON stands,
 wipes his lips, hands the guy a watch and strolls out of
 the lift into a hotel lobby - it's a party, everyone
 dancing as ELTON sings, signing autographs, generally
 being mobbed:

ELTON (CONT'D)
 Oh Philadelphia Freedom shine on me, I
 love you, Shine a light through the eyes
 of the ones you left behind..

Now he has to fight off a bevvvy of beautiful young men to get into a limo:

ELTON (CONT'D)
Shine a light, shine a light, shine a light..

Now he's in the limo...

ELTON (CONT'D)
Philadelphia Freedom, I love you, yes I do...

He's got through the first verse.

ELTON (CONT'D)
STOP!

INT. LIMO. CONTINUOUS.

As ELTON has said stop the soundtrack stops abruptly as well as the car.

ELTON
Who was that?

The car goes into reverse, ELTON winds the window down. A Blonde Blue eyed guy.

ELTON (CONT'D)
I was wondering. Would you like a ride?

ELTON smiles. The soundtrack to Philadelphia Freedom starts up. We see the guy get in, the car drive off. ELTON pops a bottle of champagne and pours his new friend a glass. We follow the car and clothes start to be thrown from the window as it makes its way down Piccadilly. As it reaches the famous round about at Piccadilly Circus the car simply keeps going round and round the roundabout - All the famous neon signs in Piccadilly Circus feature ELTON singing Philadelphia Freedom - images of his ELTON is his outrageous costumes the singing of the song has been taken over by the whole of Piccadilly Circus...

Suddenly we understand the wailing of a police siren which seemed to be on the soundtrack of the song is actually a real police siren. A cop on a motorbike follows the limo round the roundabout and pulls the limo over. Again the soundtrack stops as the cop walks up to the limo. The window descends. The cop bends down. ELTON and the BLONDE are sat naked in the back of the limo a stray bit of clothing preserving their modesty - they try to look prim and proper.

COPPER
What's going on 'ere then?

ELTON smiles.

ELTON
We got a bit lost, officer.

The COPPER looks shocked.

COPPER
Hang on a minute. You're Elton John!

ELTON
And this is, erm...

BLONDE
Steve.

ELTON
Steve.

COPPER
I'm afraid. I need to ask you to do something.

ELTON looks scared but the COPPER produces a pen and paper.

COPPER (CONT'D)
Will you sign this for me. Put "to Bob".

ELTON smiles as reaches for the paper. Philadelphia Freedom starts up again.

EXT. PICCADILLY CIRCUS. THE SAME.

The window goes up. The COPPER gets on his motorbike as the song continues.

INT. HARRODS. THE SAME

As Philadelphia Freedom plays he does crazy shopping.

INT. LIMO. THE SAME.

Surrounded by his crazy shopping - the sing carries on as he heads for the Albert Hall.

EXT. THE ALBERT HALL. DAY.

The limo pulls up at the Albert Hall. ELTON gets out he is dressed in huge platform heels, a silk suit made from the Stars and Stripes. A blonde blue eyed boy tries to get out but JOHN REID hands him a rolex and pushes him back inside the car. As ELTON walks down a red carpet singing, surrounded by fans and paparazzi....

ELTON

Oh Philadelphia Freedom shine on me..

...JOHN REID in his pucker three piece suit walks along a red carpet, knocking people out of the way. ELTON sings as he goes. He walks off into the Royal Albert Hall. Past a big sign saying: **"MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC - NO ENTRY"**.

INT. ROYAL ALBERT HALL. THE SAME.

ELTON walks on stage - the scene is a fantasy rehearsal for the biggest gay band in history. It is the Sergeant Pepper Album cover except all the characters are gay artists from history. **Oscar Wilde** is singing backing vocals with **Long John Baldry**. **Michaelangelo** is next to **Liberace**. Some are cut outs of famous gay people as in the Peter Blake original, some are actors dressed up, but it is a carnival celebration of gay artists from all fields. ELTON walks into the tableau, does a bit of toot, kisses Oscar Wilde and carries on singing.

ELTON

Oh philadelphia freedom, shine on me, I
love you/ Shine a light through the eyes
of the ones left behind/

Projections flash above the assembled group: **"Philo=greek for love; delphia - a temple, a place of worship"**. It's a sort of 'gay' LIVE AID - Close up as various historical figures sing a line each..

ELTON (CONT'D)

shine a light/ shine a light/ shine a
light won't you shine a light/
philadelphia freedom I love you/ yes, I
do.

Then, for the last chorus, the stage opens up and ELTON rises on an enormous plinth which he is built into as The Statue of Liberty, his skin painted grey but with glasses which light up as he holds up the torch of liberty above his head. The projection behind him turns into a view of NYC as seen from Hudson Bay, so it's as if ELTON was actually the Statue of Liberty.

INT. HOTEL ROOM. MORNING.

ELTON opens a bloodshot eye. He looks across young blonde blue eyed man is looking at him. ELTON gets a shock.

ELTON

Who the fuck are you?

MAN

I'm Hugh. I live with you.
Remember?

He doesn't appear to.

ELTON
Well, get me a line of coke.

HUGH
What about some orange juice.

ELTON
I don't want orange juice.
I want a line of coke.

ELTON hurls the orange juice across the room.

HUGH
But it's 9 o'clock in the morning.

ELTON
Look, if I want a line of coke. I can
have a line of coke. I'm a fucking Rock
and Roll icon. What's that noise?

HUGH
What noise?

ELTON
How am I supposed to take coke with that
racket going on?

ELTON gets out of bed and wraps a towel around him.

ELTON heads out to the corridor

HUGH
Elton.

INT. CORRIDOR. HOTEL.

ELTON comes out into the corridor. In the distance is a cleaner hovering the floor. ELTON races up to her.

ELTON
What the fuck do you think you're doing?

CLEANER
Sorry? I can't hear you.

ELTON
What are you fucking thinking of. Stop.

Before the CLEANER has had a chance to understand what is going on ELTON has grabbed the hoover.

ELTON (CONT'D)
STOP! I said stop the fucking cleaning.

ELTON has pushed the CLEANER out of the way and picks up the Hoover,

ELTON (CONT'D)
How do you get this thing to stop?

He smashes it against the wall. It still goes on. This makes ELTON lose his rag. He annihilates the Hoover, smashing it in to smithereens. Finally there is nothing left of the Hoover apart from a bit of the handle he still has in his hands. He turns and hands this to the gobsmacked CLEANER and he storms off back into his room.

INT. HOTEL ROOM. THE SAME.

ELTON is stood stock still in the middle of the room, listening.

ELTON
It's still fucking here.
Can you hear it?

HUGH
I think it's the wind.

ELTON throws open the curtains - they are in a highrise hotel. True - it is a windy day. ELTON immediately storms to the phone by the bed.

ELTON
Hello. Is that reception. Hello, this is Room 701. Yes there is a problem. I can't fucking get any peace and quiet. It's the wind. I don't care. It's your hotel. Stop the fucking wind.

He slams down the phone. He looks at HUGH.

HUGH
Morning.

EXT. RESTAURANT. THE SAME.

A limo pulls up behind other identical limos. Elton gets out.

INT. RESTAURANT. THE SAME.

Dumbshow of Elton as he comes into the restaurant. He makes his way to John Reid and a big group of people sitting at a table. But it is like the king arriving - everyone shakes his hand, people rubber neck as other diners whom Elton knows stop their meals to greet him and shake his hand.

The whole thing is a complete palaver, but Elton keeps a beaming smile on his face throughout. ELTON sits down:

ELTON
Dirty martini, straight up with olive.
So....

ELTON smiles at the group of faces. They do not smile back. They look grim.

CUT TO:

Elton sat at the table with John Reid, finishing off his meal. His smile has also gone.

ELTON (CONT'D)
I don't understand. What do you mean it only got to number eleven in Italy. I'm up there with Garibaldi in fucking Italy.

MINION
It just didn't work, Elton.

ELTON
Well, what about France?

JOHN REID
Didn't even chart.

Elton downs his wine fills his glass with more.

ELTON
It must have charted in France. I always chart in France. Well what about Australia?

JOHN REID
Bombed.

ELTON
What the fuck have you all been doing?
Do you know how much I pay you?

MINION 2
It's number one in Finland.

ELTON
Finland! But it's the best thing I've done in years.

JOHN REID
People just don't like the record, Elton.

ELTON
That's it your fired. All of you.
Finished. Get up and leave the restaurant.

JOHN REID

Wait, Elton.

ELTON

No, that's it Rocket fucking records is now over. Defunct. You're all fired. Get the fuck out of here. I'll flog the records myself.

MINION

But...

ELTON grabs the glass of wine out of the Minions hand and smashes it down on the table.

ELTON

Out. Now. All of you.

ELTON has caused a scene and the table of people leave. JOHN REID sits determined not to cave into ELTON's hysterics.

ELTON (CONT'D)

You as well.

JOHN REID

The record is shit. It's coked out, MOR, braindead, cack. You used to be a genius - now you're just a fat fuck who plays the piano. Sometimes. I'm glad I left you Elton because I can maintain some objectivity in your bloated, self-indulgent, myopic little world. Go on fucking tour. I don't care cos the legal costs and the booking fees and the seventeen fucking limosenes - all come out of your bit. Every bit of fucking tuna you stuff down your bloated fucking throat comes out of your bit. So I'm perfectly happy to stay here and look after business.

ELTON

You can't do that.

JOHN REID

Yes I fucking can. You signed the contracts, dickhead.

I'll settle the bill and rehire the guys then.

JOHN REID leaves the table. ELTON on his own. The waiter appears.

WAITER

Would you care for a sweet, sir?

ELTON

Yes, I would. I'd like a chocolate pudding. No, make that two chocolate puddings. A raspberry fool. The cheesecake. The spotted dick and the icecream.

WAITER

What kind of ice cream would you like?

ELTON

Just bring me everything.

WAITER

Everything!?

ELTON

Yes. Everything.

WAITER

Are you sure?

ELTON

Of course I'm fucking sure.

The waiter goes off. An elderly couple look over at ELTON in amazement. He smiles a false 'fuck you' smile at them. The look away in embarrassment.

INT. LIMO. THE SAME.

ELTON in the back of his limo. He opens the drinks cabinet and pours himself a huge Jack Daniels and turns up the music.

EXT. WATFORD CITY FOOTBALL CLUB. DAY.

The match has already started. ELTON in his ridiculously inappropriate Rock gear staggers along towards the clubs manager, Graham Taylor. ELTON is falling on people. He reaches Graham and takes a drink from a hip flask.

ELTON

Who are we playing?

The crowd notice ELTON and start to sing:

CROWD

He's bald, he's queer, he takes it up the rear, Elton John, Elton John...

Another chant

VOICE

He's a little bit funny...

CROWD

Elton John's a homosexual. Elton John's a homosexual.

ELTON listens to the abuse. He tries to smile it off.

INT. MANAGER'S OFFICE. DAY.

ELTON sits at Graham Taylor's desk. TAYLOR closes the door and slams a bottle of brandy on the desk.

GRAHAM TAYLOR

Drink it.

Elton looks at the bottle.

GRAHAM TAYLOR (CONT'D)

Go on. That's what you want to do, isn't it. Go on. Drink it. You want to act like a twat. I'm not going to fucking mother you. Be my guest. Get stuck in before you start to sober up and realise what a total fucking asshole you've become.

ELTON

You can't say this to me. I'm your boss.

GRAHAM TAYLOR

Your choice. Either drink it or fire me. But don't you ever fucking come here in that state again. Understood.

Taylor walks out leaving Elton staring at the bottle. ELTON stares and stares at the bottle. He can't help himself. He grabs it and starts to drink the entire bottle. He wretches and he spits it out only to carry on with renewed determination. He gulps it down like water, tears flowing down his cheeks. It spills down his face but he continues drinking till it is all gone. It's horrible, self-torture.

INT. BATHROOM, WOODSIDE. DAY.

ELTON throwing up.

ELTON looks at himself in the mirror. He wipes his mouth. He moves his wig around his head to try to make things better. It's a vain attempt.

INT. WOODSIDE. DAY.

Elton in his dressing gown. He wanders through Woodside like a lonely Citizen Kane in Xanadu.

It is stuffed with things, thousands of Tiffany lamps, stuffed animals, pinball machines, a throne, on the wall are hundreds of paintings. He wanders through aimlessly. He goes reaches the hallway...

INT. HALLWAY. THE SAME.

Elton looks around and his entire house has transformed, it's as if left to seed for a hundred years nature has reclaimed it. Ivy has grown up the walls, grass is coming up through the cracks in the stone slabs that make up the floor. He sees the door is open

EXT. WOODSIDE. THE SAME.

Elton walks out through the open door and sees the garden path leading from the house is the Yellow Brick Road. (The outside is a studio set just like in the '40s movie) Woodside has become Oz. He looks around and sees the scarecrow in the field. Elton does a double take and realises it's Bernie.

ELTON

Bernie?

BERNIE

I have to talk to you.
I need a break.

ELTON

Whatcha mean. You're whole fucking life is a break.

BERNIE

I need to get my head together. It's just doing me in.

Bernie starts taking off the scarecrow costume.

ELTON

But what about a new album?

BERNIE

I'm not a dial a lyric machine, Elton.

Bernie hands Elton his costume.

ELTON

I don't understand.

BERNIE

It isn't fun any more.

Bernie starts to sing.

BERNIE (CONT'D)

(sings)

When are you going to come down? When are
you going to land? I should have stayed
on the farm/ I should have listened to my
old man/ I know you can't hold me
forever/ I didn't sign up with you/

Bernie starts walking off down the Yellow Brick Road with
Elton following.

BERNIE (CONT'D)

(singing)

I'm not a present for your friends to
open/ This boy's too young to be singing
the blues.

ELTON

Wait.

BERNIE

(singing)

So goodbye yellow brick road/ where the
dogs of society howl/ you can't plant me
in your penthouse/ I'm going back to my
plough.

Bernie walks off the Yellow Brick Road and we realise the
whole thing has been a set and they are in a studio. He
walks through the cameras and lights followed by Elton.

BERNIE (CONT'D)

(singing)

Back to the howling old owl in the woods/
Hunting the horny back toad/ Oh I've
finally decided my future lies/ beyond
the yellow brick road.

Bernie walks through the soundstage and out into the
bright sunshine of a Hollywood back lot.

EXT. STUDIO BACKLOT. DAY.

ELTON

What do you think you'll do then?

BERNIE

I bet that'll shoot down your plane /
It'll take you a couple of vodka and
tonics/ to set you on your feet again.

Elton grabs Bernie and turns him round but Bernie carries
on singing.

BERNIE (CONT'D)

Maybe you'll find a replacement/ there's
plenty like me to be found/ Mongrels who
aint got a penny/ sniffing for tit-bits
like you on the ground.

Bernie walks away from Elton and gets on a harley
davidson.

BERNIE (CONT'D)

So goodbye yellow brick road/ where the
dogs of society howl/ you can't plant me
in your penthouse/ I'm going back to my
plough....etc

Bernie starts his bike and rides away. Elton stands
dumbfounded, as he sees him disappear into the distance.
Elton shouts after him.

ELTON

Well fuck off then. I'll get someone else
to write the lyrics.

Someone shouts "CUT".

INT. SOUNDSTAGE. STUDIO. DAY.

Elton walks past the lights and the directors chair onto
the set which is the interior of Woodside. A liveried
flunkey pours him a large vodka and tonic.

INT. BACKSTAGE. NIGHT.

ELTON as the Sun King. He is dressed in stockings, tunic,
has a white face with a painted on beauty spot and has a
six foot periwig on his head. Several people are helping
him get dressed four of whom are dedicated simply to
preventing his wig from falling off.

ELTON

I can't fucking move. What's the point of
the wig if I can't fucking move.

MINION

You have to let the glue dry.

HUGH

Are you sure you really need to wear all
this?

ELTON

I've been Batman, Garbo and Donald
fucking Duck. I don't see what's wrong
with Louis the Fourteenth.

HUGH

But Louis the Fourteenth did not have to
do Saturday Nights Alright for Fighting
and an encore of Bennie and the Jets.

ELTON

Where is my sushi?

SUSHI GIRL

Here it is.

ELTON

This is yellowtail.

SUSHI GIRL

Yes, we flew it in from Osaka.

ELTON

I hate fucking yellowtail.

He throws the sushi.

ELTON (CONT'D)

Everybody knows I hate yellowtail.

MINION

Please stop moving.

ELTON

Look it's my fucking head I'll move it if
I want.

SUSHI GIRL

I'll get some tuna.

ELTON

I don't want fucking tuna. I don't want
sushi anyway. How am I expected to play
before 50,000 people on yellowtail.

HUGH

Maybe get him a burger.

ELTON

Fuck this. Fuck that. I'm not playing.

HUGH

Elton.

ELTON

I'm going home.

HUGH

We're in Australia, Elton.

ELTON

I don't fucking care. Fuck it. I'm going
back to Windsor.

HUGH

It's seven in the evening. There are no flights till tomorrow morning.

ELTON

I don't care. I'll hire a plane.

ELTON has gotten down from the make up chair and is pushing everyone out of the way.

ELTON (CONT'D)

Let me through.

INT. BACKSTAGE, STADIUM, SYDNEY. THE SAME.

ELTON is waddling towards the exit followed by teams of people.

ELTON

Out of my way. I'm going home.

MINION

Careful of the wig.

The six-foot wig is rocking around - the minions run along with sticks keeping it upright.

ELTON

Where's the car? I want my car.

ELTON pushes through the crowds at the stage door and gets into his limo. Getting in the car with the six foot wig is not easy. The minions help push him in.

DAVEY

Please, Elton, there are fifty thousand people here.

ELTON

You should have thought about that before you gave me fucking yellowtail.

He slams the door shut.

DAVEY

Can't you do anything.

HUGH

I'm just the boyfriend.

INT. LIMO. THE SAME.

ELTON is crushed in, the six foot wig bent over against the roof.

ELTON
The airport.

EXT. BACKSTAGE, THE STADIUM. THE SAME.

Davey, JOHN REID, et al all in dismay.

DAVEY
OK. I'll go.

INT. STADIUM. THE SAME.

The crowd are getting restless. " We want Elton, we want Elton."

INT. LIMO. MOTORWAY, SYDNEY. THE SAME.

ELTON knocking back beakers of Jack Daniels in his ridiculous costume. The sunroof is open and his wig is sticking out of the top. ELTON slugs back the bourbon then looks out of the window. Suddenly he sees DAVEY's face. DAVEY taps on the window. ELTON lowers the glass.

DAVEY
Jesus Christ Elton. Please come back.

ELTON
I'm going home.

ELTON finds it hard to look down through the window because of his wig so stands up to speak to DAVEY from the sunroof.

EXT. LIMO. THE SAME.

ELTON stands looking over the sunroof at DAVEY who is riding pillion on a motorbike (driven by IVY?). They shout at each other whilst speeding down the motorway.

DAVEY
For godsake. Please come back.

ELTON
No.

DAVEY
You'll have to wear that thing for twenty four hours. How are you going to lie down?

ELTON thinks about this.

ELTON
Fuck. Turn around.

INT. BACKSTAGE. THE SAME

The excited entourage.

MINION

He's back. He's back.

The word goes through like wild fire, then in stomps ELTON followed by a train of people keeping his wig up. People run up to him passing him drinks, applying make up. He gets to the side of the stage. We hear the crowd chanting.

HUGH

You're more than an hour late.

ELTON

Give me some brandy.

HUGH

You don't need brandy.

ELTON takes the brandy. He swigs a huge amount down and staggers on stage. The crowd erupt.

INT. THE STAGE. THE SAME.

Elton staggers onto the stage. He waddles drunkenly. He trips almost falling off the stage. He shakes hands with people in the front row. He eventually makes it to the piano. He laughs to himself. The whole thing is completely chaotic.

ELTON

(into the mike)

Hello, Swindon. Or New York.

Or where-ever-the-fuck-we-are. Hello

Gran. My Gran is in the audience tonight.

Everybody give a big round of applause for my Gran.

The audience do not think this is funny.

ELTON (CONT'D)

The problem with you lot, the problem with you lot is you think. Oh here comes Elton he'll cheer us up. He'll sing us a song. But have you asked, have you really asked what you're doing here, listening to me all happy clappy. There are people starving in Africa. There are people dying with AIDS, and here we are singing fucking songs about it.

He takes a drink of brandy.

ELTON (CONT'D)

Well, I blame the Jews and the Muslims
and the Christians and the Hindus and
some of those fucking Buddhists aren't so
great either. Did I leave anyone out?

VOICE FROM THE CROWD

The hare krishnas.

Deathly silence in the crowd.

ELTON

And the Hare Krishnas. Fuck the lot of
you. This ones for my Mum.

JOHN REID at the side of the stage.

As ELTON comes off stage.

JOHN REID

I hope you're fucking proud of yourself.

INT. RESTAURANT. NIGHT.

Fred, Shelia and Ivy sit stoney faced with Elton and
Hugh. Elton is in the mad stage outfit we saw him wear in
the opening to the movie.

FRED

Hello. Who are you?

HUGH

Hi. I'm Hugh. You've met me before.

SHELIA

OK. I have something to say. We're going
away, Reggie. We've decided to move to
Minorca.

ELTON

Minorca. What do you want to go there
for?

SHELIA

Because it's far enough away from you.

FRED

What you don't seem to realise is each
time you hurt yourself Reggie, you're
also hurting us.

ELTON

One little slip about the Jews -

FRED

Reggie. Everytime we pick up a paper there's something in it. Everytime we go out to the shops there's people waiting. Everytime we try to talk to you about the drugs you ignore us. Everytime we talk to you about this drinking you tell us you're in control. Your breaking your mother's heart, Reggie.

ELTON

Heart!? She hasn't got a heart. I've paid for a house for you. I've put up with her bleating for forty years.

ELTON has wound himself into a rage. He looks at her.

SHELIA

Don't be pathetic.

He snaps and leaps across the table and starts to strangle her.

ELTON

You monster. You fucking heartless monster.

The whole table is in chaos. HUGH and FRED try to pull ELTON off SHELIA. ELTON is really trying to strangle her. The other diners are in shock. Waiters join in. SHELIA is going blue. ELTON really means to murder her there and then. The rugby scrum of people, with Elton and Shelia at the centre starts to move through the restaurant. Woe betide any diners in the way. They pough a course through the whole room. ELTON demonically trying to choke his mother. They end up on the pavement outside. Eventually ELTON is pulled away. SHELIA gasps for breath.

ELTON (CONT'D)

Go to fucking Minorica. See if I care.

FRED and HUGH tends to SHELIA. ELTON turns round and walks back into the restaurant, through the debris to his table. He sits down as if nothing was amiss. He turns to a stunned waiter:

ELTON (CONT'D)

Another bottle of the Chateau Petrus, if you please.

He looks around and suddenly realises IVY's at the table.

IVY

I know you'll take no notice but I'm gonna tell you anyway. You're trying to fill a hole, Elton.

(MORE)

IVY (CONT'D)

You can't fill it with booze it just runs out the other end. You can't fill it with things. You fill a hole with love.

ELTON

I'm Elton John. I'm adored by millions.

IVY

It's not Elton John who has the problems. It's Reggie Dwight. You're killing yourself, sweetheart.

ELTON

I don't really care, Grandma.

She gets up kisses him on the forehead, kindly, gently.

IVY

Well, I love Reggie Dwight even if nobody else does.

She leaves.

INT. DRESSING ROOM, WOODSIDE. THE SAME.

Elton's vast dressing room - rows and rows of suits and clothes. Hugh is packing his tiny suitcase. ELTON comes in in the outlandish costume we first encountered him in in the opening sequence of the film.

ELTON

What are you doing?

HUGH

I can't do this anymore. I'm just like every other blue eyed Blonde you pick up. Six months in I've got a Rolex watch, 200,000 airmiles and I don't know who the hell I am anymore. I'm not sure you even know who you are either.

ELTON

I'm Elton John. So you're going to fuck off? Just cos I strangled my Mum?

HUGH

I can't keep up with this. I'm just so tired.

ELTON

Tired. You don't know the meaning of tired. When you've stayed up five nights, played a gig for seventy thousand people, flew to New York for the launch of an album and then have to start a 50 night tour. That is fucking tired. Life is for living. What the hell are you scared of?

HUGH
Becoming like you.

Indeed they are surrounded by lorry loads worth of clothes and trinkets. He takes off his Rolex watch. Hugh hands his Rolex to Elton.

ELTON
I thought you said you loved me.

HUGH
I do love you. But I don't want to wake up next to a dead body. Nobody has the right personality for cocaine Elton. But you have the fucking worst.

ELTON
Where are you going?

HUGH
To use my airmiles.

Hugh leaves. Elton follows him.

INT. WOODSIDE. THE SAME

Hugh stomps down the stairs. ELTON shouts from the balcony.

ELTON
You can keep the Rolex. I don't care.

But Hugh is gone. ELTON is reeling. Now he shouts for his servants.

ELTON (CONT'D)
Hello. Is there anybody there?!
Somebody.
Help me.
Where is everybody?
Fuck them.

ELTON starts to stagger through the rooms of Woodside.

ELTON (CONT'D)
Where is everybody.

He is looking for something. He finally goes to a safe. He is shaking. He opens the safe and in it is an enormous bag of cocaine. He takes the cocaine out of the safe and hurries to a desk. He dumps the huge bag on the desk. This is his Scarface moment. He hastily cuts an enormous line with an envelope and snorts it. It's not enough. He buries his head in the cocaine. He starts to shake.

He staggers up from the desk. Shaking. He is having a fit. He heads for the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM, WOODSIDE. THE SAME.

He flings open the toilet door and pulls the cord to turn on the light. On the loo, trousers down, is a cadaverous Elvis. Elton leaps back in horror. Elvis appears to be dead bits are falling off him, but suddenly he moans and looks up at Elton.

ELVIS

Hey, kid. Got any laxative?

Elton holds onto the sink, he looks at himself in the mirror, reflected into infinity. The reflections suddenly move all out of sync to reveal Elvis looking over his shoulder.

ELVIS (CONT'D)

You, OK, chipmunk?

Elton clutches his chest and falls to the ground. Elton starts to have his seizure - he looks in the mirror. There are an infinite number of Eltons - each one in a different costume from a different stage in ELTON's life - he starts to die.. as he croaks in the mirror amongst the reflections he sees REGGIE. He looks behind him and in real life a younger version of Elton looks at him - he starts to sing - Sorry Seems to Be the Hardest Word:

SIXTIES ELTON

What have I got to do to make you love
me?/ What have I got to do to make you
care?/ What do I do when lightning
strikes me? And I wake to find that
you're not there.

ELTON grabs SIXTIES ELTON but he slips down. SIXTIES ELTON grabs onto REAL ELTON in the mirror the various ELTON's sing a line each...

MIRROR ELTONS

What do I do to make you want me?
What have I got to do to be heard?
What do I say when it's all over
And sorry seems to be the hardest word.

REAL ELTON dies as all the reflections of ELTON in the infinity mirror all sing in Harmony.

ELTONS

It's sad, so sad it's a sad sad
situation/ and it's getting more and more
absurd.

We are now lost in the infinity of receding ELTONS it is a hallucinatory moment - there seem to even be ELTON impersonators in the mix - the ELTONS mourn himself in song - it's over lapping accapella madness - almost becoming a fugue-like hymn.

ELTONS (CONT'D)

It's sad so sad why can't we talk it
over/ oh it seems to me that sorry seems
to be the hardest word.

The CHOIR of MIRROR ELTONS carry on singing as the door bursts open. Paramedics pick ELTON up give him CPR. One by one the ELTONS disappear till there's only one in the distance

LAST ELTON

Sorry seems to be the hardest word.

The paramedics have attached him to a machine. They give up the CPR - the machine flatlines and emits a steady beeeeeep - all in tune with the song, obviously. The paramedics close ELTON's eyes. He looks peaceful in his final rest.

INT. HOSPITAL. THE SAME.

ELTON seems to be laid to rest. Suddenly leaps up like Glen Close in Fatal Attraction. Elton gasps for air. He wakes up to find himself attached to several machines.

ELTON

Where am I?

PARAMEDIC

You nearly died. You had a seizure, your
heart stopped beating.

ELTON

Where's Hugh?

PARAMEDIC

I'm afraid Mister Williams is in rehab.

ELTON

Rehab!? What the fucks he doing in rehab?

Elton pulls off the wires and gets out of bed.

EXT. REHAB. ARIZONA. DAY.

A desert. A building. A car pulls up. A sign tell us this is rehab. Elton gets out the car. He looks dreadful. He is the same crazy stage costume as before, unshaven, in the same state he was when he had his seizure. Elton looks fearfully at the place.

INT. "FAMILY ROOM". REHAB. ARIZONA. DAY.

It's all very new age, clean and holisitic. We can tell that Elton is extremely nervous. His outlandish clothing, his disarray, his addicts jitters, tell us he is deeply uncomfortable. He sits alone looking at it all. Through the window we can see the desert. Hugh comes in. He looks, healthy, relaxed, clean and together. A complete contrast to Elton. He sits. He and Elton look at one another. The nurse is there he smiles at Elton sanctimoniously.

HUGH

How have you been?

ELTON

Great. Great. Never felt better. I mean the heart attack following the cocaine seizure was a bit of set back but otherwise, you know, fighting fit.

Pause.

ELTON (CONT'D)

I miss you.
Come back.

HUGH

I can't. You know. I can't.

ELTON

It hurts. OK. I might not be perfect but really, what is so wrong with me?

HUGH

Well, you're a cocaine addict, and a alcoholic, and a bulimic, and a control freak, you have issues with food, sex, relationships, prescription drugs, cannabis, amphetamines, and just about every kind narcotic known to man. You have huge problems with self esteem, anger management and intimacy; you're also addicted to shopping, pornography and have no desire to change.

ELTON

Well, you're not perfect either.

HUGH

Of course not. Well, come on. Hit me with it.

Elton pauses, thinking hard.

ELTON

You never put my records back in their covers.

Elton thinks some more. Realises how preposterous this is. He gets up. There are tears in his eyes.

ELTON (CONT'D)

Thank you.

He walks out.

EXT. O HARE AIRPORT. DAY.

Elton waiting in line for a cab in his crazy costume. People are pretending not to notice.

EXT. PARKLANDS HOSPITAL. DAY.

A cab pulls up. Elton John gets out at the dirty, municipal hospital. People are staring, amazed.

INT. CORRIDOR. PARKLANDS HOSPITAL. DAY.

Elton walking down the corridor, as in the opening shot of the movie.

INT. THERAPY ROOM. THE SAME.

Elton in his mad costume sits down and looks at the people.

NURSE

OK, guys. Shall we begin?

Close up of Elton. He looks round at the faces of the other patients waiting eagerly to hear him. He seems lost for words.

INT. BEDROOM. PARKLANDS. DAY. 1990.

Elton strips off his mad clothes and throws them in the basket. He looks at himself naked in a mirror. He puts on his regulation grey uniform. He looks at himself. A nurse appears, watching him.

ELTON

I can't do this. I've got to go home.

NURSE

Nobody's making you stay.

The nurse hands him his pile of clothes.

NURSE (CONT'D)

The laundry's down the hall.

INT. LAUNDRY ROOM. PARKLANDS. DAY.

Elton goes in to the laundry room with his basket of clothes. The old lady is there. He smiles. She is changing a load of washing. Elton looks at the row of machines. He has never done a load of washing in his life. He looks at the coin-op thing, presses a few buttons, but is unable to get the door to open.

ELTON

It must be broken.

The old lady presses the door release button and it springs open. She takes the washing out of his hands and puts it in the machine.

OLD LADY

You ain't ever done this before.

The old lady puts a quarter into the machine for Elton, and fills it with soap powder. The machine whirs into action and Elton sits down humiliated. The old woman sits down and reads her book, making no attempt to talk to Elton. Elton sits and stares at the machine going round and round. There is a radio playing. An Elton John song starts up. The Old Lady gets up, and changes the channel. Some Lawrence Welk music plays.

OLD LADY (CONT'D)

You weren't listening to that were you?

Elton sits. His hands are shakey, and we realise he is suffering the effects of withdrawal. We see it affecting him physically but through force of will he gains composure and finally addresses the woman.

ELTON

So tell me, what's your story?

OLD LADY

Oh, the usual. My son died when he was twenty and I started drinking. It wasn't noticable at first but then I began taking valium to relieve the depression due to the drink. Then my husband left me for the secretary, probably due to the fact I was a complete spaced out valium junkie. Then I lost the house and ended up on the street for eight years, until my liver collapsed and I ended up in here. How about you?

ELTON

Well, I'm a multi-millionaire rock star who's adored all over the world.

OLD LADY
So you had some personal tragedy?

ELTON
No. I just started behaving like a cunt
in 1975 and forgot to stop.

They watch the washing spin round.

OLD LADY
What did you say your name was?

ELTON
Elton. Elton John.

The lady thinks maybe this rings a bell. She wracks her
mind.

OLD LADY
No. Never heard of you.

ELTON
You know, I think I'm starting to like it
here.

INT. ELTON'S ROOM. PARKLANDS HOSPITAL. DAY.

Elton is alone. He is now really suffering the effects of
withdrawal. He starts to sweat and shake. He looks very
ill. He catches sight of himself in the mirror and is
horrified. Finally he takes off his wig and confronts who
he is unadorned. He is sweating profusely. He holds onto
the desk to support himself.

NURSE (OFF)
Therapy time.

INT. THERAPY ROOM. PARKLANDS HOSPITAL.

Elton faces the group. A long pause, then someone asks a
question.

PATIENT
So what I don't understand, right, is how
you have everything you want in the
world, right, so how come you're so
unhappy?

ELTON
I think somehow I was so used to striving
after the thing that I thought would make
me happy, when I actually got them, I'd
got so used to striving I forgot to stop.

PATIENT
But you did get what you wanted.

ELTON

But it didn't make me happy.

PATIENT

Go figure.

ELTON

No, no. What you don't understand is, yes, I had an extraordinary life, but all I wanted was to be ordinary.

A VOICE (IVY)

Rubbish, you were never ordinary.

Elton swings round to see who's spoken and sees Ivy who is dressed in her 1950's outfit sitting amongst the group as if nothing was out of the ordinary.

ANOTHER VOICE (SHELIA)

It's true actually. You were always different. Really a bit of loser. Look at you - in here!

Elton swings round in the other direction to see that it's Shelia dressed in her 60's outfit. He scans the room quickly - the patients have turned into the cast of Elton's life: Ivy, Shelia, Helen Piena, Long John Baldry, Linda Woodruff, Bernie and John Reid.

LINDA

I think the problem with you is you're too selfish.

LONG JOHN BALDRY

The problem with you is you are always hiding. You spent so much time trying to be somebody else - I think you forgot to be you.

Elton's head is spinning from person to person.

ELTON

Wait a minute. I know exactly who I am.

JOHN REID

You haven't a clue. You forgot who you were years ago.

BERNIE

It's all that dressing up. You're scared to look at who you are.

ELTON

Bullshit. I know perfectly well who I am. I'm just complex that's all.

JOHN REID

Well, tell us.

ELTON

Well, technically, I am an introverted extrovert with abandonment issues because of my father.

STANLEY

Don't blame me. You would have been fucked up regardless of what I did.

SHELIA

Yeah, come on Elton. So your father left. Big deal. He was an asshole. You had everything you ever wanted.

Elton turns and sees a Younger version of himself sitting amongst the group.

ALTERNATIVE ELTON

Anyway, aren't you a extroverted introvert?

Then another voice pipes up, Elton turns to see a bearded version of himself from 1969.

ELTON 3

I'm not sure you're an introvert at all, to tell you the truth.

JOHN REID

See you don't know who the hell you are.

ELTON

This is ridiculous. I know exactly who I am....

He looks around and every chair is filled with different versions of himself.

ELTON (CONT'D)

I'm Elton John.

Then a young voice breaks through the surreal chaos with real emotion.

REGGIE

But I thought you were Reggie Dwight.

Elton stops dead. He stares at the kid, it is Elton exactly as he was at the start of the film in his blazer, shorts and school cap. The vulnerable little boy stares, almost terrified of his older self. Elton is dumbstruck. The ELTON and REGGIE stare at themselves, almost unable to believe they are the same person. Elton gets off his chair and falls to his knees in the middle of the group. The boy Elton slowly comes towards him and holds out his hand and touches Elton's cheek, making sure he is real.

ELTON
 (whispers)
 I don't think I've been Reggie Dwight for
 years.

Behind Elton we realise the group on chairs is made up of the real patients in therapy, but our concern is totally on Elton meeting his former self.

The boy gently touches Elton. Elton is crying. Reggie stands in front of him just as he did his father.

REGGIE
 When are you going to hug me.

Slowly he puts his arms around the tiny figure and hugs him. Tears rolling down his cheeks, the kid not displaying any emotion, as if he's confused and daunted by the whole encounter. The contrast between the eager but bewildered innocence and the crushed experience of the older man. Elton finally pulls himself together. The intro to This Train Don't Stop Here Anymore starts to play. Elton stands up, collects himself. He looks around the room. Stanley is sitting crying looking at the two Eltons. Then we see Elton is alone and he is facing the "real" patients who are staring at him.

INT. ELTON'S ROOM. DAY.

Elton by himself - facing himself in the mirror in the grim surroundings of the parklands hospital. He puts on a smart white suit. He looks transformed. Clean, healthy, clear headed. This Train Don't Stop Here Anymore plays. Elton walks out of the room. Down the corridor.

INT. THERAPY ROOM. DAY.

Elton goes into the therapy room and hugs each patient in turn. Clearly he is saying goodbye. He gets to the Old Woman and hugs her very respectfully.

OLD LADY
 Bye, Elton.

He walks over to a piano, perfectly on cue he starts singing This Train Don't Stop Here Anymore - just as the intro has reached the correct point for the song to start.

ELTON
 (singing:)
 You may not believe it but I don't
 believe in miracles anymore/

The old lady walks over to a little drumkit on the little stage and joins in, perhaps all the patients join in one by one.

ELTON (CONT'D)

(singing)

and when I think about it I don't believe
I ever did for sure/ all the things I've
said in songs all the purple prose you
bought from me/ reality's just black and
white/ the sentimental things I write
never meant that much to me/ I used to be
the main express/ all steaming whistles
heading west/ picking up my pain from
door to door/ riding on the story line/
furnace burning overtime/ but this train
don't stop/ this train don't stop/ this
train don't stop there any more/

INT. CORRIDOR. PARKLANDS HOSPITAL. DAY.

The song carries on Elton leaves the piano and walks down the corridor, still singing.

ELTON

(sings)

You don't need to hear it but I'm dried
up and sick to death of love/ if you need
to know it I never understood that stuff/
all the stars and bleeding heart/ all the
tears that welled up in my eyes/ never
meant a thing to me/ read them as they
say and weep/

Elton walks outside..

EXT. HOSPITAL. THE SAME.

A limo is waiting. Elton gets in still singing.

ELTON

(sings)

I never felt enough to cry/I used to be
the main express/ all steaming whistles
heading west/ picking up my pain from
door to door/

INT. LIMO. THE SAME.

Elton alone, driving in his limo.

ELTON

(sings)

riding on the story line/ furnace burying
overtime/ but this train don't stop/ this
train don't stop/ this train don't stop
there any more./

The limo pulls up. Someone opens the door.

EXT. SOUTH OF FRANCE. DAY.

Elton gets out of the same limo but miraculously he is in the South of France. He is very zen - signs autographs walks through cameras set up to record his video. He walks onto the set is passed his straw boater. The intro to I'm Still Standing starts playing. As in the original video Elton starts singing to camera surrounded by the painted people.

ELTON

(singing)

You can never know what it's like/ your
blood like winter freezes just like ice/
Lonely light that shines from you/ You'll
end up like the wreck you hide behind the
mask you use,

Now the song continues but it is choreographed to a far more elaborate dance. It is joyous, the sun is bright and very soon the boardwalk is full of hundreds of people all dancing with Elton.

ELTON (CONT'D)

(singing)

And did you think this fool could never
win/ Well look at me I'm coming back
again/ I got a taste of love in a simple
way/ And if you know while I'm still
standing you just fade away.

At some point Elton will find a piano to sit down and play and it will miraculously start flying above the surrounding crowd of dancers.

ELTON (CONT'D)

Don't you know that I'm still standing
better than I ever did/ lookin' like a
true survivor/ feelin' like a little kid/
I'm still standing after all this time/
Picking up the pieces of my life without
you on my mind/

Elton continues playing seamlessly. We pull back to see the piano and Elton are being flown under a helicopter.

The crowds below are doing synchronized dancing, and Elton is gleefully singing straight to camera, making no concessions to being 500 feet above the boardwalk.

ELTON (CONT'D)

I'm still standing, yeah, yeah, yeah./

I'm still standing, yeah, yeah, yeah.

The song finishes with Elton beaming into the camera. We freeze on his fantastic smile. The crowds on the beach below have been arranged to spell out "The End" in giant human letters below.

DIRECTOR'S VOICE

And cut - perfect - just one more time.

ELTON

(OOV)

Fuck off.

THE END

Credits to a medley of Made In England going into Sixty Years On.