

TB

THE SCHOOL OF ROCK

Written by

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TB

FADE IN:

INT. MR. FINN'S DEN - NIGHT

Two leather couches facing each other. On one, a cherubic seven year-old DEWEY FINN. On the other, Dewey's parents - stern, imposing MR. FINN and nervous, rigid MRS. FINN.

MR. FINN

Dewey, your teacher called today.

Dewey's eyes widen. His ten year-old brother, NED, enters.

LITTLE NED

What's going on? Is Dewey in trouble?

Mrs. Finn rises and escorts Ned from the room, leaving Dewey alone with his father. The mood is somber.

MR. FINN

Mrs. Watson says you're a free spirit - and that's not necessarily a good thing. Students who don't excel at Horace Green are asked to leave - that's why it's such a great school.

Dewey grimaces.

MR. FINN (cont'd)

You're seven years old, Dewey - it's not too late to adjust your priorities. But to fail this early in life - you may never recover. I want you to go upstairs and really think - what do I want out of life?

Dewey is dismissed with a wave of the hand.

INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Mrs. Finn and Ned watch as Dewey exits the den and walks toward the stairwell, his head hung low with shame.

INT. DEWEY'S BEDROOM - LATER

Little Dewey sits at the edge of his bed, dejected. He looks up at the television...

AC/DC is performing in a televised concert. ANGUS YOUNG, in his school boy uniform, tools around on his guitar, having the time of his life. Dewey stares at the TV, transfixed.

INT. HORACE GREEN CLASSROOM - DAY

A room full of WELL-HEELED CHILDREN in uniform. A young girl, KIM, shares her "Show & Tell" with the class - it is a strange, colorful drawing.

KIM

This was drawn by my Uncle Walter. It's a self-portrait entitled "Spiders in My Brain". Millions of Americans suffer from mental illness. When I grow up, I want to be a psychiatrist so I can medicate people like my Uncle Walter.

Dewey, at his desk, claps enthusiastically. Kim returns to her seat. The severe MRS. WATSON stands in the back.

MRS. WATSON

Thank you, Kim. Dewey, what would you like to share with us today?

Dewey rises and walks to the front of the room with a tape deck and a plastic guitar. He turns on the tape deck - SCREECHING ROCK MUSIC BLASTS. Dewey pretends to play his plastic guitar along with the music.

MRS. WATSON (cont'd)

Dewey, turn that music down.

Dewey ignores her. He continues to thrash around the room. The other students are dumbstruck.

MRS. WATSON

Dewey. You heard me. Turn it off!

In a fit of rock rebellion, Dewey smashes his plastic guitar on the floor into little pieces. Mrs. Watson is horrified.

MRS. WATSON

DEWEY!

INT. ANOTHER CLASSROOM - DAY

Dewey's brother, Ned, in his fifth-grade class, looks up from his test and out his classroom window. He spots...

HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

An irate Mrs. Watson dragging Dewey to the Principal's office.

EXT. HORACE GREEN - DAY

Dewey, holding a box of his belongings, stands on the manicured front lawn of HORACE GREEN ELEMENTARY, flanked by Mrs. Watson and the school's MALE PRINCIPAL.

A MERCEDES pulls up - inside is an unsmiling MR. FINN.

Dewey waddles out to the car and gets in. Overcome with disappointment, Mr. Finn won't even look at his son.

The Mercedes drives around the cul-de-sac.

As the car passes by Mrs. Watson and the Principal, Dewey locks eyes with his teacher one last time. Dewey holds up one finger to each side of his head, making devil horns, and grins defiantly out the window. Mrs. Watson shudders.

The car drives away, exiting the front gate. We SEE the HORACE GREEN ELEMENTARY sign.

ON LITTLE DEWEY - sitting in reflective silence, he's not exactly full of remorse. In fact, the hint of a smile curls around his lips. His future is up for grabs, but one thing is certain, he'll never step foot in that oppressive school again. (Or so he thinks.)

FADE TO:

INT. HANNIGAN'S BAR - NIGHT

CHYRON: "TWENTY-FIVE YEARS LATER".

A local band NO VACANCY (think CREED) performs at a Boston dive bar for a handful of distracted alcoholics. Sticking out among the muscular, good-looking band members is a beer-bellied, disheveled wreck of a guitarist. Yep, it's Dewey - now thirty-two and a true rock n' roll casualty.

As THEO, the shirtless lead singer, soulfully sings, Dewey wanders the stage, intoxicated. He trips on a mic cord, kicks over an amp, then spills beer down his shirt.

THEO

*Your gloves are off. You hit below
the belt. Well, it's time out,
baby - and they've rung the bell.*

The women in the audience swoon over Theo. But Dewey steals their attention when he starts his back-up wailing.

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THEO
I'm not a-fighter. I'm a
lover. But if you run, then
run for cover. 'Cause I'm
fighting for your love.

DEWEY
LOVER! / COVER! / 'CAUSE I'M
FIGHTING FOR YOUR LOVE!

Dewey joins Theo at his microphone for a Jagger-Richards-type moment, but Theo pushes him away.

THEO (cont'd)
It's round two, girl - I'm coming
on strong. I'll hit a knock-out
punch with this heartfelt song. I
know when I - count down from ten,
I'll find you in, my arms again.

THEO
I'm not a fighter. I'm a
lover. But if you run, then
run for cover. 'Cause I'm
fighting for your love.

DEWEY
LOVER! / COVER! / 'CAUSE I'M
FIGHTING FOR YOUR LOVE!

Dewey, lost in a moment of punk euphoria, rips off his shirt to expose his flabby chest, then STAGE DIVES into the stunned crowd. A few fans near the stage recoil in horror. A few SCREAM. Dewey drops to the floor with a THUD.

Theo is furious. He walks off the stage in a huff. PIERCING FEEDBACK from the microphone.

INT. DEWEY'S BEDROOM - NEXT MORNING

The room is a disaster. Busted instruments, old rock albums, dirty laundry and rotting food litter the floor.

Dewey is splayed across his bed, passed out. The chirping birds outside his window are drowned out by Dewey's radio alarm. The ROCK MUSIC is deafening but Dewey doesn't stir. We HEAR NEIGHBORS SHOUTING: "TURN IT DOWN", "SHUT UP".

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

A bleary-eyed, hung-over Dewey wanders into the kitchen in his filthy bathrobe. He opens the fridge - his eyes go wide when he sees... A BOX OF ENTENMANN DONUTS with a post-it - "DO NOT TOUCH." Dewey hesitates, then opens the package, snatches a powdered donut and takes a bite.

Suddenly, from out of nowhere, Dewey's roommate, KEVIN, in a silly waiter's uniform, pounces on him, shouting and trying to extract the donut from Dewey's mouth.

KEVIN

Give me that donut! Give it!

The donut crumbles in the melee and falls to the floor. Kevin and Dewey stare at the scattered remains.

DEWEY

Look what you did. You turned it into powdered crap.

KEVIN

You know, life is hard enough without you eating all my food.

DEWEY

I'm hungry.

KEVIN

Live off your fat! You owe me thirteen hundred dollars as it is.

Kevin storms from the room. Dewey is sheepish.

DEWEY

Kevin... Love you.

EXT. DOWNTOWN BOSTON - DAY

Dewey's beat-up VAN is a menace on the road. MUSIC BLARES.

INSIDE THE CAR

Dewey drives to band practice. He has stolen Kevin's box of donuts and eats one after the other. The ROCK SONG ends.

RADIO DJ

If you've always dreamed of being a rock legend like these guys, here's your chance. WROK is sponsoring a battle of the bands - May 15th at the Boston Amphitheater. The winning band will get a twenty thousand dollar cash prize and a record contract with a major label.

Dewey perks to attention. He slams on the gas. As he swerves through traffic, we HEAR...

RADIO DJ

If you wanna compete, auditions are this Monday at Roxie's so come on down and show us what you've got...

INT. REHEARSAL SPACE - DAY

Theo and the rest of NO VACANCY are already practicing when Dewey enters, sweaty and breathless.

DEWEY

Dudes. DUDES!

(they stop playing)

Twenty thousand dollars. Record contract with Abel-Lay Ajor-May.

THEO

We already heard.

DEWEY

No more screwin' around, Theo. If we're gonna win this thing, we need to start actually playing music.

THEO

I agree. You're fired.

DEWEY

Your songs are kind of - and don't take this the wrong way - lame. But I've been sitting on some awesome material so...

THEO

Did you hear me? We voted - you're fired. Spider's replacing you.

Theo points to a muscle-bound GUITARIST, covered in tattoos.

DEWEY

(stunned; angry)

Well, don't I get a vote?

THEO

Yeah, but you only have one vote - we have three votes.

DEWEY

(pointing to SPIDER)

That guy doesn't get to vote.

THEO

I'm not counting him.

Dewey looks at his other band mates. DOUG, the drummer shrugs. Dewey turns to the bassist, NEIL.

DEWEY

-- Neil?

NEIL

We're all really good-looking,
Dewey. You're holding us back.

DEWEY

What the f...?

THEO

It's not just that. You don't
practice. You show up to gigs late
- you act like a lunatic on stage.

DEWEY

It's punk rock. That's what you're
supposed to do.

THEO

The rebel thing is tired. It's one
thing when you're a teenager but
we've got to get serious and make a
living. But you - you're never
gonna grow up.

Dewey throws up his middle three fingers.

DEWEY

Hey. Read between the lines, Theo.

Dewey laughs uproariously, backing away from them.

DEWEY (CONT'D)

I don't need a bunch of sell-outs.
It's time I played my songs my way.
I'm starting my own band. And
we'll blow you hacks off the stage!

Dewey stumbles backward, falling into the drum set. Doug
tries to help him up, but Dewey is stuck. The other band
members wrench him free, lifting him to his feet.

DEWEY

I just feel sorry for you guys.

Dewey musters a defiant smirk, then struts out.

EXT. OUTSIDE DEWEY'S APARTMENT - DAY

CLOSE ON A FLYER - it reads "AUDITIONS - FOR THE MOST ROCKING
BAND EVER! PLAY BACK-UP FOR A CERTIFIED MUSICAL GENIUS!" A
photo of DEWEY, strapped to a guitar, his tongue wagging.

We PULL BACK TO REVEAL TWO HIP MUSICIANS standing at a kiosk, staring at the flyer.

MUSICIAN #1

You've got to be kidding me.

MUSICIAN #2

I know that guy. He's a loser.
Don't waste your time.

We PAN AWAY from the kiosk and up to Dewey's second-floor apartment.

INT. DEWEY AND KEVIN'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Dewey's living room has been transformed into an audition space. Dewey waits at a "SIGN-IN" table, arranging a clipboard and a pen. No one has shown up.

Impatient, he walks to the window and peers out - nobody.

INT. DEWEY'S APARTMENT - LATER

Kevin has brought home left-overs from his restaurant job to a disappointed Dewey.

DEWEY

I just don't get it. There's tons
of killer musicians around here.
Where are they?

KEVIN

(lifeless)
Maybe it's time to give up your
dreams. I gave up mine - and I'm
really happy.

Dewey considers Kevin for a moment.

DEWEY

You. You can be my band. All I
need is another guitarist. But no
power-plays, Kev. I've got vision
up the butt - so just go with it.

KEVIN

No. No way.

Dewey stands and points to a poster on the wall - Kevin, in MORTUARY - a Marilyn Manson-type Goth group.

DEWEY

-- Kevin - you're not the fry boy for Captain Jack's. You're the cross-dressing, blood-sucking incubus from Mortuary. That's the real you.

KEVIN

Hey, at least, now I can pay my bills. Unlike you.

DEWEY

We win this show - we get twenty thousand dollars.

Kevin rips the poster down from the wall.

KEVIN

No, Dewey - I'm not going down that road again. I'm not a Satanic sex god anymore - I'm just a working stiff - and that's cool.

DEWEY

You're a pawn - a robot - a tiny, little ant.

KEVIN

(stung)

Ahh, don't judge me, you know? Pay me my money. I want it now. Thirteen hundred dollars.

DEWEY

I don't have it.

KEVIN

Then move out.

DEWEY

What are you so upset about?

KEVIN

Rent's due in three days. What are you gonna do? Hunh? 'Cause I'm not carrying you anymore.

DEWEY

Why not?

Kevin has had enough. He exits, leaving Dewey to stew.

EXT. NED'S HOUSE - DAY

Dewey's van pulls up outside his brother's impressive home. There are quite a few VOLVO STATION WAGONS parked in the driveway and on the street.

INT. THE FINN HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

The Finn family is hosting a birthday party for Ned's five year old son, TOBY. Mr. Finn, Mrs. Finn, Ned and his pretty wife, PATTY have congregated in the living room with other picture-perfect FAMILIES to watch Toby open his presents.

Suddenly, the crowd notices... Dewey, standing in the entry way. He's a mess, unshaven, ripped jeans, stained jacket. The Finns are stunned.

NED

(feeble)

Dewey, hey. Everyone - this is my brother, Dewey.

DEWEY

Hey.

NED

You remembered Toby's birthday.

DEWEY

Who?

Toby approaches, wrapping his arms around his father's leg.

TOBY

Hi, Uncle Dewey.

DEWEY

Oh, yeah. Hey, how's it going - Toby? Happy birthday. I, uh, got you a present.

Dewey improvising, reaches into his jacket and pulls out... a pack of condoms. The Finns are mortified.

DEWEY

Not that.

Dewey puts away the condom and fishes out a marijuana pipe.

DEWEY

Here we go. It's a pipe. A little pipe for you to pipe on.

Dewey hands Toby the pipe. Toby instantly puts it in his mouth. -Dewey realizes his error and snatches it back.

DEWEY

That's... no. Here.

Dewey has pulled out TWO CONCERT TICKETS.

DEWEY

This is it. Two tickets to the White Stripes. You can take one of your little girlfriends or... I'm available.

Dewey hands Toby the tickets. Locking eyes with an angry Ned, Dewey realizes he's walked into a hornet's nest.

DEWEY

Anyway - carry on, people.

Patty quickly hands Toby another present. Toby unwraps it.

PATTY

Oh, it's a CD-ROM with the entire Oxford English Dictionary on it from Stephanie. Toby, what do we say?

TOBY

(a thick lisp)
Thank you, Thtephanie.

NED

You can start studying for those SATs, tiger. They're only ten years away, right?

The parents share a knowing chuckle.

MR. FINN

Toby's our resident genius.
(pointedly; to DEWEY)
Unlike some people, Toby knows the value of a good education.

Dewey slumps back in his chair.

MR. FINN

What's the capital of Maine, Toby?

TOBY

Auguthta.

MRS. FINN
-- Who wrote Hamlet?

TOBY
William Shakethpeare.

NED
What's $E = mc$ squared?

TOBY
Einthein's Theory of Relativity.

Ned nudges Dewey to join in the game.

DEWEY
What's the square root of eight
hundred and eighty eight?

Toby's eyes go wide as he wracks his brain. He stammers.

TOBY
I... I... I think, uh...

Embarrassed, Toby bursts out in tears and runs from the room.

DEWEY
Hey, I don't know either, pal.
(turning to NED and PATTY)
He's got a little lithp.

Patty, concerned, chases after Toby.

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Dewey has pulled an irritated Ned aside.

NED
What? What is it?

DEWEY
Things aren't working out with the
band. Turns out - I'm just too
cutting edge. But I'm starting my
own band, you'll be happy to know.

NED
There's forty people in my house,
Dewey. Get to the point.

DEWEY
I'm low on cash. I don't want to
ask Dad - he's always such a tool.

NED

How much do you need?

DEWEY

Well, with the credit card debt and the money I owe Kevin - and rent - fifteen thousand?

Dewey laughs to cut the tension but Ned isn't amused.

DEWEY

I don't know. Like a grand?

NED

When I get to the office on Monday, I'll cut you a check.

DEWEY

Brother, I will pay you back. I swear I'm good for it. In a few weeks, I'll be rolling in dough...

But Ned has already returned to the party.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

GUESTS are leaving. Dewey is saying good-bye to Toby. The Finns, Patty, Ned and a few other PARENTS stand around.

DEWEY

Well, happy birthday, big guy.

TOBY

Uncle Dewey, I'm thinging at thchool tonight. Can you come?

Dewey's other relatives don't like that idea.

NED

Toby - your uncle's busy - he doesn't have time to come to your recital.

DEWEY

Sure I do. You singin'?
(lifting TOBY up)
You wanna be a rock star, don't ya?

Dewey starts tickling Toby and tossing him up in the air.

DEWEY (CONT'D)

You want to be just like your Uncle Dewey.

Toby nods, laughs hysterically. Dewey shakes him.

DEWEY (CONT'D)

Say, "I want to be a rock star."

Dewey continues to shake him and Toby starts to look ill.

MRS. FINN

Dewey - put him down.

DEWEY

Say it. Say - "Mommy, I want to be a rock star."

Instead of saying it, Toby suddenly VOMITS into the air.

Dewey sheepishly sets down a disoriented Toby. He turns to a stunned Ned and Patty.

DEWEY (CONT'D)

Too much cake.

INT. MR. FINN'S RANGE ROVER - TRAVELING - NIGHT

Mr. Finn and Ned ride in the front. Patty, Dewey and Mrs. Finn sit in the back. Toby sits on his mother's lap.

MR. FINN

Your brother made partner at the firm. Now, it's Finn, Baker, Simmons and Finn. I was hoping it would be Finn, Baker, Finn and Simmons - but it took a little longer than we thought for Ned to establish his own client base.

On Ned - he rolls his eyes at this obvious criticism.

DEWEY

Congratulations, partner.

MRS. FINN

How about you, Dewey? How's everything?

DEWEY

Really awesome. Thanks.

MR. FINN

Still living in that flophouse with the transvestite, eating garbage and pretending to be a musician?

DEWEY

Yup.

MR. FINN

Who knew things would have turned out so well for you? It's a good thing you never listened to me. No, you never took my advice - you had all the answers, didn't you?

Dewey doesn't have a chance to respond because he sees...

The HORACE GREEN ELEMENTARY sign out his window.

DEWEY

Wait. Where are we?

NED

Horace Green. Toby just started kindergarten.

Dewey's face contorts as the car pulls up to the school.

EXT. HORACE GREEN ELEMENTARY - NIGHT

The CHILDREN, PARENTS and TEACHERS of HORACE GREEN are out in full force for the school recital. A stricken Dewey confronts his brother as the other navigate their way toward the school auditorium.

DEWEY

Horace Green?!

NED

What? It's a great school.

DEWEY

Great school? Don't you remember? This place is a Nazi boot camp!

A few PASSERS-BY turn and stare.

NED

Shh. We were lucky to get him in here. They almost didn't take him because of his speech impediment.

DEWEY

He's too good for this school. These people are a bunch of jerks!

Ned shushes Dewey. Dewey is incensed.

INT. AUDITORIUM - LATER

Toby and his KINDERGARTEN class are on stage, singing.

KINDERGARTNERS

Old man river - He just keeps
rollin' - He don't say nothin'

In the audience, Dewey, sitting with his family, is
regressing - he's seven years old again, furtive and anxious.

DEWEY

This place gives me the creeps.

NED

Please, shut up.

KINDERGARTNERS (CONT'D)

He keeps on rollin'. He just keeps
rolling along.

The song ends. The audience claps. Dewey whoops.

DEWEY

All right, Toby! Yeah!

MRS. MULLINS, the school's principal, takes the mic.

MRS. MULLINS

Thank you, kindergartners for a
winning take on a timeless song of
protest. Now, at Horace Green we
take pride in molding our students'
talents, but with our next
performer, I can assure you, no
molding was necessary. From Mrs.
Dunham's fourth grade class, Yuki
Takeuchi.

APPLAUSE as a very serious nine year old, YUKI TAKEUCHI,
takes the stage, dwarfed by his handsome, acoustic guitar.

He sits down and begins to play - a classical guitar piece.
He is skilled - a true musical prodigy.

ON DEWEY - we PUSH IN on HIM as he takes in this sight. He
is floored by the performance. Mouth agape, he turns to Ned.

DEWEY

This kid's awesome!

Dewey's outburst gets the attention of everyone around him.
Patty covers her face with her program.

CLOSE ON YUKI - he is thoroughly absorbed by the guitar - playing with the confidence of a pro.

CLOSE ON DEWEY - he is smitten by the talent of this little kid. His mind is spinning with ideas.

EXT. SCHOOL AUDITORIUM - LATER

Children and parents reunite after the recital. The Finns talk with Toby's Kindergarten TEACHER. Dewey loiters, nearby, his eyes scanning the crowd for Yuki.

TEACHER

Toby's wonderful. And we've been making real strides with his...

The Teacher points to her lips and mouths the word, "lisp."

FATTY

Do you think we should take him to a specialist?

Toby races toward them. Ned scoops Toby up in his arms.

NED

Great job, tiger!

TOBY

Did you thee me thinging, Uncle Dewey?

DEWEY

Yeah, I thaw you thinging. You thang thuper.

Dewey's lisping imitation makes everyone uncomfortable. Dewey's eyes widen when he sees...

The preternaturally diffident Yuki and his PARENTS passing by. Dewey intercepts them.

DEWEY (CONT'D)

Hey, hey. Kid. You were awesome.
(to the PARENTS)
Your kid blew me away.

The Takeuchis are rattled by Dewey's enthusiasm. They smile politely, then continue walking to their modest car.

DEWEY (CONT'D)

Wait. Listen. I've got a band.
And I want your kid to play in it.

MRS. TAKEUCHI

- Oh, no. That's okay. Thank you.

DEWEY

I need to practice with him this week-end - we got an audition on Monday. Battle of the bands. Twenty thousand dollar prize.

The Takeuchis are frightened. Dewey turns to Yuki.

DEWEY (CONT'D)

You wanna rock with the big boys?

MR. TAKEUCHI

Get in the car, Yuki.

DEWEY

You were ripping it, Yuki. Major!

MR. TAKEUCHI

Leave him alone. Get in the car.

Yuki gets in the back seat of the car, confused. Other PARENTS observe the commotion. For the Finn family, it's the worst case scenario. They are dying from embarrassment.

DEWEY

Let me get your number.

MR. TAKEUCHI

Who are you?

DEWEY

I'm Dewey. I was in a band - No Vacancy. You may have heard of us. Listen. I've got a lot of problems and your kid is the answer!

The Takeuchis have heard enough. They get in their car, start the engine and speed away.

DEWEY (CONT'D)

Wait! Hey. Wait a minute!

Dewey, thwarted, turns around to look for his family - but they, too, have escaped to their car.

The Range Rover pulls up and Mr. Finn rolls down his window.

MR. FINN

Once again, you manage to embarrass us all with your juvenile antics.

The car lurches away and leaves Dewey, abandoned, on the street. He begins the long walk home.

INT. KEVIN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dewey, having walked home from the recital, enters Kevin's bedroom and flips on the light.

DEWEY

Good news.

KEVIN

You got some money?

DEWEY

Better. I found me a guitarist.
Yuki Takeuchi, dude. He's nine
years old and he rules!

Dewey exits. Kevin just lies in bed, shaking his head.

EXT. HORACE GREEN BREEZEWAY - MONDAY MORNING

Yuki is walking toward his classroom, when he is intercepted by a wild-eyed Dewey. Yuki looks up at Dewey, stunned.

DEWEY

Hey there, fella.

YUKI

Hi.

DEWEY

Righteous show the other night.
How'd you learn to play like that?

YUKI

I practice.

DEWEY

I play guitar, too. You want to
play with me?

YUKI

Okay.

Yuki's teacher, the no-nonsense MRS. DUNHAM approaches.

MRS. DUNHAM

Yuki, what's going on?

YUKI

He wants me to play with him.

MRS. DUNHAM

Excuse me, sir. Who are you?

DEWEY

Hey, lady. Umm, I'm just a guy trying to put a band together. I was talking to Yuki here...

MRS. DUNHAM

Yuki, go inside.

DEWEY

Maybe you can help - his folks don't seem into the idea of us tooling around on our instruments - maybe you can put in a word for me. And hey, can I take him today? There's this contest across town...

MRS. DUNHAM

If you don't get off this campus right now, I'm calling the police.

DEWEY

What?

MRS. DUNHAM

If I ever see you back here again, I'll have you arrested. I mean it.

DEWEY

Okay. I'm leaving. Mellow your yellow.

INT. CLASSROOM - MOMENTS LATER

From her classroom window, a ruffled Mrs. Dunham spots...

On the street, a frustrated Dewey getting into his van.

Mrs. Dunham grabs a pad of paper and a pen from her desk.

MRS. DUNHAM

Children. Take your seats. I'll be back in a moment.

EXT/ INT. DEWEY'S VAN - MOMENTS LATER

Dewey starts his engine and turns on his stereo - LED ZEPPELIN cranks over the SPEAKERS.

DEWEY

Uptight school.

TB

He puts on his rock star shades and puts the car into REVERSE. He hasn't noticed that...

Mrs. Dunham has come out onto the street. She stands behind his van, jotting down... Dewey's license plate number.

Suddenly, Dewey's jalopy comes lurching toward her.

INSIDE THE CAR

Over the loud music, Dewey can barely HEAR Dunham's SHRIEK followed by a SICKENING THUD.

Dewey looks confused. He has no idea what happened. He turns off the engine and steps out.

IN THE ROAD

Dewey walks around the side of his car to find Mrs. Dunham, slumped on the asphalt, clutching her leg, in pain.

DEWEY

Lady - what are you doing?!

MRS. DUNHAM

You hit me!

INT. PRINCIPAL MULLINS'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Mrs. Mullins is lecturing a tearful second grade girl, EMILY.

MRS. MULLINS

If you had scored in the ninetieth percentile, it'd be different. But we have to put you in the slower track. Remember - the world's not going to accommodate for you, Emily.

The assistant principal, PIPER, enters.

PIPER

Gail's on the phone.

MRS. MULLINS

What?

Mrs. Mullins picks up her phone.

MRS. MULLINS (CONT'D)

Gail - where are you?

TB

INT. DEWEY'S VAN - MOMENTS LATER

Dewey drives an injured Mrs. Dunham to the hospital. As Dewey swerves through traffic, she talks on her cell phone.

MRS. DUNHAM

I'm on my way to St. Francis. I was just hit by a car.

INTERCUT PHONE CALL

MRS. MULLINS

What?!

MRS. DUNHAM

I think my leg is broken.

Both Dewey and Mrs. Dunham look down at her leg - it is jutting out in the wrong direction. Dewey cringes.

MRS. DUNHAM (CONT'D)

Oh, god. The children are unsupervised. Call Caroline and have her come in.

MRS. MULLINS

She's subbing for Jeannie.

MRS. DUNHAM

What about Melissa?

MRS. MULLINS

She's on maternity leave. I'll bring in Connie.

MRS. DUNHAM

No. She doesn't know the curriculum. I know. Call Melvin Schneebly. I told you about him. Remember? I gave you his resume. He worked with me in New York - he just moved here and he's fantastic. Schneebly. Schnee-bly. I don't have his number.

MRS. MULLINS

Don't worry, Gail. I'll handle it. Just take care of yourself. Hello?

The line is dead. Mrs. Mullins, panicky, heads for the door.

TB

MRS. MULLINS (CONT'D)

She's been hit by a car. I'm going over to her classroom. Piper, find contact information for a Schnabel... Shnobbly... Melvin Shlobly. Oh, I don't know.

She exits, leaving a bewildered Piper and a relieved Emily.

EXT. ST. FRANCES HOSPITAL - DAY

TWO MEDICS with a wheelchair have come out to Dewey's van to help Mrs. Dunham out of the passenger seat.

A guilt-stricken Dewey tries to assist, but Dunham recoils.

MRS. DUNHAM

Keep away from me.

DEWEY

Lady, I didn't see you. I'm sorry

The Medics wheel Mrs. Dunham inside the hospital.

MRS. DUNHAM

That man's a reckless driver - and a pervert.

Dewey stands on the sidewalk, unsure of what to do.

INT. ROXIE'S - DAY

BANDS from all over New England have converged upon this club to audition for the contest. WROK's manager, JEFF, and a few other MUSIC EXECs are judging the contestants. On stage, a decent punk band finishes their performance.

JEFF

Thank you, Apathy. We'll see you guys in a month.

The band is stoked. They high-five each other.

JEFF (cont'd)

Next up is, uh, Dewey Finn?

Dewey, with his guitar, takes the stage and begins to play.

JEFF

(interrupting)

Uh, excuse me. Sorry - no solo acts. It's a Battle of the Bands.

DEWEY

Oh, uh, but I have a band!

JEFF

Well, where are they?

Dewey approaches Jeff.

DEWEY

See, there was an accident. Yeah. My, uh, keyboardist was run over by this sick... freak. Her leg was sticking out the wrong direction - she's at the hospital right now.

JEFF

I'm sorry, but no exceptions.

DEWEY

(pleading)

Dude, dude. I'm at the end of my rope, dude. The sandman's knocking at my door. And the tax man. And the Man, man. I owe money, man.

(almost in tears)

Please. We just need a few more days - so her leg can heal and and and and stuff like that. Please.

Jeff is struck by Dewey's palpable desperation.

JEFF

(under his breath)

Okay, look, my name's Jeff. If you get it together, bring your band down to the station - I'll see what I can do.

DEWEY

(composing himself)

Thank you, Jeff. You rock.

(thumping his chest)

You're my blood brother, Jeff.

As Dewey makes his clumsy exit, Jeff rolls his eyes.

EXT. ROXIE'S - MOMENTS LATER

Dewey exits the club. He runs into his former band - No Vacancy - drinking beers, on the street. Theo is shirtless and wearing leather pants.

TB

DEWEY

Hey, guys. Little early to be partying, isn't it?

THEO

(gloating)

We're celebrating. We made the cut. So where's your band?

DEWEY

I'm working on it.

THEO

Give it up, Dewey. You're never gonna have your own band.

DEWEY

Oh, yeah?

THEO

Yeah. 'Cause every decent musician in Boston knows you - and they know you suck.

Spider, the new guitarist, snickers. Dewey is stung.

DEWEY

Yeah, well, I've already got a kick-ass guitarist and he's better than you'll ever be. Theo. And he doesn't have pec implants either.

Theo is mortified. His shocked band mates stare at his chest. As Dewey leaves, Theo covers his pecs, embarrassed.

INT. DEWEY'S VAN - MOMENTS LATER

Dewey sits in his jalopy. The STEREO BLARES GUNS N' ROSES. Dewey clutches his head, deep in thought.

An idea. His eyes light up. Uh-oh.

INT. MRS. DUNHAM'S CLASSROOM - LATER

TWENTY FOURTH-GRADE STUDENTS, including Yuki, sit quietly at their desks when Principal Mullins enters the classroom.

MRS. MULLINS

Children, as you know, Mrs. Dunham was in an accident this morning and we've brought in a new substitute. His name is Mr. Schneebly.

TB
Mrs. Mullins to the door and... DEWEY ENTERS. He has completely transformed himself - he's shaved and groomed, wearing a tweed jacket and eye-glasses.

ON YUKI - he instantly recognizes Dewey as his crazed fan.

MRS. MULLINS (CONT'D)

Why don't you write your name on the board, Mr. Schneebly?

DEWEY

Yes, of course.

Playing the instructor, Dewey's voice is affected, over-enunciating. He struts over to the blackboard, picks up a piece of chalk and begins to write - "Mr. S..."

ON DEWEY - he doesn't know how to spell Schneebly. He turns to the class, trying to cover.

DEWEY (CONT'D)

Just call me Mr. S.

Mrs. Mullins finds this odd, but shakes it off.

MRS. MULLINS

Mr. S. taught with Mrs. Dunham in Houston but he's never been to Horace Green before. So I want you all to be on your best behavior today. Freddy - that means you.

She glares at FREDDY, a mischievous gremlin in the back. Mrs. Mullins has a brief tete-a-tete with Dewey.

MRS. MULLINS (CONT'D)

Thank you for filling in on such short notice. We couldn't find your contact information. Did Gail call you?

DEWEY

Uh, Gail... Yes. Poor Gail. What a lady, hmm? What a trooper.

MRS. MULLINS

The curriculum's on the desk and we break at three. We can talk then. Anything else you need?

DEWEY

I'm a teacher. All I need are minds - for molding.

TB

MRS. MULLINS

You saved the day.

Mrs. Mullins exits. Dewey is left alone with the students. He stares at them, at a loss. They stare back.

DEWEY

You guys can just chill out today.
Hang with your buddies. If you got
any food, go ahead and eat it.

(pointing to YUKI)

I'd like to see you up here.

The kids stare at him, baffled. Yuki rises. A precocious girl, SUMMER, raises her hand.

DEWEY (CONT'D)

Yes - blondie.

SUMMER

Summer. I'm the class factotum.
Usually now Mrs. Dunham has us work
in our math books. And after that
it's Lori's turn to present her
oceans of the world report.

Summer points to a meek, heavy-set girl, LORI - who blanches.

LORI

That's okay. I don't have to.

SUMMER

And then at twelve-thirty, Mrs.
Dunham has us memorize a poem from
Windowpanes and then...

DEWEY

Mrs. Dunham isn't your teacher
today. I am. And I say we mellow
out, kick back and party down. Can
you handle that?

(to YUKI)

You - up here.

Dewey waves Yuki up as the other students react to this unexpected break in their rigorous schedule.

Yuki approaches Dewey's desk and they whisper.

DEWEY (CONT'D)

Yuki, right?

(YUKI nods)

You like rock music, Yuki?

TB

Yuki shrugs. Dewey quickly rattles off a few bands.

DEWEY (CONT'D)

Zeppelin? Sabbath? Nirvana? U2?
Korn? Rage Against the Machine?
Who are your influences?

Yuki just shakes his head.

DEWEY (CONT'D)

I'm here because I want you to be
in my band, Yuki. What do you say?
(off YUKI's shrug)
What? What's wrong?

YUKI

I don't know.

Yuki looks back at the other kids in class, seated at their desks, intently staring at him.

DEWEY

You don't think I have the skills.
Is that it? Okay - I've been in
some bad bands. Who hasn't? Yeah,
I've never hit it big. But I got
great material. And I'm gonna make
it - with or without you, Yuki.
But I think we could make a great
team - it's worth a shot, right?
(off YUKI's blank look)
You want proof? Fine. Let me get
rid of these other kids, then I'll
go get my guitar.

Dewey turns to the other students.

DEWEY

All right, everybody - on your
feet!

EXT. FIELD - LATER

Dewey leads the kids out to the school field.

DEWEY

Okay. Let's go. Come on.

Freddy, looking grim, catches up to Dewey.

FREDDY

-- Mr. S, I didn't do my report. I
couldn't find my Ritalin yesterday
and I was hyper.

DEWEY

Well, did you find it?
(softly; conspiratorial)
Got any on you?

FREDDY

I didn't do the reading, either.

DEWEY

Hey, homework is lame. No worries.

Freddy is stunned by this response.

SUMMER

What are we doing out here?

DEWEY

Time for recess.

SUMMER

Recess?

DEWEY

Yeah, recess. When you play and
have fun. So go play and have fun.

They just stand there, looking baffled.

DEWEY (cont'd)

What's wrong with you? Go play and
have fun. Play and have fun - now!

After the kids dutifully disperse, Dewey darts away.

INT. FOURTH GRADE CLASSROOM - LATER

Dewey and Yuki are alone in the classroom with their guitars.
The following plays like the dueling banjo scene from
"Deliverance." As they play, they are stone cold serious.

Dewey plays a riff on his guitar.

Yuki imitates it exactly.

Dewey plays another riff.

Yuki again matches it note for note.

TB
Dewey plays a more complicated riff.

Yuki effortlessly duplicates it.

Dewey's guitar playing becomes increasingly challenging.

Yuki rises to the occasion, a pint-sized virtuoso.

They start playing simultaneously. They exert themselves, trying to outplay one another, their fingers sprinting along the strings of their guitars.

ON DEWEY - he is floored by this kid's abilities.

ON YUKI - he, too, seems to be enjoying himself.

Finally, exhausted, they both quit playing. Dewey is in awe of his new collaborator. Yuki is contemplative.

YUKI

If I'm in a band, do you think people will like me?

DEWEY

What do you mean?

YUKI

Nobody ever wants to eat lunch with me.

DEWEY

Dude - those days are over. You could be the ugliest sad sack on the planet, but if you're in a rockin' band, you're the cat's pajamas. You'll be the most popular guy in school.

YUKI

(brightens, then)
Okay. I'll do it.

DEWEY

This is a big commitment now. Don't say yes if you're just going to flake out later.

(YUKI nods)

Do you promise you won't fight me for creative control and that you'll defer to me on all issues related to the musical direction of our band?

YUKI

Yes.

DEWEY

Yuki - welcome to my world.

Dewey smiles and offers his hand to Yuki - who shakes it.

DEWEY

Now you and I could win this contest with our eyes closed. We just need to practice. Is there any way your parents might warm up to me?

(YUKI shakes his head)

What's your schedule like after school?

YUKI

I have soccer then computer class, guitar lessons, math tutor...

DEWEY

When's your down time?

(off YUKI's confused look)

When do you just chill out by yourself?

YUKI

When I'm sleeping.

DEWEY

Okay. Tomorrow - at midnight - I'll come to your house. Grab your guitar, crawl out your window and we'll go jam in my van.

(off YUKI's look)

Hey, you're not giving me a lot of options here.

EXT. HORACE GREEN ELEMENTARY - DAY

School is out. TEACHERS supervise as the STUDENTS of Horace Green are picked up by their PARENTS.

Dewey tries to keep a low profile as...

Yuki is retrieved by Mrs. Takeuchi. Before Yuki hops into the back, he turns and throws a meaningful look to Dewey.

Dewey smiles. Principal Mullins appears.

MRS. MULLINS

How did it go today, Melvin?

DEWEY

Hella good, Roz.

MRS. MULLINS

I talked to Gail's doctor. She has two compound breaks in her leg - she's going to be out of commission for at least three weeks.

DEWEY

(hopeful)

Yeah?

(covering, outraged)

Dammit to hell!

MRS. MULLINS

I'm in a bind. All of our usual subs are either on maternity leave or already working. I found your resume, Melvin - it's very impressive. I've called all your references - everyone speaks just glowingly of you. Is there any way in the world you'd be willing to fill in for Gail until she comes back?

INT. DEWEY'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Kevin's mouth hangs open. He and Dewey stand in the kitchen.

KEVIN

Let me get this straight - you ran over an old lady so you could get some guitarist for your band.

DEWEY

Not some guitarist. He's like the next Eric Clapton. He's like a little... me.

Dumbstruck, Kevin gets a beer from the fridge and opens it.

DEWEY (CONT'D)

And I didn't run her over on purpose. The God of Rock wanted me to run her over.

TB

KEVIN

(worried)

-- I'm on anti-depressants myself. If you're having a psychotic episode, I can't help you...

DEWEY

There comes a time when you either give up or you take it to the next level. I'm taking it to the next level, Kev!

KEVIN

You're taking it to prison. When it comes to their kids, people don't have a sense of humor. They will lock you up.

DEWEY

They'll never know. They think I'm Schneebly. I'm just gonna do it a few days - 'til Yuki can play all my material. He's lightning quick.

KEVIN

And then what?

DEWEY

We win the Battle of the Bands. I pay you back. Yuki's parents come around. We cut an album. Tour the country. You know the deal.

Kevin doesn't know what to say. He downs his beer.

INT. DEWEY'S CLASSROOM - MORNING

The STUDENTS are seated and quiet when Dewey arrives.

DEWEY

All right, today - I'm going to be working solo with Yuki - the coolest kid in America.

Dewey gives Yuki a thumbs-up. All the kids turn and look at a bug-eyed Yuki. Then Summer raises her hand.

SUMMER

Mr. S., at the beginning of class, Mrs. Dunham has me take attendance. I'm the factotum. I was elected.

DEWEY

Okay. Yeah. Go for it.

Summer, pleased, takes out the class list and a pen.

SUMMER

Michelle.

MICHELLE

Here.

SUMMER

Gordon.

GORDON

Here.

SUMMER

Summer. Here.

DEWEY

(impatient)

All right. We're all here. Now like I said I'm going to be teaching Yuki some intense stuff so give us some space.

SUMMER

What are we supposed to do?

DEWEY

Whatever you want. What do you like to do?

SUMMER

(pointedly)

I like to learn from my teacher.

DEWEY

Besides that.

(to FREDDY)

You - what do you like to do?

FREDDY

I dunno. Burn stuff.

DEWEY

I know. We'll play a game. You like games, right?

The kids stare at him, suspicious.

TB

LATER

The kids play musical chairs. They walk in a slow, deliberate circle around a long line of chairs as Dewey plays one of his songs on the guitar for Yuki.

Summer does not join in the fun - she studies a textbook at her desk.

When Dewey stops playing, the kids all scramble for chairs. One girl, LORI, is too slow. She is eliminated.

DEWEY

(to YUKI)

Okay, try that.

Yuki commences playing. As he does, the game begins again.

Dewey joins in on his guitar. Yuki and Dewey play nicely together. Dewey stops playing - he smiles with excitement.

The kids all dive for an empty chair. Freddy is eliminated.

DEWEY (CONT'D)

I like your instincts, Yuki. Try it once more and come in hard at the end, okay? Really shred it.

Yuki nods. They begin to play.

INT. TEACHERS LOUNGE - DAY

Mrs. Mullins and Dewey sit at a table with a group of TEACHERS, eating their lunches.

MRS. MULLINS

Everyone - this is Melvin Schneebly - he's covering for Gail. Did I say it right? Schneebly.

DEWEY

Actually, it's Schnay-blay.

MRS. MULLINS

This is Jane Lemmons - she also teaches fourth. Gabe Green teaches music. And Sarah Collins teaches second.

(grinning strangely)

Melvin, I spoke to Gail last night. She told me all about you.

TB

DEWEY

Oh, did she now? Do tell.

MRS. MULLINS

(to the others)

Melvin was once named Teacher of the Year by the American Scholastic Society.

DEWEY

Really?! I mean, really did she tell you that? That Gail.

MRS. MULLINS

Don't be so modest. Melvin was also nominated to the Presidential Council for Elementary Education.

The teachers are all impressed.

DEWEY

Hey, I'm just like you guys. Just another teacher forcing little kids to do things my way.

MRS. MULLINS

You know, it's always been my dream to serve on that council.

DEWEY

I'll see what I can do, Roz. Maybe I can pull some strings.

Dewey gives her a big wink. Mullins is delighted.

MRS. MULLINS

Melvin, I don't know what to say.

INT. CAFETERIA - CONTINUOUS

Yuki is eating his lunch all alone - when Summer approaches, flanked by two other kids, LINDSAY and JIMMY.

SUMMER

What's the deal with you and Mr. S?

YUKI

(intimidated)

Nothing.

LINDSAY

Is he putting you on the honor roll?

TB

JIMMY

Are you the new factotum?

SUMMER

Spit it out, Yuki.

INT. TEACHERS LOUNGE - MOMENTS LATER

The teachers are engaged in a heated debate.

MRS. MULLINS

You need testing. How else can you tell if the children are achieving?

MRS. COLLINS

But if everyone teaches to the test - maybe the kids score well - but that's not education.

MR. GREEN

Melvin - what do you think?

All eyes turn to Dewey. He's caught in the headlights.

MR. GREEN (CONT'D)

Testing or no testing?

DEWEY

No testing and I'll tell you why, Joe.

MR. GREEN

Gabe.

DEWEY

Gabe, I believe the children are our future. Teach them well but let them lead the way. Let the children's laughter remind us how we used to be.

MR. GREEN

I'm afraid I don't understand.

MRS. COLLINS

Isn't that a song?

DEWEY

Is it?

MRS. LEMMONS

Speaking of songs, I heard music coming from your classroom this morning.

DEWEY

Yes, it's a teaching tool I've picked up over the years. I find that when you teach to music, the children retain the information much better. Like, uh...

(sings strangely)

I before e except after c and when sounding like -ay as in neighbor and weigh.

Dewey grins, blithely. The other teachers are confused.

INT. DEWEY'S CLASSROOM - LATER

Dewey gingerly stands in front of his class.

DEWEY

So how about another round of musical chairs?!

No one responds. Summer insistently raises her hand.

SUMMER

Mr. S., after lunch, we split into our reading groups. Track B is reading *Charlotte's Web* and Track A is reading *Dante's Inferno*.

DEWEY

Well, just forget about all that.

Incensed, Summer walks to a poster on the wall with all the kids names on it. Next to Summer's name is a long line of tiny gold stars.

SUMMER

But Mr. S., this poster clearly indicates that we're all learning at different levels and...

DEWEY

What is this?

SUMMER

-- The school's tracking system. We get tested and the students - like me - who score well are in Track A and the students who don't - like Freddy - are in Track B.

Dewey stares at the poster, becoming outraged.

DEWEY

What kind of sick school is this?!

Dewey yanks the poster down off the wall and in a violent frenzy rips it into pieces.

DEWEY (cont'd)

As long as I'm here, there will be no tracks - or grades! We're gonna have recess all the freakin' time!

-- The kids are stunned, except for Summer, who stares at him with disapproval.

SUMMER

My mother's a room parent - she's not going to be happy when she hears about this.

DEWEY

Don't tell her. It'll be our little secret.

SUMMER

She doesn't pay fifteen thousand dollars a year for recess. How's recess going to give me the skills to climb to the top of corporate America?

DEWEY

You're nine years old. Who gives a fig? What about the rest of you? Three weeks with no tests, no scores - we'll stick it to the man!

The kids look at him, doubtfully.

DEWEY (cont'd)

(under his breath)

These kids are mental.

Dewey considers his options. After an extended moment of deliberation, he changes tactics. He smiles, gingerly.

DEWEY (cont'd)

Of course I believe in grades -- and tracks. I was testing you -- you -- passed. Good work, Summer. Fifty gold stars for you.

Summer's quizzical expression transforms into hope.

DEWEY (CONT'D)

Normal kids might have been stoked to slack off, but not you guys -- 'cause you're not normal.

Dewey grimaces but the kids seem pleased.

DEWEY (cont'd)

And because you all seem to have the right attitude, I think we're ready to begin our new class project.

SUMMER

Is it a science project?

DEWEY

No. And it may sound like a piece of cake, but trust me -- nothing's harder. It's called -- Rock Band.

They kids look at him, confused. Yuki shrinks in his seat.

DEWEY (cont'd)

And every school in the state will be competing for the top prize.

SUMMER

What's the top prize?

DEWEY

A win will go on your permanent record. Hello, Harvard.

The kids perk up. Dewey talks to them conspiratorially.

DEWEY (cont'd)

Thing is -- we're not supposed to get started until next quarter, but I think we should get a leg up on our competitors, don't you, Summer?

SUMMER

I do.

TB

DEWEY

What about the rest of you? Wanna
- - go for the gold?

The other kids nod in assent.

DEWEY (CONT'D)

Okay, but if anyone finds out what
we're doing in here, we'll be
disqualified - so let's keep it on
the d.l., shall we?

The kids get the picture, their competitive juices flowing.
Dewey is pleased with his ruse.

INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Mr. Green is alone at his desk, correcting work sheets. The
room is full of EXPENSIVE INSTRUMENTS. Dewey enters.

MR. GREEN

Shneebly, what can I do for you?

DEWEY

Can I borrow that bass guitar and
the drum set there and that
keyboard?

MR. GREEN

What for?

DEWEY

Teaching tools, Gene.

MR. GREEN

Gabe. Well, I don't see why not.

Dewey turns and gives a signal to a few of the kids from his
class. The kids swarm the room, grabbing up instruments and
toting them off. Mr. Green watches, bewildered.

INT. DEWEY'S CLASSROOM - AUDITION MONTAGE

Dewey holds auditions - each kid getting a turn at one of the
instruments.

- Summer plays "Chopsticks" on the keyboard.
- Another girl, HOLLY, plays "Heart and Soul".
- Freddy pounds on the keyboard, making a discordant racket.

TB

- The painfully timid Leri finishes an inspired rendition of the "Maple Leaf Rag." Dewey, observing with the rest of the class, is impressed.

DEWEY

What else you can play?

LORI

(bashful; softly)

Schubert.

DEWEY

Who? What about Moby?

- Anuj can't figure out how to even hold the bass guitar.
- Summer struggles to play a chord on the bass guitar.
- Freddy thrashing away on the guitar, makes no music but breaks a few strings.
- DIEGO manages to play a few chords. As he plays them, he names the chords.

DIEGO

C. G. E minor. D.

- Summer sits before the drum set. Holding the sticks, she whacks away at the drums helter-skelter.
- Jimmy gives a cymbal an ear-splitting smack.
- A nervous girl, MICHELLE, winces as she softly taps a drum.
- Hyper Freddy unleashes his energy on the drum set. This is the instrument for him. As he blasts out a solo, we CUT TO:

ANOTHER CLASSROOM

Mrs. Lemmons is lecturing the other fourth grade class. We can HEAR Freddy's drumming through the walls.

MRS. LEMMONS

Your assignment is to read the
Iliad by Homer...

The force of Freddy's drumming knocks a poster off the wall.

INT. DEWEY'S CLASSROOM - MONTAGE CONTINUES

Tomika sings while MARTA and ALISON dance the "Running Man".

TB

TOMIKA

I'm a survivor/ I'm gonna make
it./ I'm a survivor/ Keep on
survivin'.

- MARK raps with LEONARD as his human beat box.

MARK

I'm Slim Shady/ Yes, I'm the real
shady/ All you other slim shadies/
Are just imitating./ So won't the
real Slim Shady please stand up...

- DEREK sings Nirvana.

DEREK

Here we are now/ Entertain us/ I
feel stupid/ And contagious/ An
albino/ A mosquito...

- Summer belts a Britney Spears song painfully off-key.

SUMMER

I'm not a girl/ Not yet a woman/
All I need is time/ A moment that
is mine...

Dewey grimaces, along with the other kids.

INT. CAPTAIN JACK'S FISH FRY - NIGHT

Kevin closes up as Dewey eats at the counter of this cheesy
chain restaurant. Kevin's churlish boss, JOSE, barks at him.

JOSE

You didn't close out your register!

KEVIN

I was gonna clean up here first.

JOSE

First the register, then you clean.

Jose storms off. Kevin heads for the register.

DEWEY

These kids have talent. You should
hear this girl on the keyboard.
She's Alicia Keyes, man.

Dewey imitates her, wriggling his fingers.

KEVIN

I don't know anything about this, okay? I am not serving time as an accomplice to your insanity.

DEWEY

Look, I'm not gonna take 'em on the road. I just need to play one show to win that money.

KEVIN

But Dewey, you could get in so much trouble.

DEWEY

Why? What's my crime?

KEVIN

For one, you're perpetrating a fraud. And, for two, you're denying these kids an education.

DEWEY

I'm the best thing that ever happened to those kids. They don't even know what recess is, Kevin! That place is Alcatraz. I know - I went there and I'm scarred for life.

Dewey pounds the counter with his silverware for emphasis. Kevin, Jose and the other employees freeze in place.

KEVIN

Dewey - put the knife down, okay?

EXT. HORACE GREEN ELEMENTARY - MORNING

A chipper Dewey, in his professorial garb, walks through the lot toward school, when he is intercepted by a well-dressed socialite - she is LORI'S MOTHER. Lori stands at her side, looking grim.

LORI'S MOTHER

Mr. Schneebly. Beth Albright.
Lori's mother. Pleasure.

DEWEY

(shaking her hand)
Oh, no, pleasure's mine.

LORI'S MOTHER

I wanted to speak with you about Lori's issue. As you can see, she's F-A-T. And I just hope you can keep an eye on her, make sure she's not snacking during the day. Obese people are terribly stigmatized, don't you find?

DEWEY

Well, I don't know.

LORI'S MOTHER

But you're a man and just a teacher. It doesn't matter. But Lori - she's a girl with big dreams and she really should only be eating fruit.

Just as Lori's Mother departs, another parent grabs Dewey. He is FREDDY'S FATHER, clutching Freddy's shoulder.

FREDDY'S FATHER

Otis Scanlon.

DEWEY

Melvin Schneebly.

FREDDY'S FATHER

I'd like to apologize for Freddy in advance. I know he can be a real pain in the basement. The only reason he got in here is because I've been known to write a big check.

Freddy's Father laughs, nudging Dewey's shoulder.

FREDDY'S FATHER (cont'd)

But I don't want him getting the heave-ho - so if he gets out of line - I want you to call me and I'll come down and scare the pistachios out of him. You're a stronger man than I, Schneebly.

SUMMER'S MOTHER - a perky careerist - elbows her way in.

SUMMER'S MOTHER

Mr. Schneebly, I'm Candace - Summer's mother. Summer speaks so highly of you. And I know I'm not supposed to know about this...

(MORE)

TB

SUMMER'S MOTHER (cont'd)

(in a whisper)

...school project. But I forced it out of Summer so let me put in my two cents. They did a role-playing contest in third grade - Explorers - and Summer was Vasco de Gamo and she ran the entire thing and they won the blue ribbon so I just think you should keep that in mind...

ON DEWEY - he is overwhelmed by these pushy parents.

INT. NED'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Ned sits in his car with a traumatized Toby.

NED

Come on, Toby. You don't want to be late.

TOBY

I don't like thcool.

NED

Toby - you go to the best school in Massachusetts.

TOBY

Thill ith no fun.

NED

Well, school's not just about fun. It's about education and getting ahead. One day, you'll understand. Come on, sport. Give me a hug.

Toby hugs Ned and then opens the door and hops out. Ned watches his son run to school - his jaw drops when he sees...

Dewey, at the entrance, surrounded by parents. Ned rolls down his window.

NED (CONT'D)

Dewey!

Dewey spins around. He's been spotted. Dewey gulps air, approaching Ned's car.

NED (CONT'D)

What are you doing here?

DEWEY

Uh, I came by to see you. Hey.

TB
Ned is skeptical. Suddenly, little Diego approaches the car.

DIEGO

Morning, Mr. S.

(louder)

Mr. S. It's me. Diego.

Dewey turns on the kid, barking.

DEWEY

I don't know you, kid.

(mouthing, silently)

Go away.

Diego, startled, backs off. Dewey smiles at Ned.

DEWEY (CONT'D)

What a weird-o.

NED

I've never seen you up before noon.
And what's with the clothes?

DEWEY

It's the new style. Everybody's
wearing... tweed.

NED

You know, you ruined Toby's
birthday. You made a real ass of
yourself.

DEWEY

Yeah. That's why I'm here. I
wanted to say, sorry.

NED

I know why you're here. You want
money. Forget it. Why should I
come through for you - when you've
never come through for me?

DEWEY

Look, I don't need your money,
okay? I got a job. I'm on my way
there right now.

NED

(surprised; softens)

Really? What is it?

TB

DEWEY

I'm uh, working with this group -
that deals with fractions and
-- cursive and the oceans of the
world. It's complicated.

NED

Wow, Dewey. That's great news.
Good for you.

DEWEY

(abruptly)

Yeah. Well, I don't want to be
late for work. See ya, Bro.

As Dewey darts away, Ned contemplates their exchange.

INT. DEWEY'S CLASSROOM - MORNING

The class anxiously awaits Dewey's decisions. Dewey takes
out a piece of paper from his pocket and reads...

DEWEY

As we know, Yuki is on lead guitar.

The kids look at Yuki, who is unused to all the attention.

DEWEY (CONT'D)

On bass - Diego. Keyboards - Lori.
And on drums - Freddy.

Freddy throws his arms above his head, victorious. The other
kids emit moans of disappointment.

DEWEY (CONT'D)

Hey, just because you're not in the
band doesn't mean you're not in the
band. Tomika, Alison, Marta - you
sing back-up. Mark and Leonard -
you're DJs, in charge of all
sampling and spinning.

As Dewey rattles off their assignments, we SEE the kids
enthused reactions.

DEWEY (CONT'D)

Jimmy, Derek and Holly - you're on
security detail. Your job is to
make sure no one outside of this
room knows what we're doing in
here. The future of the band
depends on you.

ON JIMMY, DEREK and HOLLY - this captures their imagination.

DEWEY (CONT'D)

Gordon, Anuj, Matthew. You are roadies. We're going to have a lot of equipment - amps, electric guitars, maybe even lasers and smoke machines. Your job is to master the transporting and operation of this technology. Without a first-rate rate roadie crew, we will never have a psychedelic show.

Gordon, Anuj and Matthew exchange high-fives.

DEWEY (CONT'D)

Eleni, Lindsay, Carey, Michelle. You are groupies. You're in charge of keeping up the band's spirits. You will tell the band members how talented they are and how bitchin' their music sounds. You will design t-shirts, hats and posters. Your first duty - naming the band.

On the girls - they are pleased. Summer raises her hand.

SUMMER

What about me?

DEWEY

Oh. You're the band manager, Summer. Now let's get rocking!

The kids, pumped up, literally jump from their seats and disperse around the room - moving desks and taking out instruments. Summer is the only one left out - she looks peeved. Dewey approaches her desk.

SUMMER

I don't want to be the band manager.

DEWEY

I didn't want to say this in front of the other kids because I didn't want to make them jealous. But the band manager is the most important position of all.

SUMMER

It is?

DEWEY

Yeah. I'm going to be busy rocking out, so it's up to you to make sure everyone's doing their job. Summer - you're in charge of everything.

He just said the right thing.. Summer's eyes light up.

INT. CLASSROOM - ROCK LESSON MONTAGE

- A photo of ELVIS PRESLEY is projected onto the wall.

As Dewey lectures, using a slide projector, the kids all listen attentively.

Elvis is followed by a photo of THE BEATLES.

- Dewey wanders the aisles, passing out a ROCK CD to each student. They inspect the CD covers, carefully.

- Scrawled across the chalkboard are dozens of names - "THE BEACH BOYS", "MOTOWN", "JIMI HENDRIX", "THE GRATEFUL DEAD". Dewey adds "DAVID BOWIE" to the list.

The students all take copious notes.

- A TELEVISION has been wheeled into the room. A MUSIC VIDEO plays - Mick Jagger and the Stones are performing. Dewey points out one of Jagger's signature moves and mimics it.

The kids observe Dewey's antics with utter seriousness - as if this lesson was not at all out of the ordinary.

INT. CLASSROOM - LATER

Dewey works with Yuki, Lori, Freddy and Diego.

DEWEY

Diego - the chords are B minor. D.
E. A.

Diego plays the chords in succession.

DEWEY

And what I need from you, Freddy,
is just a steady...
(indicating on drums)
...bum-buh-buh-bum bum-buh-buh-bum.

Freddy nods then POUNDS away on the drums.

DEWEY (CONT'D)

Yeah. We're not playing stadiums
-- just yet. Take it down a peg.

FREDDY

Maybe I should take a Ritalin.

We PAN AROUND the room - the students are bickering with each other. The roadies...

GORDON

I'm in charge and I say - smoke
bombs.

ANUJ

Who made you in charge?

Nearby, Tomika attempts to harmonize with Alison and Marta.
Nearby, the groupies are discussing band names.

LINDSAY

What about the Pumpkins?

MICHELLE

Too much like Smashing Pumpkins.

The security crew...

JIMMY

Let's tell him we want to bring in
walkie-talkies.

DEREK

I'll tell him. It was my idea.

JIMMY

No, it wasn't. It was my idea.

Summer talks to Mark and Leonard.

SUMMER

I wonder if we're going to be
graded on a curve.

ON DEWEY AND BAND - LATER

Dewey is jamming with his new band. They sound wretched.

DEWEY

Okay, stop. Stop.

The others can't hear him over the din they are making.

DEWEY (CONT'D)

Cut it!!! You're not listening to each other. Now start at the top. Freddy, you sit out. Just listen.

Freddy, frustrated, throws his sticks down.

DEWEY (CONT'D)

(picking up sticks)

That's immature, pal. Would Keith Moon do that? Maybe he'd drink a bottle of Jager, puke on himself and pass-out naked on the floor. But he'd never throw his sticks.

SUMMER

(interrupting)

Mr. S., it's two-thirty. School's over.

Dewey, annoyed, tosses Freddy's sticks across the room.

DEWEY

Okay, now everyone take home your CD and really listen to it. I want you to immerse yourself in rock n' roll. And remember - we gotta keep it all on the hush-hush.

As the students gather their things and head for the door, Dewey sighs, exhausted. Then, to one of the passing kids...

DEWEY

Man, teaching is tough.

INT. NED'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ned, Patty, Mr. Finn, Mrs. Finn and Toby are eating dinner together.

NED

I ran into Dewey today. He says he's got a new job.

MR. FINN

I shudder to think. If he's making any money at it, I'm sure it's illegal.

NED

Maybe he's finally getting it together, Dad.

(off MR. FINN'S look)

(MORE)

TB

NED (cont'd)

Shouldn't we at least give him the benefit of the doubt?

MR. FINN

Why? The only thing Dewey's ever excelled at is humiliating our family.

TOBY

He'th a teacher at my thcool.

Everybody stops and stares at Toby.

PATTY

What, Toby?

TOBY

I thee him at thcool all the time.

NED

Toby, you're confused. Your uncle doesn't teach at your school.

TOBY

Yeth he doth. May I be excuthed?

PATTY

Yes, you may.

Toby gets up from the table and exits the room.

MR. FINN

First the lisp, then the stutter, now he's imagining things. You've got to take that kid to a shrink.

NED

(defensive)

Dad, you're overreacting. Toby's perfectly normal.

Mr. Finn rolls his eyes.

MR. FINN

Can you imagine - Dewey a teacher? It'd be the end of the world as we know it.

We HEAR REM'S "END OF THE WORLD" as we SMASH CUT TO:

INT. LORI'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Lori's PARENTS and her TWO SKINNY OLDER SISTERS sit down to dinner. On Lori's plate is an array of fruits.

LORI'S MOTHER

So Lori - what did you learn in school today?

LORI

I learned one time Ozzy Osbourne bit the head off a bat, but it was totally blown out of proportion.

Lori sticks a pineapple wedge in her mouth. Her family eyes her, suspiciously.

INT. YUKI'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Yuki's home is modest compared to the others. Yuki, holding his guitar, watches as his father sorts through a stack of MUSIC SONG BOOKS. Mr. Takeuchi is thrown when he finds a METALLICA SONG BOOK among the classical selections.

MR. TAKEUCHI

Where did this come from? Yuki?

Yuki shrugs. Mr. Takeuchi is perplexed.

INT. SUMMER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Summer sits next to a large stack of new books - all about the music industry. She grabs one particularly thick hardback - entitled - "HOW TO SUCCEED IN THE MUSIC BIZ".

She opens the book and begins to read.

INT. FREDDY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

FREDDY'S PARENTS are sipping cocktails, watching TV when they HEAR ROCK MUSIC BLASTING from somewhere in the house.

Freddy's Father stands and we FOLLOW him down the hall. He stops in front of Freddy's closed bedroom door.

FREDDY'S FATHER

Freddy!

He flings open the door. Freddy is rocking out, jumping on his bed, singing at the top of his lungs.

FREDDY'S FATHER (CONT'D)

(disturbed)

Freddy! You should be doing your homework!

FREDDY

I am!

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Dewey is practicing with Yuki, Freddy, Lori and Diego. But the other kids are making noisy mayhem.

DEWEY

Diego, you're playing the wrong chord. Put your index finger on the second fret - no, the second...

A series of kids interrupt Dewey's practice.

TOMIKA

Mr. S, can I be head back-up singer? I have the best voice.

JIMMY

Look. I brought in walkie-talkies.

DEREK

It was my idea, Mr. S.

ANUJ

(holding up firecrackers)
Mr. S, how 'bout between sets we light off some M-80s?

DEWEY

No, Anuj. Put those down.

GORDON

I told him, Mr. S.

ANUJ

You're not in charge. Is he in charge?

ELENI

I thought of a name for the band. The Bumble Bees?

LINDSAY

Mine's better. Koala Starfish.

CAREY

How about Pig Rectum?

DEWEY

HEY!

Dewey is unhinged with frustration. The kids are silent.

DEWEY

You guys, this is a Rock Band!
-- That means we're all in the same boat. We all get the same grade. Look at the Eagles - they were the biggest band of the 70s, but they started vying for power and it tore 'em apart. So you all need to get along and work together! Summer, come here.

Dewey pulls Summer into a broom closet.

SUMMER

Mr. S, is that true we all get the same grade? Since I have the most responsibility, I just think...

DEWEY

Summer, if you grade grub one more time, I will send you back to the third grade, got it?

This gets Summer's attention. She nods.

DEWEY (CONT'D)

Now I want us to perform in three weeks. But that's never gonna happen unless the band learns the music. I can't teach, practice and make all these decisions.

SUMMER

Okay. I get it.

DEWEY

I need you to run interference for me. You're our manager. Your job is to protect us.

SUMMER

Okay. I will. Just focus on the music. Don't stress. It's gonna be fine. I'll take care of it.

Summer steps out of the closet, bellowing at the class.

SUMMER (CONT'D)

All right, everyone - over here!
Now!

TB
INT. CLASSROOM - LATER

Dewey and the band are taking a break. Exhausted and sweaty, Dewey sits at his desk, eating his lunch. The other students are scattered around the room, working together nicely.

The groupies approach Dewey's desk. Summer blocks them.

SUMMER

You guys, he's busy. Leave him alone.

DEWEY

It's okay, Summer. What's up?

Summer lets the girls through.

ELENI

We agreed on a name. For the band.

DEWEY

Hit me.

MICHELLE

The School of Rock.

The girls look at him, hopefully.

DEWEY

(slowly; savoring it)
The School of Rock?

Dewey's eyes illuminate. He likes this name.

DEWEY

The School of Rock!

The kids all stop what they're doing and look over at him. Dewey feverishly writes "The School of Rock" on the blackboard. He underlines the words with a flourish.

DEWEY (CONT'D)

And we will teach rock n' roll to
the world!!!

On the groupies - they smile, pleased by his response.

INT. "SCHOOL OF ROCK" MONTAGE

- Dewey and the band practice. Dewey shows Lori how to play a certain song. Lori nods, comprehending.

TB

- The groupies paint a banner that reads "THE SCHOOL OF ROCK", enjoying themselves immensely. Nearby Summer happily bosses the other kids around.

- Dewey snatches the drum sticks away from a frustrated Freddy. Dewey takes Freddy's arms in his and they play the drums together.

- Lunch time. Yuki no longer eats alone. He is surrounded by fawning groupies. He's loving all the attention.

- In the classroom, Dewey helps the roadies learn their craft. Anuj plugs an electric guitar into an amplifier. Gordon re-assembles Freddy's drum kit.

- Mark and Leonard have brought in two turntables. As Mark spins, Leonard busts some fresh moves. Nearby, Dewey works with Tomika, Marta and Alison on harmonizing. As he points to them one at a time, the girls open their mouths and sing.

- Dewey and the band are making progress. Dewey likes what he HEARS. When the song ends, he gives a high-five to each of his band mates.

EXT. BREEZEWAY - DAY

Derek is at his look-out post, hiding behind a small hedge, when he sees... Principal Mullins walking purposefully toward the classroom.

Derek takes out his walkie and speaks into it.

DEREK

Red alert. It's Mullins. I repeat, red alert.

INT. CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jimmy is by the door, holding his walkie. He turns...

The class is chaos: the band is practicing; instruments and equipment are everywhere; the desks have been pushed into a corner; the groupies are painting another banner.

JIMMY

RED ALERT!

The kids immediately stop what they're doing.

In an instant, the GROUPIES roll up their banner.

The ROADIES scoop up instruments and race to the closet.

Kids grabs desks and drag them across the floor.

Dewey picks up the smoke machine and hands it to Anuj.

EXT. BREEZEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Principal Mullins has reached the classroom. Derek, in a panic, intercepts her.

DEREK
Principal Mullins. Hi?

MRS. MULLINS
Derek, what are you doing out here?

DEREK
I went to the bathroom. Just number one.

Mrs. Mullins grabs the door handle. Derek SHRIEKS.

DEREK (CONT'D)
Principal Mullins!

Mrs. Mullins spins around, startled.

DEREK (CONT'D)
I lied. I went number two.

MRS. MULLINS
Well, whatever, Derek.

Mrs. Mullins flings open the door to find...

A pristine classroom. All evidence of a rock band has been stashed away. The students are at their desks. Dewey stands at the front, by the board, a piece of chalk in his hand.

DEWEY
And in 1492, Columbus sailed the ocean... blue.
(spotting her; all smiles)
Ch, Mrs. Mullins, come in.

MRS. MULLINS
Sorry to interrupt. Mrs. Lemmons said there was loud music coming from your room.

DEWEY
Loud music? I haven't heard any music. Mrs. Lemmons must be on crack. Right, Kids?

The kids all nod their heads in agreement.

Mullins points to an overlooked guitar, against the wall.

MRS. MULLINS

Well, what's that?

DEWEY

Oh, that - well, we were singing - and learning. We were learning in sing-song. Weren't we?

The kids all nod, smiling inanely.

MRS. MULLINS

Oh, one of your methods?

DEWEY

Yes. I find it's helpful when you're teaching subjects that are really... BORING.

Mrs. Mullins finds this all a bit strange.

MRS. MULLINS

You don't mind if I sit in on your class this afternoon, do you?

DEWEY

No, no. By all means. Come on back this afternoon.

MRS. MULLINS

It is after noon. I meant, now.
(taking a seat)

Please. Continue with your method.

Dewey stalls for a moment then picks up the guitar. He plays like a folk singing mathematician.

DEWEY

(singing)

Math is a wonderful thing. Yeah,
math is a really cool thing. So
get off your ath and let's do some
math. Math, math, math, math, math.

(turns to Summer)

Forty-two divided by six is...

SUMMER

Seven.

DEWEY

(to MARK)

-- And eighty-eight divided by eleven is...

MARK

Eight.

DEWEY

And seventy-four is sixty-five more than what is that number, Marta?

MARTA

Nine.

DEWEY

No, eight.

MARTA

No, it's nine.

DEWEY

Oh, yes, you're right. It's nine.

EXT. HORACE GREEN ELEMENTARY - LATER

As children are being retrieved by their parents, Mrs. Mullins chats with Dewey by the school's entrance. To Dewey's shock, Mullins is impressed by his "method".

MRS. MULLINS

I must say, your kids were very engaged. I've never seen music used that way before.

DEWEY

It's radical - but hey, this school's radical, right?

MRS. MULLINS

Melvin, I have to be honest. A few of the parents have called to inquire about you. There's a lot of questions about your methods. I told them you're an innovator and you were named Teacher of the Year.

DEWEY

You scratch my back, babe - I'll scratch yours.

MRS. MULLINS

But I think it might be helpful if we arranged a dinner with some of the more influential parents. They could get some face-time with you - you could explain your methodology - I think it would put them at ease. When are you available?

DEWEY

Uh, I'll have to check my schedule and get back to you.

MRS. MULLINS

How about Thursday night?
(as he stammers)
Great. I'll set it up.

Mullins walks off. Dewey is left alone, full of dread. Suddenly, a little hand reaches up and tugs Dewey's shirt.

Dewey looks down - Toby smiles up at him.

TOBY

Hi, Uncle Dewey.

DEWEY

(in a panic)
Hey there, Toby.

TOBY

You're a teacher here, huhh?

DEWEY

Me? Uh, yeah. I am. But look - you can't say anything to your parents - 'cause I'm working here undercover - for the F.B.I. - like James Bond - to bust a child slavery ring...

TOBY

I already told them.

DEWEY

You did?!

TOBY

They didn't believe me.

DEWEY

(relieved)
Good. That's good.

TOBY

There' th my mommy.

Toby p̄oints. Dewey spins and sees... Patty, in her Volvo wagon, scanning the crowd for Toby.

Dewey dives behind a hedge. He whispers to Toby.

DEWEY

Don't blow my cover. James Bond!

Toby nods, then skips out to his mother's car.

As Dewey flees, crouching low behind the hedge, he runs smack into... MRS. LEMMONS'S REAR END - his head goosing her rump.

Mrs. Lemmons GASPS, then glares down at Dewey, who is spread eagle on the ground and smiling up at her, punch-drunk.

DEWEY

These kids just wear you out, don't they?

INT. DEWEY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Kevin, wearing his Captain Jack uniform, is alone in his bedroom, exhausted from work. He opens his closet door and gazes longingly at... his old rocker clothes - poly-vinyl tee-shirts, crotch-less leather pants, black Gothic wigs.

He puts on one of the wigs and stands in front of the mirror. He makes a few rock star poses, preening before his own reflection. He smiles with nostalgia.

Suddenly, Dewey comes bounding into the room. Startled, Kevin quickly yanks the wig off.

KEVIN

Jeez. Can't you knock?

DEWEY

These kids are getting good. I'm a good teacher, Kev.

KEVIN

Oh, no.

DEWEY

I've got a gift - I can reach children. Not everyone can do that, man.

TB

KEVIN

Hello - you're not teaching them.
You're exploiting them for your own
selfish purposes.

DEWEY

I am teaching them, dude. I wish
someone had given me a crash course
in rock when I was nine years old.
I'd be as big as Ozzy right now.

KEVIN

You're bigger than Ozzy. Fifty
pounds bigger.

DEWEY

These kids were brain-washed - but
I'm de-programming 'em. I'm
liberating 'em. It's a beautiful
thing.

KEVIN

Keep digging your own grave, Dewey.

DEWEY

When we win the Battle of the
Bands, you'll be eating your words.

KEVIN

How are you gonna win the Battle of
the Bands? It's in two weeks -
you're not even on the bill.

The wind is taken out of Dewey's sails.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Dewey hefts a LARGE SPEAKER onto his desk, then addresses his
students.

DEWEY

Today is going to be our first real
test - booking a gig. Yuki, Lori,
Freddy, Diego - we're going on a
field trip - but I'm going to need
everybody's help so let's go.

The kids spring to their feet.

TB

EXT. HORACE GREEN ELEMENTARY - DAY

Jimmy is situated outside the administration building. He hides behind a hedge waiting for TWO TEACHERS to enter the building. Once they are out of sight, he grabs his walkie.

JIMMY

Clear.

EXT. PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Derek stands at the edge of the lot, kneeling behind a parked car. Derek gives a signal, his arms gesticulating wildly.

DEREK

Go, go, go!

Suddenly, Dewey darts out from behind a wall, followed by Yuki, Lori, Diego, Freddy and Summer.

Crouching low to avoid detection, Dewey and the kids race across the lot toward his van.

INT. JALOPY - MOMENTS LATER

Dewey and the band pile into his van, cluttered with various instruments. Dewey notices Summer in the passenger seat.

DEWEY

Summer. What are you doing?

SUMMER

We're booking our first show and I should be there. Just go.

Dewey starts his engine. The car PEELS out with a SCREECH.

INT. WROK RADIO STATION - LOBBY - DAY

A receptionist, BECKY, looks up from her desk to see...

Dewey and the band lugging their instruments into the lobby.

BECKY

Excuse me - what are you doing?

DEWEY

We're here for the Battle of the Bands.

BECKY

It's not for another two weeks.

TB

DEWEY

But we need to get on the bill...

BECKY

It's filled. Auditions were last month.

DEWEY

I talked to Jeff. He told me to bring my band down here so we could play for him.

Becky calls Jeff's extension.

BECKY

Jeff, there's a band here to see you. What's your name?

DEWEY

Dewey - the School of Rock.

BECKY

Dewey - the School of Rock.
(hangs up)
He'll be out in a minute.

Dewey nods, pleased. Lori, pale and nervous, approaches him.

LORI

Mr. S, I don't think I can play.

DEWEY

What are you talking about?

Lori looks like she might burst into tears. Dewey turns to Summer and the others.

DEWEY

Set up the instruments.

As the others set up, Dewey pulls Lori into a hallway.

DEWEY

What do you mean, you can't play?

LORI

(clutching her stomach)
I'm don't feel good. I feel sick.

DEWEY

You nervous?
(she nods)
Why? What are you afraid of?

TB

LORI

They're gonna laugh at me.

DEWEY

What? Why would they laugh at you?

LORI

(barely audible)

I don't know. 'Cause I'm fat.

Dewey is stricken with sympathy for this insecure girl.

DEWEY

Lori - hey - you've got something everybody wants - talent - and it's way more important than looks. You heard of Aretha Franklin, right?

(LORI nods)

She's no beauty, but when she starts singing, she blows people's minds. They all want to party with Aretha. You heard of Mama Cass?

(LORI shakes her head)

She weighed three hundred pounds. But when she was on stage, doing her thing, people worshipped her. She was sexy, man.

LORI

What happened to her?

DEWEY

She choked on a ham sandwich. But the important thing is - you don't have to look some certain way. You're a rock star now. You've just gotta rock your heart out and they'll dig you. I swear. So let's go back in there and show 'em what we got. What do you say?

Lori musters a smile, feeling emboldened.

EXT. SCHOOL BREEZEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Principal Mullins is walking past Dewey's classroom. Curious, she lingers by the doorway, eavesdropping. We HEAR:

DEWEY'S VOICE

Columbus had three boats - the Nina, the Pinta and the Santa Maria. Pay attention, people...

TB

INT. DEWEY'S CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

The LARGE SPEAKER sits on Dewey's desk, piping out his voice. His STUDENTS gather around it, anxious but hopeful.

DEWEY'S VOICE

You will be tested on this. And
I'm not afraid to flunk every last
one of you.

Derek, spying through the window, rises.

DEREK

She's going.

The kids let out a collective sigh of relief.

EXT. BREEZEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Principal Mullins, satisfied, walks away, up the breezeway.

INT. WROK LOBBY - LATER

THE SCHOOL OF ROCK have set-up in the lobby. PASSERS-BY gawk at the sight of these kids, dwarfed by their instruments.

Jeff, the station manager enters and immediately Dewey motions to the kids...

DEWEY

And a one and two and a one, two,
three... hit it.

The band begins to play, but Jeff, alarmed, interrupts.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Hey! What is this? What are you
doing?

They stop playing.

DEWEY

You told me when I got my band
together, we could come down and
audition.

JEFF

Who are they?

DEWEY

My band. The School of Rock.

TB

JEFF

Is this some kind of prank?

DEWEY

No. Just let us play one song.
You'll see.

JEFF

Look, this isn't a talent show for
midgets. This is the Battle of the
Bands. Sorry. No way.

DEWEY

Come on. I know they're kids but
they're awesome. Just listen.

JEFF

I can't help you, okay? Please
take your stuff and go.

DEWEY

But these kids have been working
their little fingers to the bone
just to play one song for you.

JEFF

(to BECKY)

Call security. Get 'em out of
here.

Jeff exits, abruptly. Dewey and the kids are in shock.

EXT. STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Outside WROK. Dewey, Freddy, Yuki, Lori, Diego and Summer
are glumly loading the instruments back into Dewey's car.
Summer pulls Dewey aside.

SUMMER

So we're giving up? I thought we
weren't going to take no for an
answer.

DEWEY

What do you want me to do, Summer?
He was calling the fuzz.

SUMMER

Can we just try one thing?

DEWEY

No. I need to get you guys back to
school. It's already one-thirty.

TB

SUMMER

I thought I was the band manager.
Will you let me do my job? I have
an idea.

Dewey stops what he's doing and looks at her.

INT. WROK - MOMENTS LATER

Jeff walks down a hallway, when Dewey appears out of nowhere.

DEWEY

Jeff. Hi.

JEFF

(disturbed)
Oh my god.

DEWEY

Hey, it's cool. I just want to
say, I'm sorry. I shouldn't have
barged up here without telling you
what was going down. It wasn't
fair to you or the kids -
especially after everything they've
been through. And I just feel like
crap. I'm gonna go take 'em back
to the hospital. But I'm really
sorry. Really.

JEFF

(softening)
Yeah. okay. Wait. What do you
mean, hospital?

DEWEY

I volunteer at St. Anne's. The
children's wing. Teaching music.

JEFF

Oh, yeah. That's... nice.

DEWEY

No, it isn't. I screwed up. I
told them if they practiced, they'd
get to play the Battle of the
Bands.

JEFF

Why would you tell them that?

TB

DEWEY

I wanted to give them something to look forward to. Something to keep their spirits up.

Dewey points out the window...

On the street, Summer and the others sit among their instruments, looking sickly and pathetic.

DEWEY (CONT'D)

They're terminal. Every last one of them.

Jeff is stricken by this news.

DEWEY (CONT'D)

They have, uh, oceano-chondrius-osisis.

JEFF

Never heard of it.

DEWEY

You're lucky. 'Cause it's Hell.

Jeff looks back out the window, shaking his head.

JEFF

Really puts things into perspective, doesn't it?

INT. DEWEY'S VAN - TRAVELING - DAY

A celebratory mood as Dewey drives the kids back to school. Queen's "We are the Champions" plays over the stereo - Dewey and the kids sing along, jubilant.

THE BAND

We are the champions./ We are the champions./ No time for losers 'cause we are the champions...

Dewey turns to Summer, sitting in the passenger seat.

DEWEY

Summer. You get an A.

SUMMER

(pointedly)
I didn't do it for the grade.
(beat)
Why not an A plus?

Dewey smiles at her and resumes singing.

INT. CLASSROOM - LATER

As the other kids occupy themselves, the band practices. Dewey stops singing, frustrated.

DEWEY

Stop!

(the band stops)

Freddy, you're off again. You're all over the place. What's up?

FREDDY

Sorry.

DEWEY

We've only got two weeks so we really got to focus.

Freddy nods, takes a prescription bottle out of his pocket and pops a pill.

DEWEY

Hey, hey - what's that?

FREDDY

My Ritalin.

Dewey is not pleased.

DEWEY

Dude, I know about drugs and drummers. Not a good combo.

FREDDY

It's prescription.

DEWEY

It's a slippery slope. First you start with Ritalin, then it's weed, then it's uppers and downers - soon you're on the streets, sniffing rubber cement and jonesing for horse. I've seen it happen.

FREDDY

But I need it.

DEWEY

No, you don't. It's a crutch.

Freddy, stung, tosses the bottle across the room.

FREDDY

-- Well, then I guess I'm just too stupid. Why don't you just kick me out of the band?!

Freddy storms from the room. Dewey is concerned.

EXT. SUMMER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Mrs. Mullins and Dewey have just rung the bell. They stand on the porch of this impressive home. Dewey is nervous.

MRS. MULLINS

Melvin, I appreciate you taking the time. I think this will put a lot of concerns to rest.

(under her breath)

Parents can be such a pain in the ass, you know what I mean?

The door opens. It's Summer's Mother.

SUMMER'S MOTHER

Welcome, welcome.

She gingerly ushers them into the house.

INT. SUMMER'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

Dewey is in the hot seat, surrounded by parents - including Freddy's, Summer's and Lori's.

SUMMER'S MOTHER

I'm just concerned that you've put an emphasis on music to the exclusion of other subjects.

Freddy's Father holds up an Eminem CD.

FREDDY'S FATHER

How is this - homework?

Dewey is sweating bullets. Everyone is staring at him.

MRS. MULLINS

Melvin? You want to respond?

Dewey takes a moment, then finally speaks up.

DEWEY

The truth is - I don't like music. And I hate rock music. Hate it.

Dewey shudders. The parents are pleasantly surprised.

DEWEY

But when I served on the education
for presidents of...

(looks to MULLINS)

What was it?

MRS. MULLINS

The Presidential Council for
Elementary Education.

DEWEY

Yes. That. I found that every
study indicates - rock music is the
best way to teach children - not
just to teach them music but every
subject.

The parents are intrigued.

DEWEY

Did you know that if you massage
your child's head for ten minutes
before bedtime - while playing
Beck's "Odelay", you can raise his
IQ by twenty-five points?

The parents react.

DEWEY

Another study shows that scores
were ten percent higher when
children listened to Nirvana while
taking their tests. This is
proven, people.

Mrs. Mullins nods - as if she was familiar with this study.

DEWEY

I don't care one rat's diddily
squat butt about rock music. I'm
just out there on the front lines
trying to teach your kids... stuff.

The parents consider this - they like what they hear. Dewey
waves his empty wine glass.

DEWEY

Could I get another glass of this?

TB

MOMENTS LATER

The crowd has dispersed around the room. Dewey is cornered by Lori's Mother.

LORI'S MOTHER

Mr. Schneebly - just fascinating. The thing is - Lori could be brilliant - she could be in Mensa - but if she's a fat pig, no one's going to ever pay any attention to her. You know?

DEWEY

Mrs. Albright, ever heard of the Aretha Franklin weight loss study?

LORI'S MOTHER

No. What is it?

DEWEY

A hundred overweight children - each lost over twenty pounds.

LORI'S MOTHER

Really? How?

DEWEY

For fifteen minutes - every day - the children would dance around to an Aretha Franklin album. And the weight just melted off.

LORI'S MOTHER

Aretha Franklin?

DEWEY

Sounds crazy - but it works.

LORI'S MOTHER

Fascinating.

Freddy's Father approaches and pulls Dewey aside.

FREDDY'S FATHER

Schneebly, you've opened my mind. But music or no music, I think Freddy may be a lost cause.

DEWEY

Sir, your son, Freddy - is the smartest kid in my class.

TB
 Freddy's Father snorts.

FREDDY'S FATHER

-- I think you've had too much to drink there, Schneebly.

DEWEY

In fact, I think he may be the most gifted child I've ever taught.

FREDDY'S FATHER

(stunned)

I'm talking about Freddy Scanlon.

DEWEY

So am I. He's top of the class.

FREDDY'S FATHER

My Freddy?

DEWEY

He's a genius, Sir. Sometimes he teaches me.

Freddy's Father is shaken to the core. He polishes off his drink, reeling, as Dewey walks away.

INT. LORI'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Lori is watching TV in her bedroom, when her mother enters.

LORI

Hi, Mom. How was the party?

Lori's Mother puts a CD into Lori's stereo.

LORI

What are you doing?

Suddenly, Aretha Franklin's "Think" blasts over the stereo.

LORI'S MOTHER

Honey, for the next fifteen minutes, I just want you to... dance around the room.

Lori's Mother dances - showing her daughter how it's done.

LORI'S MOTHER

How can you resist Aretha Franklin?

Lori is bewildered but she begins to dance with her mother.

TB

LORI'S MOTHER

Yeah. Really let loose, Lori.
Shake it, shake it!

Lori and her mother shake their booties to the music.

INT. SUMMER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Beck plays in Summer's bedroom. Summer is in bed. Her mother sits over her, massaging Summer's temples.

SUMMER

Mom - what are you doing?

SUMMER'S MOTHER

Shh. Just relax.

Summer closes her eyes. Her mother continues to massage her.

SUMMER'S MOTHER

Just listen to the music.

INT. FREDDY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Freddy is playing video games when his father - intoxicated and a little emotional - sits down beside him.

FREDDY'S FATHER

Freddy.

FREDDY

Yeah, Dad?

Freddy's Father looks at him, lovingly, tears in his eyes.

FREDDY'S FATHER

I'm so proud of you, Son.

His father embraces him, clutching Freddy tight.

INT. CLASSROOM - NEXT DAY

The students are hard at work: inspecting equipment, making posters. Dewey practices with the band. He likes what he hears. They stop.

DEWEY

Nice. All right, take five. But
no smoking.

The band disperses - except for Freddy, who locks eyes with Dewey.

TB

FREDDY

You lied to my Dad. You told him I was top of the class.

Dewey nods.

FREDDY

Thanks.

(pause)

Why'd you do it?

DEWEY

Freddy, I know what it's like to struggle in school. I know what it's like to be written off. But don't write yourself off.

Freddy nods - he knows what Dewey means.

DEWEY

Everybody has something they're good at. You're the best drummer here. There's probably lots of other stuff you're best at, too. But if you give up on yourself, you'll never know.

Freddy, touched, smiles gratefully at Dewey.

Suddenly, Holly, on look-out, sounds the alarm.

HOLLY

Mullins!

Dewey is irritated. The kids quickly drop what they're doing and jump to action, putting away instruments, dragging desks.

EXT. BREEZEWAY - DAY

A chipper Mullins walks to Dewey's door and opens it.

INSIDE THE CLASSROOM

The students, sweaty and out of breath, are at their desks, but just barely. Dewey at the blackboard, is all smiles.

DEWEY

Howdy do, Mrs. Mullins?

TB

MRS. MULLINS

Big news. I just spoke with Mrs. Dunham and she's feeling well enough to come back to school tomorrow. Isn't that great?

Dewey and the kids are shocked.

DEWEY

What about her leg?

MRS. MULLINS

She's on crutches but she's raring to get back to work. She sure misses you kids.

From their faces, the kids obviously don't miss her.

MRS. MULLINS (CONT'D)

I know you've had fun with Mr. Schneebly. Hopefully, we can bring him back to Horace Green real soon.

INT. DEWEY'S CLASS - LATER

Dewey and the kids sit at their desks in grim silence. Michelle raises her hand.

MICHELLE

Mr. S.? When Mrs. Dunham comes back, are we still gonna work on the project?

DEWEY

I seriously doubt it, Michelle.

DIEGO

You mean, there won't be a band?

Dewey shakes his head. The kids are crushed.

TOMIKA

Does she have to come back?

Dewey considers this. His face goes through a series of expressions as his mind races. Finally, he sports a mischievous grin.

DEWEY

That's a good question.

The kids brighten.

TB

EXT. HORACE GREEN ELEMENTARY - NEXT MORNING

Mrs. Dunham limps down the hall with much difficulty - a cast on her leg and supported by crutches.

INT. DEWEY'S CLASSROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The students are at their desks, conspicuously attentive, watching Dunham's every move. With her oversized cast and her unwieldy crutches, sitting down is a complex endeavor.

MRS. DUNHAM

I was hoping Mr. Schneebly would be here to fill me in on where he left off in the curriculum.

Her crutches, leaning against the desk, slide away and fall to the ground. Dunham struggles to retrieve them.

MRS. DUNHAM (CONT'D)

But we've been unable to reach him so you all will have to help me. Summer - where are we in Mother Earth?

Dunham picks up a textbook, entitled Mother Earth.

SUMMER

We presented our reports, then we studied glaciers and now we're on volcanoes.

Dunham takes a prescription bottle from her purse and pops a pain pill. She rises and hobbles over to the blackboard, writing the word "VOLCANOES".

Suddenly, GUNS N ROSES "Paradise City" can be heard, faintly echoing through the classroom.

MRS. DUNHAM

Who can tell me... what is that music?

YUKI

What music, Mrs. Dunham?

The music fades away. Dunham shrugs it off, but then the music resumes, louder this time.

MRS. DUNHAM

You don't hear that?

The kids all shake their heads. The music fades away again.

TB

MRS. DUNHAM (CONT'D)

Hmm. Who can tell me the
difference between an active
volcano and a dormant volcano?

Derek raises his hand.

MRS. DUNHAM (CONT'D)

Derek.

DEREK

Mrs. Dunham, I'm Jimmy.

MRS. DUNHAM

You're Jimmy? But... who's Derek?

Jimmy raises a finger. Mrs. Dunham is confounded.

MRS. DUNHAM (CONT'D)

Oh. Sorry, Jimmy. I mean, Derek.

DEREK

An active volcano has lava and a
dormant volcano doesn't.

As Mrs. Dunham writes the word "LAVA" on the board, a LOUD
VOICE blurts out...

VOICE

LAVA!

MRS. DUNHAM

(startled)

Who said that?

(off their blank looks)

Did someone just scream, "lava"?

The kids shrug, looking troubled.

INSIDE THE COAT ROOM

Dewey, hiding out in the coat room, barks into a microphone.

DEWEY

GAIL!

INSIDE CLASSROOM

The mic is hooked up to a SPEAKER hidden under Dunham's desk.

Hearing her name, Mrs. Dunham jumps out of her skin.

TB

MRS. DUNHAM

What is it? Who said my name?

The kids shake their heads. Mrs. Dunham takes a deep breath then underlines the word, "LAVA".

With Dunham's back to the class, there is sudden movement as kids stealthily switch seats and dart about the room.

MRS. DUNHAM (CONT'D)

Who can tell me about lava?

Summer? Summer?

Mrs. Dunham looks out into the classroom. No sign of Summer.

MRS. DUNHAM (CONT'D)

Where's Summer?

LORI

Mrs. Dunham, Summer's absent.

MRS. DUNHAM

Absent? No, she isn't. I was just talking to her.

ANUJ

She's been sick all week.

MRS. DUNHAM

But two seconds ago, she was sitting right there.

Mrs. Dunham points over to Summer's desk, which is now occupied by Tomika. Mrs. Dunham is losing her grip.

MRS. DUNHAM (CONT'D)

Uh, who can tell me about lava?

Jimmy raises his hand. He is now sitting at Derek's desk.

MRS. DUNHAM (CONT'D)

Derek.

JIMMY

Jimmy. Mrs. Dunham, are you okay?

She wipes her brow and moves to sit back down at her desk.

INSIDE THE BROOM CLOSET

Dewey presses a TAPE PLAYER. Summer is now hiding here.

IN CLASSROOM

AC/DC's "BACK IN BLACK" pipes out from under Dunham's desk. Dunham leaps to her feet, wild with rightly-earned paranoia.

MRS. DUNHAM

What is that? Don't you hear it?!

The kids just stare at her, concerned.

MRS. DUNHAM (CONT'D)

It's rock music - it's coming from somewhere in this room! Doesn't anyone hear that horrible sound?!

Searching for the source of the music, she pushes the contents on her desk to the floor.

Mrs. Dunham whimpers, covering her ears. The MUSIC abruptly dies out. Mrs. Dunham forces a smile.

MRS. DUNHAM (CONT'D)

Will you excuse me for a minute?

And with that, Dunham grabs her crutches and flees the classroom. The kids are frozen, their mouths agape.

EXT. BREEZEWAY - LATER

Mrs. Mullins walks with Dewey toward his classroom.

MRS. MULLINS

My guess is the pain medication was making her a little loopy.

DEWEY

I find when someone's high on drugs, they shouldn't be around children.

MRS. MULLINS

I agree. Melvin, it's that time of the year again. Aptitude tests.

Mullins hands Dewey a thick stack of tests.

MRS. MULLINS

These are crucial - tests their learning skills and determines which track we put them in.

TB

DEWEY

You want them to take it today?

MRS. MULLINS

(nodding)

Takes about six hours.

Dewey grimaces. Mullins smiles and turns a corner.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Dewey passes out the tests. The kids groan.

FREDDY

We have to take these now?

DEWEY

Yup.

SUMMER

But we already lost a whole day 'cause of Mrs. Dunham. The show's at the end of the week. This school's priorities are completely out of whack.

DEWEY

You're preaching to the choir, Summer. Look, you don't have to take the full six hours. Finish 'em quick, then we can get to work.

Yuki nods as he opens his test.

LATER

Dewey waits impatiently as the students race through their bubble tests. He whistles and rocks in his chair.

Yuki is the first to finish. He walks his test up to Dewey and hands it over.

DEWEY

Nice, Yuki. Freddy, how you doin'?

Freddy shrugs. He rises and turns in his test.

LATER

The band - Lori, Yuki, Diego and Freddy practice with Dewey as the rest of the class continues taking their tests.

TB
 The music is too distracting for Summer. She gives up, closing her test book.

EXT. HORACE GREEN - DAY

Dewey intercepts Mullins with his stack of completed tests.

DEWEY

Here you go, Roz.

MRS. MULLINS

Great. We'll get these scored.

Dewey is all smiles - relieved of the burden.

MRS. MULLINS

And Melvin - Parents Visiting night is Thursday. Since your discussion the other night with the parents went so well, I thought maybe you could give a speech about your techniques to the whole school.

His smile fades.

INT. DEWEY'S CLASSROOM - DAY

The end of the day. Dewey addresses his class.

DEWEY

This is the big week, you guys. So no late night parties, drinking tequila and trying to get lucky. I want you to get to bed early so you can wake up ready to rock.

The BELL RINGS. The kids gather up their belongings and disperse. An anxious Dewey approaches Summer.

DEWEY (CONT'D)

Three more days, Summer. I'm nervous.

SUMMER

You want to go over our checklist again?

(off his nod)

Transportation.

DEWEY

I talked to the bus driver. I told him we're going on a field trip and to be ready to leave at noon.

SUMMER

Schedule.

DEWEY

We go on at one. Unless something goes wrong, we should be able to get back here by two, giving us fifteen minutes before school lets out.

SUMMER

Feel better?

DEWEY

Yeah, thanks.

SUMMER

Don't worry, Mr. S. I've got a really good feeling about this.

Summer grabs her back pack and heads out. As Dewey smiles, hopeful, we HEAR MUSIC...

FINAL REHEARSAL MONTAGE

- In the classroom, School of Rock is practicing a song. They are coming together as a band. Freddy, Yuki, Lori and Diego play like seasoned pros.
- Dewey supervises as the other kids give make-overs to the group. With their new hairstyles and temporary tattoos, they look like pint-sized hard rockers. Yuki, looking very cool, is fussed over by all the groupies - he's in heaven.
- The roadies have been struggling to get a SMOKE MACHINE to work - finally smoke begins to billow out. The roadies are thrilled.
- The groupies hand out colorful "SCHOOL OF ROCK" tee-shirts and caps to the other students.
- The School of Rock performs for the rest of the class. Sophisticated lighting gives the room a club-like atmosphere. A spotlight, operated by the roadies, tracks Dewey's every move. The kids are ecstatic, taking pride in the band's progress. When the song ends, they cheer wildly.

INT. CAPTAIN JACK'S FISH FRY - NIGHT

Kevin and Dewey eat together after work.

KEVIN

-- Fernando quit. They're looking for a new bus boy - in case you're interested.

DEWEY

(pumped up)

Dude - no need. We are winning this contest. We sound awesome. Freddy is on point. Lori's loosening up. You should see Yuki - he's cooler than Keith Richards.

KEVIN

Wow. Sounds like you've really lost your mind.

DEWEY

The problem is Mullins wants me to speak at this Parents Visiting Night to the whole school.

KEVIN

Well, say a few words and sit down.

DEWEY

Too risky. Ned will be there. My cover will be blown. I've got to get out of it. I've come too far to lose out now.

KEVIN

Well, you're the king of excuses. Tell her you wrote a speech but your dog ate it.

DEWEY

(shaking his head)

That's the oldest one in the book. That's like saying I can't do it 'cause my grandmother died.

INT. MRS. MULLINS OFFICE - NEXT DAY

Mrs. Mullins makes a sympathetic face.

MRS. MULLINS

She died? Was it sudden?

DEWEY

Totally. I'm just too upset to make that speech.

TB

MRS. MULLINS

I completely understand. I'm so
sorry.

DEWEY

(suddenly chipper)
Well, good luck with it.

He heads for the door. Mullins calls out to him.

MRS. MULLINS

Melvin - we have a problem..

Uh-oh. Dewey spins around.

MRS. MULLINS

We had your students' tests graded.
Their scores were way off this
year. Usually they're in the
ninety-ninth percentile. But this
year most were in the seventies -
some even lower.

DEWEY

You're kidding. Whoa.

MRS. MULLINS

Yuki Takeuchi scored a thirty-
three.

DEWEY

Oh, well. Just a test, right?

MRS. MULLINS

Not for him. His scholarship is
dependent on academic achievement.
There's no way now he'll qualify
for a scholarship next year. And
knowing his parents financial
situation, he'll have to leave
Horace Green.

DEWEY

(floored)
What?! Can't he take it again?

MRS. MULLINS

If he was on the bubble, I'd say
maybe, but his score was so low,
it's out of the question.

TB

DEWEY

(stammering)

-- But you can't just kick him out of school!

MRS. MULLINS

Melvin, what about the hundreds of other kids out there who'd kill for a chance to go to Horace Green? It wouldn't be fair to them. You've been in education long enough to know that an academic scholarship has to go to the most qualified student.

DEWEY

But Yuki is qualified.

MRS. MULLINS

Not according to these scores.

Mullins stands and leads a stunned Dewey to the door.

MRS. MULLINS

Would you excuse me, Melvin? I need to call Yuki's parents.

Mullins ushers Dewey out of her office and closes the door.

INT. CLASSROOM - LATER

Dewey returns to his classroom, looking like a zombie. The kids are all busy, preparing for the big performance.

The SCHOOL BELL RINGS. The kids grab their things and head for the door. They say good-bye to him on their way out.

KIDS

Bye, Mr. S./ See ya, Mr. S.

Summer passes him.

SUMMER

Mr. S, want me to get here early so we can go over the schedule?

DEWEY

(elsewhere)

That's okay, Summer.

Summer exits. Yuki passes - flanked by two groupies.

DEWEY

Yuki, stick around for a sec.

YUKI

Sure thing.

GROUPIES

See ya, Yuki./ Call me Yuki, okay?

The room clears out. A troubled Dewey locks eyes with Yuki.

YUKI

Something wrong?

DEWEY

I just hate this school - don't you? All those tests and tracks. It's lame, right?

Dewey anxiously awaits Yuki's response.

YUKI

Well, now that I've made some friends - I think it's pretty cool.

DEWEY

But you're under all that pressure to achieve - you're only nine years old - your parents shouldn't drive you like that.

YUKI

They don't. They don't care if I go here. I want to go here.

DEWEY

You do?

YUKI

It's the best school in the state.

DEWEY

But you don't need to go to the best school in the state to be a guitarist. You can go anywhere.

YUKI

I don't want to be a guitarist. I mean, I like to play the guitar - it's fun and everything - but I want to be a doctor.

TB

DEWEY

Oh, yeah?

Dewey looks nauseous. Yuki is concerned.

YUKI

Are you okay? Did you get in trouble?

DEWEY

No. I'm cool. Listen, I'll see you tomorrow, Yuki.

YUKI

(trying to cheer DEWEY)
It's gonna be a great show.

DEWEY

Yeah.

Dewey musters a smile, then Yuki exits.

Alone in the classroom, Dewey deflates. He picks up a guitar, starts to play...

Then, in frustration, Dewey hefts the guitar over his head and smashes it against the floor. The guitar splinters into pieces.

EXT. HORACE GREEN - NIGHT

PARENTS, STUDENTS and TEACHERS converge in front of the auditorium for Parents Visiting Night.

Among the arriving families are the Takeuchis. Yuki and his parents have been informed of the bad news and are taking it hard.

As they walk toward the auditorium in silence, Yuki stops in his tracks when he sees...

Dewey, standing a distance from the crowd. A guilt-stricken Dewey locks eyes with Yuki.

Yuki's tear-stained face says it all. Yuki gives Dewey a reproving look, then joins his parents and disappears into the crowd.

Dewey is devastated.

TB

INT. HORACE GREEN AUDITORIUM - LATER

The auditorium is jammed with people. Everyone's here, SEE Ned, Patty and Toby; Yuki's family, Lori's family; Summer's family; Freddy's family - even Mrs. Dunham.

Mrs. Mullins, on stage, is at the podium.

MRS. MULLINS

Welcome, everyone. Isn't this a special school?

Applause from the crowd.

MRS. MULLINS

And what makes it so special is the contributions of every single one of you out there. The parents... the students... and the faculty.

More clapping from the crowd.

MRS. MULLINS

We've got an incredible group of dedicated teachers. I was hoping to introduce to you a new member of our faculty who has impressed me with his unorthodox but remarkably effective approach to teaching. Unfortunately, there's been a death in his family and he wasn't able to be with us tonight.

But just as she says it, Dewey appears in the back of the auditorium. Mullins spots him - she's delighted.

MRS. MULLINS

I take it back. He is here. Now that's dedication. Using music to make an impact on the minds of his students, Melvin Schneebly's technique is an example of teaching at its most inventive. When you hear what he has to say, I think you'll be as impressed as I am.

Mullins waves Dewey up on stage. Everyone in the auditorium turns to get a look at this master teacher...

Dewey takes a deep breath, then begins the long walk of doom toward the stage.

ON NED AND PATTY - they can't quite believe their eyes.

TB
 ON MRS. DUNHAM - she puts on her glasses, then whispers to Mrs. Lemmons, sitting next to her.

-- MRS. DUNHAM
 Who's that?

MRS. LEMMONS
 Melvin Schneebly.

MRS. DUNHAM
 No, it isn't.

ON THE TAKEUCHIS - they recognize Dewey as the weird stranger who tried to abduct their son.

ON DEWEY - he stands at the podium in a flop sweat.

DEWEY
 I'm not Melvin Schneebly. I'm not even a teacher. Sorry, Roz.

Dewey gives a stunned Mrs. Mullins an apologetic smile. Confusion erupts in the crowd.

DEWEY
 My name's Dewey Finn. I came here 'cause I needed a back-up band.

REACTIONS from the crowd - everyone is dumbstruck.

DEWEY
 I used to go here, though. I was kicked out when I was seven. I always felt like if this school had been easier on me - maybe things would have been different. Maybe my dad would have liked me better. Maybe he would have believed in me. After I got kicked out, I gave up on education. I was gonna be a rebel - stick it to the man. Rock 'n roll. What I didn't realize was that when I gave up on education, I gave up on myself.

ON Ned - he's reeling.

DEWEY
 I was so gung-ho not to do what people wanted me to do - I never really thought about what I wanted... to do.

(MORE)

TB

DEWEY (cont'd)

A good education helps you figure--
out who you are - what makes you
happy. Not what makes your parents
happy. Or your teachers. You.

Reactions from the audience as his words hit home.

DEWEY

I've never been happier then when I
was with these kids. Your kids are
awesome. You should be proud of
them. They gave me a real
education and I betrayed them. I
lied to them and I let them down.

Dewey locks eyes with Yuki, then turns to Mrs. Mullins.

DEWEY

But don't make them pay for my
mistakes. I'm sorry, everybody.

Dewey steps down from the stage, passing Ned on his way out.

NED

Dewey?

DEWEY

Sorry, bro. I blew it again.

Dewey runs from the auditorium as all hell breaks loose.
Teachers jump to their feet, parents shout. Everyone -
especially the kids - are in shock.

EXT. HORACE GREEN ELEMENTARY - NIGHT

Dewey bursts out the front door, running as fast as he can,
into the night and away from the school.

INT. DEWEY'S APARTMENT - LATER

Dewey is hiding out in his apartment with Kevin. Their PHONE
RINGS insisently. Dewey pulls the phone cord from the wall,
then flops down on the couch, dispirited.

KEVIN

I can't believe you'd risk all that
for twenty thousand dollars.

Dewey opens a beer and takes a swig.

DEWEY

It wasn't about the money, man.
The writing was on the wall - it
was my last shot.

(MORE)

TB

DEWEY (cont'd)

And I just wanted to play one kick-ass show. So I could say, "I did it. At least, I had one kick-ass show."

KEVIN

(wry)

One kick-ass show.

DEWEY

Hey. One great rock show can change the world.

Kevin gives Dewey a sideways look.

DEWEY (CONT'D)

What was the best show you ever saw?

KEVIN

I was eleven. My cousin snuck me out of the house, took me to CBGB's - we saw Blondie and the Ramones.

DEWEY

Nice.

KEVIN

Those guys on stage, they were like Gods, you know? But there aren't shows like that anymore. There aren't bands like that anymore.

DEWEY

You're just not eleven years old anymore. You need to get back in touch with your inner rock child.
(impassioned)

A rock show is a party. It's a celebration - of life. And musicians are mediums, channeling the spirit of the life force. It doesn't matter if it's the Ramones or just some scrubs in a garage band - rocking out is a sacred act.
(off KEVIN's laugh)

I believe that.

KEVIN

I'm sure you do.

DEWEY

You become cynical about rock, Kev - you become cynical about life.

TB

KEVIN

Dewey, you've devoted your entire life to music, you've given it -- everything you have, and what do you have to show for it? Maybe a little cynicism is what you need.

The wind is taken out of Dewey's sails. He sips his beer and looks into the middle distance of the room.

INT. CAPTAIN JACK'S FISH FRY - NEXT MORNING

Kevin and Dewey are both in uniforms. It's Dewey's first day on the job. Their boss, Jose, is already in an uproar.

JOSE

Kevin, he threw away a basket!

KEVIN

Dewey, you toss the plastic silverware, but you keep the plastic baskets - put 'em in here.

DEWEY

Baskets in here. Sorry, sorry.

Dewey's trying to have a good attitude, but it's going to be a challenge.

INT. HORACE GREEN AUDITORIUM - CONTINUOUS

The auditorium is packed with FOURTH GRADE PARENTS who have descended upon the school to complain. Mrs. Mullins is trying to manage the crisis. Patty and Ned are here. SUMMER'S MOTHER has the floor.

SUMMER'S MOTHER

How could this happen? How could you let our children be exposed to this maniac?

FREDDY'S FATHER

I pay twelve thousand a year so my kid can get the best education in the state. I want my money back!

The PARENTS shout their approval for this idea.

INT. CLASSROOM - LATER

Dewey's students sit at their desks in dejected silence, waiting for Mrs. Dunham. Summer has had enough.

TB

SUMMER

You guys, what are we doing? Yeah, he wasn't a teacher. And yeah, it turned out we weren't being graded on any of this. But we've worked too long and too hard not to play this show.

Freddy perks up.

FREDDY

She's right. I want to play.

LORI

Me, too.

The kids look to Yuki. He hesitates, then nods.

YUKI

Let's do it.

But just then, Mrs. Dunham hobbles in on her crutches.

MRS. DUNHAM

All right, children. We are way behind in our curriculum so we need to get straight to work. First, I want you to separate into your tracks. Track A up front...

The kids exchange looks - what are they going to do now?

INT. AUDITORIUM - LATER

Ned has the floor.

NED

Dewey Finn's my brother - I want to apologize for what he's done. And while I'm as outraged as the rest of you - even more so - I can say this - Dewey is irresponsible and self-destructive, but he's not a criminal. I don't believe your children were ever in any danger.

Ned is drowned out by the shouting of the other parents.

INT. CLASSROOM - LATER

As the kids divide into their tracks, Summer approaches Mrs. Dunham. Summer speaks in a conspiratorial whisper.

SUMMER

Mrs. Dunham, as class factotum, I feel like it's my duty to tell you what's happened since you've been gone.

MRS. DUNHAM

Thank you, Summer. That would be very helpful.

Behind Mrs. Dunham's head, we SEE in the b.g., STUDENTS, one by one, sneaking out of the room.

SUMMER

Well, Diego presented his Oceans of the World report. And frankly, I think he's done better work...

As Summer chats up Mrs. Dunham, she steals glances at the exodus of kids from the room.

MRS. DUNHAM

(writing in grade book)
Interesting.

SUMMER

Uh, Anuj was tardy seven days.

MRS. DUNHAM

Seven. That's excessive.

SUMMER

I thought so.

As Mrs. Dunham writes in her grade book, Summer motions for the kids to hurry it up.

SUMMER

And Mrs. Dunham, some of the girls have been "sharing answers" in their math books. I don't want to name names but it's Michelle, Holly, Lindsay and Tomika.

MRS. DUNHAM

Oh, my.

Mrs. Dunham feverishly writes down the names. The room has completely emptied out.

SUMMER

There's more, but I need to go to the little girls room.

TB

MRS. DUNHAM

Of course, Summer, but hurry back.

Summer bolts from the room. Mrs. Dunham continues writing, then looks up - not a student in sight.

EXT. HORACE GREEN ELEMENTARY - LATER

The school's aging BUS DRIVER is napping when a stream of excited fourth graders pour onto the bus. He grabs Summer as she passes.

BUS DRIVER

What's going on?

SUMMER

We're here for the field trip. Remember - Mr. Schneebly talked to you. The Boston Amphitheater.

BUS DRIVER

Where's Mr. Schneebly?

SUMMER

He's already there. You better get going or you'll make us late.

INT. AUDITORIUM - CONTINUOUS

Mrs. Mullins tries to control the meeting.

MRS. MULLINS

Let me assure you, there is nothing more important to us than for you to feel your children are in a safe and secure environment.

Mrs. Dunham hobbles into the auditorium and whispers in Mrs. Mullins' ear. Mrs. Mullins turns white.

MRS. MULLINS (CONT'D)

We have a problem...

INT. SCHOOL BUS - TRAVELING - DAY

The kids are beside themselves with excitement. The Groupies give the band members last minute rock n' roll make-overs.

In the front of the bus, Summer stands over the Driver.

~~SARAH~~ Sarah

Can you go a little faster, please?

BUS DRIVER

I can't go over fifty-five.

Summer sighs, frustrated. She spots out the window...

DEWEY'S VAN PARKED OUTSIDE CAPTAIN JACK'S FISH FRY.

SUMMER

(shrieking)

Stop the bus!!!!

INT. CAPTAIN JACK'S FISH FRY - CONTINUOUS

Dewey is bussing a table. Out the window behind him, we SEE the SCHOOL BUS slam on its brakes with a SCREECH.

MOMENTS LATER

Dewey is busy sorting plastic baskets when he looks up to see... Summer and the rest of the band standing before him.

SUMMER

Where are the instruments?

DEWEY

What?

SUMMER

We can't play this show without instruments. Where are they?

DEWEY

In my van.

SUMMER

Well, get in your van and meet us at the amphitheater.

Dewey is too stunned to react.

SUMMER

Come on. We're already late.

Dewey looks out and sees... the school bus, filled with waving kids. He is touched and excited.

Kevin, behind the counter, is amazed.

DEWEY

Kev, I'm sorry. I gotta do this.

KEVIN

Yeah. Go.

TB
 Dewey yanks off his bus boy apron and follows the kids out.
 The boss, Jose, is angry.

JOSE
 What's he doing?

KEVIN
 He's leaving.

JOSE
 He can't leave.

KEVIN
 (smiling; inspired)
 Yeah, he can. And so can I.

Kevin whips off his apron and hustles from the restaurant,
 leaving Jose, enraged.

EXT. CAPTAIN JACK'S FISH FRY - MOMENTS LATER

Dewey and Kevin hop into Dewey's van. The van pulls out of
 the lot with a SCREECH, chasing after the school bus.

EXT. BOSTON AMPHITHEATER - LATER

The speeding school bus, followed by Dewey's van, drives into
 the bustling parking lot of the Amphitheater. A sign out
 front - "TODAY - WROK'S BATTLE OF THE BANDS".

EXT. BOSTON AMPHITHEATER ENTRANCE - LATER

Dewey, Kevin and the kids, lugging their instruments and
 equipment arrive at the artist's entrance. The THEATER
 EMPLOYEES are thrown by the sight of all these kids.

FEMALE EMPLOYEE
 Can I help you?

DEWEY
 We're on the bill. The School of
 Rock.

She checks her list. To her surprise, they're on it.

FEMALE EMPLOYEE
 Down the hall. On your right.
 Hurry. You're up next.

Dewey and the kids run as if their lives depended on it.

TB
 INT. AMPHITHEATER HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Dewey and the kids race up a hallway to the stage.

INT. BOSTON AMPHITHEATER - CONTINUOUS

On stage, No Vacancy is performing its last song. Theo is belting his heart out.

THEO

*I'm not a fighter, I'm a lover.
 But if you run, then run for cover.
 'Cause I'll be fighting for your
 love. I am fighting for your love.*

The crowd cheers. Theo pumps his fists, exultant.

BACKSTAGE - CONTINUOUS

Jeff tries to maintain amidst the chaos. He turns to his ASSISTANT.

JEFF

Who's up?

ASSISTANT

School of Rock. But they're not here.

JEFF

Figures. Take 'em off the list.

But just then, Dewey and the kids arrive, sweaty and out of breath. Jeff and his assistant stare at them, mouths agape.

DEWEY

We're here.

JEFF

You're late. How long will it take you to set-up?

Dewey looks to Anuj, one of the roadies.

ANUJ

Three minutes.

JEFF

All right. Go.

And the crew gets to work - the kids dispersing with the instruments and equipment.

TB
 EXT. BOSTON AMPHITHEATER - LATER

A caravan of VOLVO STATION WAGONS driven by anxious Horace Green parents, pull into the lot.

INSIDE NED'S VOLVO - CONTINUOUS

Patty and Ned are horrified by this turn of events.

PATTY

They'll probably kick Toby out of school.

NED

Patty, calm down.

PATTY

For the rest of his life, he's going to be talking with a lisp.

INT. BACKSTAGE - CONTINUOUS

The kids congregate. Summer goes over her check-list.

SUMMER

Roadies?

ANUJ

Good to go.

SUMMER

Groupies?

MICHELLE

Banner's ready and we're set.

SUMMER

Security?

JIMMY

Set.

Summer gives Dewey the okay.

DEWEY

All right. Let's pray!

The kids dutifully close their eyes.

DEWEY (CONT'D)

God of Rock, thank you for giving us the chance to play a kick-ass show. We are your humble servants.

(MORE)

TB

DEWEY (CONT'D)

Give us the strength to blow everyone's minds with our hard-rocking power. In your name we pray. Amen.

KIDS

Amen!

INT. STAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Hundreds of people in the audience watch as the giant "SCHOOL OF ROCK" banner unfurls against the back scrim of the stage.

Anuj and Gordon spark up the smoke machine. SMOKE BILLOWS ACROSS THE STAGE.

In the wings, Matthew works the LASER LIGHTS. Colorful prisms dance across the CLOUDS of SMOKE.

Jimmy, Derek and Holly are positioned at the edge of the stage - with their walkies and black uniforms, they look like munchkin bouncers.

On stage, Dewey and the band take their positions.

A nervous Dewey locks eyes with Yuki. Yuki gives him an encouraging smile. Dewey nods and...

YUKI BEGINS TO PLAY an inspired acoustic guitar solo.

In the audience, the crowd is stunned by the sight of the band. Theo turns to the other members of No Vacancy.

THEO

(amused)

It's a bunch of little kids. How pathetic.

When Yuki's guitar solo ends, the band comes in full throttle. A big stadium sound takes the audience by surprise.

THEO

Whoa!

The band continues to thrash until Dewey takes the mic. He begins to sing.

The groupies, Eleni, Michelle, Lindsay and Carey stand at the foot of the stage, swaying to the music, mouthing the lyrics.

Tomika, Alison and Marta join in on back-up.

The band is blasting away. The audience is amazed.

TB
EXT. AMPHITHEATER ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

The parents have arrived, among them Ned and Patty. They argue with the SECURITY GUARD.

SUMMER'S MOTHER
My daughter is in there!

SECURITY GUARD
Well, you're not getting in without a ticket.

SUMMER'S MOTHER
She's nine years old!

SECURITY GUARD
I don't care how old she is...

IN THE LOT

Mrs. Mullins has parked her Volvo. She tries to help the ailing Mrs. Dunham out of the passenger seat.

MRS. MULLINS
Come on, Gail. We've got to move.

Dunham bangs her cast against the car door and WAILS.

ON STAGE

Dewey and the band finish their first song. The CROWD claps enthusiastically.

BACKSTAGE

Kevin is blown away. He CHEERS, wildly.

Jeff stands with a few FESTIVAL PROMOTERS. He is flabbergasted by the performance.

Theo and the rest of No Vacancy also watch in amazement.

As filler between songs, Mark and Leonard spin records, a medley of hard-thumping hip-hop and psychedelic electronica.

AMPHITHEATER HALLWAY

Ned, Patty and the other PARENTS run into the arena.

INT. STAGE - CONTINUOUS

The parents arrive, but before they can disrupt the show...

Dewey and the band begin their next song.

As Dewey sings, we catch glimpses of all the kids, enjoying the moment...

The groupies dancing at the foot of the stage.

The roadies working the lights and smoke machine.

The security crew, in matching uniforms, managing the fans.

In the audience, Ned and Patty are struck by the quality of the performance. Mr. Takeuchi turns to his wife.

MR. TAKEUCHI

Should we take him home?

MRS. TAKEUCHI

No. Just wait.

Mrs. Dunham and Mrs. Mullins arrive, shocked by the sight of the parents listening attentively to the concert.

ON KEVIN - he is overcome by the experience. Watching these kids play moves him in an unexpected way. As he laughs, tears well in his eyes.

BACKSTAGE, a MUSIC EXECUTIVE turns to Jeff.

MUSIC EXEC

These kids are incredible! Who's their manager?!

SUMMER

I am!

Jeff and the Promoter look down at her, baffled. She shakes the Promoter's hand.

SUMMER (CONT'D)

Summer - nice to meet you!

ON STAGE, each of the band members get a turn in the spotlight. After each solo, the crowd goes nuts.

ON LORI - in a tight-fitting, fashionable outfit, she is masterful on the keyboards. No longer the insecure wallflower, she plays to the crowd, totally uninhibited.

ON LORI'S MOTHER - in the audience, she turns to her husband.

TB

LORI'S MOTHER

Is that Lori?
(looking closer)
-- She looks fabulous.

ON FREDDY - he lets loose on the drums - a spot-on performance.

ON FREDDY'S FATHER - he swells with pride, turning to another PARENT.

FREDDY'S FATHER

That's my son.

ON YUKI - he powers out another solo.

ON THE TAKEUCHIUS - they are delighted, cheering for their child.

The band performs a monstrous finale. Dewey and the back-up singers belt it to the rafters.

ON KEVIN - he is laughing and crying at the same time.

ON NED and PATTY - even they clap with appreciation.

ON DEWEY - he is in heaven. This is what he always dreamt it could be. Finally, a show the way he envisioned it.

He throws off his guitar and slides down the stage.

As the song ends, Dewey jumps into the air and STAGE DIVES into the crowd.

All of the kids in the audience raise their arms and hold Dewey above their heads. At least for this fleeting moment, he is a bona fide rock star.

INT. BOSTON AMPHITHEATER - LATER

All of the bands have played. A RADIO DJ takes the stage.

RADIO DJ

And the winner of this year's
Battle of the Bands - by unanimous
vote - The School of Rock.

The crowd explodes with excitement. Parents hug children. Children hug other children. Mrs. Dunham and Mrs. Mullins high-five each other.

TB

BACKSTAGE

Even No Vacancy seems to take it in stride. As Dewey heads for the stage, he is congratulated by his former band mates.

THEO

Nice goin', Dewey.

ON STAGE

Dewey and the kids swarm the stage. The DJ presents Dewey with a check.

RADIO DJ

And here is your check for twenty thousand dollars. Congratulations.

Cheers from the crowd. Dewey inspects the check.

DEWEY

Wow. I could really use this. But since we're the School of Rock, I think we better spend it on school.

Dewey turns to the kids.

DEWEY

If it's okay with the rest of you guys, I'd like to give this money to Yuki so he can stay at Horace Green. What do you say?

The other kids nod with approval.

Dewey hands the check over to Yuki - he takes it, thrilled.

Dewey and Yuki lock eyes and smile.

ON THE TAKEUCHIS - deeply moved, they wipe away their tears.

ON MRS. MULLINS and MRS. DUNHAM - they, too, are crying.

Yuki and Dewey high-five and as the crowd CHEERS, we...

FADE OUT.

EXT. DEWEY'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

We HEAR the SQUEALING of an ELECTRIC GUITAR coming from Dewey's window.

Ned's Volvo pulls up outside the building and parks. He and little Toby emerge from the car.

T B
Volvos are parked up and down the street as PARENTS wait to pick up their children.

Ned takes Toby's hand and they walk up the stairs to Dewey's apartment.

A sign out front reads - "THE SCHOOL OF ROCK - AN AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM".

INT. DEWEY'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Ned and Toby enter to find...

The living room transformed into a classroom for Dewey and Kevin's popular after school program. TWO DOZEN KIDS are learning how to play rock n' roll.

In one corner, Kevin teaches a group of aspiring guitarists.

KEVIN

That's a C chord. Right. And then E minor. And then G. Now all together. C. E minor. G.

Across the room, Dewey works with another group of musicians.

DEWEY

Nice. But if you guys want to be the next Strokes, you gotta practice every day. I want your finger tips bleeding, you got me?

For the first time, Dewey sees Ned. He is surprised.

DEWEY

(to the KIDS)

Take five.

As the kids relax, Dewey approaches Ned. A moment of awkwardness between them.

DEWEY (CONT'D)

Hey, bro.

NED

Looks like business is booming.

DEWEY

I'm having fun.

Dewey nods, then smiles down at Toby.

TB

DEWEY

Dude, look at you. You're getting huge.

NED

Yeah. You know, Toby's got a real musical ear.

DEWEY

Well, it's in the genes.

NED

Patty and I were thinking maybe he could join your program.

DEWEY

(surprised)

You sure? I don't want to be a bad influence.

NED

You're not, Dewey. In fact, I think a little bit of you is just what he needs.

They lock eyes. Ned's smile is full of warmth and sincerity. Dewey is deeply pleased.

NED (CONT'D)

So - is there room for one more?

DEWEY

Hell, yeah. He can start right now. Tobe - you ready to rock your socks off?

TOBY

I think tho.

DEWEY

Well, let's rock n' roll, shall we?

Dewey ushers Toby into the room, toward the instruments and the other kids.

Ned watches by the door, smiling.

And on Dewey and Kevin and their young musical disciples, playing music and having fun, we slowly...

FADE TO BLACK.