

Grand

Written By

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Cast of Characters

NOAH: Fiance of Isabella. Grew up playing piano.

ISABELLA: Fiancee of Noah. The true breadwinner of the family, but Noah doesn't know that.

ANGELA: Noah and Isabella's noisy next door neighbour.

MATT: A pawnbroker.

Scene 1

Isabella addresses the audience as if speaking directly to Noah.

FLASH FORWARD

ISABELLA

Noah, you're a charming guy. So charming that all it usually takes is for you to say 'my love' and I'd follow you anywhere. You're used to making decisions and I'm used to accepting them so quickly, so I can find a way to make them work. This is something I can't fix myself. You know I love you, which is why it hurts me to say, you have to make a decision.

Scene 2

FLASHBACK

A semi detached home in Cwmbran, 2015. The stage will have three wings, one for the front door of the house, another for the bedroom and the other for the kitchen. Lights up on a living room with a sofa. Noah returns from an exhausting day of work. He throws off his coat and flops onto a sofa.

NOAH

Lord, give me strength.

His fiancée, Isabella, appears and approaches him.

ISABELLA

Long day?

NOAH

The longest yet. I can't move.

ISABELLA

I can fix that, with my emotional jumper cables. Just insert them like so.

Isabella wraps her arms around Noah.

NOAH

This is just a hug.

ISABELLA

Is it working?

NOAH

Yeah, it is. What would I do without you, Izzy?

ISABELLA

Moan about working more, probably.

NOAH

Ha! Sorry. It's just I'm living the life I wanted to avoid at the moment.

ISABELLA

What do you mean?

NOAH

I wake up before the world and work to the point where my power is drained. Then I come back home too anxious about doing it all again tomorrow that I can't enjoy the evening.

ISABELLA

You know, a nine to five work day is pretty typical of most people. And I wake up before you.

NOAH

Your workplace isn't miles of windows and cubicles. It's so boring. And I thought marketing would be much more interesting.

ISABELLA

What can you do? You can't just quit your job and do whatever you want.

NOAH

You know what I need? A hobby. Something to take my mind off work. Something like... a musical instrument.

ISABELLA

Again, Noah? We're not buying a piano. We've been over this.

NOAH

And yet I can't remember a valid reason why we shouldn't.

ISABELLA

There's so many costs that take priority. The mortgage, our wedding. Not to mention more furniture. This place doesn't feel like a home yet.

NOAH

A piano will make it more like a home.

ISABELLA

Noah-

NOAH

My love, soon we'll be thirty, then we'll be married, then we'll be trying for a baby, then another and the next thing you know, our kids will start living life for themselves while ours is coming closer to an end.

ISABELLA

Morbid.

NOAH

-But true. I don't want to look back on my life wishing I made the most of my hobbies while I could. When our kids come, I'm going to have to give them my one hundred percent attention. Before I have to dedicate my life to our kids, please, let me get this piano.

ISABELLA

I didn't know you were so excited about having children.

NOAH

Of course. Why, are you surprised?

ISABELLA

I suppose I just never thought about it before.

NOAH

Haven't you thought about how adorable our kids would be?

ISABELLA

In my head, that kind of stuff is ages away to think about now. I'm more concerned about stuff in the moment. Have you thought about our future a lot?

NOAH

Absolutely. A year after our wedding, we'll start trying. We'll have at least two. Maybe more. They'll be musical geniuses.

ISABELLA

How do you know they're gonna be musical?

NOAH

Because they'd be our kids. My parents can teach them like they taught me. Picture this. It's a chilly, Autumn evening. It's already dark outside and our house is lit with a fireplace, those fairy lights you love and cinnamon scented candles. You and our youngest will be snuggled up in a fleece blanket and our oldest and I will be sat over here, sharing the piano bench. They will play the melody and I'll be adding chords. Like how I used to play for you and you'd sing along to my melodies. And turn my sheet music. Doesn't that sound wonderful? We could have that if you let me get this piano.

ISABELLA

What if I say no?

NOAH

Don't say no. That picture I've just made for you won't exist without a piano.

ISABELLA

Then I'll think about it.

NOAH

Really? I can get one?

ISABELLA

This isn't a yes, it's a maybe. You need to be able to afford one first. Don't expect me to chip in for it. It's not like I can play it or anything.

NOAH

I can teach you. I'll make you a virtuoso.

ISABELLA

Good luck. Can I ask that you don't get a massive piano to plant in the middle of our living room? We barely have room as it is and I'd like to save room for guests to come over.

NOAH

You won't know it's here.

ISABELLA

It's a piano, Noah. I think I'll know it's here.

NOAH

I'm gonna look for one now.

Noah gets up from his seat as there's a knock on

the door. He checks through peep hole.

NOAH
Uh oh.

ISABELLA
What's wrong?

NOAH
Angela's coming over.

ISABELLA
Quick. Grab a coat.

Noah and Isabella rush to pick up coats, putting them on.

ANGELA
(OFF-STAGE) Hello? Izzy? Noah? Are you home? If you are, I hope you're decent. I'm going to use the spare key you gave me.

NOAH
In retrospect, that was a terrible idea.

Angela enters.

ISABELLA
Hi, Ange. This is a really bad time, you see. We were just heading out.

ANGELA
Oh, where are you going?

ISABELLA
The uh-

NOAH
The music shop. We're buying a piano.

ANGELA
A piano? What on earth for?

ISABELLA
Noah played when he was younger. Wants to pick it back up again.

ANGELA
If it's for Noah, how about he goes shopping and you stay here? I have to talk to you desperately about something.

ISABELLA

Ooh, Ange. We really should go together. It's going in our living room after all.

ANGELA

I could just come with you.

NOAH

On second thought, Izzy. Maybe I should just go. Too many cooks spoils a broth and all that jazz.

ISABELLA

But-

ANGELA

Excellent. I'll pop the kettle on.

Angela exits to the kitchen.

ISABELLA

How could you do this to me? You said you owed me not two minutes ago.

NOAH

I'll owe you twofold when I get back.

ISABELLA

Screw you and screw your piano.

NOAH

Maybe later. Have fun. Love you so much.

ISABELLA

Yeah, yeah. See you soon.

Noah exits and Angela re-enters.

ISABELLA

What did you desperately need to talk to me about?

ANGELA

I need your opinion on my dress.

ISABELLA

Ange, you made this sound like an emergency.

ANGELA

It is. I only have three hours and seventeen minutes before the sale is over. What do you think about me wearing this to your wedding?

ISABELLA

As I suspected it would be, that's a wedding dress.

ANGELA

It's not a wedding dress. It's an off-white, floor-length gown with lace detailing and a train.

ISABELLA

Does it come with the veil?

ANGELA

A headpiece. And yes but I'm not gonna wear it. Wouldn't want to be mistaken as the bride. Can you imagine?

ISABELLA

Right. It's a no from me.

ANGELA

I'm running out of options, Izzy. Before you know it, it's gonna be your wedding day and I'll have nothing to wear.

ISABELLA

Just promise me you won't wear literally nothing. I would rather you in the wedding dress.

ANGELA

To be honest, I'm a little surprised you want a wedding.

ISABELLA

Every girl wants a wedding, Ange.

ANGELA

You know what I mean. With your job and Noah's spending habits, I'm surprised you can afford it. Then with everything going on, you agree to let Noah buy a piano?

ISABELLA

I haven't agreed. You're right. The fact is Noah's awful with money. It's not like he will be able to afford one. I just hope he'll see how much they cost and he'll realise he can't afford one. I'm not lending him money either.

ANGELA

Can you even afford to?

ISABELLA

Can you keep a secret, Ange?

ANGELA

Of course.

ISABELLA

Noah doesn't know this but I make more money than he does.

ANGELA

How?

ISABELLA

I've been working longer hours than him. I know a hospitality job isn't the most glamorous but as a manager, they pay me extremely well.

ANGELA

Noah really has no idea?

ISABELLA

No. He had a hard time getting his job. He didn't have the grades for much, so I contacted a friend of mine who was looking for someone to join his marketing team. I might be overthinking this, but I don't know how he would feel about his girlfriend getting him a job where he makes less than her. It's not a big deal at all, but I don't know how he'll react if he finds out.

ANGELA

How much more do you make?

Isabella takes her phone and types down a number before showing Angela.

Jesus Christ. You've hid that much from him?

ISABELLA

Please don't say it like that. Most of it is going towards the wedding which is really for him as well. Ange, I need you to promise that you won't tell Noah this.

ANGELA

Cross my heart. Hope to die.

Scene 3

Noah passes by a shop window where the audience would be. In the window is a mini grand piano

NOAH

Oh my God. If I didn't know the term love before this moment, I know it now. What a gorgeous, quaint piano. By the touch of my skin and your bone, we can possess heaven. I long to hear your sound, like wings take flight, note to note. A sound so faint and charming. And yet here you're banished like an invalid unable to thrive as you should. I can relate to your struggle. If you were to join me, I could herald the control to make you soar through stars, and I would watch the constellations from your stool.

Noah cups his hands over his eyes, looking through the audience as if behind a window. Matt enters, passing behind Noah before stopping to observe him.

MATT

It's beautiful, isn't it.

NOAH

She.

MATT

She's beautiful then. I pass by this shop everyday. There's always someone here, admiring it. You should get it.

NOAH

How long has she been here?

MATT

Not long. Maybe a couple of weeks?

NOAH

Then it's inevitable someone's gonna take her away from me.

MATT

I wouldn't worry about that. Just go inside and ask the store manager if anyone's taken an interest to it. Anyone looking to buy a piano isn't going to get the first one they see. I'm sure if someone was thinking of buying it, they would ask about it.

NOAH
I want her.

MATT
What's stopping you?

NOAH
Can't afford it.

MATT
At all?

NOAH
I've probably got about £300 in savings. Had I known I would be able to get one, I would have saved a bit better.

MATT
If you're that desperate for money now rather than later, you should come with me. This is my place.

NOAH
A pawn brokers?

MATT
Yep. I'm Matt, by the way. Matt Harris.

NOAH
Matt Harris. I appreciate the offer but I don't know how any of this works. I don't want to get into any kind of debt.

MATT
I completely understand. It's pretty low risk if you can afford a lump sum every month but I don't want to pressure you.

NOAH
Wait a sec. Low risk?

MATT
You can probably just waiting until your next paycheck before buying it, but if you're that desperate to buy it- her now, you can follow me.

NOAH
How does it work?

MATT
In the simplest terms, you sell something to me and then buy it back later. There will be an interest but

at least it's quick money when you need it.

NOAH

What can I sell you?

MATT

Anything worth value. Gold. Diamonds. Watches...

*Broker looks down at Noah's hand.
Jewellery works.*

Noah looks at his engagement ring.

NOAH

Bless her. My Izzy was the one to propose to me. I had to save up for a week to buy her a ring too. She walked around for that whole week with a ribbon tied around her finger.

MATT

Your Izzy sounds charming. This ring obviously means a lot to you. I wouldn't expect you to pawn it-

NOAH

-But it's low risk, right? For a ring like this, could I get £200?

MATT

It's good quality. Probably about £250?

NOAH

Once I get paid by the end of the month, I can just pay that with interest and get the ring back, right?

MATT

Yes, but there will be an interest.

NOAH

I can afford that. Let's do it.

MATT

If you're so sure. I hope you understand what you're doing.

NOAH

I do. I'm getting a piano.

END OF SAMPLE