

OPEN MIC

Written by
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FADE IN:

EXT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR - NIGHT

It's dark and raining. Lamps illuminate the road and pavement. The roads are heavy populated.

A small club in Covent Garden. Cars zoom past in the road ahead. There's a door, pedestrians pass by unaware that it even exists.

The door opens.

INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

The club is completely empty. The lights have a red hue.

The chairs upside down on the tops of the tables.

In the corners are speakers.

There's a large bar area to one side. It has red velvety stools and an elongated table that separates the patrons and the staff.

Behind the bar are an array of drinks and a high-end coffee machine.

There's a stage at the end of the club, brought to life by a series of lights above.

The stage's main attraction is the state-of-the-art drum kit. To the side of the stage are steps connected to it.

A few other stools populate the stage. As well as a microphone stand and keyboard stand.

Behind the stage is a door labelled 'DRESSING ROOM'.

At the end of the club, next to the bar is a door with a plaque that reads 'MANAGER' and underneath, a plaque with the name 'Charles Clemont'.

The door opens and enters the office.

INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR, OFFICE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

A small office with narrow walls decorated with framed pictures of 'Jazz Royalty'.

A small oak desk and a worn leather chair.

On the desk is an old computer monitor and keyboard. Most of the keys have worn away.

There's an old desk phone, with a '3' flashing on the answering machine.

The office door opens.

Enter CHARLES CLEMONT (65) a short, plump man with light-brown skin. His suit is neat but out of style.

His face is like worn leather. He's clearly a man past his prime.

He presses the 'play' button on the answering machine and takes a seat behind his desk.

"You have three new messages - Message-one."

TRUMPETER

(voice)

Hi Charles, it's Terry here. I'm not gonna be able to make it tonight, sorry. Family commitments.

"You have two new messages - Message-two."

PRISCILLA

(voice)

Hey Charlie it's Pris. My class got cancelled so I'm free to work Friday if you're down a server, Okay, bye.

"You have one new message - Message-three."

BONES

(voice)

Charlie your figures are slipping and you've failed to make payment on the club. We need to ta--

Clemont quickly deletes the message. A worried look on his face.

"You have no new messages - Press--"

Clemont erases the messages.

"Messages deleted - You have no new messages."

Clemont looks at his watch.

CLEMONT
Five-thirty on a Thursday. Not long
till open mic starts. I do love
hearing stuff from the new talent.

Clemont opens up a drawer and pulls out a hand-held radio.

He pops it on the desk and tunes it to an R&B station. He then rests in his chair and relaxes.

Beat.

The phone rings, Clemont answers it.

CLEMONT (cont'd)
Hello?... Oh hey man... No I ain't
opened yet I can talk. You are...
I'll let him know as soon as he gets
in... alright, see you tonight.

Clemont puts the phone down and smiles.

EXT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR - NIGHT

The street outside the club is much busier now. Amongst the crowded street is STEVE JAMES (30) a tall, slim man in a hat and jacket.

His face is pristine and youthful. He's carrying a case by his side.

He pulls a bow tie out of his trouser pocket.

Steve stops in front of the door of the club and does up his bow tie. He takes a long, deep breath, composes himself and exhales slowly.

He puts on a welcoming smile and opens the door.

INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

The club is sparsely populated. Some of the tables are occupied and there are PEOPLE sitting at the bar.

There's a well-dressed SINGER (20s) performing on stage and a PIANIST (20s) accompanying her on the keyboard.

Steve enters. As he walks through the club, he notices instruments and cases underneath some of the tables.

There's a BUSINESS MAN (50s) in a suit hugging a guitar case.

SUZIE-Q (27) a short woman in dark, smart clothing approaches him.

SUZIE-Q

Good, you're here. Charlie's in his office. He's been waiting for you. He's been asking for you and wondering about you since opening.

(re: trumpet case)

So you're gonna play tonight?

STEVE

Maybe.

Suzie-Q goes to a table to take an order.

Steve walks over to Clemont's office. He opens the door and enters.

INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR, OFFICE - NIGHT

The radio is on in the background, Clemont is at his desk with his phone up against his ear. His face is buried in a document.

Steve enters. He takes off his jacket and hat to reveal A dark long sleeve shirt.

CLEMONT

Yes sir, I know... We're not far off turning a profit this time... We're only a few thousand out. We should be in profit by the end of the month the way things have been going.

Clemont sees Steve and gestures for him to take a seat.

Steve grabs a chair and sits down. He twiddles his thumbs waiting for Clemont to finish his call.

CLEMONT (cont'd)

No... please don't come down here, it's really... it's something we can sort out another day... Okay, okay... bye.

Clemont slams the phone down. Which takes Steve by surprise.

STEVE
Evening Charlie, everything okay? You
look worried.

Clemont wipes some sweat from his brow and forces a smile.

CLEMONT
Never better.
(he sees Steve's
trumpet case in his
lap)
I see you've got your trumpet. You up
for playing tonight? It's open mic,
you can play late, towards the end if
you'd prefer.

STEVE
We'll see, Suzie said you needed to
see me?

CLEMONT
Yes, I have some fantastic news.
Daniel Foley is coming tonight,
(Steve's face lights
up)
said he wants to hear you play.

STEVE
Daniel Foley? Owns The Basement?

Clemont nods.

CLEMONT
The two of us go way back, played
together in the seventies. He was on
brass and I played piano.

Steve shoots up out of his chair.

Before Clemont has even left his seat, Steve is squeezing
his hand with a firm handshake.

STEVE
Don't worry Charlie, I won't let you
down. You won't regret this. I'll go
put my stuff away and go help Jodi at
the bar.

CLEMONT
You're shift doesn't sta...

Steve rushes out the door.

Clemont laughs.

CLEMONT (cont'd)
That kid's gonna be one hell of a
player some day.

Clemont smiles as he turns his radio back up and watches as his office closes.

INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR, DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

A typical dressing room with chairs and lowboy tables up against mirrors with light bulbs either side of them.

Some of the tables have various make-up items sprawled across them.

There's a series of lockers along one of the walls. Next to it at the end of the room is a water cooler and disposable cups.

Steve enters. He walks up to an unused locker, opens it and stuffs his jack and hat inside. Followed by his trumpet case.

He closes the locker and secures the lock. He's about to remove the key when suddenly, he hears footsteps from outside.

UNKNOWN WOMAN (O.S.)
They'll be here tonight, be ready,
because that's when we strike.

UNKNOWN MAN (O.S.)
Don't worry, I will be.

Steve removes the key and puts his ear to the stage door leading to the alley.

INT/EXT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR, DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

Steve opens the door slightly.

A dark and dingy alleyway. There's a large dumpster up against the wall.

Steve sticks his head out the door. The alley is empty.

INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR, DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

Steve takes a long, deep breathe. He goes over to the water cooler and pours himself a drink.

INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR - NIGHT

The bar is busy now. There are tons of 'PATRONS', and many of the bar stools are occupied. As are most of the tables.

On stage is GABRIEL (21) in a cream shirt and beige trousers playing guitar.

Steve is pouring lager into a glass. He puts it on a tray with three other pints.

JODI (25) a young, petite, fresh-faced girl with her hair in a ponytail. She is wearing a black t-shirt and a long black skirt and has just finished serving a Patron.

JODI

After you've poured that pint, we need a White Russian for the dude at the end of the bar.

STEVE

Will do.

He takes the tray to the end of the bar. Suzie-Q comes over and takes the tray.

STEVE (cont'd)

Table three.

SUZIE-Q

Thanks, Steve.

Suzie-Q takes the tray over to the table.

JODI

Steve, White Russian.

STEVE

Coming up.

Steve grabs a cocktail shaker and begins filling with ice.

As he makes the drink, he looks across at all the tables and all the PATRONS sitting there.

He scans the bar again.

At one of the tables, he sees a BLONDE WOMAN (38) in a sequin dress, sitting with a LANKY MAN (40) in a shirt and trousers.

Under their table is a duffel bag.

STEVE (cont'd)
(pointing to them)
Hey Jodi, that table over there, what was their order?

Gabriel finishes playing and everyone starts clapping.

JODI
If it's table sixteen,
(grabs ticket)
it should be coming out soon. Why?

STEVE
No reason.

JODI
Well if you must know, they ordered a sharing platter.

Jodi hands Steve the ticket.

JODI (cont'd)
Why, did you want to take it to them?

STEVE
Well I don't mind.

Jodi smirks.

Steve grabs some coffee liqueur and fills a jigger. He pours it in the shaker. He grabs some vodka and does the same. He adds the cream and shakes.

Steve is walking to a table, carrying a sharing platter on a tray. As he gets closer, he can hear their conversation.

BLONDE WOMAN
And I told the son-of-a-bitch that he wasn't getting the raise. Then you won't believe what he did.

LANKY MAN
Try me.

BLONDE WOMAN
He tried to stick his tongue down my throat.

The Lanky Man is shocked.

LANKY MAN
What happened next?

The Blonde Woman sees Steve coming. She stops talking and smiles.

BLONDE WOMAN
I'll tell you in a second, our food's here.

Steve approaches the table.

STEVE
The sharing platter.
(he places the
platter on the
table)
Enjoy your meal.

Steve smiles then makes his way back to the bar.

STEVE
It can't be them.
(beat)
They've got their own problems.

He gets back behind the bar.

Jodi stands next to him and whispers in his ear. Turning his attention to a Customer.

JODI
The man in the grey suit is acting pretty strange.

At one end of the bar is an older Man in a grey suit, harassing customers and spouting gibberish, though no one is listening. Some are avoiding him.

STEVE
What'd he order?

JODI
He's had a few whiskeys, might want to check him out though, before the shit hits the fan. You're good at talking to people.

STEVE
Alright, but one day you're gonna
have to deal with these types
yourself.

Jodi smiles.

JODI
Thanks Steve, I owe you one.

Steve makes his way over to the Man in grey.

STEVE
'Scuse me sir, but are you okay?

The Man goes on a bit more, not really making much sense.

STEVE (cont'd)
Sir?

Steve goes round the bar and over to the customer.

The Man in grey tries to resist and fight Steve off even though Steve hasn't tried to grab him. He launches himself at Steve, but falls to the floor. Steve helps him up. He thrashes at Steve.

Amidst the commotion, the Lanky Man is behind someone and clutching a knife. The Man in grey knocks him down. The knife cuts his cheek. There is a small cut but no blood.

He scrambles to get up, grasps the hilt of the knife and rushes back to his table.

Steve takes the Man through the club. Some PATRONS look on in shock and horror.

The two MEN make it to the front door, the Man in grey is kicking and screaming like a child. Steve keeps his composure.

He opens the front door of the club and throws the Man out into the street and quick shuts it.

Steve turns to the onlookers.

STEVE (cont'd)
Nothing to worry about everyone.
Commotion's over.

Steve makes his way back to the bar.

Everyone goes back to their business.

He goes back behind the bar and resumes taking drinks order and pouring drinks.

Steve turns to ALICE (52) an older woman, all dolled-up and holding on to her looks.

STEVE (cont'd)
So, what'll it be?

ALICE
A Tom Collins please.

STEVE
Coming right up.

Steve grabs a Collins glass.

ALICE
Can I get it with a cherry garnish instead of a lemon?

STEVE
You got it.

Steve makes the drink.

STEVE
So, you a regular here?

ALICE
I come here and unwind after work.
And one other thing...

STEVE
Oh yeah. What's that?

Alice pulls him in closer and whispers in his ear.

ALICE
Pick up guys, younger ones.

Steve is surprised.

STEVE
That's not an invite is it?

Alice laughs.

ALICE

Oh my no.

(Steve is relieved)

Although, that boy with the guitar...

(she smiles)

Steve finishes making the drink and places on the bar.

STEVE

That'll be eight-fifty.

Alice hands him a tenner. Steve puts it in the till and takes out the change.

Steve hands her the change and a receipt.

STEVE

Well I don't know where he was sitting, so you might want to go find him before he leaves.

Alice takes a sip of her drink.

ALICE

I'll do that.

She stands up and wanders round the club, looking Gabriel
She is soon amongst the crowd and out of Steve's eye-line.
Steve smiles.

Jodi, cleaning a glass turns to Steve.

JODI

Are you flirting with customers?

Steve scoffs at her question.

STEVE

No. Anyway, she's looking for someone younger. Namely the guy who played guitar earlier.

JODI

Jeez, he barely twenty. Good luck to her.

Steve looks over to see if he can spot Alice.

FANTASY

He sees her following someone into the toilet. The door closes, revealing that it's the gent's.

INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR, MEN'S LAVATORY - NIGHT (STEVE'S FANTASY)

A large men's room with urinals on one side and stalls on the other. There are a line of sinks near the door.

The entire room is empty, save for Gabriel who is zipping up his flies.

Alice stands behind him. She pulls out a wire and wraps it around his throat.

CUT TO:

EXT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR, ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

STEVE'S FANTASY

Alice closes the lid of the dumpster outside the club, and makes her way back inside.

INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR - NIGHT

REALITY

Steve stands staring at the lavatory door. Jodi waves her hand in front of his face.

JODI

Earth to Steve. Hello? Anyone home?

Steve jumps back.

JODI (cont'd)

You spaced out for like two minutes.
Are you okay?

Steve nods.

JODI (cont'd)

Good, order up. Two whiskey's over ice.

Steve grabs a rocks glass and fills it with ice.

JODI (cont'd)
 And if you insist on serving the
 drinks directly to the table, it's
 for that table over there.

She points to a table, far away from the stage.

Sitting there are two MEN (late 40s) in suits chatting. One starts laughing. On the table is a harmonica.

Steve grabs a tray.

Steve makes his way through the club carrying the tray of drinks. He comes to a table near the end of the club.

STEVE
 Two whiskey's with ice.

MAN #1
 Right here.

Steve places both drinks on the table.

He's to go on his way.

MAN #1 (cont'd)
 So anyway, that's when I gut the
 fucker.

Steve stops and listens.

FANTASY

MAN #1 (cont'd)
 She's in the back now, that's where I
 left her. Outside, in the dumpster.

Steve stands up and makes his way to the dressing room.

INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR, DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

Steve enters an empty dressing room. He rushes to the back door, opens it and rushes outside.

EXT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR, ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

Steve goes to the dumpster. He opens it up and looks inside.

Shocked at what he sees, he puts his hands inside and soon brings them out. They are covered in blood and guts.

REALITY

INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR - NIGHT

Steve stands listening to the two men's conversation.

MAN #1

That bass was huge, I swear. It was
one hell of a fishing trip.

The two Men laugh.

Steve breathes a sigh of relief.

He makes his way back to the bar.

Steve is standing behind the bar with Jodi.

Clemont comes out of his office visibly distressed and takes
a seat at the bar.

CLEMONT

Whiskey, quickly.

Steve grabs a tumbler glass and is about to fill it with
ice.

CLEMONT (cont'd)

Just pour, no ice.

STEVE

You okay, Charlie?

Steve grabs a cheap bottle of whiskey and pours it into the
glass.

Clemont snatches the glass off the bar the second Steve
stops pouring and drinks it.

CLEMONT

Another one, then I'll be out of your
hair.

Steve refills the glass.

Clemont downs the drink.

STEVE

This wouldn't have anything to do
with whoever you were on the phone to
before, when I saw you this evening
would it?

CLEMONT

You heard that?

STEVE
I heard enough.

Clemont gestures for another drink.

Steve pours another drink, but puts substantially less in the glass.

CLEMONT
(downs the drink)
Thanks Steve, I needed that. Are you still up for performing tonight?

Steve gives a confident nod.

STEVE
Wouldn't pass on it for the world.

Clemont nods.

CLEMONT
Good lad.

Clemont looks up at the stage. The Man with the harmonica is up there playing, the Man he was with is accompanying him on the drums.

CLEMONT (cont'd)
You're better than this comedy act.
I'll leave you to tend the bar.

Clemont goes back to his office.

As he opens the door, a message is being left on the answering machine.

BONES
(voice)
Charlie, me again...

Clemont shuts the door quickly.

Jodi turns to Steve.

JODI
Is Charlie okay?

STEVE
I don't know.

Steve looks at the closed door, worried.

INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR - NIGHT

The club is crowded. On stage is a Young Woman singing a cover of 'Feeling Good'.

Steve is behind the bar, pouring a pint for a Patron.

He hands the beer to the Patron.

The song ends and is followed by CHEERS and APPLAUSE from the crowd.

Beat.

The woman on stage starts singing another song.

A MIDDLE-AGED MAN comes to the bar.

STEVE
What'll it be?

MIDDLE-AGED MAN
I'll have a gimlet.

STEVE
Coming right up.

Steve grabs a glass from under the bar.

He makes the drink

Steve hands it to the Middle-Aged Man.

He takes a sip.

The Middle-Aged Man carries his drink back to his table.

FANTASY

The Middle-aged Man comes to his table. He is sitting with a Man in a dark suit, and a Woman in a suit.

Beat.

The Middle-aged Man finishes his drink. He gets up and goes to the toilet.

Beat.

He comes out wiping his hands on his trouser leg. His hands are smeared with blood.

REALITY

INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR, OFFICE - NIGHT

Steve is at the bar, watching the Middle-aged Man walk back to his seat.

He joins his friends and they watch the performance on stage.

STEVE

No, it's not him either, and they aren't gonna kill him.

The Woman holds the Middle-aged Man close and kisses him on the cheek.

Jodi gestures to Steve to get his attention.

JODI

Another whiskey, order up.

STEVE

Ice or neat?

JODI

Ice.

Steve grabs a glass and whiskey. He gets a scoop of ice and drops it into the glass.

Steve pours the whiskey into the glass.

STEVE

Whiskey up.

Someone comes over and grabs the drink.

JODI

Couple Caucasians.

Steve grabs two glasses and some vodka.

Steve makes the drinks.

Two White Russian cocktails sit on the bar top. A Woman pushes through the crowd and picks them up.

Beat.

WOMAN IN CROWD (O.S.)

Good choice, Cassie.

INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR - NIGHT

Steve is back behind the bar. It's busy.

On stage, a Man is poorly playing the trumpet.

He's playing a tune but it isn't clear what it's supposed to be.

Clemont is watching the performance.

He isn't impressed.

Clemont walks over to the bar.

CLEMONT

I want you to perform early.

STEVE

But what Daniel?

CLEMONT

Don't worry about Daniel, he'll see you perform. I guarantee it. Consider this a practice.

(beat)

You're better than the people who've been on stage so far.

STEVE

What about the bar? Jodi can't serve drinks on her own.

Clemont smiles.

CLEMONT

I'll serve the drinks. You go get your trumpet. Forget about your work for now, just get on stage and entertain this crowd.

Clemont goes behind the bar.

Steve is reluctant.

CLEMONT (cont'd)

Go on boy, I can handle the bar. I've been mixing drinks since before you were born.

Steve makes his way to the dressing room. He's nervous.

He looks back to see Clemont happily serving patrons, as if bartending comes naturally to him.

CLEMONT (cont'd)
Don't worry lad, you're gonna do great.

Steve smiles back, nervously.

He goes into the dressing room.

INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR, DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

Steve walks in to the dressing room. He's nervous, worried and jittery.

It's quiet, there's a disturbing sense of calm in the room.

Steve walks up to lockers. He takes the key out of his pocket.

He puts the key in the lock and slowly turns it.

The door creaks open behind Steve. Someone enters behind him. They walk up behind him.

SUZIE-Q
Good luck Steve.

Steve jumps.

STEVE
Holy shit Suzie, d'you mind not sneaking up on me like that?

SUZIE-Q
Jeez, sorry.
(she looks at Steve)
Steve, are you okay?

STEVE
Yeah, fine. Just nervous I guess.

SUZIE-Q
Well I know you, and you'll do fine.

She gives him a kiss on the cheek and leaves.

STEVE
Thank God that's over.

Steve opens the locker.

Beat.

STEVE (cont'd)
I wonder if--

He closes the locker.

Steve walks over to the door to the alleyway.

Before he can even stick his ear to the door. He can hear someone yelling outside.

UNKNOWN WOMAN (O.S.)
You son-of-a-bitch. It wasn't him?

Beat.

Steve opens the door a crack. He looks outside.

UNKNOWN WOMAN (O.S.) (cont'd)
You're gonna completely fuck up our
hit, y'know that.

UNKNOWN MAN (O.S.)
It looked like him I swear. But it
wasn't. Also there was a man trying
to fight off the bartender. Bastard
smacked my hand and I cut my cheek.

A loud slap.

UNKNOWN WOMAN (O.S.)
Does it hurt now?!

UNKNOWN MAN (O.S.)
What the fuck was that for you
bitch?!

A body slams against the wall.

Steve opens the door a bit more. Curious, he goes outside for a closer look.

EXT/INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR, ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

It's stopped raining but the alleyway is poorly-lit making it difficult for Steve to see anything. He steps out to get a better look.

EXT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR, ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

The Unknown Woman hears Steve's footsteps.

Instinctively, she pulls the Unknown Man towards her and sticks her tongue down his throat.

They're up against the wall.

The Unknown Woman pins her partner against the wall. They hold each other's faces, obscuring them.

Steve walks into the alley to see two people making out, hot and heavy. She's all over him.

The Unknown Woman jumps up and wraps her legs around her lover's waist. He gropes her from underneath.

The Unknown Woman dismounts the Unknown Man.

UNKNOWN WOMAN
Go away. We're busy.

STEVE
Alright, sorry.

Before the Unknown Man has a chance to catch his breath, she moves her face towards his, smacking her lips hard against his.

Steve looks back at them for a moment, shakes his head then goes back inside.

The Unknown Woman lets go and steps back.

UNKNOWN WOMAN
You're welcome.

She winks.

EXT/INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR, DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

Steve enters the dressing room.

STEVE
Who could 'he' be?

Steve's about to close the door to the outside when suddenly, he hears a body slump to the ground outside. Followed by shoes slapping the ground getting quieter and quieter.

Steve swings the door open.

EXT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR, ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

Steve rushes outside. The Lanky Man is bleeding out on the floor. He's covering a stab wound to his side. Blood is trickling through the gaps between his fingers.

Steve rushes over. He pulls the man's hand away and applies pressure to the wound. When he sees the man, he recognises him.

STEVE

So, how was the sharing platter?

LANKY MAN

(sarcastically)

It was very nice... can't you see I'm dying out here?!

Steve pushes harder against the wound. The Lanky Man cringes as Steve presses down.

The Lanky Man's face is peeling away slightly at his cheek.

STEVE

What's that on your face, some sort of scratch?

The Lanky Man begins peeling off prosthetic skin. Revealing his true face.

He's a much younger man than his mask made him appear, at least half the age. The Lanky Man removes his wig. Revealing slicked-back hair.

Steve rips the rest of the prosthetic skin off of his face.

The Lanky Man's eyes close.

Steve shakes his body frantically, trying to keep him conscious.

STEVE (cont'd)

What about her? What does she really look like? And who does she intend to kill?

LANKY MAN

Her name is--

His body convulses.

LANKY MAN (cont'd)

--She isn't a natural blonde.

His body freezes, his eyes close and he draws his final breath.

Steve is terrified.

CUT TO:

Steve dragging the body over to the dumpster whilst muttering numerous swearwords under his breath. He opens the lid of the dumpster.

The smell hits him instantly.

He digs through it. Pulling out bits of skin.

He pulls out a blonde wig.

STEVE

Well he wasn't lying about her hair.

Steve struggles to drag the body up but eventually succeeds.

He lifts the body and rolls it into the dumpster. Steve continues to cough.

He closes the lid.

Steve coughs as he makes his way back to the club.

He opens the stage door.

INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR, DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

Steve enters. His coughing continues.

He goes up to his locker, opens it and takes out his trumpet case.

STEVE

(coughing)

Let's do... let's do this.

Steve goes back into the club.

INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR - NIGHT

Steve comes out of the dressing room. Goes to the bar.

STEVE

Water.

Jodi pours him some water. He downs it and gives her back the glass. Steve makes his way up onto the stage.

STEVE (cont'd)
Good evening everyone. My name's
Steve James and I'll be performing
for you all this evening.

Steve scours the crowd.

STEVE (cont'd)
But I'm gonna need a beat. Are there
any drummers who could help me out?

BAILEY (O.S.)
I'll give you a beat.

BAILEY (27) a girl in a punk getup with dyed hair makes herself known.

She makes her way up to the stage and sits at the drum kit. She counts herself in and starts playing a beat.

Steve takes a deep breathe and puts his lips to the trumpet.

Their performance is intercut with images of the body in the dumpster.

He plays a tune and most of the patrons are listening to his performance.

As he plays, he looks over the crowd, to see if he can possible spot the killer.

He stops playing for a moment, letting Bailey play a drum solo.

He goes back to playing, joining her on the beat. Their performance comes to an end.

The audience applaud and cheer.

Steve puts his trumpet back in the case.

In the midst of the noise, he goes over to Bailey.

STEVE
You're quite the drummer.
(He offers a hand)
I'm Steve.

Bailey grabs his hand and shakes.

BAILEY

Bailey.

STEVE

Never seen you around here.

BAILEY

Oh I'm new here, just moved from down south.

STEVE

Well you're one hell of a drummer.

BAILEY

Thanks. You're quite the brass player.

STEVE

Hop over to the bar, I'll whip you up a cocktail. I make a mean White Russian.

BAILEY

I just might take you up on that.

Bailey smiles.

They walk off stage together. Steve goes back to the dressing room.

INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR, DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

Steve enters the dressing room. He goes to his locker, unlocks it and puts his trumpet case back in.

He closes the locker and locks it.

He looks at the door to the alleyway, worried.

STEVE

What if someone's found the body?
What if the woman who killed him comes back? What if she knows someone moved the body? What if comes to kill me? What if--

The door to the stage opens.

Steve shuts his mouth and covers it.

Suzie-Q enters.

SUZIE-Q
That was one amaz--

Steve turns around. His hand over his mouth.

SUZIE-Q (cont'd)
--Steve, are you okay? You're
sweating like crazy.

Steve grabs her by the wrist and leads her to the alleyway
outside the club.

EXT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR, ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

Steve takes her to the dumpster outside the club.

He opens it.

Suzie-Q peeks inside and then quickly throws her head to
side. She vomits next to the dumpster.

Steve shuts it.

SUZIE-Q
Jesus Christ Steve! I know you seemed
a little on edge tonight but holy
shit. I'm calling the police, right
now.

She takes her phone out.

STEVE
No-no-no don't do that, I didn't kill
him. It was these two people a guy
and a girl. I think she's still in
the club. They were planning to kill
someone, but that's not the most
insane part.

SUZIE-Q
Then what is? Coz this all sounds
crazy enough to me.

STEVE
They were wearing prosthetic skin
over their faces. So even if I had
seen who killed him and the also
intends to kill someone in the club,
they'll look completely different
now. All her stuff is in the
dumpster.

(MORE)

STEVE (cont'd)

(beat)

I heard them earlier tonight talking and went down for a closer look. They were making out, I couldn't really see their faces.

Suzie-Q is shocked.

SUZIE-Q

Prosthetic skin?

Steve nods. He opens the dumpster and pulls out the wig and a piece of prosthetic skin.

STEVE

See, told you.

He puts it back in the dumpster.

SUZIE-Q

So you've got no idea who killed him and there's no way to tell now either?

Steve shakes his head.

STEVE

And, Daniel Foley's coming tonight to see me play.

SUZIE-Q

Who's that?

STEVE

He owns a prestigious jazz club... that's not important right now.

SUZIE-Q

Is that why Clemont wanted to see you when you came to work tonight?

Steve nods.

SUZIE-Q (cont'd)

Boy, this is... well I don't know what this is.

Steve wanders up and down. Worried.

STEVE

It's a fucking shit storm is what it is.

SUZIE-Q

And we can't phone the police because there's no way to tell who killed him--

STEVE

--And because I had to drag the corpse over to the dumpster and put it in there. Also, how many people are wearing sequin dresses in there?

SUZIE-Q

You put the body in the dumpster? But why?

Steve is freaking out.

STEVE

Well I wasn't gonna leave it sitting there against the wall.

Suzie-Q is becoming more and more worried.

STEVE (cont'd)

I've been trying to suss out who the killers, now killer is, all night.

SUZIE-Q

This is too much for me to take in Steve.

Suzie-Q makes her way back inside.

Steve stands staring at the dumpster.

INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR - NIGHT

Steve walks in. The club is still very busy. The stage is empty. Music is playing through the speakers.

The bar area is quieter now. A few patrons are sitting there, but there's a noticeable amount of empty stools.

Steve goes back behind the bar and joins Jodi.

JODI

Well played up there.

STEVE

Thanks.

JODI

That's as much admiration as you're gonna get from me. Order up, gin and tonic.

Steve smiles. He grabs a glass and fills it with ice.

He grabs the gin and pours some in the glass. He grabs the tonic water and does the same.

He gives the drink a mix, peels some lime and squeezes the oils into the glass.

He then wipes the peel along the rim and places it so that it floats on top, as a garnish.

He adds a straw and places it on the bar.

A hand amongst the crowd snatches the drink off the bar.

Steve scans the club again, looking at the numerous patrons at the bar and at the tables.

STEVE

This just got a hundred times harder.

Steve collects some empty glasses and starts washing them in the sink behind him. He looks over at Clemont's office. The door is closed.

JODI

He rushed back in there almost as soon as you finished your bit, hasn't come out since.

STEVE

What about Bailey? Where'd she go?

JODI

Who?

STEVE

The girl who backed me up on drums. Mad hair, looked out of place.

JODI

Disappeared into the crowd. You know what it's like on open mic night. People play, then disappear, just like that.

STEVE

You're probably right. So many faces
come past us, we're never gonna
remember them all.

JODI

Anyway, what's one pretty face in a
sea of people?

Beat.

Steve thinks about that last comment as he continues washing
up glasses. He grabs a cloth and starts drying glasses.

Steve turns round to have a look round the club.

Most of the tables are occupied, though the tables close to
the stage are empty.

STEVE

It's definitely gotten quieter.

JODI

Makes our lives easier. Less drinks
to pour. We can take a breather.

Steve sighs as he looks at the club.

FANTASY

INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR - NIGHT

Steve is behind the bar. Pouring a pint for someone.

He looks around the bar again.

LANKY MAN (V.O.)

She isn't a natural blonde.

Suddenly every WOMAN in the club is wearing a blonde wig.

Steve is confused. He turns to see Jodi, head covered by a
blonde wig.

He looks over at Suzie-Q, she too has a blonde wig on. She
looks back at him and blows him a kiss.

REALITY

Steve is behind the bar. Pouring a pint for someone. It over
fills and rolls down the glass.

He turns round to see Jodi her hair it's natural colour.

JODI
Are you okay?

Steve jumps back a bit.

STEVE
Oh, yeah, fine.

JODI
That's the second time you've zoned out tonight.

STEVE
Just too many things going on inside my head I guess. Too many thoughts all at once.

JODI
I know what you mean. You think about one thing and then a memory from years ago pops into your head. And it's never a good one.

STEVE
It's like that, but more recent than a few years ago.

JODI
Don't let it bug you all night, the customers need their drinks, and we need those tips.

STEVE
yeah, you're right.

Steve grabs a glass from off the bar and starts washing it.

A Customer is talking to Jodi.

Jodi turns to Steve.

JODI
I've got something that'll put your mind at ease.

STEVE
Oh yeah?

JODI
Making a Sazerac.

Steve smirks as he grabs a rocks glass. He coats the glass in Absinthe, running it around the glass. He discards it, then pours in brandy. This is followed by a few drops of Bitters and a tiny amount of sugar.

He stirs the drink and adds a lemon peel to garnish.

He puts it on the bar and the Customer comes over and takes the drink.

JODI (cont'd)
Whiskey, rocks.

STEVE
Will do.

Steve grabs a glass and fills it with ice. He grabs a bottle of whiskey and pours it in.

He puts it on the bar.

STEVE (cont'd)
Whiskey with ice.

Steve puts the drink on the bar. Someone comes and grabs it.

Jodi grabs some glasses off the bar and dumps them in the sink.

Steve turns round and washes them up.

He turns back around. The club is still very busy, no one is coming to the bar.

STEVE (cont'd)
D'you think you could handle the bar for a minute, I'm just going to the loo?

Jodi looks around.

JODI
Go for it.

Steve makes his way to the toilet.

INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR, MEN'S TOILET - NIGHT

Steve enters toilet. A few stalls are occupied and so are some of the urinals.

Steve goes to one of the empty stalls.

He unzips and does his business.

He flushes the toilet goes to wash his hands.

As he washes his hands, he notices bits of the prosthetic face mask.

Steve thinks back to the Lank Man.

STEVE

His face, whomever he tried to kill
must've seen him and must've defended
themselves.

He washes the bits of fake skin down the sink.

STEVE (cont'd)

Unless--

FANTASY

INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR - NIGHT (STEVE'S FANTASY)

An unseen figure is standing at the bar. Jodi is serving them a drink.

STEVE (V.O.)

Whoever he tried to kill didn't see
him coming.

The Lank Man goes up behind the figure.

STEVE (V.O.) (cont'd)

They were caught off guard, and had
to improvise.

The Lanky Man goes to stab the figure.

STEVE (V.O.) (cont'd)

Knocking their assailant down.

The Lank Man falls to the floor.

He gets up and runs to the toilet.

INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR, MEN'S TOILET - NIGHT (STEVE'S FANTASY)

The Lanky Man goes to the toilet. He looks in the mirror. His mask is coming off. He takes the knife and cuts his cheek.

He dabs it with a bit of water and puts a tissue over it.

STEVE (V.O.)
He makes it look like he cut himself.

The Lanky Man exits the toilet.

INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR - NIGHT (STEVE'S FANTASY)

The Lank Man walks out into the club. He goes and sits down next to the Blonde Woman.

She turns to him.

STEVE (V.O.)
She turns to him and asks if he's done it.

Disappointed, he shakes his head.

STEVE (V.O.) (cont'd)
He tells her no.

She leads him outside.

STEVE (V.O.) (cont'd)
They go outside.

EXT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR, ALLEYWAY - NIGHT (STEVE'S FANTASY)

The Blonde Woman and the Lanky Man stand there talking.

She's yelling at him.

STEVE (V.O.)
She isn't happy.

He takes out the knife and demonstrates what he was going to do.

STEVE (V.O.) (cont'd)
He shows her what his plan was.

She shoves him against the dumpster. The knife falls out of his hand. She slaps him and quickly incapacitates him.

He bends over in pain.

STEVE (V.O.) (cont'd)
She hurts him as a distraction.

She grabs the knife and stabs him in the side of his body.

STEVE (V.O.) (cont'd)
Then stabs him. And makes her way
back round into the club.

She rips off the prosthetics and the wig and tosses it in
the dumpster.

She then makes her way back to the club.

EXT/INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR - NIGHT (STEVE'S FANTASY)

She enters the club.

STEVE (V.O.)
She comes into the club, completely
unrecognizable and starts fresh. But
she's still got the same dress on.

INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR - NIGHT (STEVE'S FANTASY)

A Woman enters the bar. She picks up her bag.

She goes to the lavatory.

STEVE (V.O.)
So she goes to the toilet.

INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR, WOMEN'S TOILET - NIGHT (STEVE'S
FANTASY)

The toilet is the same design as the men's except for no
urinals and double the stalls.

The Woman is in one of the stalls, changing clothes. A dress
is draped over the top of the stall.

Beat.

It's pulled down.

STEVE (V.O.)
And she puts on a new dress.

The stall is unlocked.

EXT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR, ALLEYWAY - NIGHT (STEVE'S FANTASY)

The Woman throws the bag in the dumpster.

STEVE (V.O.)
She throws away the bag.

INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR - NIGHT (STEVE'S FANTASY)

A Woman, face unseen, enters the bar. She sits at her original table.

STEVE (V.O.)
She takes a seat back at her table.

Suzie-Q comes over and takes her order.

Beat.

Suzie-Q brings a drink to her table. She then walks back to the bar.

STEVE (V.O.) (cont'd)
And searches for her target.

The Woman scours the club for her target.

REALITY

INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR, MEN'S LAVATORY - NIGHT

Steve stands there. The tap still running.

STEVE
But that still doesn't get me any closer to finding out who the intended victim is and it doesn't explain that smell.

Steve turns off the tap. He leaves the room.

INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR - NIGHT

Steve enters. He looks for Suzie-Q. He sees her and goes up to her.

Steve grabs her by the arm and whispers in her ear.

STEVE
Come with me.

He takes Suzie-Q to a quieter part of the club.

STEVE (cont'd)
I have a theory. It might be nothing, but it definitely has some weight to it. Whoever the killer is, she's still in the club. She's just wearing different clothes.

Behind them NAOMI (27) a dark-haired woman in a black two-piece dress. Walks past them carrying something.

SUZIE-Q
Along with having a different face?

STEVE
Exactly.

SUZIE-Q
Any ideas who the victim might be?

Steve shakes his head.

STEVE
Before she killed her partner, there was a mention of a "he".

SUZIE-Q
Anything else?

Steve shakes his head again.

SUZIE-Q (cont'd)
So you're more or less back at stage one?

Steve nods.

SUZIE-Q (cont'd)
Has there been anyone that looks like they might be a target?

STEVE
Not from what I can tell. We see hundreds of people every night. It could be literally anyone. That, as well as not knowing the killer's identity makes it almost impossible.

SUZIE-Q
D'you think they know each other?

STEVE

Who?

SUZIE-Q

The killer and the victim?

STEVE

Maybe? Maybe not.

Naomi walks back past them, her hands now empty.

STEVE

Maybe he knows her as a blonde-haired woman. Or maybe he knows what she really looks like?

SUZIE-Q

We'll just have to look for someone who's leaving the club that could be a the target.

Steve thinks for a moment.

STEVE

How long have you got left on your shift?

SUZIE-Q

I'm here all night, Steve. Till closing.

STEVE

Shit, me too.

SUZIE-Q

You're stuck behind the bar and I'm waiting tables... does Jodi know about this?

Steve shakes his head.

SUZIE-Q (cont'd)

Well I can't exactly stand by the door for the rest of the night, whilst you keep looking out from the bar. Clemont'll fire us.

STEVE

He's got his own problems to deal with.

SUZIE-Q
 How'd you know? You know what he's
 like, spends all his time in his
 office.

STEVE
 I overheard one of his conversations
 earlier this evening I don't know who
 he was talking to. But he sounded
 very apologetic.
 (beat)
 Scared, even.

Suzie-Q is intrigued.

STEVE (cont'd)
 It sounded like he's in some sort of
 financial issue. Related to the club.

SUZIE-Q
 Doesn't he own this place?

STEVE
 I don't think so.

SUZIE-Q
 But he's been in business for
 decades.

STEVE
 He rents this place from someone.

SUZIE-Q
 Who?

STEVE
 That, I don't know.

SUZIE-Q
 D'you think maybe the two are
 connected?

STEVE
 Maybe, but maybe we need to do more
 digging first?

Steve sees Clemont sitting at the bar again.

STEVE (cont'd)
 Anyway, let's get back to work.
 Charlie's back out again.

Steve brings Suzie-Q's attention to Clemont sitting at the bar. He's talking to Jodi.

Both of them walk off. Suzie-Q goes and clears empty tables.

Steve goes back to the bar.

JODI
Need another whiskey, Charlie?

CLEMONT
I wouldn't mind.

Steve interjects.

STEVE
Okay but let's make this the last one for tonight, nothing worse than a guy puking all over the bar. No less, the manager.

Jodi grabs a tumbler. She fills it with ice. She grabs a whiskey bottle and fills the glass.

Jodi puts the drink on the bar. Clemont grabs the drink.

CLEMONT
Don't worry, I won't drink it all in one go this time.

Steve smirks.

Clemont takes a sip of his drink.

CLEMONT (cont'd)
Still, I gotta drink it all before the ice melts and dilutes it.

Clemont takes a gulp of the drink.

STEVE
I'm gonna fix you up so coffee, Charlie.

Steve grabs a coffee cup. He sticks it under the nozzle of the coffee machine.

He grabs a pack of ground coffee and puts a few spoonfuls into the machine.

He fills the machine with water and turns it on.

Beat.

The coffee pours out the nozzle and into the cup.

Steve hands the cup to Clemont.

STEVE (cont'd)
Just how you like it, drink up.

Steve takes away the empty whiskey glass.

Clemont isn't making any attempt to drink the coffee.

Steve tries to encourage him to have the drink.

STEVE (cont'd)
Charlie, come on man. You need this
more than you need the whiskey.

Each attempt is met with failure.

Steve eventually stops trying.

Clemont grabs the coffee.

Steve is relieved.

Clemont drinks his coffee.

CLEMONT
D'you know why I like you so much,
Steve?

Steve shakes his head.

STEVE
No idea.

CLEMONT
Cause you're gonna make one hell of a
musician one day.

Steve smiles.

STEVE
Thanks Charlie. That's means a lot.

CLEMONT
It's true. One day, you'll be out on
the world stage playing with a band
or as a soloist.

Naomi sits at the bar.

Steve turns to her.

STEVE

What'll be?

NAOMI

I'll have... an espresso Martini.

STEVE

Sure thing.

Steve fires up the coffee machine once again. As the machine warms up, Steve grabs a Martini glass. He fills it with ice to chill it.

Beat.

Clemont sits there, wallowing in his own misery.

STEVE (cont'd)

Charlie, you gonna be okay?

CLEMONT

Oh yeah. I'll have another coffee while you're at it as well.

Clemont puts the empty cup on the bar. Steve takes the cup and rinses it out.

He grabs an espresso cup and sticks it under the nozzle of the machine.

Steve fills the shaker with some ice.

Steve grabs some vodka and pours it into the shaker. He next grabs some coffee liqueur and does the same.

Steve pours the double espresso into the shaker. He puts the lid on top and shakes.

He dumps the ice out of the Martini glass and pours the cocktail in.

Steve puts the drink on the bar.

STEVE

That'll be seven-fifty.

Naomi hands him the money.

Steve puts the money in register.

Steve grabs another coffee cup, puts it underneath the machine and makes Clemont's coffee.

Beat.

He hands Clemont the coffee.

STEVE (cont'd)
You're welcome.

Bailey goes back on stage. She starts drumming.

STEVE (cont'd)
Charlie relax, watch the girl up there.

CLEMONT
Was she the girl that backed you earlier?

STEVE
Yep.

Steve turns to Naomi.

STEVE (cont'd)
How's the drink?

Mid-sip, she gives him a thumbs up.

NAOMI
Good, I needed it. Had a rather stressful evening.

STEVE
Yeah, I know the feeling. Every thought clouding your mind at once.

NAOMI
Yeah, that's it.

STEVE
Just relax, enjoy the music, the atmosphere.

Steve cleans out the cocktail shaker.

STEVE (cont'd)
Don't think about what's happened or going to happen. Think about the here and now.

NAOMI
That I can do.

Naomi turns round in her chair and watches the stage.

Bailey is drumming on stage. Most people in the club are watching.

She plays softly but gets louder and beats the drum harder.

Bailey plays a marvellous crescendo.

The music builds.

More and more as she keeps drumming.

It gets to the highest point.

She pauses. As people start applauding she plays again momentarily to end her performance.

The crowd cheers.

Clemont goes up on stage amidst the cheers and applause.

Bailey walks off stage as Clemont comes on.

Clemont grabs the microphone.

Bailey takes a seat at the bar.

CLEMONT

Good evening ladies and gents. My name is Charles Clemont and welcome to Clemont's Jazz Bar.

(beat)

We've had some fantastic performances tonight so far. We're gonna take a bit of a break from the live performances but they'll resume in about an hour or so. But don't worry, we'll reopen the stage soon for all you burgeoning musicians.

There's some applause from the crowd.

Clemont walks off stage.

He goes back to the bar.

Steve is serving Bailey a drink.

CLEMONT (cont'd)

Put the CD player on for a while.

STEVE

You don't usually take a break from the live music.

Steve presses play on a CD player. Music starts playing through the speakers.

CLEMONT

Yeah I know, but I just thought maybe people needed a break.

He looks round at the tables of Customers laughing, chatting and having an all round good time.

CLEMONT (cont'd)

Look at them, they don't care about the music, it's just extra entertainment for them. People bring their instruments but not all of them can really play. Not all of them have the passion for it.

(Beat)

I started this as a way to let up-and-coming musicians get some experience. They perform and get a free drink if they do. It works well. I only do it one night a week, for the fun of it.

Now it's just become one big joke. Too many people take it for granted.

STEVE

Maybe it's time you stopped doing it? Just let this place be a restaurant?

Clemont shakes his head.

CLEMONT

I could never do that. It's too popular to stop suddenly. Plus, it gets people coming here on a typically quiet night.

(beat)

Maybe I've just lost the spark, like when an author can't write. They look for an idea and there's just nothing.

STEVE

I'd say you could do with a drink, but I think you've had enough of those tonight.

CLEMONT

I wouldn't mind another cup of coffee though.

Steve makes him the drink.

Beat.

He hands Clemont the drink.

Clemont takes a sip, then smiles.

STEVE

What if you took a break from the business for a bit? Instead of running the place, you could give management up temporarily to someone else. Just for a few weeks? I've worked here for about three years now and I've never seen you take a holiday or even a night off.

Clemont looks over at the tables again.

CLEMONT

I couldn't do that. Do you know anything about management?

STEVE

No, but I'm not talking about me. I'm talking about hiring a sub-manager, almost like a night porter, like they have in hotels.

Clemont thinks about it for a moment.

CLEMONT

Now that, that could work well. He could--

JODI

--Or she.

CLEMONT

Or she could work here a couple nights a week; whilst I take the night off.

STEVE

There you go, consider that, consider spending nights with your family instead of spending every night here. This place closes at midnight and it's already nine-thirty. Imagine it, having dinner with your wife and kids and then watching TV as a family.

Clemont closes his eyes and thinks.

CLEMONT
I can picture it now. Joanna and
junior all huddled up together. I
come in with fresh coffee for us and
hot chocolate for him.

Clemont smiles.

CLEMONT (cont'd)
Man that does sound great.

STEVE
What do you think?

CLEMONT
I'll think about it.

A Patron comes to the bar for a drink.

STEVE
Get back to your coffee, Charlie.
Think it over.

Clemont drinks his coffee.

CLEMONT
I can do that.

Steve turns to the Patron

STEVE
What'll it be?

PATRON
Whiskey, neat.

STEVE
Coming right up.

Steve grabs a glass. He grabs the whiskey and pours.

He puts the drink on the bar.

STEVE (cont'd)
That'll be eight-fifty.

The Patron rummages through his pockets. He takes out a
tenner. He hands it Steve.

Steve puts the money in the register and takes out the
change.

He hands it to the Patron.

STEVE (cont'd)
Anyway, I've got more stuff to worry
about.

Steve watches from the bar, looking at all the tables. Again trying to suss out who the killer is.

He sees a tall, leggy woman in her 30s in a cut-off white dress.

FANTASY

She walks past a table and spills a drink on the Man sitting there.

The Man, irate goes to the toilet.

Steve watches as she follows him.

Beat.

After a while the woman comes out of the toilet, her dress has a few spots of blood on it.

REALITY

Steve cringes thinking about the scenario.

STEVE (cont'd)
No, it can't be her.

Naomi holds up an empty Martini glass.

NAOMI
Can I get another one of these?

STEVE
Oh, yeah Espresso Martini, right?

NAOMI
That's the one.

Steve takes the empty glass and puts it in the sink.

He grabs a fresh glass and mixes her up a new drink.

Steve puts the finished drink on the bar.

Naomi gives him the money for the drink.

STEVE

Hey, Charlie any idea when Daniel's gonna be here?

CLEMONT

He's swinging by tonight. Why, you nervous?

STEVE

Just a tad. Overexcitement more than anything.

CLEMONT

Don't worry kid, you'll do great, just relax. Have yourself a glass of whiskey before you go up. Clear your throat and your mind.

Steve looks round the club again. He sees Suzie-Q, worried and trying to get his attention.

STEVE

That I can do.

He looks over at her. She's gesturing for him to go outside. Pointing at the door.

Steve is confused.

He turns to Jodi.

STEVE (cont'd)

Excuse me for just a moment.

Steve rushes over to Suzie-Q.

Clemont looks at him, perplexed.

STEVE (cont'd)

What? What is it?

Suzie-Q is frantic, stuttering, struggling to get her words out.

SUZIE-Q

Outside, in the dumpster. Go see for yourself.

Steve makes his way to the dressing room.

INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR, DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

Steve rushes through the dressing room and into the alleyway.

EXT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR, ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

Steve bursts out the door and into the alleyway.

He goes over to the dumpster.

Steve opens the dumpster.

He rummages through the dumpster and comes across a duffel bag.

Steve takes the duffel bag out the dumpster.

He puts it on the ground and unzips it.

He pulls out a pair of blood-covered rubber gloves and a blood-covered hacksaw.

Steve cringes. He digs further into the bag.

He pulls out a sequin-covered dress. There's some blood on it.

Underneath the dress are a matching pair of flat dress shoes.

Steve continues to dig through the dumpster.

There are numerous black bin bags, all tied up perfectly.

He takes out one of the bags, there's some weight to the bag.

Steve opens the bag.

He freaks out and throws the bag back in the dumpster.

Steve pukes next to the dumpster.

He slams it shut.

Shaken, he makes his way back into the club.

INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR, DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

Steve ambles his way through the dressing room.

INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR - NIGHT

Steve enters the club.

He sees Suzie-Q. The worried look on his face is enough for her to tell he saw it too.

Suzie-Q rushes over to him.

SUZIE-Q
How screwed are we?

STEVE
Very. Very very.

Steve stands thinking.

Beat.

Suzie-Q is getting more worried.

SUZIE-Q
Steve, what can we do? We're gonna die. She's gonna go outside, see that someone's gone through her stuff in the dumpster and then we'll become the targets. Forget the victim, whoever he is. She's gonna be after us now.

Steve is still thinking.

SUZIE-Q (cont'd)
Steve, come on, say something.

She grabs him by the shoulders and shakes him frantically.

As soon as he starts talking, she lets go.

STEVE
What if we use that to our advantage? You said earlier to try looking for who the target might be, instead of looking for the killer is.

SUZIE-Q
You said you've been doing that all night and haven't had any possible leads. What makes you think they'll magically appear out of thin air?

STEVE
Maybe they're not here yet?

SUZIE-Q
It's getting pretty late.

STEVE
You know what it's like here. People seem to just stagger in near the end of the night.

SUZIE-Q
That's true. Maybe you should go back to the bar and try and look harder for a possible victim?

STEVE
I can do that, not that it'll do much good, It hasn't so far.

Suzie-Q looks over at Clemont who's back to drinking whiskey.

SUZIE-Q
What's up with Charlie, is he okay?

STEVE
No, he really isn't, not tonight.

SUZIE-Q
Is it the guy who owns this place?

STEVE
Yeah, and, to make matters worse, the guy's been breathing down his neck all night.

(beat)
It's driving him crazy.

SUZIE-Q
I said it before and I'll say it again. Do you think there's a connection?

STEVE
It's looking more and more likely, but I'm still not convinced.

Steve thinks for a moment.

STEVE (cont'd)
Someone approached a guy sitting at the bar. It could've been one of the killers.

Suzie-Q is stunned.

SUZIE-Q

Really?

STEVE

Yeah, I was dealing with a drunk guy. Jodi didn't want to handle it so I did, and as I was trying to grab the guy, I could swear someone had a weapon or something in their hand.

Her shock turns to intrigue.

SUZIE-Q

Go on.

STEVE

It had to have been a knife or some glass or something, because the guy in the dumpster outside had been stabbed. I spoke to him.

SUZIE-Q

You spoke to one of the killers?

STEVE

Yeah he was about to tell me her name but he closed his eyes, and then he told me she wasn't actually blonde.

SUZIE-Q

Anything else?

STEVE

It's his body in the dumpster.

Suzie-Q is shocked.

STEVE (cont'd)

I dragged him across and put him in there. And, I showed you.

(Suzie-Q nods)

But something must've happened between that time; the other killer must have wanted to make sure nobody knew he was in there.

(beat)

Did you see anyone go out into the alleyway? But, more importantly did anyone see you go into the alleyway?

SUZIE-Q

So they don't know that we know about the body?

STEVE

Exactly. What do you think her motive was to kill her partner?

Suzie-Q thinks.

SUZIE-Q

I really don't know.

STEVE

We need to find a way to get potential targets out in the open.

Suzie-Q thinks for a moment.

SUZIE-Q

We've gotta get people dancing.

STEVE

That's not gonna happen, not in a place like this.

SUZIE-Q

I know, but maybe it's the only way.

She thinks again.

SUZIE-Q (cont'd)

When are you going up to play again?

STEVE

When Daniel Foley gets here. I was only supposed to perform once tonight, for him, but that comedy act was up before with their poor excuse for a musical duo.

Suzie-Q smirks.

SUZIE-Q

And that cute girl backed you up on drums.

Steve blushes.

SUZIE-Q

D'you know when he's coming?

Steve shakes his head.

STEVE

No clue. And before you say it, Bailey's not the killer.

SUZIE-Q

Ooooh, she has a name. And how can you tell?

STEVE

She looks too out of place. Killers tend to blend in to these sorts of places.

SUZIE-Q

That's probably true.

STEVE

Come on let's get back to work, we can't just stand here talking about who the killer might be. We need to find her, and stop her before she has even the slightest chance to approach her target.

Steve and Suzie-Q go their separate ways.

INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR - NIGHT

Steve is back at the bar.

He's watching the tables again. No one stands out.

Clemont is sitting at the bar. He's back to drinking coffee. He finishes his coffee and goes back to his office.

STEVE

Why was Clemont drinking whiskey?

JODI

He asked for it. I said "No" but he said he'd fire me if I didn't give it to him.

STEVE

But we need to keep him sober. He's under a lot of shit tonight.

JODI

You think I can't see that? I'm well aware he's not himself at the moment, but I would just rather do what he says and keep my job. I haven't been here as long as you have.

STEVE
Don't worry about Charlie. Worry
about the customers.

Steve sees a pile of wet glasses. Soaking on the side. He
grabs a cloth and starts drying them.

Jodi is taking orders from Patrons.

JODI
Once you've got those glasses dry we
need a couple of beers.

Steve grabs two bottles of beer. He opens them and puts them
on the bar.

Someone comes and grabs the bottles.

He goes back to drying up.

STEVE
Has anyone sketchy been at the bar
tonight?

JODI
Apart from the guy you tossed out,
no.

STEVE
Really, no one?

JODI
Nope, not from what I could see.
You're better at reading people than
I am.

STEVE
Oh, I'm really not.

JODI
Don't worry about it, Steve. Our
shift'll be over soon and you can
just go home, go to bed and forget
about everything.

STEVE
I wish I could.

Amongst the crowd, someone asks for a Gimlet.

JODI
That'll give you something to do,
knock up another Gimlet.

Steve grabs a shaker and fills it with ice.

He grabs some gin and pours it into the shaker. Next he grabs some lime juice and puts it into the shaker.

Steve puts in some sugar and closes the lid.

He grabs a cocktail glass and fills it with ice.

Steve shakes the drink.

He discards the ice and pours the drink into the glass.

STEVE

One Gimlet.

Someone picks up the drink.

Jodi turns to Steve.

JODI

Bourbon, neat.

Steve grabs a tumbler glass. He gets some bourbon off the shelf.

Steve pours the bourbon into the glass and puts it on the bar.

STEVE

Bourbon.

The drink gets picked up.

JODI

Water.

Steve grabs a glass. He fills it with water and puts it on the bar.

STEVE

Water.

The drink gets picked up.

JODI

Cosmo.

STEVE

Coming up.

Steve fills a shaker with ice. He measures out the vodka and adds it to the shaker.

He measures out orange liqueur and adds it to the shaker.

He measures out the cranberry juice and adds it to the shaker. He then secures the shaker.

Steve grabs a cocktail glass and fills it with ice.

He shakes the drink.

Steve pours the drink into the glass and garnishes it with a lime wedge.

JODI

Tom Collins.

Steve grabs a Collins glass.

He fills it with ice. He measures out the vodka and pours it in the glass.

He measures out the lemon juice and pours it in the glass.

Steve adds some sugar and finally, carbonated water.

He stirs the drink and puts it on the bar.

STEVE

Tom Collins.

The drink gets picked up.

JODI

Another water.

Steve grabs a glass and fills it with water.

He puts the drink on the bar. The drink gets picked up.

JODI (cont'd)

Two more waters.

Steve grabs two glasses and fills them with water.

He puts the glasses on the bar. They get picked up.

Eventually the large crowd winds down.

Jodi turns to Steve.

JODI (cont'd)

Does that usually happen? A bunch of customers all at once.

STEVE

Yeah, usually near the end of the night. The smart ones get water. Everyone else just gets more alcohol.

JODI

So when do we start calling people taxis?

STEVE

I've never had to. You've also gotta remember that this is a jazz club, not the sort of club where people get blackout drunk. They come for the music or, on open mic night, to perform. Occasionally you get the odd customer that you have to throw out, but it's very rare.

Someone comes to the bar and hands him a glass.

Steve refills the glass with water.

He watches the club floor again, looking at the tables.

FANTASY

Steve spots a SHORT WOMAN (28) in minimalist dress.

She walks over to a BUSINESS MAN #2 (37) in a grey suit sitting at the bar.

They're chatting. He's laughing. She's flirting with him.

She puts her hand on his thigh.

She pulls out a thin needle-like weapon and sticks it in his back.

He continues laughing and collapses to the floor.

She walks away, grinning.

REALITY

Steve watches the Short Woman. She walks straight past Business Man #2. Practically ignoring him.

JODI

We need another water.

Steve grabs a glass and fills it with water. He puts it on the bar. Someone grabs it.

He watches from the bar as Clemont's door opens. Clemont comes out of his office, a huge grin on his face. He walks up to the front door of the club.

The door opens. Standing there is DANIEL FOLEY (69) a tall man in casual clothes.

Clemont and Foley shake hands.

CLEMONT
How've you been, Danny?

FOLEY
Not bad, not bad. My god this place has changed. Did you get new lights installed?

Clemont shakes his head.

FOLEY (cont'd)
Did you repaint the walls?

Clemont shakes his head again.

FOLEY (cont'd)
Tables? You got new tables.

CLEMONT
C'mon Daniel, we'll get you a table and I'll bring you your favourite cocktail.

Clemont walks over to the bar.

CLEMONT (cont'd)
Steve, we need an old fashioned.

Steve grabs a tumbler glass and puts some ice in. He then grabs a mixing jug. He adds Bourbon, bitters, sugar and water to the jug. He mixes the drink until the sugar has dissolved.

Steve dumps the ice out of the glass. He then pours the drink into the glass.

Steve takes a lemon peel and squeezes it over the glass. He then drops the peel in the drink.

CLEMONT (cont'd)
Now come with me. There's someone I'd like you to meet.

Steve puts the glass on a tray and take the drink over to the table.

Steve, Clemont and Daniel are sat at the table talking.

CLEMONT (cont'd)

So anyway, Steve comes in for the interview and afterwards, I ask if he has any questions. He asks if I can play piano. I nod and then he says "Can you play backup? I want to show you something." So we're out there on the stage. I played backup on keyboard and for about five minutes, he's playing an outstanding trumpet piece. I told him then and there. You've got the job, but I want you to perform that piece for our guests.

Foley laughs.

FOLEY

Great story, love it.

(he turns to Steve)

So, you know why I'm here. I'm looking for someone who can really play. For someone who can get people interested... no, invested in the performance and get the customers watching the stage. Not just sitting there enjoying the music and the atmosphere while they eat or drink. One thing I've had recently is having people chatting louder than the person on stage.

Clemont is shocked.

CLEMONT

Really, at The Basement?

FOLEY

People don't appreciate the blues the way they used to. I want someone to bring that appreciation back. And, if this guy's as amazing as you say he is, I think he'll be the golden-egg layer I've been looking for.

(beat)

Let's see your instrument, kid.

Steve reaches under the table and grabs his trumpet case. He places it on the table.

Foley opens the case. He picks up the trumpet.

FOLEY (cont'd)
Wow, this is beautiful kid. How long
you had it?

STEVE
Couple years.

FOLEY
I'm looking forward to seeing you
play this.

Foley puts the trumpet back in the case.

CLEMONT
Go back behind the bar Steve, we'll
get you set you up soon. You're one
hell of a player, but you're also a
great bartender.

Steve smiles. He grabs his trumpet case and makes his way
back behind the bar.

Suzie-Q comes over to Steve.

Steve talks to her privately.

SUZIE-Q
Is that the guy?

Steve nods.

SUZIE-Q (cont'd)
Are you excited? I am.

He nods again.

Steve makes his way back to the bar.

STEVE
Were you okay on your own behind the
bar?

Jodi smiles and nods.

She looks over at Clemont and Foley smiling and laughing.

JODI
Who's the guy Charlie's chatting
with?

STEVE

Daniel Foley, he's owns a club in Soho.

Jodi nods, feigning interest. She quickly goes back to pouring drinks.

Steve stands at the bar, washing up.

He starts drying.

Jodi is serving a customer. She turns to Steve.

JODI

We need a glass of the good vodka.

Steve reaches up on the shelf and picks up an elegant-looking bottle. He shows it to the customer, who nods.

Steve pours some into a glass and puts it on the bar.

Beat.

JODI (cont'd)

We need another whiskey, neat.

Steve grabs a bottle of whiskey and a glass.

He pours the drink and puts it on the bar.

Someone picks up the drink.

Beat.

Suzie-Q comes over to the bar. She pulls Steve in close.

SUZIE-Q

I went back outside. Those bags are gone.

STEVE

That means, who ever the killer is, must be regular enough to know when the dumpster gets emptied.

SUZIE-Q

So now it's a dead end?

STEVE

Exactly.

SUZIE-Q
We're gonna have to try something
else.

STEVE
Like what?

SUZIE-Q
Try and get people up and dancing,
while you play, then the killer will
have difficulty trying to find their
target, because they'll have to fight
their way through a crowd.

STEVE
I'll see what I can do.

Steve looks over at Clemont and Foley. The two men are still
chatting away.

STEVE
Maybe you're right.

Steve looks at the bar. He sees Naomi watching Foley and is
perplexed.

He gestures to Suzie-Q to look at Naomi. She looks over and
like Steve is equally confused.

SUZIE-Q
D'you think--

STEVE
--Maybe?

Naomi goes over to their table.

She starts talking to them, particularly Foley.

SUZIE-Q
It's definitely a surprise.

Beat.

SUZIE-Q (cont'd)
Go over there.

STEVE
No.

SUZIE-Q
Go on, see what you can find out.

Steve is reluctant but Suzie-Q encourages him.

STEVE

Alright.

Steve walks over to their table.

NAOMI

You own 'The Basement'!

FOLEY

Yeah.

NAOMI

I've been a few times, It's fantastic.

She touches his knee.

FOLEY

Why thank you.

STEVE

Can I get any of you another drink?

FOLEY

Yes, please. I'll have another Old Fashioned.

Steve takes away the empty glasses and makes his way back to bar.

CLEMONT

Steve, five minutes.

Steve nods. He smiles as he walks back.

He's behind the bar. Making an Old Fashioned. Suzie-Q approaches him.

SUZIE-Q

What d'you find out?

STEVE

Nothing, she's flirting with him, that's it.

Suzie-Q looks over at Naomi laughing hysterically. She puts her hand on his shoulder.

SUZIE-Q

Yeah, she really is. But that doesn't mean she's isn't the killer.

STEVE
Well we can try and find out soon
because I'm on in five.

SUZIE-Q
You got your trumpet.

Steve pulls his case out from under the bar.

STEVE
Right here.

SUZIE-Q
So what's the plan?

STEVE
I'm going to perform, and you're
going to try and find a sign that
she's the killer. If you do find a
sign, get her out of the building.

SUZIE-Q
What if she has a plan of her own?

STEVE
Then you're just gonna have to
improvise.

Steve puts the drink on a tray and takes it over to the
table.

Suzie-Q is speechless.

Steve makes his way to Clemont and Foley's table. Naomi is
much closer to Foley now. Holding his arm.

FOLEY
And one of the guys is going crazy on
those drums, his hands almost started
bleeding like in that movie--

Foley looks up at Steve.

STEVE
Your Old Fashioned.

Foley smiles as Steve puts the drink on the table.

FOLEY
These are good, kid.
(he takes a sip)
Keep'em coming.

STEVE
Can I get anyone anything else?

NAOMI
I'll have another Martini.

STEVE
Coming right up.

Steve takes away Naomi's empty Martini glass.

He sees Naomi squeezing Foley tight.

As Steve walks back to the bar, Suzie-Q comes up to him.

SUZIE-Q
Anything?

Steve shakes his head.

STEVE
If she really is the killer, she's
really good at hiding it.

Steve looks back over at their table.

Naomi is practically in Foley's lap now.

SUZIE-Q
Or she's really trying to get into
his pants.

(beat)
What if we're wrong about her and
she's just a flirt?

STEVE
Then you've made a grave error in
judgement and we're back to square
one.

(beat)
But I think there's more to it than
that. There has to be. She doesn't
seem like the kinda girl that would
that go for someone like him.

SUZIE-Q
You're right. She's tall, pretty,
dark-haired. He's tall, not much of a
looker and much older.

Steve and Suzie-Q stare at their table.

STEVE

I've gotta go back there in minute,
she wants another espresso martini.
I'll see if I can find anything else
out.

He goes back to the bar, leaving Suzie-Q watching Clemont
and Foley's table.

Steve pours the drink into the glass. He puts the drink on
the tray and takes it back over to their table.

Steve approaches the table.

Naomi is still forcing herself on Foley.

NAOMI

I'd be very interested to talk to you
in private about working at your
club.

FOLEY

Typically I contact people about
working for me, but if you leave me
your details I'll see what I can do.

NAOMI

You do that.

Steve clears his throat loud enough for them to hear.

They turn around.

STEVE

Your espresso Martini.

He puts the drink on the table.

NAOMI

Thanks.

Steve makes his way back to the bar.

Suzie-Q comes up to him.

SUZIE-Q

Anything?

STEVE

No, she's asking him about working at
his club.

SUZIE-Q

D'you think it's some sort of lie, to get him comfortable around her?

STEVE

Probably, she did say something about talking privately.

SUZIE-Q

What did he say to that?

STEVE

He more or less dismissed the idea.

SUZIE-Q

D'you think he's onto her?

Steve looks over the table again. Foley is laughing, intoxicated by Naomi as she continues to indulge him.

STEVE

No, but if she is the killer, she's got him right where she wants him. But she's got one problem.

SUZIE-Q

What's that?

STEVE

She can't outright kill here and now. She even said it herself.

SUZIE-Q

When?

STEVE

When she asked him if they could talk privately.

SUZIE-Q

How d'you think she'll lead him somewhere?

STEVE

I don't know yet, I'm trying to work it out.

SUZIE-Q

Maybe he'll go to the toilet and she'll kill him while--

STEVE

--I already thought about that.

Suzie-Q is sceptical.

SUZIE-Q
What d'you mean you've "thought"
about it?

She looks at him, inquisitive of what he has to say.

Steve tries to force the words out but can't at first.

STEVE
I've been watching people all
evening, imagining they're the
killer.

(beat)
What I think is more likely, is that
she kills him outside, like she did
to her partner.

FANTASY

EXT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR, ALLEYWAY - NIGHT (STEVE'S FANTASY)

Foley walks out into the alleyway, looking for Naomi. She
isn't there.

STEVE (V.O.)
He'll be outside, waiting for her.

Foley, confused makes his way back to the club.

STEVE (V.O.) (cont'd)
She won't turn up, so he'll go back
inside.

There's a noise. Foley whips round to see what it was.

STEVE (V.O.) (cont'd)
And as soon as he lets his guard
down, that's when she'll strike.

Foley sees nothing, and makes his way back to the club. From
the darkness behind him, Naomi emerges, she's clutching a
knife.

Naomi approaches him. She raises the knife. She grabs his
hair and yanks his head back.

A slicing sound is heard.

Foley's dead body drops to the floor, blood pouring out from
his throat.

STEVE (V.O.) (cont'd)
Then she'll drag his body to the
dumpster.

Naomi drags Foley's body to the dumpster.

From inside the dumpster, a body drops into it.

STEVE (V.O.) (cont'd)
He gets dumped in it.

Naomi whistles.

Beat.

A garbage truck appears.

Two GARBAGE MEN in uniform exit the truck. They roll the
dumpster over to the truck and empty the contents into it.

Foley's body falls onto a pile of rubbish.

The compactor shuts.

The two Men are back in the truck. They drive away.

STEVE (V.O.) (cont'd)
And that's it, he's dead and no one's
the wiser.

Naomi's shoes can be heard against the ground as she walks
through the alleyway. The sound gets quieter and quieter as
she leaves.

REALITY

INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR - NIGHT

Steve stands there talking to Suzie-Q.

Suzie-Q is shocked by what Steve has just said.

SUZIE-Q
That sounds ridiculous.

STEVE
Ridiculous, yet plausible.

Suzie-Q looks over at Clemont, he's sitting alone at the
table.

SUZIE-Q
Steve, look.
(He looks over at
Clemont)
Where'd Foley and the girl go?

STEVE
That's a good question.

SUZIE-Q
You don't think--

Suzie-Q rushes out the club. Steve is watching Clemont at the table.

Beat.

Suzie-Q comes back into the club and rushes over to Steve.

SUZIE-Q (cont'd)
Nothing. The dumpster's empty.

Foley walks back to the table and takes a seat.

STEVE
So where's the girl?

Suzie-Q shrugs.

SUZIE-Q
Maybe we're wrong, maybe Foley's not the victim.

STEVE
What exactly did you see out there?

SUZIE-Q
There really was nothing. No one was out there, not that I could see anyway.

STEVE
I wanna see what's out in that alleyway. Last time I went out there, all the evidence was gone. We must be missing something.

They rush to the dressing room.

Clemont watches them, puzzled. He follows them.

INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR, DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

Steve and Suzie-Q make their way through the dressing room.

Beat.

Clemont enters the dressing room. He walks through to the door to the alleyway. He stops and listens.

Outside, Steve and Suzie-Q's searching through the dumpster can be heard.

EXT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR, ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

Steve is inside the dumpster, looking through it.

Suzie-Q is walking up and down the alleyway searching for clues.

The door to the dressing room opens.

Steve and Suzie-Q turn around to see Clemont standing there. He comes out to the alley.

CLEMONT

What the fuck are you two doing!?

STEVE

We're... we're... we are...

SUZIE-Q

We're looking for my
 (she takes out an
 earring and drops
 it)
 earring. Found it.

Suzie-Q smiles, picks it up and sticks it back into her ear.

SUZIE-Q (cont'd)

Don't worry, Steve, I found it. I
 knew I'd lost it earlier. Didn't
 realize it was gone when I took out
 the rubbish.

Suzie-Q smiles and makes her way back inside.

Clemont walks over to Steve.

CLEMONT

What the hell are you doing Steve!?

STEVE

We were just doing our jobs, taking stuff out. It's busy tonight and Suzie can't take out all the empty bottles and stuff on her own.

Clemont laughs.

CLEMONT

That's bull shit. I saw you and Suzie go outside, you've been talking to her all night and then rushing to the dressing room.

The look on Clemont's face is one of disappointment.

STEVE

I can explain--

CLEMONT

--Steve, I don't care what it is. Just get back inside, take your trumpet and go home, you're not as ready to perform for Daniel as I thought you were.

INT/EXT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR, DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

Suzie-Q is listening from the dressing room. Confused by what she's hearing, she steps out into the alleyway.

CLEMONT (O.S.)

Do what you suggested I do and take some time off. Come back on your next shift refreshed and ready to work.

STEVE (O.S.)

The girl, sitting at your table is--

She continues to listen.

CLEMONT (O.S.)

--Is an up-and-coming singer, looking for a chance to perform. She overheard me and Daniel talking about work and introduced herself. Her name's Naomi.

EXT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR, ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

Suzie-Q steps out and goes right up to Clemont.

SUZIE-Q
You've got it all wrong, Charlie.
She's here to kill someone, probably
your friend.

Clemont is intrigued.

CLEMONT
Oh, really, please continue.

SUZIE-Q
When Steve came to the dressing room
this evening, he overheard her
talking with her partner about
killing someone in the club tonight.

Clemont turns to Steve.

CLEMONT
Is that true?

Steve nods.

SUZIE-Q
And then, they got into an argument
and she killed him.

CLEMONT
Him?

SUZIE-Q
Her partner.

CLEMONT
If her partner's dead, where's the
body?

SUZIE-Q
It's disappeared. It was in the
dumpster, and at some point it was
taken away.

Steve can only watch in amazement as Suzie-Q tells Clemont everything.

CLEMONT
It gets cleaned out every night.

SUZIE-Q
That's not the craziest part.

CLEMONT
Then what is?

SUZIE-Q

She... she...

STEVE

Was wearing a wig and prosthetic skin over her face. Along with the body, her disguise was also taken away.

CLEMONT

Why did she take it off?

STEVE

Because, from what we've come up with, the victim either knows what she looks like, or, it's so that she can discard it after she kills her target and be unrecognisable and blend in.

CLEMONT

If all that's true, and Daniel Foley is the intended target, then why hasn't she killed him already?

STEVE

We don't know, but that girl's been all over him all night.

CLEMONT

You're right, but she hasn't tried to hurt him in anyway.

STEVE

Did you leave them alone at the table at all?

CLEMONT

No, but that doesn't mean she hasn't sat there alone while I've been talking with you.

Clemont, looks at the door.

CLEMONT

Come on, we need to go back inside and make sure, nothing's happened. And Steve--

STEVE

Yeah?

CLEMONT

Get ready, you're on next.

The three of them rush back into the club.

INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR - NIGHT

Steve is back behind the bar.

Suzie-Q is carrying a tray of drinks to a table.

Clemont is sat at the table with Foley and Naomi. He has his eyes on Naomi.

He signals to Steve. Steve nods and makes his way to the stage.

Clemont goes up on stage.

CLEMONT

Ladies and gents please join me in
welcoming back to the stage our very
own Mister. Steven. James.

Clemont starts the applause and the patrons quickly join him.

Daniel is sitting there, excited, a huge grin of across his face.

Steve is on stage. He goes up to the microphone.

STEVE

Good evening everyone, hope you're
having a fantastic time tonight.

(he looks over at
Bailey)

I won't be needing a backup this time
around, sorry.

(she smiles)

This one goes out to a Mister Daniel
Foley.

Foley raises his glass in appreciation.

Steve starts playing.

As he plays, everyone in the club is watching.

Steve looks down at the tables of patrons. He looks over at the bar. Jodi is watching him play as she shakes a cocktail.

He looks at Bailey again. He reads her lips.

"You're doing great." She says.

Time has slowed down.

Steve looks down at the tables again.

Clemont and Foley are watching. Foley is engrossed by his performance. He nods as if to say "This is the guy I've been looking for."

Steve's performance continues.

Naomi is sitting there, watching. She too is enthralled by Steve's performance.

Steve continues playing.

He looks over at Naomi again. She, along with the others at her table are watching him perform, though something doesn't seem right. Naomi is drying her hand.

As Steve continues playing, he watches her, but then focuses on the performance, forgetting his worries and closing his eyes. It's about the performance now and nothing else.

Steve performance goes on but after a few more minutes, comes to an end.

The crowd erupts in applause and cheers. Steve stands there. He bows his head.

The cheers and applause continue.

Beat.

To Clemont's surprise and Foley's joy, Steve starts playing again.

The crowd, though enthusiastic at first, go back to their meals and conversations.

Steve looks down at Clemont and Foley.

Naomi has disappeared.

Steve's playing becomes flimsy, missing beats. It's clear to Clemont and Foley that something isn't right.

He looks up to see Naomi leaving the club.

Steve watches as Foley drinks his cocktail. He's scared, worried. He hits a long note.

His performance finishes abruptly. He rushes off stage and to the dressing room.

Clemont watches, confused.

INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR, DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

Steve enters. He throws his trumpet on the dressing table and goes out into the alleyway.

EXT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR, ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

Steve throws the back door wide open. He runs out.

He can hear her shoes as they pound against the floor, but she's gone. Nowhere to be seen.

Steve, frustrated, kicks the dumpster again.

The sound of Naomi's shoes on the ground has stopped. In the distance, the screech of tires.

She's gone.

A screams from inside the club.

Steve rushes back inside.

INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR, DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

Steve makes his way through the dressing room.

INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR - NIGHT

Steve races in.

Mass panic.

A large crowd of PEOPLE are circled around something. The bar staff are holding them back.

CLEMONT

Will someone please phone for an ambulance, now!

Jodi is on the phone.

JODI (O.S.)

Hello, yes, we need an ambulance...

Her voice gets drowned out by the noise of the crowd. Steve wanders through the club to the large crowd gathered round something.

Steve pushes through.

On the floor is Foley, going into shock. Blood escaping out of his mouth, his eyes bloodshot with tears running down them. His nose is a bloody mess.

Clemont holds him, tears in his eyes.

Steve looks over, on the table is his empty glass. He walks over to it.

He picks up the glass and sniffs it.

STEVE
I know I've smelled that before.

Steve thinks, his eyes widen.

EXT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR, ALLEYWAY - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Steve is in the alleyway holding the blonde wig and coughing.

INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR - NIGHT - SAME

Steve stands there, in the midst of the chaos.

STEVE
She poisoned him.

He's stunned.

STEVE (cont'd)
She hid the vile in her wig.

EXT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR, ALLEYWAY - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Naomi holding her wig. Half of her face has peeled away. She reaches inside and pulls out a vile of purple liquid.

INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR - NIGHT

Steve is there, still shocked.

INT. CLEMONT'S JAZZ BAR, OFFICE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Enter Clemont's office. The phone is ringing.

"The person you've tried to reach is not available right now. Please leave a message after the beep. To end your message, simply hang up"

There's a beep.

BONES (V.O.)

I hope you enjoyed your present,
Charlie. Unfortunately I wasn't able
to see it in person.

(beat)

That's what happens when profits fall
and you don't make payment. I'll be
round tomorrow to collect. Have it
ready for me, or you'll be the next
person going home in a body bag.

Sirens can be heard outside.

FADE TO BLACK.