

MMD 902 Assignment 1
"AGAIN"

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FADE IN:

INT. BEDROOM - EVENING

A WATCH TICKS.

Tick.

Tick.

Tick.

A hand enters the frame and picks up the watch.

JOE A BESPECKLED YOUNG ASPIRING DRUMMER WITH A BURNING PASSION FOR MUSIC SITS AT A DESK IN A CRAMPED BEDROOM SPACE.

ON THE DESK: A DIARY, LOOSE MUSIC SHEETS, PENCILS, HEADPHONES, A DRUM KEY, A WATER BOTTLE, AND A PHONE SET-UP FOR RECORDING

Joe holds the watch close to his ear.

He listens.

Not casually. Like he is trying to find an answer inside it.

JOE (V.O.)
Timing is the first thing they
teach you.

He places the watch flat on the desk.

THE DIARY SITS OPEN BENEATH HIM. SHEET MUSIC, ROUGH NOTES, AND PENCIL MARKINGS CROWD THE PAGE.

Joe leans in closer.

FROM ABOVE, JOE APPEARS BOXED IN BY THE DESK, THE DIARY, THE WATCH AND TEH DRUM-KIT BEHIND HIM.

INSERT - DIARY PAGE

A hand written reminder:
AUDITION TAKE - SUBMIT BY 11:59PM

Below it, three phrases are written in heavy marker.
STAY IN TIME.

CLEAN FILL.
AGAIN.

Joe stares at the word.
AGAIN.

With a pencil, he taps beside the watch.

Tap.

Tap.

Tap.

At first, the tapping matches the ticking.

JOE (V.O.)
Don't rush.

The tapping slowly speeds up.

JOE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Don't drag.

Joe notices.

Stops.

Silence.

He puts on his headphones.

His eyes close.

The ticking fades into a METRONOME CLICK.

Click.

Click.

Click.

Joe opens his eyes.

JOE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Stay with the click.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Close on bass drum pedal.

His foot presses down.

The beater hits the drum skin.

THUD.

Joe sits behind the kit. His posture is upright. His face is calm, but tight with concentration.

He raises the sticks.

Waits.

Then plays.

The groove is controlled. Focused. Precise.

He approaches the fill.

His shoulders tense before it arrives.

The fill begins.

He misses the final hit.

The rhythm collapses.

Joe stops immediately.

The metronome keeps clicking.

Click.

Click.

Click.

Joe stays still.

His eyes drop.

He exhales sharply.

JOE (V.O.)

It was barely a mistake. One that shouldn't have happened. Let's try again.

Joe reaches for the drum key.

Drum key is being used to tune the snare drum.

Metal tightens against metal.

Cut to his hand gripping the drumstick.

Cut to his jaw tightening.

Joe hits the snare drum once.

Too hard with a hint of frustration and disappointment in himself.

JOE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
There, that should do it. That was
the problem. Wasn't it?

He takes off one side of the headphones.

He reaches for the water bottle.

He drinks. A mental reset.

His leg taps against the floor trying to find the lost rhythm.

Even while resting, he is still counting.

Joe puts the bottle down.

Headphones back on.

He starts again.

Same groove.

Same focus.

Same build-up.

The fill arrives.

He misses again.

This time, his reaction is sharper.

Joe freezes.

His fingers tighten around the sticks.

He shakes his head.

The metronome keeps clicking.

Click.

Click.

Click.

He lowers his head into his hands.

For the first time, the frustration is visible.

He stays there for a beat.

Then he he lifts his head.

He taps the stick against his leg.

Fast.

Then faster.

He starts again before he is ready.

MONTAGE - PRACTICE LOOP

The watch ticking on the desk.

The pencil tapping.

The headphones pressed tighter over his ears.

The drum key turning.

The bass drum pedal striking.

The snare hit.

The fill.

The miss.

The stop.

Joe's leg is tapping.

The diary page.

Joe writes one word harder into the page:

AGAIN.

JOE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Why is this so difficult. It's
nothing I haven't done a million
times before. Why does the weight
of this going perfectly haunt me?

The groove restarts.

The fill fails.

JOE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Failure is not an option. I've come
too far not to succeed. Anything is
possible.. Anything..

From above, Joe sits with the drum-kit.

The cymbals, toms, snare and stands surround him like a cage.
He is a prisoner to perfection.

The watch ticks.

The metronome clicks.

The drums hit.

The sounds overlap until the rhythm becomes uncomfortable.

JOE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Perhaps "perfect" isn't the goal.

Joe plays with more force now.

Less musical.

More desperate.

JOE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I'm trying to make it about being
the person I thought I had to be.

The fill arrives again.

Joe attacks it.

Misses.

JOE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Something has to change. This chase
for the perfect take is making me
lose the authenticity that defines
me.

He starts again immediately.

JOE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Trying to beat the mistake out of
me isn't the answer. I've lost
myself for far too long.

END MONTAGE.

INT. BEDROOM - LATER

Joe sits behind the kit again.

The room feels smaller.

The watch is visible on the desk.

The diary lies open.

The metronome clicks.

Joe raises his sticks.

He plays harder than before.

The groove rushes.

The fill arrives.

He attacks it.

Misses worse.

Silence.

The cymbal fades.

The metronome keeps clicking.

Click.

Click.

Click.

Joe holds still

He raises the sticks as if he is about to continue.

Instead, he slams them into the snare drum. The frustration has reached its peak.

CRACK.

The sound cuts through the room.

Joe pulls the headphones off.

The metronome stops being dominant.

Now we focus on his breathing.

Heavy.

Uneven.

Joe looks at the watch.

The watch feels louder than the drums.

Joe stands.

Moves to the desk.

His hand hovers over the watch.

For a moment, he does nothing.

Then turns it face down.

The ticking becomes muffled.

He stops the metronome.

Silence.

Joe closes the diary.

The word AGAIN disappears beneath the cover.

JOE (V.O.)

Maybe timing and tempo were never
about staying perfect. Somewhere
along the way, I forgot about being
authentic.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Joe returns to the kit.

No headphones.

No metronome.

No watch in view.

He sits in silence.

Breathes.

His grip softens.

His shoulders drop.

He does not count in.

He listens to the room.

