

CROWN CITY

Written by

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INT. URBAN APARTMENT LOFT - MORNING

Zoom meeting screen with seven team members popping up onscreen, some are slumped and bedraggled while others are clean-cut and eager to start the workday.

CHERYL

Good morning! How was everyone's weekend?

There's a slight delay as the coffee kicks in...

TEAM MEMBER #1

Good!

TEAM MEMBER #2

Good.

We push back revealing that we're watching the meeting from KAT's laptop screen at her desk. She hides her exhaustion well behind her late-twenties workaholic eyes. She's done this same Zoom call 1,597,039 times. She clicks herself off mute but waits to reply as we see her abysmal weekend in quick dirty shots:

EXT. NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

(Mindless EDM / rap thumping) A line stretching for two blocks as KAT'S FRIENDS bicker and argue drunkenly outside of a nightclub. They're the basic, privileged, toxic-type that Kat finds herself stuck with...

INT. NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

Sweaty bodies bumping up against Kat as she tries to have a good time, looking for her friends, but she's in a haze...

DRUNKEN CLUB GUY pressed up against her on the side of the dancefloor as someone bumps him as his drink spills on Kat's shoulder.

INT. UBER - NIGHT

Kat half asleep in the back of an Uber alone.

EXT. UBER STREETSIDE - NIGHT

Kat tripping as she exits Uber, stumbling toward her apartment, looking for her keys in her clutch.

INT. APARTMENT LOFT BATHROOM - NIGHT

Kat still in her club dress, dry heaving over the toilet, before slumping back against the wall, as we start to hear her co-workers over the Zoom again call still replying:

TEAM MEMBERS (V.O.)
Good! Good... Great!

INT. APARTMENT LOFT - MORNING (PREVIOUS)

KAT
Good!

As we see a "I am dead inside" look coming from her eyes.

CHERYL
Glad to hear! We have back-to-back meetings today, so we'll try to make this brief. Kat, can you start with your analytics report for Sundry?

KAT
Yes! One second, let me pull up it up...

Kat starts to screenshare her marketing report on the Zoom call. Charts, data, etc...

KAT (CONT'D)
Yeah! So these are the 2nd quarter stats taken from Iconosquare. As you can see their follower growth seems to have stagnated but we're seeing an overall trend of consistent engagement across all platforms. If you look at figure 1.2 you can see that...

Series of close ups on Kat and data with speed ramps, slow motion, and soft focus of her eyes, mouth, various numerical charts and graphs... As her words blend together with coworkers' monotonous corporate speech:

TEAM MEMBERS
We're going to need to explain to them in Friday's meeting why these numbers don't reflect the full picture...
(MORE)

TEAM MEMBERS (CONT'D)

Kat, can you send me the updated
Frame links and please replace them
on the master spreadsheet
corresponding to Trello cards...
Slack me that folder again
please...

Send me the SOP for the Iconosquare
analytics report for Amanda to
start inputting her data asap, this
should've been done last week, the
client just asked again...

That reminds me, confirm that
Terry's PTO request is approved
before sending...

Make sure the ClickUp content brief
is approved before forwarding it
over to Brad for captions, last
time there were major issues...

CHERYL

(Suddenly loud and abrasive)
Kat, was that everything you had?

KAT

Yes, that's everything...

CHERYL

Perfect, we'll roundtable this
during the client call. Have a
great Monday, everyone!

The team gives obligatory waves and smiles as the call
ends...

Kats smile immediately snaps to sigh, as she slumps back in
her chair... Then she puts music on 'Don't get around much
anymore' by Etta James. She sings the first few bars
surprisingly well, with a raspy soulfulness as she walks to
kitchen drinking a pre-workout shake as we transition to
montage:

Kat working out, eating, working at computer, time-lapse
building data spreadsheets - all in her apartment as we view
from a surveillance-esque wide shot panning back and forth of
her caged-in workday at home.

Timelapse of sun setting outside window as we transition to:

INT. APARTMENT LOFT - EVENING

Kat slams her laptop shut as her workday is finally over.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

She exits the apartment and lights a spliff, and begins to walk down the sidewalk to get some air.

EXT. STREETS OF PASADENA - NIGHT

Various shots of pedestrians, busses, exteriors of sports bars, showcasing Pasadena's urban night life.

EXT. - CROWN CITY THEATER - NIGHT

She comes to jazz/performance theater as we see vintage scene people walking in dressed in proper fancy vintage clothing. It's like we're transported to a 1950's technicolor picture.

The marquee reads "Swingtronix". She observes but keeps walking, as handsome man MIKE, with slicked-back hair walk past her towards the theater. She turns and starts to walk back - peering into the theater with band beginning to play vintage jazz/swing song ALL OF ME.

INT. - CROWN CITY THEATER - NIGHT

She timidly walks in, starts to observe the diverse array of eccentric-looking people mingling and dancing:

Burlesque dancers, nerdy-looking couples in gaudy but stylish pastel colors, zoot-suited older men dancing close to the stage vibing with the band.

She then observes the band who are in their late twenties to early forties:

Drummer MARK, bass player JOHN, guitarist LUCA, saxaphonist KULLY who brings the song back to chorus as the glowing lead singer MARGOT shines with an Ella Fitzgerald-esque delivery as more people begin to dance.

Kat observes Margot as she sings, impressed by her charm and charisma onstage. She doesn't miss a beat.

MIKE (O.S.)

Excuse me, this is a members only club.

She turns to see Mike, the handsome man she followed in.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Are you on the list?

KAT
(Terrified) Oh, no sorry! I
didn't...

She turns to leave.

Mike gives a deviant giggle.

MIKE
I'm totally messing. Welcome in.

I'm Mike. (offering his hand to
shake).

KAT
(Relieved) Kat...

MIKE
First time here?

KAT
Mhm, yeah I don't know if I'm
staying though--

MIKE
I'll show you around. Allie makes a
mean Mai Tai (gesturing to the bar
across the room).

MIKE (CONT'D)
Let's go before the line gets long.

Kat is now too curious to leave. They walk close to the bar
line as hey bump into ELLIE who's socializing with a
myseterious zoot-suited older man BERNARD.

MIKE (CONT'D)
(Hugging Ellie) I thought you had
that gig?

ELLIE
It got cancelled, sooo yeah.

MIKE
Ah, damn.

ELLIE
You know how it goes with them.

MIKE
All too well...

Kat moves closer

MIKE (CONT'D)
This is Kat, just met.

ELLIE
Hi!

KAT
Hey!...I love your dress.

ELLIE
Thanks!

MIKE
It's her first time at Swingtronix.

ELLIE
You came on a good night. This band
is one of the best.

Ellie's theatrical friend BONNIE slides past briefly:

BONNIE
(To Ellie) Can you grab me a
sidecar my darling? (Quietly) I
need some liquid courage, Tucker's
here...

ELLIE
I got you.

She gives a friendly wave to Mike and Kat before disappearing
into the crowd.

MIKE
(To Kat) Do you dance?

The line moves up.

KAT
Ehh, no not really... I love the
whole vintage jazz aesthetic
though. I'm more of a singer. But
you know...

ELLIE
Nice! Do you record?

KAT

No. (Nervous laugh) Like, I go karaoke sometimes, but I just haven't had time to get serious about it with work.

MIKE

We should get you in touch with Margot (pointing to stage), she's super cool.

KAT

She's so good... oh my God.

ALLIE (BARTENDER)

What can I get you rascals?

MIKE

(To Ellie and Kat) Mai Tai's?

KAT

Yeah!

ELLIE

Sidear for Bonnie!

MIKE

(To Allie) Three Mai Tai's and a sidecar please. And make it snappy! (joking)

The band continues to play upbeat swing.

Ellie, Mike, and Kat continue to socialize as other people join their little circle next to the dance floor.

We see Kat pleased to meet these new faces, in stark contrast to her demeanor during work..

Ellie and Mike move to the dance floor as new fast swing song starts.

They're obviously professional swing dancers.

Kat watches, drinking her Mai tai from the side. She looks around the room, as everyone looks so genuinely happy, dancing, laughing, and talking to one another.

Ellie does a dance solo as the crowd erupts and cheers her on.

Margot does a back-and-forth sing-dance jazz conversation with Ellie.

Kat is back at the bar getting another drink.

The room gets more energetic and crowded as we start to go into a fog with Kat as she drinks more.

Mike offers Kat a dance.

She joins him for a bit and begins to stumble on the dance floor.

She goes back to her drink on the side.

Mike continues to dance with others but looks over to check on Kat.

Kat starts to lose her confidence and exits the back door.

EXT. - CROWN CITY THEATER BACK ALLEY - NIGHT

In the back alley, Kat gets on her phone and opens Uber.. Calculating the 7-block distance home costing \$30.

KAT

What the fuck...

She finishes her drink and starts to walk to the street and then realizes she has the glass from the bar in her hand. She sighs, looking at the glass. She turns around to head back into the theater. She tries to open the door, but it's locked. Slightly defeated, she takes a few steps back, and notices herself in an oversized vintage mirror propped up against the theater. She sees herself in the stained reflection, a sad tipsy young woman holding the low-ball glass to her side.

The back door opens, startling Kat - as Kully (saxophonist) and Luca (guitarist) exit. Kat moves out of the way, trying to act cool. She hears Natalie's voice approaching from just inside:

NATALIE (O.S.)

Be right back, there's still two more sets don't worry!

Natalie emerges from the back door to join Luca and Kully on their break. Luca takes out a pack of cigarettes, and searches his pockets for a lighter as Kully gets on his phone.

KULLY

Marcus texted me again about the gig on the 5th, did you find anyone yet?

NATALIE
Still waiting on Molly to respond,
literally no one's available...

LUCA
Do either of you have a lighter?

KAT
Here you go!

She tosses him her lighter from about eight feet away, making her presence known.

LUCA
(Startled) Thanks! A gift from the
shadows?

NATALIE
Hey! Just chillin' back here?

Kat timidly approaches as Luca lights his cigarette.

KAT
(Nervous laugh) Yeah! Just waiting
for an Uber... You guys are great
by the way. For real.

NATALIE
Thanks! Are you Mike or Ellie's
friend?

KAT
No, I actually just randomly came
in tonight. I live up on Grand, not
that far.

Luca tosses the lighter back to Kat.

LUCA
Thanks!

NATALIE
Love it! What's your name?

KAT
Kat. You're Natalie, right?

NATALIE
Yep! And that's Kully and Luca
(gesturing to them).

KAT
(Wave) Nice to meet you!

NATALIE

So you're not staying for the pie fight?

KAT

What?

NATALIE

There's a pie fight at this event every month at midnight, it's a riot.

KAT

(Laughing) Oh shit. That's cool!

KULLY

(To Luca) You want a drink?

Kully tries to enter back inside but the door is locked.

KULLY (CONT'D)

Um...

NATALIE

(Sighs) I'll text John.

As Natalie sends the text to John:

NATALIE (CONT'D)

So, what do you do Kat?

KAT

I'm a project manager for a social media marketing company.

NATALIE

Oh, rad!

KAT

Eh, low-key losing my mind though... It's remote, so pros and cons... mostly cons to be honest (nervous laugh).

NATALIE

You should totally help revamp our social media, it's like not good.

Natalie starts to pull up her bands Instagram profile on her phone.

KAT

I'm like more on the analytics and engagement side, I'd love to follow your band though!

Natalie shows Kat the bands IG profile.

NATALIE

We tried the whole paid ads thing, but that just isn't working... Jason's been crushing it with the reels though.

Kat has her phone out and follows their profile.

KAT

Nice! How often do you guys have shows?

NATALIE

Pretty often, it's kind of all over the place, Cicada Club on Saturday, be back here on the 29th.

Natalie opens her notifications showing Kat's follow request, as she clicks on Kat's profile.

KAT

Awesome!

Natalie notices one of Kat's reels of her singing to an Etta James song.

NATALIE

Oh, you sing? I love Etta...

KAT

Not seriously, but yeah that's one of my fav songs... I got a whole 7 likes on that one.

Natalie turns up the volume and puts the phone to her ear.

Kat starts to get a little uncomfortable but awaits Natalie's approval...

NATALIE

(Impressed) Yes, girl!...there's Some soul in there.

As she follows along, pointing her finger up and down as high and low notes ring out.

NATALIE (CONT'D)
I mean, how can you not (starts
singing 'Something's Got a Hold On
Me') Ohh, ohh sometimes I get a
good feeling, yeah...

Natalie points to Kat to continue singing, as Kat resists at first but gives in nervously:

KAT
I get a feeling that I've never,
never, never, never had before, no
no...

NATALIE
(Harmonizing) Yeah...

Natalie looks to Kat to continue singing.

KAT
I just wanna tell you right now
that I...

NATALIE
(Continuing to harmonize) Ohh...

KAT
I believe, I really do believe
that...

They look at each other in approval.

KAT (CONT'D)
Something's got a hold on me, yeah.

NATALIE
Oh, it must be love. (Clapping to
the beat)

Kat continues to belt with Natalie harmonizing, as they start to have fun singing together in the back alley. Kat gains confidence as she sings.

Kully and Luca are very impressed with Kat's voice.

KAT
(Crescendoing) I said, Oh.

NATALIE
Oh!

KAT
Oh.

NATALIE

Oh!

KAT

Hey, hey, yeah. Oh, it must be love.

NATALIE

(Finishing) You know it must be love.

Kully and Luca start clapping.

LUCA

Okay, alright!

NATALIE

Yes! I love it.

Kat's guard is let down after the cathartic moment, she's enjoying herself.

The back door swings open as John emerges:

JOHN

Oh, hey guys.

NATALIE

Thanks John!

KULLY

(To Natalie) So she should fill in for the 5th if Molly can't.

NATALIE

Oh shit! No, but that's not a bad idea...

They start to move toward the door.

KAT

What's that?

NATALIE

There's a monthly event here that's like western-rock fusion. It would be right up your alley. It's like (*insert similar 50's western rock artists).

KAT

Cool! I don't know if I--

LUCA
She could come to Sunday's sesh?
We gotta get on that, like last
week...

Luca and Kully enter back inside.

NATALIE
Totally. You free Sunday night?

KAT
Um, yeah I should be...

NATALIE
DM me and I'll get you all the
info.

KAT
Will do!

NATALIE
I'll take that glass in.

KAT
(Hands her the glass) You're the
best...

NATALIE
Talk soon! Damn, I'm glad you came
tonight.

KAT
Right? Talk to you soon! (Door
closes)

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

Kat rides an electric scooter back to her apartment with a
smile on her face as the midnight air hits her face.

INT. APARTMENT LOFT - MORNING

A laptop lid whips open. Kat's frantically booting up her
computer.

KAT
Fuck. Fuck. Fuck.

As she keeps trying to jam the laptop charger into the port,
since it's dead.

KAT (CONT'D)

Fuck you!

The laptop finally boots up as she navigates to her calendar to open a 'team meeting' Zoom link.

It's 9:17 am.

KAT (CONT'D)

Please be off camera...

She checks her disheveled self in the preview window, fixing her hair before joining.

She joins but no one's in the call.

KAT (CONT'D)

Umm...

She checks her Slack messages with an unread message "team meeting cancelled".

KAT (CONT'D)

Thank fuck. (sigh of relief)

She lets her guard down as she then checks her phone. There's a DM from Natalie with the details of Sunday's rehearsal session with a list of songs to practice.

Kat walks over to the window as she puts her earbuds in and starts to play "Got My Mojo Working" as we transition to montage of Kierra getting to rehearsal space, meeting band - including Gareth and Jason. She's now singing "Got My Mojo Working" with the band. She's nervous and timid at first, but starts to get the hang of it as Jason leads rehearsal.

Rehearsal scene as she gains confidence singing with band transitioning to montage:

Kat hanging out with band members, Ellie, Mike, Natalie as friends before she finally performs the rockabilly night at Crown City, as we watch her perform onstage with sass and swagger in front of the crowd. Fulfillment in her face as she belts the last notes of the song.

Cut to black.