

Crescendo

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Crescendo

noun

1. The loudest point reached in a gradually increasing sound.
2. The highest point reached in a progressive increase of intensity.

INT. FAMILY HOUSE - KID'S BEDROOM - DAY

The room is a vibrant burst of color and imagination. A bookshelf overflows with well-loved storybooks and action figures. A colorful rug sprawls across the floor. The TV is playing in the background, casting a warm glow across the room.

Dressed up YOUNG ISAAC SWAINSON (12) is fixing his green tie with a milk carton print in front of the mirror, loosening it up a bit. He is visibly uncomfortable.

He examines his reflection in the mirror, checking out his outfit. With a sigh, he drops his head, letting it slump down onto his shoulders.

Isaac's father, ROBERT (45), shouts at him from a different room in the house.

ROBERT (O.S.)
Isaac! Are you ready?

Isaac lifts his head up and takes a deep breath.

ROBERT (O.S.)
We gotta go, Isaac. Hurry up!

ISAAC
I'm coming. I'm coming.

Isaac walks to his little TV set and turns it off. He takes the disc out of the DVD player and puts it back in its case, we see the movie playing was 'Sister Act'.

He walks back to the mirror for final checks and loosens his tie a bit more.

INT. FAMILY HOUSE - FOYER - DAY

As Isaac descends the stairs he finds Robert in the foyer.

Robert, dressed in a sharp suit, hastily slips into a coat, his eyes fixated on Isaac.

AMANDA (33), Isaac's mother, stands beside Robert. Her eyes, filled with a mixture of pride and affection, are looking lovingly at Isaac.

ROBERT
Come here.

Isaac stops in front of Robert. Robert tightens Isaac's tie and brushes some dust off of his shoulders.

ROBERT (CONT'D)
Look at you.

AMANDA

So handsome.

Robert smiles at Isaac with a proud gaze.

ISAAC

I really don't want to go, dad.

AMANDA

Don't be silly, honey.

ROBERT

You don't know how lucky you are.
You'll be thanking me for this once
you're older.

AMANDA

Have fun!

Amanda leans in, kissing Robert gently. With a tender smile, she runs her fingers through Isaac's hair, a silent gesture of encouragement.

Robert, holding the doorknob, places his hand on Isaac's shoulder and they step out of the house.

INT. OPERA HOUSE - LOBBY - NIGHT

A CROWD OF ELEGANTLY-DRESSED PEOPLE fills the lobby, their laughter and chatter creating a lively ambiance. Isaac's eyes widen as he takes in the sophisticated surroundings, admiring the elegant attire of the people around him.

Robert guides Isaac through the bustling crowd, his hands gently resting on Isaac's shoulders. Isaac looks up at him, a mix of excitement and awe in his eyes as they navigate the glamorous event together.

INT. OPERA HOUSE - THEATRE - NIGHT

The theater is alive with anticipation. Robert and Isaac maneuver through the attendees, finding their way to their seats.

ROBERT

(to the attendees)

Excuse us. Sorry... Excuse us.

The opera-goers get up, one by one, letting the two of them through.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

Thank you.

Isaac comes to a halt in front of a JAPANESE GIRL IN AN ELEGANT GREEN DRESS (13), occupying her seat. Their eyes lock for a moment.

Robert gently guides Isaac down by the hand, settling him into the seat next to the girl. As Isaac takes his place, he leans over to Robert and speaks in a hushed voice.

ISAAC

Dad, how will I know what he's singing about if it's not in English?

ROBERT

It's not really about the lyrics, Isaac. It's about the emotions. You will see. Just try and enjoy it.

Isaac settles into his seat, briefly turning to the Japanese Girl beside him with a shy smile before shifting his attention to the stage.

As the lights dim, the legendary LUCIANO PAVAROTTI enters the stage.

The orchestra begins to play, and Isaac becomes enraptured by the unfolding performance. The flickering stage lights cast a mesmerizing dance of shadows across his face as he immerses himself in the world of the opera.

MONTAGE OF LUCIANO PAVAROTTI'S OPERA

Every now and then Robert leans over to whisper something into Isaac's ear. But Isaac does not pay much attention to him, he has entered a new world and is solely focused on the performance.

Isaac is like Alice in Wonderland now, his life turned from black and white into color.

As Luciano Pavarotti sings his final note, the sheer brilliance of his tone envelops Isaac's ears. The richness and power of his voice creates a profound impact on young Isaac, evoking a sensation he has never experienced before.

The opera almost feels like a hallucination now, the tones coming out of Pavarotti's throat have vibrant colors and are attacking Isaac's sense one by one.

Isaac blushes and covers his crotch with his hands.

Luciano Pavarotti hits the perfect note and holds it as long as humanly possible. As the tone goes on, Isaac starts squirming in his seat. He gets red and steamy. He is feverishly hot.

The Girl in the green dress sitting next to him grabs Isaac's hand, he looks down at himself in terror.

During the final seconds of the song, Isaac is done. Sigh. A flood of relief runs across his face. He smiles at the girl, lets her hand go and sinks into his seat.

The opera ends. People jump up to their feet. Roaring applause.

Isaac keeps sitting in his seat with a wet spot on his trousers and a satisfied grin on his face.

OPENING TITLE SEQUENCE

INT. ISAAC'S APARTMENT - DAY

Silence. Back to reality.

The apartment is full of scattered musical instruments. The showpiece of the place is a vinyl player connected to several amplifiers and enormous speakers. Above it, a signed poster of Luciano Pavarotti.

A male figure hunches over the vinyl player, headphones over his head, connected to the amplifier. His back is turned to us, immersed in the music.

MUSIC CUE: 'AMÉRIQUES' BY EDGARD VARÈSE

His shirt is on, his trousers and underwear pulled down below his bottom. His arm is pumping swiftly.

Suddenly, he halts, frustration evident as he angrily pulls up his pants. With an abrupt gesture, he turns off the record player. Grabbing a notepad from the nearby table, he flips it open. The pages are filled with a list of famous musicians - BEETHOVEN, MOZART, PLÁCIDO DOMINGO, ANDREA BOCELLI, ALICIA KEYS, USHER, PEGGY LEE, FERGIE, ENRICO CARUSO, GALINA VISHNEVSKAYA, SUSAN BOYLE, and a bunch of others. Every name is ruthlessly crossed out with a red marker.

He grabs a red marker and crosses out the only uncrossed name on the list - EDGARD VARÈSE.

With a resigned sigh, he caps the marker and carefully sets the notepad on top of the record player. Turning around, he runs a hand through his hair. In this moment, it becomes clear that this man is Isaac (25), all grown up.

Isaac tucks his shirt in while walking across the room towards the mirror. He grabs a tie from the coat hanger that is suspended on the side of the mirror and starts tying it. He grabs a blazer and puts it on.

Last look in the mirror. Isaac smiles at himself and leaves the frame.

INT. OPERA HOUSE - LOBBY - NIGHT

In the midst of the bustling lobby, Isaac stands amidst a SWARM OF PEOPLE navigating around him. He gazes upward, taking in the grandeur of the ceiling, and inhales deeply, savoring the rich atmosphere of the event as it fills his lungs.

INT. OPERA HOUSE - THEATRE - NIGHT

Isaac is sitting in his seat, watching the opera. Lights from the stage dancing on his face are creating a show of its own. He sits, content and absorbed in the magic unfolding before him.

MONTAGE OF OPERA

As the music crescendos, a surge of emotions overwhelms Isaac, his eyes welling up with tears. The powerful climax resonates within him.

Isaac abruptly rises from his seat. With a sense of urgency, he briskly runs out of the theatre, leaving the echo of the performance behind.

INT. OPERA BAR - NIGHT

Tchaikovsky is playing over the stereo.

Isaac sits at the bar. He is drinking an Old Fashioned, looking around the bar.

We see Isaac's POV looking at the people in the room: AN ELDERLY COUPLE flirting as if in their twenties, A FAMILY OF FOUR with both kids asleep in their booth, the parents enjoying a moment of silence, FASHIONABLE MILLENNIALS getting drunk. A WAITER placing down a napkin and a drink on top of it.

Isaac is finishing his drink, he is about to leave, when suddenly the doors open and in comes a lively group of people - THE PERFORMERS FROM THE OPERA. Isaac's gaze follows them as they make their way through the bar. They are all smiles, brightening up the room.

The BARTENDER (30's) moves up behind Isaac.

BARTENDER

You wanted the check?

Isaac turns around.

ISAAC

What?

BARTENDER
You wanted to pay?

ISAAC
No... No. Sorry.

Isaac points to his glass.

ISAAC (CONT'D)
I'll have one more.

Isaac turns back at the performers. Amongst them he sees AGNIESZKA (40's), a pretty lady with ginger colored hair and blue eyes. She stands out in the crowd.

Agnieszka takes a seat, her gaze meeting Isaac's. They lock eyes, a silent exchange passing between them.

The WAITRESS (60's) intrudes the view and starts taking orders from the performers.

Isaac leans over to talk to the Bartender.

ISAAC (CONT'D)
Hey. Hey!

The Bartender is preparing a drink, he lifts his head up to see what Isaac has to say.

ISAAC (CONT'D)
Do you see that red head over there?

BARTENDER
I do.

ISAAC
Could you send her a Tom Collins from me?

BARTENDER
(smirking)
She's more a Sazerac kind of woman.

ISAAC
Oh, really? What's that?

BARTENDER
The mother of all drinks. Cognac or whiskey, bitters, sugar and absinthe.

Isaac nods appreciatively.

ISAAC
Well, then send her one of those.

BARTENDER

Sure thing.

The Bartender places Isaac's new Old Fashioned in front of him and starts making a Sazerac.

Isaac savors a sip of his drink, relishing the soothing sensation as it glides down his throat. Unbeknownst to him, Agnieszka stealthily approaches from behind.

AGNIESZKA

Do you have a lighter?

Isaac turns around to find Agnieszka standing there, a slim cigarette dangling from her mouth. She exudes an air of timeless elegance, resembling a living painting in his eyes. The sight startles him for a moment.

ISAAC

Sure. Can you smoke in here?

BARTENDER

She can.

Isaac looks for a lighter in his pocket. He eventually finds it and lights Agnieszka's cigarette for her, the flame casting a flickering glow on their faces in the dimly lit ambiance.

AGNIESZKA

Old Fashioned?

Isaac looks at her, confused, not understanding the question. She points at his drink.

ISAAC

Oh, sorry. Yes. Do you want a sip?

Agnieszka laughs.

AGNIESZKA

No, thank you. It's just an interesting choice for a man of your age is all.

Isaac looks at his drink and his hair falls into his eyes, hiding them away from Agnieszka.

ISAAC

My mom... My mother used to order it. I don't even like the taste that much to be honest. It does feel nice going down the throat though.

AGNIESZKA

I see, is she--

Isaac interrupts her with a nod.

AGNIESZKA (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. So what are you doing here?

ISAAC

I went to see the opera actually.

AGNIESZKA

(raising an eyebrow)

And? Did you enjoy it?

ISAAC

Oh, absolutely. It was an absolute marvel, and your performance, in particular, left me thoroughly impressed. You truly captivated me.

Agnieszka exhales a small cloud of smoke into the air, her smile lingering as she maintains eye contact with Isaac. The tendrils of smoke dance between them.

AGNIESZKA

You're very sweet. Thank you.

ISAAC

What about you? Celebrating?

AGNIESZKA

Something like that. Sure.

The Bartender carefully places a drink on the bar in front of Agnieszka.

BARTENDER

(looking at Isaac)

From him.

Agnieszka carefully reaches for the drink and glances up at Isaac.

ISAAC

Sazerac.

AGNIESZKA

Very sweet indeed.

They clink glasses.

INT. AGNIESZKA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Isaac is in bed with Agnieszka. She is laying on her back, her hair creating a halo around her head, making her look like a saint. Isaac is hunched over her lap, fingering her.

Isaac slowly moves up towards Agnieszka's ear and whispers into it.

ISAAC

Could you sing for me?

Agnieszka smiles and runs her thumb across Isaac's lips.

AGNIESZKA

What would you like me to sing?

ISAAC

Anything with high C's would be great. The higher the better.

Isaac rolls Agnieszka over on her stomach. She is a bit flabbergasted, but starts singing. Isaac keeps fingering her from behind.

As the singing ascends to higher notes, Isaac becomes increasingly engrossed. Her voice seems to weave its way into his very being. He starts pulling her hair with his free hand.

The harder Isaac pulls her hair, the higher Agnieszka's voice gets. Once Agnieszka gets all the way to the high E's, Isaac's grimace turns animalistic.

Isaac stops fingering her and pulling her hair at once. He rolls over to the side of the bed, covers his crotch and breathes deeply. His body shaking.

Agnieszka stops singing and looks at Isaac, confused.

EXT. SPRING STREET - MORNING

The sun is coming out.

Isaac lights up a cigarette. He walks along the street with a crooked smile on his face. His hair is scruffy and his tie is loose.

With a hint of self-loathing, he walks silently and observes what is around him. He notices the nature within the city coming alive. The birds are singing, the trees are turning green, the flowers are blooming.

It is a good day to be alive.

INT. ISAAC'S APARTMENT

Isaac meticulously cuts out a picture of Agnieszka from the playbill. Opening up a worn scrapbook, he carefully places the image into a free spot in the bottom right corner.

Cautiously, he glides his hand over the picture to ensure it is securely glued. With a touch of reverence, he writes 'E5' over her face with a green marker.

He lingers for a moment, studying Agnieszka's picture among others in the scrapbook. His gaze traces over the images of various performers, both male and female. His finger delicately glides across one particular picture of a guy with a 'G6' written over it, a thoughtful expression crossing Isaac's face as he reflects on the memories encapsulated in the scrapbook.

Isaac stands up and moonwalks his way to the kitchen counter. He sips on his coffee that has been standing there for some time and picks up his phone laying next to it. He looks at the time on the screen.

ISAAC

Shit!

He puts down the coffee mug and leaves the frame in a hurry.

INT. CAFÉ - DAY

Isaac lounges on a plush leather sofa in a decadently decorated café. Seated across from him is LEMMY (25), a woman whose meticulous grooming exudes both elegance and poise. They are in the middle of a conversation.

ISAAC

Do you mind if I lay down?

LEMMY

Go ahead.

Isaac lays down on the sofa and rests his head on the armrest. He closes his eyes.

Lemmy laughs.

LEMMY (CONT'D)

So we're going full psychologist this time?

ISAAC

Yes.

LEMMY

I'm listening.

ISAAC

Listening, learning and understanding is all that you can be asked to do. Thank you for that.

Lemmy looks around, making sure she is not on a hidden camera show.

LEMMY

Okay... You're welcome. Let's get back to what you were saying before then. You were at a funeral.

ISAAC

So I was standing above my grandmother's casket, surrounded by my family, while I was looking at her motionless face. She looked like a wax figurine. Anyway, I was studying her wrinkles all the way down to her lips and all of a sudden this overwhelming need to stick a finger in her mouth came over me. I just wanted to dig in there and play her like an instrument.

Lemmy starts coughing and has a sip of water to calm down.

LEMMY

Sorry. Please, continue.

Isaac looks at Lemmy, concerned.

ISAAC

It's odd, isn't it? You think I'm weird.

LEMMY

Hey, you know I don't judge you.

ISAAC

I mean, of course I didn't do it.

LEMMY

Of course.

They smile at each other cheekily.

ISAAC

She was a great singer, my grandma. I remember her singing me lullabies.

Isaac starts singing a lullaby with a soft and tender voice.

Lemmy listens to him, closing her eyes.

EXT. FAMILY HOUSE - EVENING

Isaac knocks on the front door. The door slowly opens, revealing Isaac's father, Robert (58). Time has etched lines on his face, and the weight of experiences shows. Yet, with open arms, he welcomes Isaac, pulling him into a warm embrace. The reunion feels somewhat bittersweet.

Thank you for reading the preview of my screenplay.

If you're interested in reading more or discussing potential collaboration, please feel free to reach out to me.

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