

"STEP UP"

(aka the "Music High" Project)

By

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FADE IN:

INT. HALLWAY - BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - MID-DAY

CLASSICAL MUSIC plays. SUNLIGHT beams through the skylight, painting a golden hue. CAMERA floats down the corridor, passing open classroom doors. MUSIC segues from one room to the next, an overlapping medley of images and sound...

A beautiful BALLERINA spins on her tiptoes.

A SAXOPHONIST wails. HANDS paint a backdrop.

An ACTOR shouts his echoing tribute to Tennessee Williams.

A DRUMMER pounds a beat. TAP SHOES batter the floor. The Ballerina soars through the air. FINGERS fly up a guitar.

There's an open window at the end of the hallway. CAMERA drifts out it. A stone WALL soon obscures our view. We rise over it... the music fades. CAMERA descends into:

INT. ALLEY - MID-DAY

Hip hop MUSIC blasts from a tangerine, '78 Monte Carlo. Four teenage guys have been pounding beers and passing a joint for the last hour. We join them in the midst of a "slamball" dunking contest. Slamball needs a basketball rim (this one rusty and bent), a ball, and a small TRAMPOLINE...

MAC, 20, leader of this group, was the coolest guy to walk the planet back in high school. He dribbles to the hoop, springs off the trampoline, and throws down a slam, hanging on the rim for extra emphasis.

MAC

Yeaah!

TYLER "TY" GAGE, 17, a joint between his lips, smirks. He's tough, streetwise, with a flash of vulnerability that he allows no one to see. He grabs the rock.

TYLER

I'll show you how to throw it down, baby.

MAC

You'd better represent.

Ty hands the J to Mac, bounces the ball off the backboard, then springs off the trampoline to pull of a 360.

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TYLER

Now that's what I'm talking about!

RANDY, 18, good looking, wild, and tough, grabs the ball to slam one, but SKINNY, 18, takes it from him.

SKINNY

Lemme show you how King James do it.

Skinny dribbles to the hoop. This guy's been hit in the head too many times not to cause some kind of brain damage.

MAC

He's gonna bust his ass again, watch this shit...

Skinny springs himself off the trampoline - but he whacks his head against the backboard. He hits the ground hard.

MAC

Damn, man, you gonna break it!

Skinny springs up laughing.

SKINNY

I'm bringing that shit down, man!

A SIREN shrieks once. A POLICE CAR rolls past the alley, the COP motions "move it along." Mac hides the joint.

MAC

No problem, have a nice day, officer.
(under his breath)
You prick.

The cop car rolls on. Ty grabs his bookbag.

TYLER

Lunch time's up, I gotta roll.

MAC

What about dessert, bro?

With a grin, Mac tosses Ty the twelve pack's remains.

SKINNY

Yeah, baby, yeah! Dee-zert, dee-zert!

Ty checks that there's no sign of the cop, so he pops a can - and guzzles. Skinny cheers insanely.

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TYLER

Later.

Ty stashes the rest of the twelve pack behind the dumpster and walks away.

EXT. STREET - MID-DAY

Tyler walks from the alley. He pulls headphones on as he darts across the street, going against the "ONE WAY" sign. A CAR HORN blasts.

EXT. LAKE CLIFTON HIGH - MID-DAY

The toughest school in Baltimore. A BELL rings. Tyler tosses a breath mint in his mouth as he climbs the steps.

INT. LAKE CLIFTON HIGH - MID-DAY

Students scurry to their classrooms as doors close. Ty hurries down the hallway.

TYLER

Wait up, Kev!

KEVIN, a good kid who used to be Ty's friend, is about to close the door.

TEACHER

Don't let him in.

A look of something close to sadness crosses Kevin's eyes... as he shuts the glass panelled-door in Ty's face.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE - AFTERNOON

Alone, Ty plays a Mortal Kombat type videogame, a cigarette burns down in the corner of his mouth.

STORE OWNER

You know the rule.

The STORE OWNER nods toward a "No Smoking" sign. Ty tosses his smoke out the open door and keeps playing.

EXT. STREET - AFTERNOON

Tyler walks home, his headphones on to drown out the world. He passes a group of CATHOLIC SCHOOL GIRLS in their skirts. He takes a good look at their butts.

EXT. TYLER'S APARTMENT BUILDING - EVENING

He enters his lower, middle class neighborhood building.

INT. TYLER'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Even smaller than it looks from the outside. Ty enters to find his father, RICHARD, 40s, unpacking a paper bag of cheap take out. Richard's blue collar has pulled so tight it's choked the life from him.

RICHARD
Dollar Chinese here, dig in.

TYLER
You just got off work?

RICHARD
Karl quit, I hadda close up shop.

They sit on the sofa. There's no dining table, only a coffee table and fold out tv tray. They load their plates.

TYLER
Bob gonna hire somebody else? You work a sixty hour week already.

RICHARD
I'll pick up the slack for a while.

Dad flips the tv on and his eyes go right to it.

RICHARD
School all right today?

TYLER
Fine. I gotta "B" on that paper I did last week.

RICHARD
Woulda been an "A" if you didn't wait till the last minute. They give us any soy sauce?

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Ty passes a packet. Dad keeps watching the tube, its blue light flickering.

EXT. TYLER'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Ty tightens a bolt on his '83 restored Harley Davidson. He revs the throttle. It cranks. He grins.

NEIGHBOR (O.S.)
KEEP IT DOWN!

Ty guns the throttle a little louder.

TYLER
Can't hear you!

EXT. INNER HARBOR - NIGHT

Lights glow off the water. Mac hangs out with two 20-something bad girls, NICOLE and LISA, when Ty rides near.

MAC
Damn, you got it running.

Ty stops next to them and cuts the engine.

MAC
Meet Nicole, and her friend, Lillie.

LISA
Lisa.

MAC
They joining us at the party. This is my homey, Ty.

Ty's eyes walk all over her, hers over him.

LISA
Nice ride.

TYLER
Wouldn't know, yet, would you?

EXT. PIER - INNER HARBOR - FIVE MINUTES LATER - NIGHT

Motorcycles are banned here, but that doesn't stop Mac and Tyler, with Nicole and Lisa in tow respectively, from roaring

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down it. Pedestrians dodge them and vice versa. Mac rides a red, Honda speedbike.

LISA

Look out!

Ty's loving this.

TYLER

For this one? Or that one...?

He dodges more pedestrians. She's shrieking, he's being cool about it all. A lady YELLS. Some kids LAUGH.

But then one guy FALLS INTO THE WATER.

Ty and Mac burst out laughing as they speed away.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

Motorcycle headlights glow. Ty and Mac pull over. Skinny, Randy, and some other guys are now playing a game of three on three slamball: Skinny drives to the hoop to try and dunk, his opponent bounces off the trampoline to collide with him in mid air to block his attempt. Both smash to the ground and Randy grabs the ball.

Ty pulls out the stashed beer from earlier.

TYLER

Anybody thirsty?

SKINNY

My man!

They all grab beers as the game has stopped for now.

LISA

What time's this party?

MAC

Soon as we get there.

Skinny picks up the ball.

SKINNY

Clear out.

TYLER

Here we go again...

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Skinny dribbles, springs off the trampoline, slams it hard... and sure enough, the entire rim crumbles to the ground.

SKINNY

Yeaaaah, baby - yeah!

But then the pole it's standing on starts to tip.

TYLER

Oh shit...

It keeps tipping - and cracks off. It smashes into a WINDOW, which shatters.

MAC

Oh shit!

They all start laughing. Skinny leaps to his feet and climbs atop the pole to look in the window.

SKINNY

Man! Check it out...

He scurries through the window... and is gone from sight.

MAC

Where'd he go?

Skinny then flings open a DOOR in the alley.

SKINNY

Get in here - you gotta see this!

They all hurry inside, the door shuts behind. It leads to:

INT. AUDITORIUM - BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - NIGHT

Mac, Ty, and the girls enter with Skinny, Randy, and the others. The auditorium's huge and empty. The stage set up with musical instruments, ie, drums, guitars, keyboards, etc.

TYLER

Holy shit.

MAC

Why go to the party, when the party
can come to you?

Mac whips out his cell phone and begins to dial.

INT. AUDITORIUM - BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - MIDNIGHT

CRASH! CLANG! Skinny dives headfirst across the stage, sliding into a set of drums.

The place is packed with fifty-plus party-goers. Smoke floats in air. A beer keg gets pumped. Stage lights are on. Spotlights swipe back and forth.

Ty walks with Lisa around the rear, checking it all out.

LISA
What kind of kids go to a school like
this?

TYLER
Rich ones.

She yanks him down into a chair.

LISA
Now. I wanna know more about that
ride.

She starts to kiss him...

IN THE CONTROL BOOTH

Randy swings the spotlight from one direction to the next. He loads a DAT TAPE into the RECORDER beside him.

ON STAGE

Mac lights a bong. Skinny jams on a guitar, a GIRL cymbals.

SKINNY
Turn this shit up!!

IN THE CONTROL BOOTH

Randy has no idea what he's doing, he starts hitting buttons. The DAT starts to play, a PULSING BEAT fills the auditorium.

ON STAGE

MAC
That's it, crank this shit!

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Everyone starts grooving and dancing.

IN THE CONTROL BOOTH

The recorder starts chewing the DAT tape. He didn't have it the machine correctly.

RANDY

Uh-oh.

Randy hits more controls but makes everything worse.

ON STAGE

FEEDBACK. More lights flash. A stage PLATFORM rises. Mac jumps on the riser, shakes a beer, holds it between his legs, and opens it. It sprays all over a group of girls.

A bucket of PAINT gets spilt. Then splashed on seats. Some ends near Ty, who breaks from Lisa and sees the chaos.

TYLER

... what the hell?

LISA

No. What the fuck.

She pulls him back. Her shirt's off, her bra nearly. She starts unbuckling his pants.

TWO GIRLS on stage start shoving each other.

MAC

It's *DEATHMAAAAAATCH!!*

The two girls fall to the ground, pulling hair and ripping clothes. Randy tries to get the spotlight on them as the group chants "TAKE IT OFF!" The cymbals crash to the floor and roll. Skinny tries a Metallica guitar spin over his back. It works - but the guitar goes airborne and SMASHES into the wall. More paint gets thrown.

Smoke from a bong reaches the SPRINKLERS. They kick on.

Suddenly - BLUE LIGHTS flash through the windows.

SKINNY

COPS!!!

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Chaos ensues. Everyone scurries for the exits. Ty fumbles to buckle his pants as Lisa grabs for her clothes.

The BACK DOOR flies open, and a group of POLICEMEN storm in. The party-goers high tail it the other way.

Ty gets slammed into - his KEYS fly from his hand.

TYLER

Shit!

He has to push through the dispersing crowd to reach his keys. Mac is already at the door, Mac turns back...

Ty finds his keys - but a cop grabs him and throws him hard to the ground. No choice, Mac turns and runs out.

Ty left on the ground in water and paint. His hands being cuffed.

EXT. POLICE STATION - 3:00 A.M.

Silence. Fuming Richard walks out, a paint-wrecked Ty right behind. Dad unlocks his beat-to-hell PICKUP TRUCK.

INT. DAD'S PICKUP - MOVING - 3:00 A.M.

Dad drives, Ty rides. A long beat, then finally:

TYLER

I need to pick my bike up.

RICHARD

It's in impound.

Dad won't look at him.

TYLER

I need to borrow the cash to get it.

RICHARD

Christ. How many goddamn times do I have to do this?

TYLER

Forget it, I'll get the money somewhere else.

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RICHARD
What the hell's gotten into you
lately?

TYLER
"Lately?" What planet you been on?

RICHARD
Yeah, that's it, blame me because you
messed up again.

TYLER
I can walk home.

RICHARD
Okay - let's see you.

Dad slams the brakes on.

RICHARD
Go - walk.

TYLER
I will!

RICHARD
Then do it!

The beat hangs. Neither gives.

TYLER
Better than putting up with your shit.

Ty slams out.

EXT. STREET - 3:00 A.M.

Dad's truck roars away, leaving Ty standing alone at the
intersection. Red lights, green lights, him in the middle.

INT. COURT ROOM - MORNING

Tyler, wearing a tie, stands in front of the JUDGE, a firm
woman who has far better things to do.

JUDGE
You were the only one who broke in?

Ty nods. Dad waits stern-faced behind his son.

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JUDGE

How noble, not to rat out your friends. And foolish, too. But there's our problem, see? I looked over your history, your test scores, your transcripts...

She has it all in front of her.

JUDGE (cont'd)

You made good grades once, in fourth grade you were even "Romeo" in a school play. You had it together.

(closes his file)

Now, here's your third arrest in two years. The damage to the school property was over five thousand dollars, so what do we do? Juvie? Probation? Community service? I want to help you.

Ty won't look her in the eye.

JUDGE (cont'd)

But none of these fit the crime. I've got to fix that, and make sure you get fixed. I've thought about this a lot, and come up with what I think is an elegant solution: As means of probation, I'm ordering you to attend Baltimore School for the Arts for the rest of the semester. Follow their rules and everything's fine, if you don't, then it's straight to juvenile hall.

Now Ty looks at her. Their eyes hold.

JUDGE (cont'd)

One day I'll expect a thank you call, now sign some paperwork on your way out - next case, please.

She slams her gavel. Ty can't move.

EXT. BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - MORNING

Kids arrive. Students carry big cases of musical instruments along with backpacks and bookbags.

Ty and his father pull up in Dad's truck.

E/I. DAD'S PICKUP - MORNING

TYLER
I coulda driven myself.

RICHARD
Look, this is temporary. You get through these couple months, then we get you enrolled in some kinda tech school next year, so you can get your life started. All right?

TYLER
Yeah, sure.

A high-pitched BOY with a screeching voice bounces past.

RICHARD
And, uh, don't turn into one of them.

Ty climbs out. Richard watches his son walk away.

INT. HALLWAY - BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - MORNING

Ty steps in. CAMERA SWIRLS around him as he drinks in the energy. The moment. And the confusion. A KID WITH A CELLO shoves past him.

CELLO KID
'Scuse me.

A group of giggling ARTSY GIRLS dart by laughing. Other kids DANCE or stretch in the hallway.

SECURITY GUARD
Can I help you?

TYLER
If you know how to get outta here.

INT. MR. HOLLIS ALDEN'S OFFICE - MORNING

Tyler sits with one arm slung back, his leg kicked out, as HOLLIS ALDEN, 40s, Chairman of the School, peruses his file. "Hollis," as he prefers students call him, dresses cool. He's that teacher everyone loved but no one ever, ever wanted to cross. Too late for Ty...

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HOLLIS

We ask for an increase in budget and I get you, a book of trouble sent personal delivery? It costs tax payers \$8,736.43 to put each student here, and now in you walk, taking a spot from someone who actually wants to attend our school. May I be blunt, please?

Ty motions his arms to give Hollis the floor.

HOLLIS

I don't want you here, but I have to have you.

TYLER

Makes two of us.

Ty smirks.

HOLLIS

You think this is funny?

TYLER

No. Kinda. I mean, the guys seeing me at a school like this?

HOLLIS

Failure here means juvenile hall, so listen up: The only way you pass is to shape your shit-ship up, work hard, and fulfill the same requirements as every other student. That means you perform in our Spring Open House.

Hollis slides Ty his class schedule.

TYLER

"Perform?"

HOLLIS

Did you not read the sign before you broke in?

(then)

Let's see how tough you are now.

As Ty's at the door:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HOLLIS

And I did you a favor: The students
don't know it was you who wrecked
their school, so don't brag about it.

INT. HALLWAY - BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - MORNING

Ty walks alone down the empty hallway. He double checks his
class schedule and room number. He HEARS singing. Out of
curiosity he slows down...

PATTI (O.S.)

I know that my heart will go o-on...

HIS POV - IN A REHEARSAL ROOM

PATTI, 16, shy and overweight, sings her heart out. She goes
for the high note, that one Celiene holds forever...

PATTI

Near, far... wheeeeer-eeever you are...

Her voice screeches. She then sees Ty at the door. She
quickly gathers her sheet music and shuffles from view.

Ty wipes at his ringing ear and keeps moving...

TREVOR (O.S.)

"Then tell me what this is!!"

HIS POV - IN ANOTHER REHEARSAL ROOM

The biggest over-actor in town, TREVOR, rehearses a monologue
from "Death of a Salesman." Prior to studying here, Trevor
surely attended the William Shatner school of "Schmacting."

TREVOR

"What am I doing in an office, making
a...?!" Um. Dangit. Line!

Ty moves on. He HEARS a *tap-tap-tapping*. He leans near
another room's window...

HIS POV - CLAUDIO'S REHEARSAL ROOM

An amazing tap dancer, CLAUDIO, pounds the floor. Dressed in
baggy 501s and an extra large Warren Sapp jersey, he gyrates
and spins, his dread-locks bounce. When it looks like he
can't go any faster, he kicks another gear. His feet blur.

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HOLLIS
End of the hall, on the right.

Hollis stands with the Security Guard. Ty moves on.

INT. DRAMA CLASSROOM - MORNING

Tyler enters quietly to find...

ON STAGE

A group of students are going at it in a song & dance battle: BRETT, 18, is leader of his BOY BAND of three others. Sharp, good-looking and silky smooth, he throws the microphone from one hand to the other.

His opponents: A girl named JACKI, with blue hair, who leads two other guys. She shuffles her spray-painted, silver Doc Martens in rhythm to keep up with Brett.

JACKI
(rapping)
*Boy band bullshit, think you're hot,
this thing right here is the the thing
that rocks!*

BRETT
(rapping)
*I can grip it and switch it any style
you want - flip the coin bitch, come
get destroyed.*
(singing)
'Bye, bye, by-yye!

Brett's boys twirl a perfect spin and knee-drop in rhythm. Jacki's partners slip and fall. Brett high-fives his boys.

BRETT
Next!! Who wants this - who??

A guy with a sweatshirt hood and shades stands from the back. He is MILES, 17, African American, hipper than the hippest. He peels his jacket off like a prize fighter.

BRETT
Oh, no - don't tell me. Not Miles, I
like Miles...

MILES
Wait!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Miles lifts his hand. Everything stops.

MILES
*I hadda let it marinate, before I
saturate and annihilate.*

BRETT
Masturbate.

MILES
*Heaven's gate, that's where you wait
When I'm through with you - rip it up
You have no clue what I'm 'bout to do.*

KRIS TINA
(interrupting)
Save it for song and dance, this is
drama.

The drama instructor, MS. KRIS TINA YI, who always hurries but finds time for her students, walks in, her long black hair bouncing behind. She's stylish, super cool, the boys like her, and she knows Aikido to keep them in line.

KRIS TINA
I said sit it, unless you two want de-
tention instead of at-tention.

BRETT
It was character work for my scene.

JACKI
Yeah, for "Jackass."

Ty starts out the door, but...

KRIS TINA
Excuse me, may I help you?

TYLER
My bad, I think I'm in the wrong
place.

She grabs his schedule, the class glances over him.

KRIS TINA
Nope, I'm Ms. Yi, call me Kris Tina.
Class, this is Tyler. Tyler, hop on
stage, we'll do a cold reading for
placement. Go, shoo!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Just then, the door opens and ANGIE PERRY, 17, long legged, lithe, and beautiful without knowing it or trying, enters.

ANGIE
Sorry, I'm late, we had a dance
department meeting.

Ty sees Angie, and now he's really nervous.

ON STAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Ty stands alone. He holds a sheet of paper in hand, his hand trembles. The class sits in the theatre seats.

KRIS TINA
Start with the final speech, this is
where Richard III has wooed Lady Ann.
There he was, all ugly and hunch-
backed, and he just Mac Daddy'd the
most beautiful babe in the kingdom.

TYLER
Uh. Right. Um...

Nothing happens. Angie and a few kids look at each other...

KRIS TINA
You can begin now.

He takes one more breath, then reads. Flat.

TYLER
"Was ever woman in this humor woo'd?
Was ever woman in this humor won?"

A few giggles from the class.

KRIS TINA
Stop. What does "woo" mean?

From the back of the theatre:

BRETT
Woo-boy, he sucks!

KRIS TINA
Quiet.
(back to Tyler)
He's gloating, laughing at her. Try
again.

Ty looks back down at the paper in hand...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

TYLER

Uh. "Was ever woman in this humor
woo'd?"

The BELL RINGS.

INT. HALLWAY - BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - MORNING

Students burst from Drama class. Angie hurries past Ty, he checks her out, when Brett shoves past him.

BRETT

No hard feelings, right, rook? We're
just playing around.

TYLER

No worries, hair gel, it's cool.

A few giggles. Brett wants to say something, but words fail, he's not used to being 'dissed. He moves on.

MILES

(to Tyler)

Ow, man. That hurt so bad, I felt it
over there.

Miles steps beside Ty, Jacki right beside.

MILES

I'm Miles.

TYLER

Tyler.

MILES

"T." I like it.

Miles offers his hand. Tyler takes it.

JACKI

Jacki. 'Sup?

MILES

Me'n Jacki, we're in a band, we crank
tunes and mix our own stuff. See you
'round?

TYLER

Yeah. Whatever.

Ty blows him off and walks away. Now Miles is miffed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JACKI
(to Miles)
What a 'dis.

MILES
Thinks he's too cool for school.

JACKI
Nice butt, though.

MILES
Since when d'you like guys?

Jacki shrugs innocently.

INT. CAFETERIA - BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - MID-DAY

Tyler waits in line, students all around him.

ANDREW
(to the cafeteria worker)
Could I get an extra milk, please?
(to Tyler)
First day, huh?

Next to him stands ANDREW, 16, artsy, Buddy Holly-style glasses and a little bow-tie. Andrew's books are stacked high next to his tray. This guy is surely the school nerd.

TYLER
Wish it were my last.

Ty moves on. As soon as he pays, he stops and takes in the entire lunchroom:

Groups of students sit together. Musicians with musicians, actors with actors, dancers with dancers. There's an amazing energy and atmosphere in the air.

The musicians bang spoons and forks against each other, their plastic trays and on the table. Many wear MP3 players with headphones, bobbing their heads to their own worlds.

The dancers move and shuffle their feet under the table. One couple dances on the table.

Actors exchange talk and run lines.

ANDREW
(to Tyler)
How do you like it so far?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TYLER

It's great.

Ty empties his tray and walks out. Andrew watches him go, before he topples his milk into his meatloaf.

ANDREW

Crud.

EXT. ROOFTOP - BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - MID-DAY

Tyler climbs up the fire escape. He takes a moment to breathe. The Inner Harbor sparkles with sunlight in the distance. He's just glad it's quiet.

Then, he HEARS something. He turns... and SEES her.

Angie stands alone. She doesn't see him, she wears headphones. The sunlight peers over her shoulder, the wind slightly blows her hair. Her back straight and erect. She takes a few more deep breaths.

Ty watches in curiosity and intrigue.

Angie starts running. Slow steps at first, but building in stride, elegant and gazelle-like. She's running toward...

... the edge of the roof. It looks like she's going to jump.

TYLER

Uh, wait. Hey! Don't do it...

She can't hear him. She's running faster, building in intensity. She leaps -

When Ty tackles her, grabbing her from mid-air and hurling her to the ground.

Angie shoves herself away from him in panic.

ANGIE

What do you think you're doing?!

She yanks her headphones off, we HEAR faint classical music.

TYLER

You're the one was gonna jump.

ANGIE

I was practicing my ballet leaps!

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He looks over the edge... to SEE another ledge two feet down.

TYLER
My bad. Uh, you okay?

ANGIE
I'm getting security.

TYLER
Cut me a break, it's my first day.

ANGIE
Yeah, and you missed "common sense"
class.

TYLER
My name's Tyler.

ANGIE
Did I ask?

BRETT (O.S.)
Ang? You ready to rehearse...?

Brett climbs up the fire escape.... to see them together.

BRETT
Everything okay?

ANGIE
Yeah. It's fine.

She grabs her things. Brett keeps his eyes on Ty.

INT. DANCE REHEARSAL ROOM - MID-DAY

Angie stretches out as Brett takes off his jacket.

BRETT
Was that guy messing with you?

ANGIE
He surprised me, that's all.

BRETT
I have no idea what he's doing here, a
new senior this close to the end of
the year. It's not an acting
scholarship, I can tell you that.

He moves behind her. Massages her shoulders.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRETT

You're so tense...

She closes her eyes. It feels good. He steps nearer.

BRETT

I miss you. I miss us.

ANGIE

Brett, I can't, you know that.

BRETT

I know, I know, you don't want a relationship now.

He smiles, then finds their CD for the boombox.

BRETT

I've come up with more moves for us.

ANGIE

I wanted to talk to you about that.

(here goes...)

I need to do my own thing. A solo.

BRETT

What?

ANGIE

C'mon, you're already performing with your group.

BRETT

First you break up with me, now you don't want me for a partner?

ANGIE

It'll be the first solo I've done in two years.

BRETT

We're seniors, it's our swan song to the school.

ANGIE

I need to do this.

BRETT

I think it's a mistake.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ANGIE

Okay - then I'm making a mistake, but
it's something I can call mine.

He knows she's made her mind up. He softens.

BRETT

You'll blow 'em away.

He kisses her forehead, and holds there an extra beat.

BRETT

But if you need anything...?

She smiles tightly. The door shuts behind him. She looks at
herself in the mirror.

EXT. MAC'S BACKYARD - NIGHT

The flame of a barbecue flares, Mac tends the grill, pouring
Jack Daniels into it. It's an old house in a bad 'hood, bars
on the windows, peeling paint.

MAC

Wooo-whoooo!

A party, music pumps. Twenty people or so are milking a keg
and passing a joint. Drunk Lisa steps in front of Ty.

LISA

So have they turned you "funny," yet?

MAC

Yeah, are you gonna be singing show
tunes'n shit?

SKINNY

And hanging out with them buncha art
fags? Don't touch my butt, man!

RANDY

It'd be more action than you ever get.

Mac passes Ty the Jack Daniels. Ty swigs.

MAC

So how're things over there, really?

TYLER

I got this dickhead counsellor riding
me hard. That place is crazy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAC

It's gotta be better than juvie.

SKINNY

I know! Let's bust into that judge's office, we can torch the records!

TYLER

Great idea.

Mac and Ty walk from the grill, beers in hand...

MAC

Any babes there?

TYLER

This one girl. A dancer, legs up to here.

MAC

You like her...

TYLER

I didn't say that.

MAC

Dude, I can tell you're all over her. Tell me, does she have a friend? C'mon, bet she can scratch her ear with her toe...

Ty grins.

TYLER

She does look flexible.

MAC

My man!

They bump fists as Lisa throws herself around Ty.

LISA

C'mon, Ty, the room's free...

TYLER

Get off, you're drunk.

(to Mac)

Man, where d'you find these girls?

MAC

Mostly at the mall. But, if you don't mind, bro?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Mac takes Lisa's hand, she wraps her arms around him. Ty and Mac share a look, before Mac and Lisa head to the house.

Ty watches them go... absorbing all around him.

INT. TYLER'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Tyler lies still in bed, his alarm blasts but he doesn't move. He finally jerks up. It's 8:40 AM...

TYLER

Shit.

EXT. BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - MORNING

Tyler hurries up the steps. He's past being late.

SECURITY GUARD

Hollis's office. Yesterday.

INT. MR. HOLLIS ALDEN'S OFFICE - MORNING

Tyler enters.

HOLLIS

Sit down.

Ty does. Hollis shoves a form in his face.

HOLLIS

This is a complaint against you, from another student. It says you accosted her on the roof yesterday.

Ty's surprised.

TYLER

It was an accident, I thought she was gonna jump.

Hollis stares. Ty wads up the complaint.

TYLER

This is bullshit. Fine - toss me out.

HOLLIS

Is that what you're used to, being tossed aside?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TYLER

Oh, I get it, here comes the
"analyzing." Let's see, I'm from a
broken home, I've had a rough life, my
old man doesn't beat me 'cause he damn-
well knows better, blah-blah-blah.
Feeling sorry for me, yet?

Hollis knows a cry for help, and when he's being played.

HOLLIS

Yeah, you're pathetic, and I'm keeping
this on file. Get outta here.

Ty shrugs, gets up to leave.

HOLLIS

Did you choose a project for the
Spring Open House, yet? Everyone else
has been rehearsing for weeks.

TYLER

Nothing's my style.

HOLLIS

You have till end of day, or your
"style" is stripes with matching bars.

Hollis hands him a SELECTION FORM. The form is a long
checklist of potential performance pieces.

INT. HALLWAY - BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - MID-MORNING

Tyler walks past students till he finds Angie at her locker.

TYLER

What're you, in third grade, have to
run to the teacher to complain?

ANGIE

I didn't make a complaint. Now move
before I change my mind.

She shoves past, he watches her go. Then...

BRETT

Smooth move.

Ty turns. Brett stands there.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TYLER
You filed it.

BRETT
And now we're all watching you.

TYLER
Good. When I stomp your head,
everybody's gonna see.

Ty walks away. Brett stares hard after.

INT. HALLWAY - BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - AFTERNOON

Tyler walks down. Within each rehearsal room, students are hard at work. He carries the Selection Form in hand.

First on the list: "Jazz Dance Demo."

IN THE JAZZ DANCE REHEARSAL ROOM

A full rehearsal, and Ty's the only guy, except for a GAY DUDE making eyes at him. Ty wears his jeans and t-shirt, everyone else in dance tights. He's in sock feet, sliding on the floor, the others in jazz shoes.

Down he falls.

IN THE HALLWAY

Ty marks "Jazz Dance Demo" off his list.

IN THE ACTING REHEARSAL ROOM

He's holding a script, trying to act with Trevor, the ham. Trevor charges him like a madman, screaming, crying, his nose snotty. He grabs Ty by the shirt -

Ty grabs him and throws him to the floor. Jumps on top of him, draws his fist back - now Trevor is really crying.

IN THE HALLWAY

ON THE SELECTION FORM - Ty crosses out "Acting Scene."

Ty stops outside Patti's rehearsal room.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HIS POV - INSIDE

Plump Patti tries to dance and shake it like a diva.

ON TYLER - That one's not even worth trying.

IN CLAUDIO'S REHEARSAL ROOM

Ty enters. He grins, thinking for sure he's found it.

MOMENTS LATER

Claudio's FEET gyrate and tap in unbelievable fashion and speed. Ty's FEET can't begin to keep up.

Claudio spins, his back arches, his head bobs, his entire body an instrument. Ty tries the same... he falls OUT OF FRAME. SMASH, right into a table with Claudio's stuff on it.

Claudio shakes his head, "Not for you, man."

IN THE HALLWAY

Only a few things remain on his list: "Ballet." "Modern Dance." "Orchestra." "Freeform." It's feeling hopeless. Past another door he goes...

HIS POV - INSIDE THIS REHEARSAL ROOM

Brett with his boy band. Brett is the point, coordinating everyone. They're good. When one of the group misses a step, Brett corrects the move. The guy picks it up.

Brett throws Ty a head nod and goes back to it.

BACK TO TYLER

He moves on. Two last doors remain, one on each side of the hallway. One is "Ballet," the other "Freeform."

He takes a breath and opens the Freeform door.

INT. FREEFORM REHEARSAL ROOM - AFTERNOON

A cool, funky groove hits him in the face. Inside, Miles jams on keyboards, Jacki plays guitar, and on drums pounds the school nerd, Andrew.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANDREW

Are you here for the audition?

Andrew hits a quick riff on the drums. He's damn good.

MILES

Look, Jacki, it's the new dude.

JACKI

Middle name rude.

Miles and Jacki throw music riffs back and forth.

ANDREW

Guys, we do need a singer...

MILES

A hemorrhoid needs an ass but don't mean they make good partners.

TYLER

I wouldn't waste my time on amateurs.

Ty starts out.

JACKI

Oh no, he did not...!

MILES

Wait, wait, what's that, your Selection Form?

Miles takes a quick look and sees all the cross-offs.

MILES

Not having much luck, are you?

ANDREW

Gotta pick something or you F-A-I-L.

Andrew pounds some beats to accentuate that.

The classroom door is still open. Hollis walks past, strolling the hallways. His eyes meet Ty's as he passes. Miles sees the desperation in Ty, and smirks...

MILES

This is the last room in the hallway unless you wanna wear a tutu.

Miles hands him a microphone and goes back to the keyboards.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MILES

What song d'you know? Don't tell me a
fine white boy like you don't at least
yodel in the shower?

Ty steams. He doesn't like being played like this.

MILES

How 'bout Bizkit? D'you know any Limp
Bizkit?

Andrew rips off a riff.

MILES

Or something softer, like Nora Jones?

Jacki's fingers fly up the guitar in a jazz riff.

MILES

There's always my boy Kanye.

Miles tears up the keyboard, showing off. Andrew and Jacki
segue right in. These guys are like a machine. Andrew and
Jacki stop, Miles keeps playing a suspense like riff.

MILES

What's the matter? Feeling insecure?

Ty just stands there, his hand trembles.

ANGIE

(interrupting)

Let me guess?

Ty turns. She's standing at the door.

ANGIE (cont'd)

Somebody called Miles an "amateur?"

Miles grins. He's enjoying this.

MILES

(to Tyler)

C'mon. Don't you know something?
Anything?

ANGIE

Not one song...?

All eyes on Ty. Angie smirks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ANGIE
Tough break, rookie.

Angie takes off her shoes to enter her ballet rehearsal.

Ty has to save face...

TYLER
(into microphone)
Annggie!

She turns to him... and just then, it's like time slows...

... as Miles hears something. It surprises him, it intrigues him. He looks quickly for the sheet music...

TYLER
Have lunch with me tomorrow, on the
roof?

ANGIE
Only if you're jumping.

MILES
(singing)
Angie.

Miles hands the sheet to Ty and nods to Jacki, who begins to play The Rolling Stones' "Angie."

JACKI
Angie.

ANGIE
Look, guys, I'm busy, I have
rehearsal, I have an audition tonight,
okay?

Miles nods to Ty. Do it.

TYLER
When will those clouds all disappear?

Angie stares. Mad, embarrassed, and unsure what to do...

MILES
With no loving in our souls...

The tune funks up. It's the original - remix style.

TYLER
And no money in our coats...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

His voice over the amplifier fills the hallway, his voice nervous, but soothing. He can't sing with a great range, but the boy's got natural soul.

TYLER

You can't say we're satisfied.

JACKI

Angie...

Miles and his crew keep playing. Ty didn't expect to connect like this, to the song, to the moment. To her.

TYLER

*All the dreams we held so close
Seemed to all go up in smoke...*

Doors in the hallway begin to open. Claudio pokes his head out. So does Patti, and Trevor. Other dancers.

MILES

Let me whisper in your ear...

TYLER

Where will it lead us from here?

Angie shifts embarrassed. Everyone looks first at her, then they begin to crowd near the rehearsal room.

ON TYLER

Oblivious. He's hitting something, finding something. Miles continues to mix as he goes. It's part rap. Andrew picks up the beat keeping up.

TYLER

*There ain't a woman that comes close
to you...*

Brett exits from his door. Curious what's going on...

TYLER

C'mon, baby, dry your eyes.

Brett steps near. He does a double-check on Ty.

TYLER

*Angie, Angie...
Ain't it good to be alive.*

Miles hits the final few keys as the music ends. Ty realizes everyone's watching him... then they break into

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

applause, all but Brett. Angie slips from the crowd to enter her rehearsal room.

Ty tries to play it off... but he feels humbled.

EXT. BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - LATE AFTERNOON

Ty climbs on his bike when Miles, Jacki, and Andrew hurry near.

ANDREW

You ride that? Wow. Mom would never let me near one of those.

TYLER

What mama don't know...

MILES

Your shit was dope in there, T., you've got a good voice.

TYLER

I was just screwing around.

He starts to crank the bike, when Miles hands him a CARD.

MILES

Screw around with us some more. I mean it, you were good.

That's something Ty never hears. He reads the card.

TYLER

"Lethal Records?"

MILES

I intern there, gives us free studio time and access to equipment. We'll hit it 'soon as we get you broke in.

JACKI

He means in tune.

Just then, Angie's sporty, red LEXUS rolls out. She tries not to look at Ty. She looks.

TYLER

What's the deal with her and the Backside Boy?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MILES

He's the ex who still wants her sex.
Every guy in the school -

JACKI

- and some girls.

MILES

Likes, has liked, or will like, Angie.

ANDREW

(heartbroken)

Some of us since third grade.

MILES

Her'n Brett take all AP courses and
make straight A's.

JACKI

Her mom's one of our most famous
alumni, she even danced with
Baryshnikov.

TYLER

"What mama don't know..."

Ty grins, and rips away on the bike.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

A smoky bar. Tyler throws darts with Mac, Skinny and Randy
play a table top soccer game alongside.

MAC

You sang?!

Mac's laughing his ass off.

TYLER

Well, yeah. They said I was good.

Ty shrugs. And smiles awkwardly.

MAC

I'm sorry, man, I love you'n shit,
but... you suck! They're probably
making a joke of you 'cause you
trashed their school.

TYLER

You mean we trashed it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Ty steps past Mac to throw a dart.

MAC
Chill, I'm just messing with you.

TYLER
Nobody knows it was me, anyway.

He throws another. It's Mac's turn.

TYLER
But you never know. It might be MTV,
here I come. Rock stars score all the
chicks.

MAC
(deadpan)
Yeah, and I'll be your roadie.

Mac throws his dart. Ty just stands there.

INT. BALTIMORE ARENA - NIGHT

Hundreds of teen girls loosen up, the girls dressed in leotards and wearing numbers on their backs. Angie wears the number "93." Other dancers from the school warm up beside her, they are: LUCY, a thin, leggy girl, and her friends, NINA and SANDY.

LUCY
The new guy is hot.

ANGIE
So's wet tar and it smells.

LUCY
With our luck, every new guy in our
school turns out gay.

ANGIE
He's not gay, trust me. He couldn't
keep his eyes off my chest.

LUCY
Why...?

Lucy means her boobs are bigger. The girls laugh.

ANGIE
Bitch!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHOREOGRAPHER
First positions, please!

The JUDGES take seats in the audience. Angie takes a breath.

THE AUDITIONS BEGIN

Classical music plays. The girls dance nimble ballet steps. Angie is technically proficient, she knows every step and performs each with ease. Lucy is flashier.

The CHOREOGRAPHER weaves among the girls, observing as she goes. She stops near Angie and watches her, with Lucy dancing right behind her.

CHOREOGRAPHER
One, two, three, four!

Here comes the big finale. It's a series of moves designed to make the girls fall. Many do.

Angie and Lucy keep going along with the best of the rest. They're sweating.

Angie's arms high above her head, she lifts her leg there, too. Other dancers do the same.

The music ends and the Judges quickly confer while the girls catch their breath.

LEAD JUDGE
Okay, everyone, listen for your number
for callbacks:
(reading from his list)
8. 17. 22...

If a dancer's number is called, he or she is ecstatic. If not, they wait like Angie. And wait...

LEAD JUDGE (cont'd)
46. 59. And 90.

Lucy shrieks. She is number "90."

LEAD JUDGE
The rest of you are excused, thank you
for your time.

Angie sighs in defeat and begins off-stage with the others.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CHOREOGRAPHER
(to Angie)
Keep working at it.

Angie forces a smile and continues away.

EXT. ANGIE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Immaculate, gated and nice. Angie's car pulls up. She takes a moment alone before climbing out.

INT. ANGIE'S HOUSE - DINING TABLE - NIGHT

An arty house with antiques and high taste. Her father, TIMOTHY, 40s, an attorney, sits at the head of the table...

Her mother, PAMELA, 40s, lithe and attractive, next to him.

ANGIE
(entering)
Sorry. Everything ran late.

At the end of the table sits Angie's kid-sister, NATALIE, 11, with dark hair and a rebellious 'tude.

NATALIE
How'd it go?

Angie loads her plate.

ANGIE
Is Denny's hiring? That's where I'm headed.

PAMELA
I heard. Charlene called.

Mom always knows first...

ANGIE
She wasn't there?

PAMELA
She knows the choreographer. It's a business, you have to remember that. You never know what they're looking for.

ANGIE
They were looking at Lucy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NATALIE
Boobs-On-a-Stick?

PAMELA
Lucy is very talented.

TIMOTHY
Hard workers, that's what everyone
wants, no matter what their field.

ANGIE
Sometimes I wonder why I bother. I
mean, if I can't make callbacks here
in Baltimore, how will I ever survive
New York?

PAMELA
With that negativity, you already know
the answer.

NATALIE
(to Angie)
Menudu called.

PAMELA
Brett wanted to know how your audition
went.

ANGIE
I'm sure the word's already out.

INT. HALLWAY - BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - MORNING

Lucy is laughing hard to several other students.

LUCY
She thought my pirouette was perfect!

Angie walks past and tries to force a smile. It's hard. She
stops at her locker to open it, when Tyler starts twirling
the combination to the locker next to hers.

TYLER
Hey.

She glances his "coolness" up and down.

ANGIE
"Hey."

He tries to look cooler.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGIE
That's not your locker.

TYLER
I traded up. Hope I didn't embarrass
you too badly yesterday.

He leans closer.

ANGIE
So what's our song for today? "The
New Kid in Town?"

TYLER
No. But I might have a few other
moves. So how'd your audition go?

Her sense of fun melts. She turns back to her locker.

ANGIE
Don't rub it in.

TYLER
Rub what it in...?

ANGIE
Okay. Your song was cute, but I'm
very busy. These are my final few
weeks of school, then I leave for New
York. So good luck, have a good life,
and I'm sorry, but I'm not going out
with you.

She offers her hand for a handshake. He stares at it.

TREVOR
(interrupting)
Excuse me...?

Trevor steps behind Ty. Trevor's still a little scared from
the body slam.

TREVOR (cont'd)
Um, that's my locker?

Angie looks at Ty. He shrugs.

TYLER
I offered him ten bucks, he turned it
down.

She slams her locker and walks away. Ty watches her go.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Brett watches Ty, and he's not happy.

INT. HALLWAY - BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - MORNING

The last students enter their classrooms as Ty approaches his. But Brett and his crew await.

BRETT

Got a sec?

Ty sizes them up. *It's him versus four guys...*

TYLER

'N Sync wants their wardrobe back.

BRETT

A guy like you could never understand Angie, how hard she works, how much she sacrifices. You think this is easy, don't you? You think we just show up, dance around, and make a music video, but we work our asses off.

TYLER

And I'm real impressed.

Kris Tina opens the classroom door.

KRIS TINA

Class has started, gentlemen.

Ty starts past Brett, but Brett grabs his arm.

BRETT

We're going to succeed, something you obviously know nothing about.

Ty shoves Brett away.

KRIS TINA

Okay, enough...

Brett shoves Ty - when Ty ducks his shoulder and slams Brett into the wall. Both tumble to the ground. Brett's pals try to pull Ty off, but Ty keeps going.

Kris Tina gets in the middle of it - she twists a couple arms to clear the pile, till she gets shoved aside herself.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Hollis and the Security Guard hurry down the hallway and pull Ty away. Kris Tina wipes her lip.

KRIS TINA
Brett threw the first punch.

INT. WAITING AREA - MR. HOLLIS ALDEN'S OFFICE - MID-MORNING

Quiet. Brett sits on one side, Tyler the other. Brett sneers. Ty flips him off and looks out the window.

INT. MR. HOLLIS ALDEN'S OFFICE - MID-DAY

Kris Tina closes Tyler's file. She's mad.

KRIS TINA
He caused all that damage? And I cut him slack his first day.

HOLLIS
So what do we do? Call the Judge and have him removed?

Her eyes gleam with a plan.

KRIS TINA
No. Let me have a crack at him.

INT. DRAMA CLASSROOM - MORNING

The class settles into their seats as Tyler takes the stage with Trevor. Trevor holds a pair of nerdy, geeky glasses for a scene. Kris Tina places both actors in starting positions.

KRIS TINA
You're here, and Tyler, the glasses are for you.

She takes them from Trevor and hands them to him.

TYLER
Nah, no way.

KRIS TINA
Trevor, you are playing the imposing, arrogant, thinks-he-knows-it-all guy from across the tracks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TREVOR

Cool!

KRIS TINA

Tyler: You're the guy he picks on.
Glasses, please.

Ty slides them on. The class laughs. He takes them off.

KRIS TINA

Put them back on, and plant it in the
chair.

Ty sits in the stage chair like he always sits, his arm slung
back, leg kicked out...

KRIS TINA

Bring your feet together.

She helps "adjust" him by clenching his knees in.

KRIS TINA

And hunch over.

She shoves him over. The class giggles again.

KRIS TINA

Do not move from that position. What
do you think, class, how cool is he
now?

They roar in laughter. Angie can't help but grin.

KRIS TINA

See, Tyler, we're about to break down
that image you have of yourself.

(leans near him)

It's not easy here, child, and it's
not any easier out there.

She goes to her seat.

KRIS TINA

Let's take it from the top.

If Kris Tina looks like she's enjoying this... she is.

INT. HALLWAY - BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - MORNING

As class separates, Tyler passes everyone in a huff.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Angie watches him go. Her eyes find Brett's. She looks away.

INT. FREEFORM REHEARSAL ROOM - AFTERNOON

The clock ticks. Miles, Jacki, and Andrew wait, and wait...

JACKI
He's not showing.

MILES
Screw him, I gotta go to work.

Miles gathers his things to leave.

ANDREW
I wonder where he is...?

EXT. GOLF DRIVING RANGE - SAME TIME - AFTERNOON

Mac lines up for a shot. Tyler swigs a beer wrapped in a brown paper bag. He's playing with Randy, Skinny, and Mac.

TYLER
I can't take it there, man.

MAC
So quit, you're seventeen.
(aiming his shot)
Honda. Blue.

Mac whacks the golf ball, but he's not aiming at the green, he's aiming at cars in the parking lot. There's a blue Honda CRV. The ball misses.

MAC
Aw, so close!

Ty lines up for his shot.

TYLER
I dunno, man, I can't quit.

SKINNY
You turned into one of them, dude!

TYLER
Shut up.
(lining up his shot)
The Accord.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He swings. WHACK. The ball sails - SMACK! Right off the Accord's windshield.

DRIVING RANGE MANAGER
(interrupting)
I warned you kids! Give me my clubs!

The hefty DRIVING RANGE MANAGER comes waddling near.

TYLER
What clubs?

He fakes left with the club, then right and throws it to Mac.

The guys laugh, the hefty guy gives chase. Mac throws the club in air and the guys break away running.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DRIVING RANGE - AFTERNOON

The guys slam the final brews as they walk to Mac's ride.

MAC
For real, man, you're seventeen. They
can't force you to go to school.

RANDY
(pointing)
LOOK!!

THREE YOUNG TOUGHS, each barely 16-years old, are trying to steal the hubcaps off Mac's car.

MAC
You shits!!

The Young Toughs run. Mac, Ty, Skinny, and Randy break into pursuit. The chase is on. The Toughs' feet move in a blur, over cracked asphalt and broken bottles. They race alongside a chain-link fence.

Ty and gang are even faster. Ty grabs the sweatshirt hood of one Tough and slams him against the fence.

TYLER
Where d'you think you're going??

The Tough swings a knife. Its blade nicks Ty's cheek.

TYLER
Son-of-a-bitch!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Randy throws his shoulder into the Tough's gut. Enraged, Ty grabs the guy's arm and slams it against the fence over and over till the blade falls to the ground. Ty kicks it away then goes to work with Randy on this guy, punching and kicking him.

The other two Toughs begin to scurry over the fence - but Mac grabs one of their legs...

MAC

Get your ass back down here!

Mac pulls him hard to the ground.

MAC

That's my car!!

Mac kicks him in the gut. Skinny joins in.

SKINNY

That's his car!

Ty lets the Tough he and Randy are wailing on go.

TYLER

Go on, get the hell outta here!

The young Tough staggers away.

The guy Mac was working over breaks free and takes off, too. Mac hurls a beer bottle after him. It misses.

MAC

And tell your friend I'm looking for
his ass, too!

Mac grabs another bottle and throws it...

This one hits a CAR, shattering its windshield. The ALARM starts wailing.

The guys go quiet. They look at each other.

MAC

A hole in one!

The CAR OWNER hurries from the driving range.

CAR OWNER

Hey!? What the hell??

The guys dive in Mac's car.

INT. MAC'S MONTE CARLO - MOVING - AFTERNOON

As the car rips away, Skinny and Randy in the backseat laugh their asses off - and moon the car owner as they go.

Ty sits in the front seat, blood on his cheek. He stops laughing, his eyes go still.

CLOSE ON TY

He looks at his buddies... and can't help but wonder what the hell he's doing here.

INT. ENGLISH CLASS - BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - MORNING

Tyler sits in the back of the class, a band-aid on his cheek. He sees Miles a few rows over, ignoring him...

MRS. LOWRY, 40s, English teacher, walks the rows, returning written reports. Brett's paper is a "A," Angie's an "A."

MRS. LOWRY
Some of you should spend less time
entertaining and more time studying.

Ty's paper is a "C."

Mrs. Lowry hands Miles his. A bright red "D" on it, with a notation, "MINUS 20% FOR BEING LATE." Ty spots it...

MRS. LOWRY
Don't forget your final papers are
due. No paper means no final show.

INT. HALLWAY - BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - MORNING

After class, Tyler hurries to catch up to Miles and Jacki.

TYLER
Hey, we rehearsing today or what?

MILES
What part of "yesterday at 2:30 pm"
did you not understand?

TYLER
I had some shit I hadda do.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MILES

What a coincidence, I got shit to do today. It's called audition a singer.

Miles and Jacki walk away. Angie sees it all.

EXT. PAWN SHOP - LATE AFTERNOON

Ty stops his bike in front.

INT. PAWN SHOP - LATE AFTERNOON

Ty enters. His father works behind the counter, handing a CUSTOMER cash for some speakers.

RICHARD

Don't spend it all at once.

Dad puts the speakers away next to a long row of guitars.

RICHARD

(to Tyler)

Another would be rock'n roller bites the dust, huh? Pull up a seat, I wanna talk to you.

TYLER

It couldn't wait till tonight?

Dad joins him by the counter.

RICHARD

I finally used that internet thing. Bob helped me print some stuff out.

Dad drops a stack of papers in front of his son. They read "BALTIMORE TECH." It's an application.

RICHARD

They offer 'bout any trade you could want: Mechanics, welding, you name it. And you'll qualify with a high school diploma.

Ty sinks.

TYLER

I dunno.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RICHARD

What's to know? You don't have the
brains or grades for college.

(checks his watch)

Hey, pull the gate down, would ya?
It's time to close up.

Ty pulls the gate down. He SEES his reflection in the
window, against the shop's lock and bars.

INT. SCENE SHOP - BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - AFTERNOON

Students busily work in paint clothes as Hollis strolls past.
Backdrops, signs, banners, etc., being created...

HOLLIS

Good work, everyone, good work. We
have four weeks till the show.

Angie paints a backdrop. She wears paint-splattered overalls
with the legs rolled up. Then:

TYLER

Hollis said you'd show me what to do.

He holds two buckets of red.

ANGIE

And how much did you pay him?

He joins her, watching what she does and trying to copy.

ANGIE

Use more green around the edge.

TYLER

So what d'you think of our band?

ANGIE

You got kicked out after one day,
that's what I think.

TYLER

Will you help me get back in?

She gives him a look.

TYLER

I'm gonna go see Miles tonight, at his
studio. You know him, right? Maybe
you could influence him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGIE

To do what, let you make a fool of him again? You don't take this serious, you don't take us serious.

TYLER

I gotta do something in the show and Miles needs a singer, I'd be helping both of us. I gotta do something. Please.

He's talking about a hell of a lot more than just the gig. She senses it, but still:

ANGIE

I'm sorry, but I told you. I'm busy.

She goes back to work. He absorbs her a beat.

TYLER

Give me a break, would you? And maybe cut yourself one, too.

He puts the paint away. She stares after him... and is somewhat bothered by what he just said.

EXT. LETHAL RECORDS - NIGHT

A brick building, a little flashy for this street. Ty climbs off his bike, to find Angie leaning against her car.

ANGIE

I'm only here in case he tries to kill you. I plan to do it myself.

INT. LOBBY - LETHAL RECORDS - NIGHT

Ty and Angie enter. Miles slips from behind the desk to greet Angie, kiss her cheek, and ignore Ty.

MILES

Great to see you, Ang. And what does he want?

ANGIE

To apologize. Don't you?

TYLER

Yeah.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They wait for that apology.

TYLER
I'm sorry I blew you off, all right?

Miles thinks a beat, then leads them down a corridor.

MILES
We scored a free studio, the group
that reserved it no-showed.

INT. STUDIO - LETHAL RECORDS - NIGHT

We're not in any studio an A-List recording artist would use,
but this one's still pretty fine. Ty follows Miles in, Angie
right behind.

MILES
Sixty-four track, soundproof booth,
microphones, turntables, cart machine,
CD, DVD, MP3, we got it all.

Ty grabs a microphone and sings into the White Stripes:

TYLER
*Back and forth through my mind
Behind a cigarette.*

MILES
Hold up, man!

Miles snatches the mic from him.

ANGIE
Bet that never happens to Fifty.

TYLER
So, uh, when do we rehearse?

MILES
Before we DO anything, you gotta have
some idea what you're DOING. So do
you? Have any idea?

TYLER
(shrugs)
Sure.

Miles turns up a pot. Mozart plays over the speakers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MILES

Hear that, that's Mozart, the man was genius. Listen to those layers.

Miles moves his hands to the rhythm.

MILES (cont'd)

It takes you away, to that place he hears.

TYLER

Only classical I dig is Zeppelin.

MILES

We have that, too.

He hits another deck. The intro to "Whole Lotta Love" from Led Zeppelin plays. Ty's impressed.

MILES

What d'you hear?

TYLER

Jimmy Page tearing it up. Robert Plant joining him.

Ty bobs his head to the beat.

MILES

A whole lot more'n that's going on. Listen to the rhythm. Count it off.

Miles resets Led Zeppelin to the beginning.

MILES

One. Two. Three. Four. One. Two. Three...

On "FOUR," the guitar riff changes ever slightly.

MILES (cont'd)

One. Two. Three. Four. One. Two. Three...

On "four," Robert Plant's vocals kick in.

MILES

Let's take it back.

Miles turns another pot up and brings Led Zeppelin under. Tchaikovsky plays a soothing piano concerto.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ANGIE

I know this, it's Tchaikovsky, I
danced to it freshman year.

MILES

(to Tyler)

And what d'you hear? One. Two. Three.
Four.

On four, another key stroke gets added.

TYLER

Holy shit.

The piano solo dances in air, Led Zeppelin faintly under.

MILES

Is this weirding you out? 'Cause I'm
just getting started.

Miles the maestro moves on... another pot cranks. Then
another, every sound different... but the same.

MILES

It's in rockabilly, blues, a little
B.B. King from way Old School, to
today.

Eminem's "Lose Yourself" segues in with its first chorus.

MILES

One. Two. Three. Four.

On each four, Eminem hits a new line or punches a word hard.

MILES

And let's not forget jazz. Thelonius
Monk, John Coltrane...

Miles changes a pot and Miles Davis blows trumpet.

MILES (cont'd)

And Miles Davis. This is "Midnight
Blue," do you feel it?

Miles brings everything but Miles Davis down and slides
behind the mixing board, where he looks right at home...

MILES

Back in the day, jazz was the devil's
music, played in alleys and dark
clubs. It was sinful 'cause it was
(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MILES(cont'd)

sexual. Listen to that... that's not
about nothing but scoring with your
girl.

Ty grins. Feeling it now.

TYLER

One. Two...

MILES

You're slipping her onto the sofa.

TYLER

Three. Four...

MILES

Opening her blouse...

ANGIE

Her knee finds your groin.

TYLER

(to Angie)

Mood music.

Angie hisses.

ANGIE

She'd have to be in the mood.

Miles spins to the board. Miles Davis keeps playing.

MILES

Oh! Grab that mic, Ang, do that
hissing thing again.

She takes it, Miles readies.

MILES

Let's put a beat on this. Go.

ANGIE

(into mic)

Hssss.

Miles turns on a programmed drumbeat. It's too fast.

MILES

Nah, that's lame...

He takes a piece from "Whole Lotta Love," and slows it down.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

MILES

Hold up, here it is...

He slows it way down. He runs Angie's "hiss" under at intermitten points.

ON TY

The world seems to swirl around him as he drinks it in. Music and rhythm everywhere. His eyes opened to another world. Then, over the speakers, deep in reverb:

TYLER'S VOICE

*Back and forth through my mind
Behind a cigarette... rette...ret.*

Miles fades it all out. Ty stands in awe.

MILES

All right. If I give you a second chance...?

TYLER

I'm there, man. I won't let you down.

The door opens to interrupt.

MILES'S BOSS

Miles? Studio Three's ready to layoff some tracks.

EXT. LETHAL RECORDS - NIGHT

Tyler walks Angie to her car.

ANGIE

Miles works harder than anybody in the school. It's terrible what happened.

TYLER

What d'you mean?

ANGIE

Some jerks broke into the auditorium and trashed the place, most of the equipment was stuff he borrowed from here. He has to work extra nights to repay.

They've reached her car.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGIE (cont'd)
They even ripped up his DAT masters,
had to start his whole semester's work
over from scratch.

Ty just stands there numb.

ANGIE
I'd better go, I have a biology test
tomorrow.

TYLER
Wait.

She stops. *But he can't tell her the truth.*

TYLER
Got time for a walk?

She looks at her watch. She doesn't want to go, yet.

EXT. PARK - NIGHT

Tyler pops a can of Coke as they walk. She has one.

TYLER
So you're hitting The Big Apple?

ANGIE
I'm enrolled next fall at Tisch, but
I'm going up mid summer.

TYLER
"Tisch?" Yeah, that's a good one.

He has no clue what Tisch is.

ANGIE
Tisch is part of NYU, it's their arts
school. New York University?

TYLER
The "N" and "Y" gave that one away.

She's intrigued. He's not like anyone else at school.

ANGIE
What about you, are you going to
college?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TYLER
(with a smile)
Harvard. Ever heard of it?

ANGIE
Why are you at our school? Seniors
don't usually transfer in, and not two
months before school's out.

TYLER
I just... needed a change.

ANGIE
From what?

TYLER
I was going down a one way street.
Had to get off that road before the
dead end hit.

ANGIE
So your parents made you?

TYLER
My old man doesn't pay that much
attention.

ANGIE
What about your mom?

TYLER
She checked out long time ago.

ANGIE
Died?

TYLER
Left.

She sees his flash of vulnerability.

EXT. LETHAL RECORDS - NIGHT

Tyler walks Angie back to her car. She unlocks it.

TYLER
Good looking out for me tonight. You
being here helped.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGIE

You're the one that has to pull it off
now. Good night.

He watches her drive away.

INT. TYLER'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - LATE NIGHT

Moonlight and streetlight filters in. Tyler quietly opens the door. His dad sleeps in the chair. There's a faint SCRATCHING sound.

A record player was playing a LP, but it's reached the end. Ty lifts the needle. He SEES a box on the floor. He kneels beside it.

In the box are old PICTURES of him, as a little boy. ANOTHER PHOTO has his mother and father, both loving on their wedding day. Ty has her eyes, and he knows it. The wedding picture has a date: "JUNE 17."

TYLER

(to himself)
... that's today.

He looks back at his father, still asleep.

He puts the photo down, and lifts the LP cover. "THE BEST OF THE CAPTAIN AND TENNILLE." It says, "Featuring the worldwide smash 'Love Will Keep Us Together.'"

TYLER

Whatta crock.

INT. AUDITORIUM - BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - MID-DAY

Tyler enters along with the rest of the school. The entire floor is abuzz...

LUCY

What's the big announcement...?

Angie's nonchalantly looking around, till she sees Ty. She looks away. He doesn't.

MILES

(to Tyler)
I saw that. You and... ? Da-amn.

Brett saw it, too, and doesn't like it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Hollis steps behind a microphone, Kris Tina beside him.

HOLLIS

Could we have everyone's attention,
please? First off, we're happy to
say, the auditorium is fully repaired
from the damage. The show is on!

Everyone claps and cheers. Ty looks bothered.

HOLLIS

And we have one other announcement.

Brett looks smug and confident...

HOLLIS (cont'd)

I got a call this morning from Stan
Turner. Stan created a tv show called
Tomorrow's Stars a few years back.

Hushed excitement over everyone.

HOLLIS (cont'd)

He's touring performing arts schools
on the east coast to help launch a new
show. Stan is good friends with
Brett's agent.

A few cheers. Brett steps to the mic.

BRETT

Hope it doesn't make any of you too
nervous!

A few laughs. Brett high-fives with his buddies.

MOMENTS LATER - AS THE STUDENTS FILE OUT

Brett walks past Ty, and tosses him a towel.

BRETT

Hang onto this. It's gonna be worth
bank one day.

Ty gets ready to slug him, but Miles holds him back.

MILES

All it means is we've got work to do.

INT. FREEFORM REHEARSAL ROOM - AFTERNOON

Jacki's FINGERS tear up the electric guitar. She's not doing a rock'n roll riff, but a classical sound.

Tyler watches in amazement as she ends it.

TYLER
How the hell'd you do that?

JACKI
It all starts with the basics.

MILES
Which is where you're gonna start today. Pull up a seat, welcome to "Lead Singer in a Band 101." Somebody get this man a pen.

Andrew hands him pen and paper. Miles sits across from Ty.

MILES
First lesson, ready? Put this down.
(then)
"Doe. Rae. Me."

TYLER
Doe who?

ANDREW
Didn't you see "Sound of Music?"

MILES
Write that down, that shit dates back to Mozart and Bach.

TYLER
"Doe, rae, me?"

MILES
No, no, no. It's "Doe. Rae. Me."
(to Andrew and Jacki)
Don't leave me hanging.

JACKI
"Doe. Rae. Me." LYLE
"Doe. Rae. Me."

MILES
(back to Tyler)
All right, go. With feeling.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TYLER
Dooe...?

MILES
Like you mean it.

TYLER
Raaae...?

MILES
I don't feel nothing.

TYLER
Meeee.

MILES
You got balls in them pants or not?

TYLER
Dooooooooe...

MILES
Grab hold of 'em. Do one of them
Michael Jackson crotch grabs.

Miles stands up. Grabs his own crotch.

TYLER
Raaaeeee...

MILES
On your feet. Hold them nuts!

Ty stands. Grabs his own crotch.

TYLER
Meeeeeeeeeee!

Angie walks past the door. She sees him with his hand on his
nuts. He tries to play it off and "adjust" himself.

ANGIE
Glad to see you're enjoying yourself.

INT. TYLER'S APARTMENT - LATE EVENING

Tyler is putting dishes away at the kitchen sink.

TYLER
"Doe. Rae. Me. Doe. Rae. Me..."

INT. TYLER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Tyler sits at his desk doing homework.

TYLER
"Doe. Rae. Me."
(again, with feeling...)
"Doe. Rae. MEEEEEE."

Dad stops at his door, and shakes his head in disbelief.

MONTAGE:

INT. FREEFORM REHEARSAL ROOM - AFTERNOON

Ty sings into the microphone. He's too close and they get awful feedback. Miles adjusts the distance.

INT. DRAMA CLASSROOM - DAY

Ty still works on the "nerd" scene with Trevor.

Angie bites her tongue to keep from laughing.

INT. FREEFORM REHEARSAL ROOM - EVENING

Miles shows Ty how to hold an ACOUSTIC GUITAR.

Jacki shows him how to move his fingers.

Angie walks past to enter the Dance Rehearsal Room. Ty watches her go.

INT. DANCE REHEARSAL ROOM - NIGHT

Angie works on her routine. She falls. Sitting on the ground she blows the hair from her eyes.

Lucy practices across from her. Lucy is perfect.

EXT. STREET CORNER - DAY

Ty helps some movers unload a moving van. He's sweaty, dirty, the muscles in his arms bulge.

At the end of the work day, the FOREMAN hands him CASH.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FOREMAN

If you ever wanna sell that bike.

TYLER

Keep dreaming. See you next weekend.

INT. USED MUSIC SHOP - NIGHT

Ty pays cash for a well-used ACOUSTIC GUITAR.

INT. TYLER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

He practices with the guitar. His fingers hurt.

INT. TYLER'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Under the faucet, Ty rinses blood from his fingertips.

EXT. PARKING LOT - BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - MORNING

Ty arrives. He SEES Brett climbing from his Escalade SUV. Brett reaches in the back of his ride, and pulls out a brand new, five hundred dollar electric guitar.

INT. FREEFORM REHEARSAL ROOM - AFTERNOON

Ty holds the microphone. He's getting better with it. The band is beginning to jam now.

END MONTAGE

INT. SCENE SHOP - BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - AFTERNOON

Tyler helps Angie stand one flat against another. Other students busily work around them.

TYLER

So now what d'you think of our band?

ANGIE

Miles is great, Jacki, too. Andrew rocks.

TYLER

And...?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGIE
You're okay.

TYLER
"Okay?"

She bites back a grin.

ANGIE
You need to work on your stage
movement. Have you seen yourself? I
mean, you just stand there.

She pokes her gut out and pretends to hold a microphone.

EXT. LOADING DOCK - AUDITORIUM - AFTERNOON

The kids take a break from painting flats to have a dance
off. A few break-dancers compete against some jazz kids.
Other students provide the beat by pounding trash cans or
stomping the steps.

Angie watches, feeling the groove. Ty steps beside her.

TYLER
So give me some pointers. I gotta
represent the school, right? I'd hate
to embarrass you. Again. I know this
club. See you at eight?

She's about to say yes, when...

HOLLIS
(interrupting)
Angie, look who's here...

Hollis nears with Angie's Mom. Angie gets nervous.

ANGIE
Mom...?

PAMELA
I have a surprise for you.

HOLLIS
"Surprise," she's checking up on us.
(to the kids)
One more dance then back to it!

PAMELA
I landed tickets for tonight.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Pamela flashes TICKETS.

ANGIE
I thought they were sold out?

PAMELA
I called in a favor.

BRETT
(interrupting)
Hi, Pamela, good to see you.

Brett walks past, twisting his ballcap to the side. He stops to kiss her cheek, then continues on to join the dance off. He starts and he's already on fire.

PAMELA
Hi, Brett, woo! Looking good!

Ty's still just standing there like a world apart.

PAMELA
Oh, hi. I'm Pamela, Angie's mother.
We're going to the National Ballet.

TYLER
Cool.

Ty nods and smiles nervously.

PAMELA
And you are...?

TYLER
Oh, Tyler, how you doing?

Ty offers his hand. Mom takes it, but her eyes find Angie's. Angie kind of smiles.

PAMELA
And what year are you?

ANGIE
Senior. He's new.

PAMELA
Oh, great. Where did you transfer from?

Ty doesn't like to feel on the spot.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

TYLER
Lake Clifton.

PAMELA
I don't know that one...?

TYLER
It's kinda past downtown a ways.

Mom forces a smile. Angie winces.

TYLER
Your daughter, ma'am, she'll be in that ballet one day. Me, if I could do one thing as good as she dances, I would be set for life. But you know that, you're her mother. I mean, you know that part about her, not about me. Me, I'm a singer. Um, I'm gonna grab a flat.

He darts away. Mom stands there a beat, till...

BRETT
(to Pam)
He was "interesting," huh?

Brett wipes sweat, a grin on his face.

ANGIE
(to Brett)
Give it a rest.

Angie turns to reenter. Mom watches her go. Concerned.

INT. ANGIE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Angie's Dad pulls on his sports jacket and heads out the door, keys jingling.

TIMOTHY
We're three minutes behind!

Mom and Angie come down the steps, each wearing nice dresses as they adjust their earrings.

ANGIE
He's nice, he's different.

PAMELA
But that boy's not for you. Wait...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Mom swaps Angie's necklace for another one and adjusts it.

ANGIE

Can I for once decide something?

PAMELA

So he's the new boy, all the girls are buzzing about him, I remember what that's like. But you leave for college in a few months, you don't need the distraction.

(meaning the necklace)

That looks better.

ANGIE

Maybe I want a distraction.

PAMELA

Focus weeds out the weak. Natalie!

ANGIE

I'm not you.

PAMELA

Excuse me...?

ANGIE

That's all you want. You push me and want me perfect.

PAMELA

You can be perfect. Natalie, let's go!

ANGIE

But I'm not! I got a "B" in geometry and changed it on my report card, did you know that?

PAMELA

My rebellious daughter, and yes, I know, I'm on the School Board.

ANGIE

And I'm not a virgin, either!

Oops...

ANGIE

God. Uh, I'll be in the car.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Angie walks out. Mom just stands there. Natalie walks from the kitchen wearing blue jeans and a t-shirt.

PAMELA
(still stunned)
... she's not a virgin.

NATALIE
Yeah, I know.

Natalie walks past Mom, too.

INT. TYLER'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Tyler enters with his guitar slung over his back... he finds Dad wringing a bloodied towel out in the kitchen sink, his face bruised.

TYLER
Shit, what happened?

RICHARD
Some asshole didn't like my offer.

Ty hands him a fresh towel packed with ice.

TYLER
You seen a doctor?

RICHARD
Why, to let him tell me my jaw's numb?
It's nine o'clock, where've you been?

TYLER
We hadda rehearsal.

RICHARD
Those school forms are still blank.

Dad's put them on the counter. "BALTIMORE TECH."

RICHARD
So what're you waiting for?

TYLER
It's just... I'm doing something, you know, that I've never done.

RICHARD
What the hell're you talking about?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TYLER
I'm a singer. In a band.

RICHARD
You're shitting me, right?

TYLER
I'm even learning to play guitar.

RICHARD
All right, listen. I know you have to do this "show" thing, right? So just do it and let it go. Don't get attached to some dream.

TYLER
The guys I'm jamming with think I'm good.

Dad pats the "BALTIMORE TECH" stack.

RICHARD
This is your reality.

TYLER
But when have I ever been good at something?!

RICHARD
Christ, I've heard it all now.

TYLER
You haven't heard me.

RICHARD
What are gonna do next year, Tyler - d'you want my job? That's where you're headed.

TYLER
I'm trying to figure out what I want!

RICHARD
Is that between the DWI, vandalism, and everything else?

TYLER
You've never believed in anything I do.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

RICHARD

Pull your head outta your goddamn ass,
would you?

TYLER

I could just leave, would that make
you happy?

RICHARD

And now you wanna leave? I love it.

TYLER

I could!

RICHARD

There's the door - where are you
going??

TYLER

I'm seventeen, anywhere I want.

RICHARD

And you're gonna live off what,
"playing guitar?"

TYLER

I have a job on the weekends!

RICHARD

Do you make enough to pay rent, buy
food, utilities??

TYLER

It's always about money for you.

RICHARD

Wake up - everything's about money!

TYLER

And you never had enough to keep Mom
around, did you??

RICHARD

I didn't leave her - she goddamn left
me!!

TYLER

She left us!

That hits hard, for both of them. Ty storms to his room.

INT. TYLER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

He stuffs his belongings in a duffel bag.

INT. TYLER'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Ty slams out, his bag and guitar over his shoulder. He's too angry to cry, but the tears are close. His father sits down in his chair.

EXT. STREET CORNER - NIGHT

The wind blows. Tyler dials on a pay phone.

MILES (V.O.)
Lethal Records?

Music pulses through the phone...

TYLER
Hey, it's me. Mind if I drop by the studio and hang?

MILES (V.O.)
I'm too in the weeds, we got three groups shuffling in'n out tonight...
(to someone else)
Put your login sheets there.
(back to Tyler)
I gotta go, catch you later.

Miles hangs up. A beat... Ty pulls a piece of paper from his pocket, and dials the number on it.

ANGIE (V.O.)
Hi, it's Angie, you've reached my cell. Leave a message.

He hangs up. He slides his headphones on and starts walking.

EXT. SIDEWALK - NIGHT

Tyler walks with a beer in hand. The lights of the city and buildings surround him. Then, a HORN blows. He doesn't hear it from the headphones. It blows again - and Mac's Monte Carlo pulls in front of him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAC
Haven't seen you in a while, bro.
And he's not happy about it.

INT. MAC'S MONTE CARLO - MOVING - NIGHT

Ty rides beside Mac, as Skinny and Randy pass a joint.

MAC
What about pretzel girl? Couldn't you
crash with her?

TYLER
They don't have the room.

Mac knows he's lying.

MAC
You don't have her home number, do
you? What'd she give you, her cell?
(mocking)
"And don't call me after nine-thirty?"

Ty shrugs.

MAC
Some of 'em are just out of our
league, bro.

SKINNY
What you need is another brew.

Skinny passes Ty one and pops one for himself.

SKINNY
On three. One. Two. Three!

Skinny starts guzzling. Ty takes a sip.

RANDY
Go, go, go!

Skinny finishes.

SKINNY
Dude, I kicked your ass, you didn't
even get started! BURP!!

Ty looks back out the window.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAC
You looked pissed.

TYLER
There's this one jerk off, thinks he
owns the school.

SKINNY
Let's go get him, beat his ass!

MAC
Lean back, you're spilling beer on me!
(then to Tyler)
Is he there now? At the school?

Mac grins. "Should we?" A beat... Ty grins back.

TYLER
Doing his two step spin'n shit.

Ty takes a big sip of beer. Mac turns the car around.

EXT. BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - NIGHT

Mac's Monte Carlo squeals to a stop. The foursome climb out.

SKINNY
I get first swing after Ty.

Sitting in front of the school, waiting, is Miles.

MILES
T.? 'Sup...?

Miles takes a look at the other three guys.

SKINNY
Is this him?

TYLER
No. Uh, this is Miles, he's cool.
Miles, Mac, Skinny, Randy.

MAC
'Sup?

Mac offers his hand. Miles takes it, his eyes on Ty.

MILES
Things settled down at work, thought I
might catch you here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TYLER

(to Mac)

Look, what we were talking about in the car? Forget it.

MAC

Your call?

Mac looks at Ty. A bond has changed, and they both know it.

TYLER

Later, man.

Mac's Monte Carlo rips away, Ty's bag and guitar left on the curb. Ty and Miles wait...

MILES

Your friends? Just showing 'em around?

TYLER

Yeah, just kicking it.

The beat hangs. Miles doesn't buy it, but doesn't ask more.

MILES

You hungry?

TYLER

(relieved)

Starved.

INT. MILES'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The door flings open, Miles leads Tyler in.

MILES

Yo, I brought comp'ny!

Miles's mother, YVONNE, 40, greets them.

MILES

T., this is my Moms.

YVONNE

Welcome to our home.

Miles's THREE LITTLE BROTHERS are in the living room. The oldest works at a coffee table doing his homework, the other two are playing on a folded-out hide-a-bed in their pajamas, doing a WWF impersonation.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

YVONNE
(to the boys)
Thelonius - let Coltrane breathe,
you're gonna kill him!

Ty looks at Miles...?

MILES
Oldest there, that's Duke, he's ten.

Miles's sister, NINA, 14, walks in.

NINA
I'm Nina.

MILES
For Simone. Mom loves her jazz.

FIFTEEN MINUTES LATER:

Miles and Ty finish leftover soul food next to Duke, still
working on his homework.

MILES
What'cha you got there, homey?

DUKE
A math test tomorrow. I keep getting
the wrong answer.

Miles quickly scans his paper.

MILES
You forgot to carry the two.

Yvonne enters, grabbing her keys. She's wearing a night crew
cleaning uniform.

YVONNE
Get in bed early, hear?

The kids AD-LIB GOOD-BYES as Yvonne leaves.

MILES
Dad got sick 'bout ten years ago. He
smoked too much and partied too hard.
He was a horn blower, knew all the
greats, even played alongside Miles
Davis once. What's your old man do?

TYLER
Rides my ass, mostly.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The rest is unsaid, but Miles hears it clearly. Miles puts their plates up.

MILES
We need an original song for the show.

TYLER
Isn't that what you do, write stuff?

MILES
Mixing and sampling, that's not the same. My music needs fresh lyrics.

TYLER
Don't look at me.

MILES
I'm just saying, it sounds like you might have something to say.

Ty never thought of it that way.

MILES
Be honest with yourself, and let it flow. See what you come up with.

NINA
(interrupting)
Miles, the sink's clogged again.

She pokes her head from the bathroom, her hair in curlers and a green mud pack on her face.

MILES
That's cause you brushed your nappy head over it when I told you not to.

Ty's leaving, but looks back. Miles is already helping Duke with his homework. Miles's own books untouched.

EXT. STREET - TYLER'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Tyler walks up to the building. He SEES the window, and the faint-blue glow of the television.

He pulls up his jacket collar, and walks on.

INT. AUDITORIUM - BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - NIGHT

Dark. A hand unlocks a window. Ty climbs in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He adjusts his duffel bag as a pillow. He begins to write in a notebook. Scribbling lyrics as they come to him. Most he scribbles out, but he keeps trying.

PULL BACK - He sits alone in this big, empty space.

FADE OUT

CLASSICAL MUSIC PLAYS...

INT. AUDITORIUM - BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - 7:00 A.M.

The music wakes Tyler. It takes a moment for him to gather where he is. He glances around.

ON STAGE - ANGIE

Dances. Her moves more dynamic and daring than we've seen. She's wearing a leotard and looks great.

He watches. A tension hangs over him, he can't help but think about Mac's words...

She sees him, but continues. Her toes erect and strong as she dances on them, before spinning and throwing her leg behind her head. The number ends.

ANGIE

Morning.

She's sweaty and out of breath.

ANGIE

You stayed here last night?

TYLER

Home wasn't where I belonged.

She finds something strangely familiar in those words.

TYLER

How was the ballet?

He hands her a towel. She wipes her face.

ANGIE

Boring. Got in a fight with my mom.

TYLER

About what?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGIE

It started about you. Then... other stuff. She thinks I like you.

It hangs a beat.

TYLER

You okay?

ANGIE

No one has any idea how hard it is, always measuring up to her, to all her success, every move you make under a microscope and criticized. Sometimes I hate dancing.

He absorbs that.

TYLER

Bullshit.

ANGIE

Now I'm turning all drama queen on you.

He steps nearer, joining her on stage.

TYLER

What you were doing here's amazing, you know that?

ANGIE

(shrugs)

The pirouette was off.

TYLER

Forget the moves. I mean the look on your face.

She needed that.

TYLER

You know. I never got my lesson.

She grins. The mood lightens.

ANGIE

We-ell. If you really want to impress your crowd, you could do this...

She grabs a microphone, throws it from one hand to the other, spins, and drops to one knee. She tosses him the mic.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

TYLER

Uh. Maybe we should start with the basics.

ANGIE

If you can keep up.

She puts a fast-tempo, drum driven song on the boombox. She struts across stage. Ty moves behind her.

ANGIE

I'm spinning, are you ready?

He's looking at her butt.

TYLER

You have no idea.

She turns and throws her leg across his shoulder. Teasing, playing. His hands go to her back in support. Their lips and eyes close. She hurls her leg off him and spins the opposite way. He turns after her but she gets away.

Their fluid improv continues, both caught up in it. He turns right to find her, she moves left. It goes back and forth till they end face-to-face like a showdown.

ANGIE

Are those feet cement or what?

She's moving hers to the beat. He looks down and starts doing the same. A battle. They go faster and faster. She throws in a dance step he has to copy. He's not as good, but he does it. He's street, raw. She's trained, polished. *It's electric.*

He then gives her a move and she does it better. Faster they go, feet pounding. Till finally, he falls, laughing.

She blows her finger like a six-shooter.

ANGIE

Maybe you should stick to singing.

EXT. ROOFTOP - BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - MORNING

Tyler and Angie have coffee as kids arrive below. She's still in her dance clothes, but wearing his jacket.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGIE

Can I tell you something, and you not think I'm nuts?

TYLER

Tell me and I'll let you know.

ANGIE

... that day up here you thought I was jumping? I think about it sometimes. About taking off from all the pressure. I read it's normal, you know, in psyche class? But... I'm not crazy, am I?

TYLER

If I gave it a thought, I'd be out here with you.

(then a smile)

But I'm scared of heights. I'd drop like a rock.

The beat hangs... then he kisses her.

ANGIE

I hate when my mom's right.

They kiss again as the morning sun shimmers off the water.

EXT. TYLER'S APARTMENT BUILDING - EVENING

Tyler cautiously nears with his duffel bag and guitar.

INT. TYLER'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

He enters. His father eats in his recliner chair. Neither says anything for a long moment. Ty puts his stuff down in the kitchen. He opens the 'fridge. Finally:

Dad turns the tv off.

RICHARD

What kind of guitar you got?

TYLER

A cheap one.

INT. COSTUME WORKSHOP - BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - DAY

Work tables of costumes are sorted by some students, others work sewing machines. Kris Tina walks among it all.

KRIS TINA

Anything torn too badly goes in the
recycle bin. The rest we're using in
the show.

She throws Ty a red-feathered boa. Teacher and student exchange a smile.

MONTAGE:

INT. REHEARSAL ROOM - AFTERNOON

Claudio works with Ty, showing him a few gyrations. Patti watches tentatively. Ty waves her to join.

Plump Patti now dances with them. She's moving it well.

Now Angie and Lucy join in, too. All having a blast.

INT. FREEFORM REHEARSAL ROOM - DAY

Tyler jams with the band. He's playing guitar and moving his body like he knows how to.

He tries "the move," throwing the mic from one hand to the other. He misses. The mic flies past Miles.

INT. DANCE REHEARSAL ROOM - NIGHT

Angie goes through her moves with growing confidence.

EXT. LOADING DOCK - AUDITORIUM - DAY

The garage door lifts, light pours in. The scene shop flats get loaded in, the students work like a machine.

INT. AUDITORIUM - BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - NIGHT

A STAGE LIGHT flares. The TECH CREW adjusts lights.

The various bands load equipment in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Trevor runs his monologue while the world moves around him.
He forgets a line again.

Hollis and Kris Tina supervise and keep everyone sharp.

INT. STUDIO - LETHAL RECORDS - NIGHT

Miles mixes and remixes, searching for the right sound.

He gives a CD to Tyler.

INT. TYLER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ty listens to the CD. He's trying to write. It's not happening.

A stack of wadded-up paper grows at his feet.

INT. MILE'S BEDROOM - MILES'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Miles sits down behind his old computer. He yawns, exhausted. He starts work on his paper.

The CURSOR blinks. Miles sleeps with his head on his desk.

INT. ENGLISH CLASS - BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - DAY

Mrs. Lowry returns paperwork to students. Miles does not get one, he didn't turn it in.

Ty looks at him. Miles look embarrassed.

INT. AUDITORIUM - BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - NIGHT

Brett and his group tweak their steps while lights are fine-tuned. Ty and Miles watch their competition closely.

END MONTAGE

INT. AUDITORIUM - BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - NIGHT

As the kids leave, Hollis and Kris Tina carry rolls of toilet paper.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HOLLIS

Great tech-in, everyone! Dress rehearsal's Thursday, so get some sleep. And, uh, who wants to help us with this glamour job?

Brett grabs a roll, and hands it to Tyler.

BRETT

I hear he's a little "blocked."

Students laugh. Ty tries... but the truth hurts.

INT. DANCE REHEARSAL ROOM - NIGHT

Angie rehearses. Ty sits in the corner, scribbling one line after another in his spiral notebook, his headphones on. He still scratches most out.

Angie finishes her routine. She lifts one of his headphones.

ANGIE

How's it going?

TYLER

Fantastic.

He wads this page up. Takes his headphones off.

TYLER

Miles has written this kick-ass melody and I can't do shit with it.

ANGIE

Maybe you could write a love song.

TYLER

Yeah, right.

ANGIE

What if you were... inspired?

She kisses him. The beat hangs.

TYLER

A little more inspiration might help.

She kisses him again.

TYLER

Still not feeling it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She loosens her hair, tosses it... and kisses him again.

TYLER

Maybe... something's starting.

She peels off her top. Now she's wearing her sports bra and biker shorts. She sits across his lap. Takes his hands and puts them around her bare midriff. She kisses him deeply.

ANGIE

Now write me a damn line.

He grabs for his pencil in a hurry.

INT. STUDIO - LETHAL RECORDS - NIGHT

Tyler pulls up a chair beside Miles.

MILES

If I don't pass, I don't play the show.

Ty puts Miles's paper in front of them, red ink all over.

TYLER

Look, your paper's 'sposed to be about where you're from, your roots. You ride me to be honest with myself, right? Practice what you preach.

Ty crosses two more paragraphs out.

TYLER (cont'd)

Cut to the chase, tell us what makes you tick. Take us there.

MILES

... I was up all night on that shit.

TYLER

I'd better roll, I got some writing of my own to do. Angie's been a big help.

MILES

Yo, I booked us a gig for tomorrow.

Ty stops.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MILES

A little some'em-some'em to warm us
before dress rehearsal.

TYLER

You mean... with a live audience?

MILES

No, dead. You need the experience.
Bring your muse, she can help with
background vocals. We start at six.

TYLER

I dunno. Once in front of a crowd's
enough...

MILES

It pays. And your ass is broke.

INT. ANGIE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The doorbell rings. Natalie opens. Tyler stands, dressed in
a nice performance shirt.

TYLER

Hi. I'm Tyler.

NATALIE

(dreamily)

And I wish I were sixteen.

PAMELA

(interrupting)

A paid performance tonight...?

She steps near. The tone of her voice says it all.

TYLER

Hi, Mrs. Perry.

PAMELA

I'm not sold this is a good idea, the
night before dress rehearsal.

TYLER

It'll be over early. And I want you
to know, I'm glad Ang is gonna be
there, I'm nervous, and... she calms
me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAMELA

Does she?

Angie hurries down the steps. She's wearing a form-fitting red dress, not too short, but tight and just right. Ty's mouth drops.

NATALIE

You don't look so calm now.

ANGIE

'Bye, Mom...

As they start out the door.

PAMELA

Wait, wait, wait!

HER POV - OUTSIDE

Tyler's motorcycle is parked.

PAMELA

No. No, you are not riding that, your career could be over before it starts.

(to Tyler)

What do you think you're doing? My daughter is not getting on there!

A beat... then Ty hands Mom his keys. She shuts up.

INT. ANGIE'S CAR - MOVING - NIGHT

Angie drives, Tyler sits beside. Silence hangs.

TYLER

It wasn't about the bike, was it? I'm not good enough for her.

ANGIE

It's not that, it's just...

(she gives up)

I'm not good enough, either.

It saddens her. They keep driving.

A PAIR OF ELK EARS WALK PAST...

INT. ELKS LODGE - NIGHT

The infamous elk ears adorn some FAT GUY. Eighty-plus guests mingle, the men wearing their ridiculous hats.

JACKI

No way. I'm not doing it.

Miles, Jacki, and Andrew stand at the door with their equipment in hand, Tyler and Angie right beside them.

JACKI

Look at them, they wear dead deer on their heads!

She starts to leave. Andrew, too.

MILES

Please - I need this gig, rent's due.

He didn't want to say that.

TYLER

Rent?

MILES

Mom, she's been without work a couple nights. It'll be over before we know it. Please.

The group absorbs that. Especially Ty.

JACKI

Just keep me a barf bag handy.

WEDDING COORDINATOR

(interrupting)

At least the band's here. All else is falling, it is tumbling apart!

The colorful WEDDING COORDINATOR greets them. She's a big woman with a big face, big smile, big arms, small feet.

MILES

What d'you mean, ma'am?

WEDDING COORDINATOR

The mother-in-laws had a fight - they each wore the same monstrous hat and blames the other of conspiracy! The Bride locked herself in the limo!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The WEDDING PARTY, sans Bride and Groom, storm in. The hefty MOTHER-IN-LAWS wear identical hats with huge feathers. We can feel the air get sucked out of the room.

ON THE STAGE - MOMENTS LATER

The group readies their equipment.

MILES

So maybe this was a bad idea.

None of the band disagrees. Angie's still upset from her encounter with Mom... it's a mess.

A WAILING CRY erupts. The BRIDE enters, she's been crying and is way past being over the top.

BRIDE

I can't believe this happens on my wedding day!

Her Elk-hat wearing GROOM follows behind.

The Bride rushes to her family, the Groom left standing.

WEDDING COORDINATOR

(to Miles and the band)

Just... do something. Anything.

Ty steps behind the mic, Miles at the keyboards, Andrew on drums, Jacki on guitar. Angie takes a spot on backup vocals.

JACKI

What do we do...?

Miles looks overwhelmed. The whole band does.

Ty looks out at the chaos. On one side of the room, the Bride's family tries to soothe the Bride. On the other side, the Groom argues with his parents...

Behind him, Angie stands in her own world.

Ty's eyes work hard, his mind in overdrive. Then, the idea hits. He lifts the mic, takes a breath...

TYLER

(singing)

Love.

Everyone in the room turns.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

TYLER

*Love will keep us together
Think of me babe whenever...*

Miles hits a riff to segue in, Jacki and Andrew join.

TYLER

Some sweet talkin' girl comes along...

MILES/JACKI

Singing a song...

Miles again mixes the song - it's the classic new style.

TYLER

*Don't mess around, you just gotta be
strong.*

Ty pulls the mic off the stand. He carries it to Angie.

TYLER

*Just stop! 'Cause I really love
you... Stop! I been thinkin' of
you...*

TYLER/ANGIE

*Look in my heart, and let love keep us
together.*

They continue. Ty gets more animated with each line and verse. He's not just singing to them and Angie, he's singing for them. The families find themselves being calmed. The boy has soul, and he's sharing. Miles funks up the melody, Jacki adds guitar riffs.

Angie starts to laugh, the cloud lifts.

The Wedding Coordinator waves to her Technician. LIGHTS begin to swirl. The song continues, the crowd joins in. All but the Bride, who is still tentative...

Angie does "the move." She throws her mic from one hand to the other, spins, and drops. She challenges Ty...

He grins, but won't have any part of it.

TYLER

*I've said it before, and I'll say it
again!*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Then... the Bride shrugs her Plump Mother away. The Groom does the same. The newlyweds' eyes meet. The Groom and Bride drift toward one another at the center of the floor.

And they embrace.

TYLER/ANGIE
Love will keep us together!

Everyone starts clapping and cheering.

LATER...

Guest cheer and throw rice as the Bride and Groom depart.

Everyone dances and sings, even the Mother of the Bride and the Mother of the Groom in their matching, big ugly hats.

INT. ELKS LODGE - LATE NIGHT

The party over. Miles empties the overflowing TIP JAR on the table.

MILES
Here, five ways...

ANGIE
No, I didn't do anything.

He slides Ty his share...

TYLER
Keep it. You need it more than me.

Andrew and Jacki slide theirs back, too.

JACKI
Yeah, catch us next time.

MILES
(a beat)
I love you guys.

EXT. INNER HARBOR - LATE NIGHT

Overlooking the water, the stars dance with their reflections. Tyler and Angie cuddle together on the pier.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGIE

You were amazing tonight. The way you
took over the crowd.

TYLER

I've never done anything like that.

She looks at him. Neither wants the night to end.

TYLER

You need to get home, don't you?

ANGIE

... I've stayed out this long.

They begin to kiss.

INT. AUDITORIUM - BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - LATE NIGHT

They kiss beneath the proscenium arch. And soon make love on
the stage floor, wrapped in blankets.

INT. ANGIE'S HOUSE - LATE NIGHT

Angie enters quietly. We HEAR his motorcycle pull away.

NATALIE

I like this one.

Angie is startled. Natalie holds a glass of milk.

ANGIE

What're you still doing up...?

NATALIE

Warning you.

The living room light is on.

INT. ANGIE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATE NIGHT

Angie tries to hurry past without being noticed.

PAMELA

It's two in the morning.

Mom puts down her *Dance* magazine.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAMELA

Where's your sense of responsibility,
your commitment to the show?

ANGIE

I'm dancing better than I've ever
danced, and it's because of Tyler.

PAMELA

I know trouble when I see it.

ANGIE

You don't know him.

PAMELA

Something doesn't fit, no senior
transfers in this late.

ANGIE

He doesn't "impress" you. Well,
life's not always one of your first
impressions, Mom!

PAMELA

He's trash, Angela, open your eyes!

ANGIE

How dare you...?!

PAMELA

You're leaving, what's he going to do?
Junior college maybe, if he can even
manage that?

ANGIE

You control a lot - but you can't
control the way I feel!

PAMELA

So what are you saying? That you're
ready to give up everything for this
boy you just met?!

ANGIE

I don't know!

It stops right there.

ANGIE

I don't know.

Angie walks past her mother.

INT. PAWN SHOP - LATE NIGHT

Dark. Tyler slides the gate up. He leaves the lights off.

He walks among the rows of "For Sale" audio equipment. There's a well used DAT player, an amp. He's deep in though, though we're not sure about what...

He dials on the phone.

TYLER

Hey, it's me. I'm ready to move on this if you are... let's do it.

His eyes go back to the equipment.

EXT. BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - MORNING

A new day.

INT. MR. HOLLIS ALDEN'S OFFICE - MORNING

Two students leave as Brett enters.

BRETT

These are permission slips for the senior trip, from Kris Tina's class.

HOLLIS

Drop 'em in my "in" basket, thanks.

Hollis hurries out. Brett drops the slips, when he SEES a FOLDER with Tyler's name on it. He takes a look around... then picks it up.

The folder reads "DEPARTMENT OF PROBATION."

EXT. BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - MORNING

Tyler walks up the steps of the campus... when he starts feeling the stares and whispers.

INT. DRAMA CLASSROOM - MORNING

The entire class is abuzz with gossip, until Ty walks in. All eyes fall on him. Angie shifts.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He takes his seat beside Miles.

TYLER

Why's everybody so weirded out?

Miles stares hard a beat then looks away. Ty leans back confused, till he HEARS the whisper behind him.

TREVOR

... it was him, he trashed our school.

Ty sits there still.

INT. HALLWAY - BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - MORNING

As students change classes, Tyler walks alone, a pariah. Angie walks nearby, but keeps her head down.

INT. CAFETERIA - BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - MID-DAY

Lunch. Ty sits down with Miles, Jacki, and Andrew, Angie already sits there, too. They quiet as soon as he joins.

ANDREW

(finally)

Those tapes were his whole semester's work.

MILES

I stuck my neck out for you.

TYLER

... I'm sorry. I regret it to hell.

MILES

You know what I regret? That we have dress rehearsal in a few hours, otherwise I'd get a new singer.

Miles grabs his tray and leaves. Jacki and Andrew follow. Ty looks at Angie. She looks away.

EXT. ROOFTOP - BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - MID-DAY

Tyler leans against the railing, Angie beside him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TYLER

... I don't even know that guy any more, that old Tyler. You believe me, right?

She shrugs.

TYLER

Go on, say it. You're thinking your mom was right.

ANGIE

This isn't about her! God, Tyler, the whole school thinks I'm nuts to even talk to you!

TYLER

Screw the goddamn school. What do you think?

ANGIE

"Screw the school?" That is what you'd would say.

He leaves her standing alone.

INT. AUDITORIUM - BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - EVENING

The Dress Rehearsal. Brett and his group perform their routine on stage, and they are nearly flawless.

Applause and cheers as Brett and his group leave.

HOLLIS

Next! Places, please, let's go!

BACKSTAGE

Buzz and energy. Angie searches through the crowd.

ANGIE

Has anyone seen Tyler?

PATTI

Just walked in.

Tyler stands in the wings alone. Angie looks at him, but his eyes avoid her. Angie's music begins.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KRIS TINA
Angie, you're on!

Angie launches into her routine.

ON STAGE

Angie is good, but not great. It's a sharp performance, but there's nothing special there. Then, during one of her spins... she falls.

She gets up, to try to finish the routine, but she can't do it. She walks off stage.

A few parents sit in the auditorium with the faculty, Angie's mother among them. Mom is more than a little concerned.

BACKSTAGE

Kris Tina tries to offer Angie comfort.

KRIS TINA
A bad dress rehearsal means you'll
have a good show...

HOLLIS
Miles, you guys are up.

Ty walks right past Angie without a word.

ON STAGE

Miles, Jacki, and Andrew come on. Ty the last to join.

MILES
Got any lyrics?

TYLER
No...

Ty doesn't look at him either.

MILES
We'll do our party medley.

They take their places. Ty looks out at all the eyes on him, everyone staring or looking away...

Angie's mother whispers to a friend.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Ty LOOKS off stage...

HIS POV - BACKSTAGE

Brett consoles Angie.

BRETT

Hey, it's okay. It's okay...

BACK TO TYLER

He SEES her crying... and sees Brett embrace her.

Miles begins playing their party medley. Jacki and Andrew join in.

Ty steps to the mic... and does nothing. He steps back.

Miles keeps playing. They all do, Ty missed his intro, so they'll re-set it.

He grabs the mic, but again doesn't sing. He holds the stand a moment - before he throws it to the ground. It clangs hard. Feedback.

He slams out the back door.

EXT. AUDITORIUM - BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - EVENING

Tyler walks away alone.

INT. DRESSING ROOM - AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

Angie is the last in here as Lucy and some others leave. Her mother steps in.

PAMELA

I'm not one to say, "I told you so."

ANGIE

Please, Mom. You are so like that.

PAMELA

But I am sorry. I know you're hurting...

Mom starts to reach for her. Keeping a strong face, Angie nods and walks past her.

INT. CORRIDOR - AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

Once alone, Angie crumbles and starts to cry.

EXT. TYLER'S APARTMENT BUILDING - MIDNIGHT

Tyler walks up... to find Miles sitting on the steps.

TYLER

You lost?

MILES

Some new equipment showed up on my doorstep. You wouldn't know anything about that, would you?

TYLER

Just replacing your shit.

MILES

You don't have cash like that...?

TYLER

I sold my bike. Don't worry, none of it's hot.

Ty starts past him.

MILES

Hey. We all say'n do shit we shouldn't, okay?

TYLER

What you mean is, the show's tomorrow night, and you don't have time to score somebody else.

MILES

You forgot that part about you being my friend.

Ty sure as hell didn't expect that.

MILES

But don't prop yourself too much, I've played since I was three, so I can play without you. But I'd rather not.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TYLER
... I can't go. I don't even know
where I belong.

MILES
That's what you have to decide, nobody
can tell you.

Miles starts away, but stops.

MILES
Oh, and that paper you helped me
with...?

Miles nods toward the steps. He's left an ENVELOPE behind.
Miles walks on.

Ty sits on the steps. Opens the envelope. The title page
reads, "THAT PLACE." A bright red "A" graces it.

Ty drops it in the trash and walks in.

INT. TYLER'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Tyler puts those "Baltimore Tech" forms on the coffee table.
He sits down, lifts a pen... and begins filling them out.

His father walks past and sees what he's doing. Dad looks at
his son, but says nothing.

EXT. BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - AFTERNOON

A banner reads "FAREWELL GRADUATING CLASS." A BELL rings.

INT. HALLWAY - BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - AFTERNOON

The hallway jams. Students emerge from class, embracing,
hugging, kissing. It's the last day of school, the last day
of four years for many.

Angie forces a smile to several friends.

INT. MR. HOLLIS ALDEN'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Kris Tina enters with a heavy look on her face.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KRIS TINA

That's it, no call, no show, no one
knows where he is.

She hands Hollis Tyler's file.

HOLLIS

We have court orders. I'll make the
call.

Hollis picks up the phone, thinks a beat... then dials.

INT. HALLWAY - BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - AFTERNOON

As Hollis and Kris Tina leave Hollis's office, Angie waits.
She gets brave, and walks in.

INT. MR. HOLLIS ALDEN'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Alone, she quickly looks at Tyler's file. She's reading,
searching for something, anything...

EXT. MAC'S BACKYARD - EARLY EVENING

A bonfire burns, wall-to-wall people and teens everywhere.

CROWD

Go, go, go!

Ty funnels a beer. The group cheers.

SKINNY

My turn, I've been practicing!

Mac throws his arm around Ty in a headlock.

MAC

Welcome home, man - welcome home!

Mac leads Ty away, his arm around him.

Then, a few WHISTLES and CATCALLS interrupt. Ty turns...
the gate opens, and Angie enters.

LISA

You must be his dancing queen?

Angie's eyes search the crowd. She sees Ty, he her...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LISA
Can you really make your toe touch
your ear?

Drunk Lisa bursts out giggling and staggers away with some other girls. Angie's hurt, but strong.

ANGIE
(to Tyler)
Is that what you've told them?

TYLER
Not exactly. How'd you find me?

ANGIE
Multiple "Disturbing the Peace"
complaints from this address. Can I
talk to you, in private?

MAC
Cindy and Randy are finished, bro.

Ty takes Angie's hand and leads her toward the house.

SKINNY
Knock that booty for me, dude!

INT. MAC'S HOUSE - EARLY EVENING

Couples make out everywhere as they walk through. Ty knocks on the last bedroom door. No answer, he opens.

INT. BEDROOM - MAC'S HOUSE - EARLY EVENING

Candles, a messy bed, a tv, a 'fridge...

TYLER
I'm not performing tonight, so don't
waste your time. I'm giving everybody
what they want.

ANGIE
Are you drunk?

He pops another beer.

TYLER
Not yet. Wanna join me?

He leans back on the bed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGIE

This isn't you, so stop being a jerk.

TYLER

What d'you want me to be? Rich, smart? Sorry, I'm neither.

ANGIE

I came here to ask you to go to New York with me.

There, she said it. His mask dissipates.

TYLER

New York? I can't go to New York.

ANGIE

What's keeping you here?

TYLER

Tech school this fall. My old man's here, my friends.

ANGIE

... I won't be.

TYLER

That's your choice.

ANGIE

Ty, you are smart, you're talented, I see it, I believe in you.

She sits beside him. When she touches him, he pulls away.

ANGIE

But you don't want to be with me...?

TYLER

You're the one leaving. Go to Tisch, be happy. Maybe you'll find somebody your mom approves of.

ANGIE

I told her how I feel, I've told the school, I've told Miles. I love you.

Ty looks away.

ANGIE

Look at me. I said I love you...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

TYLER
People say things.

ANGIE
Sometimes they mean it. Don't be
afraid.

TYLER
I'm not afraid.

ANGIE
Then go with me. Tyler...?

She's near tears.

ANGIE
If you don't feel the same just say
it.

The door flings open - Skinny and Lisa stagger in laughing.

SKINNY
Uh, are you guys done or what?

Ty looks back at Angie. One more beat.

TYLER
Yeah. We're done.

He leaves the room. She can't move it hurts so bad.

EXT. MAC'S BACKYARD - EARLY EVENING

Ty hangs by himself. He watches Angie drive away.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Mac's Monte Carlo rolls past.

INT. MAC'S MONTE CARLO - MOVING - NIGHT

Mac drives, Skinny and Randy in back. Tyler sits in the front seat, deep in his own thoughts, the world seems a blur...

SKINNY
You dropped the roach, man! It's
burning my ass!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RANDY

Fart on it and put it out!

Mac smiles along as he listens.

TYLER

(finally)

Stop the car.

MAC

What? The party's at Fell's Point...

TYLER

Lemme out.

MAC

What's wrong with you...?

TYLER

I said stop the damn car.

Mac stops. Ty's look says it. It's bittersweet, it's hard... but it's over.

MAC

We ain't coming back to pick you up.

TYLER

I know.

They both absorb that. Mac offers his hand. They shake, not that cool homey shake, but a real one.

MAC

Take it easy.

Ty then climbs out.

SKINNY

Wait, I don't get it. He's, like, not gonna hang with us no more?

Mac watches Ty disappear from sight. He almost smiles.

MAC

Nah, man. I don't think so.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Tyler races across the street. He's going the same direction as the "ONE WAY" sign.

EXT. FRONT DOOR - ANGIE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The doorbell rings - followed by an impatient KNOCKING.
Breathless Tyler knocks again, rings again.

The HOUSEKEEPER opens the door.

TYLER
Is Angie here?

HOUSEKEEPER
They already left to the show.

Ty nods and hurries away.

INT. AUDITORIUM - BALTIMORE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - NIGHT

Hollis greets guests as students and faculty pile in.
FLASHBULBS ignite as proud parents take pictures.

Angie's parents take their seats with Natalie.

NATALIE
I just hope she doesn't fall off the
stage.

Mom smacks at her.

NATALIE
Wha-at?!

BACKSTAGE

Students bubble over with enthusiasm and energy.

TREVOR
Did you see him, he's in the third row
- Stan Turner!

The students try to peek out the curtain.

KRIS TINA
Get away from there right now!

In the chaos, Brett finds Angie.

BRETT
... I've been a dick, and I'm sorry.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGIE
Is that one of your acting class "I'm
sorrys?"

BRETT
No. Those are easy for me.

He hugs her, then walks away. Her eyes search the students.

MILES
(to Angie)
No sign of him.

IN THE MAIN AUDITORIUM

The lights dim. Everyone settles down.

BACKSTAGE

The students take their places...

ON STAGE

The Opening Act. Claudio's FEET tap an amazing display.
He's blowing the crowd away.

BACKSTAGE

Students watch in awe. Brett whispers to his friend.

BRETT
He already landed a national spot for
"The Gap."

KRIS TINA
Ssshh!

She pulls Brett's ear. Angie's disappointment grows...

EXT. STREET - BALTIMORE - NIGHT

Tyler hurries across the street. A horn blows, a Pickup
Truck pulls to a stop. Behind the wheel:

RICHARD
Your teacher called me, I've been
looking all over the goddamn town.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Ty stands there a beat, unsure what to do.

RICHARD

I didn't mail those forms. If you
wanna, you do it. It's your choice.

His Dad has Ty's guitar beside him. Ty looks at it.

RICHARD

Well, get the hell in, you got a show,
don't you?

Ty leaps in...

INT. ON STAGE - NIGHT

All is quiet as Trevor performs his monologue.

TREVOR

"... why am I trying to become what I
don't want to be? What am I doing in
an office, making a contemptuous,
begging fool of myself..."

Trevor drops to one knee. The audience drinks it in. He
stops. A beat hangs. He looks to the wings...

BACKSTAGE

Kris Tina waits along with the other students.

KRIS TINA

He forgot again. Where's the script??

ON STAGE

Trevor then winks at them, and picks it right back up.

TREVOR

"When all I want is out there, waiting
for me the minute I say I know who I
am. Why can't I say that, Willy...?"

Applause. He did it.

PATTI

Near, far, wherever you are...

Patti now lets her number belt. And does it ever.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PATTI

And I know that my heart will go o-on!

Perfect. More applause. Patti basks in the glow.

BACKSTAGE

Kris Tina shoves through the throng of students...

KRIS TINA

Where is Brett...?

LUCY

Now you know he's already out there.

ON STAGE

Everything goes dark, then backlight glows and machine fog floods the stage. Brett and his crew ignite their performance. Each step perfect and flashy. Their song is good, it's a tune about lost love and winning the girl back. The song is more real than anything we've seen them do.

The audience is on their feet, dancing and eating it up.

Brett ends the number with his arms spread and his head thrown back. The applause is so loud it pounds in his chest.

BACKSTAGE

Brett and his group embrace everyone as they exit the stage.

KRIS TINA

Angie? Are you ready?

She takes a breath. As ready as she can be.

ON STAGE

Angie takes a moment to absorb the audience. There's no Tyler as far as she can see. Her music begins...

She doesn't see it... but in the back of the auditorium, a shadow moves as someone enters.

Her piece starts with a classical number that segues into a freeform dance, a hybrid of ballet, jazz, modern, with a little hip hop crossover. It's got attitude, but more than

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

that, it's got expression and soul. She bares herself in a way she never has before.

Angie's number comes to an end. She's completely still as she rises to face the audience. Her chest heaves.

Silence. Until the applause and cheers deafen her. Her Mom claps the loudest, and wipes a proud tear.

BACKSTAGE

Angie comes off stage, feeling the high of the moment. She leans against a pillar to gain her composure.

KRIS TINA
Miles, you're up.

The trio look at each other.

KRIS TINA
Miles, Jacki, Andrew, let's go.

IN THE MAIN AUDITORIUM

Patrons check their programs to see who is next. No one is yet on stage.

BACKSTAGE

Everyone waits...

MILES
I'll sing.

Just as they start for the stage, the BACK DOOR OPENS.

Tyler enters. He's out of breath, his guitar across his back. In his hand he holds a crumpled piece of paper.

Miles looks. Angie leans forward in relief. Brett sizes Ty up.

Ty stops at Angie. Their eyes meet.

TYLER
You were beautiful out there.

ANGIE
... you were here?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TYLER

I was in the back row. I had to run
all the way around.

KRIS TINA

So go - you've kept us waiting long
enough with your dramatic entrance!

ON STAGE

Tyler, Miles, Jacki, and Andrew walk out. The audience
absorbs them. All falls quiet.

Ty looks at the audience. The lights in his eyes.

TYLER

A lot of people don't think I belong
here. Maybe they're right. I screwed
up. But I'm glad I did what I did.

A few uncomfortable shifts in the crowd and backstage.

TYLER (cont'd)

'Cause if didn't trash this place, I
never woulda found it.

(then)

Anyway, here's something we've been
working on.

Ty nods to Miles, who is surprised. The lights dim. Miles
starts it, Jacki begins to play, Andrew taps the drums
underneath. It's an advanced version of what Miles played in
the studio, only now more soulful, a soothing melody not
unlike U2's "One." Miles funks it up a bit.

Ty steps to the microphone. He begins to sing. His voice
commanding and confident. The song, "That Place," is a
number about loss, faith, and belief, those questions we ask
all our lives as we search for that place we're from, and
wonder if it makes us who we are...

His eyes closed at the beginning, but as the song builds, so
too, does his energy and passion.

Ty's father enters... to see his son on stage. Hollis's eyes
meet his, and they exchange a smile.

BACKSTAGE

Angie watches from the wings. So does Brett and his group. The entire school crowds near.

ON STAGE

Ty and the group continue.

The crowd sits in admiration. Angie's mother shifts. She's impressed.

Ty continues till the song reaches its crescendo. Music stops as he sings the final line acapella.

The lights swim around him. The crowd hidden in all darkness. His breathing heavy and hard.

TYLER

Thank you.

He pulls the guitar from around his neck and exits stage.

BACKSTAGE

Ty walks past the other students, all of whom are staring. He stops at Angie, pulls her near.

TYLER

I love you.

That's when it starts... CLAP CLAP.

IN THE MAIN AUDITORIUM

Angie's mother is the first to clap. Natalie just stares at her in disbelief, then joins in.

Ty's Dad claps next. Everyone applauds.

RICHARD

Yeah, yeah - that's my boy!

The entire crowd rises to their feet.

BACKSTAGE

Tyler pulls back from Angie, he looks confused.

ANGIE
That's for you.

KRIS TINA
They want you back on stage.

TYLER
But -

BRETT
No buts. It's your moment.

Brett smiles and nods his approval.

ANGIE
They're waiting.

He kisses her, and leads him back...

ON STAGE

Tyler waves to the crowd as he re-emerges. He grabs his guitar, Jacki and Andrew take their places. The crowd still on their feet. Before beginning, Ty motions into the wings for everyone else in the school to join them.

The group hurries past a beaming Kris Tina.

Ty looks at Angie. He grins.

He drops into "the move." He throws the microphone from one hand to the other, catches it, spins and drops.

TYLER
One, two, three, four...!

The group kicks into their final rocking number. PULL BACK as the entire school dances and sings along...

the end