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Dance Academy

SERIES ONE

EPISODE 14
BLOCK 5

"Turning Pointes"

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1 **EXT. NATIONAL ACADEMY OF DANCE - DAY 4** 1
TARA, TARA (V.O.)

Tara walks towards the National Academy of Dance. She wears civvies, her pointe shoes hang around her neck and she carries a small bag with her ballet uniform.

TARA (V.O.)
*There was this girl I knew from
Patchewalling. Sort of wide-eyed,
awkward. Never been kissed.*

2 **INT. ACADEMY/CORRIDOR/STUDIO - DAY 4** 2
TARA, TARA (V.O.)

Tara walks down the empty Academy corridor, it echoes to her footsteps.

TARA (V.O.)
*With an extreme talent for
embarrassing herself.*

At the end of the corridor even the familiar vending machine has been unplugged. Tara speaks to it.

TARA
Hey you.

Her voice reverberates around the space, but the vending machine does not reply. Tara runs a finger along a dusty window sill and walks into the darkened studio.

TARA (V.O.)
*I, on the other hand, have a
boyfriend who is, like, golden.
Amazing friends. And starting this
week I can dance en pointe.*

Tara's looks around the studio, taking it all in. She swings her arms and legs up into a exuberant grand jete en tournant (*adjust*).

TARA (V.O.)
*This semester really is going to be
spectacular.*

3 **EXT. ACADEMY/CAFE - DAY 4** 3
TARA, CHRISTIAN, ABIGAIL

Tara arrives at the Academy café and pulls up short.

Abigail sits by herself on one side of the café, Christian on the other. Each is completely absorbed in their own world and comfortably ignoring the other.

Abigail forces herself to get through a pre-prepared, packaged lunch. Christian reads a novel (*Great Expectations*).

Tara walks over to Abigail, who doesn't invite her to sit.

ABIGAIL

You're back early.

TARA

I have to start private classes with Miss Raine, it's one of the requirements of my ... scholarship.

Tara doesn't want to upset Abigail, but it's too late. She has said it.

TARA

How are you?

Abigail glares at her. What a stupid question.

ABIGAIL

Super. Thanks for asking.

Abigail stands and leaves the café.

Christian smiles and waves Tara over, happy to see a familiar face after the solitude of the holiday break spent at the vacant Academy.

CHRISTIAN

Hey.

TARA

Good holiday?

CHRISTIAN

Did you know that Gloria in the cafeteria, hasn't spoken to Edgar, the cleaner, since the passionfruit sponge incident of 2002?

Tara takes a second look at Christian.

TARA

So climbing the walls then?

CHRISTIAN

Little bit.

ABIGAIL, ADAM

Abigail sits in her best dancer's posture. Her back is straight, her head held high, her hands rest elegantly in her lap.

She is beautifully presented, her hair pulled back in a bun, her make-up is impeccable. She has obviously made a great effort to appear perfect and healthy.

Her psychologist, ADAM (30s) sits in an armchair at a slight angle to her. He has her diary open in his lap.

ABIGAIL

... it was the final of the National Junior Ballet Eisteddfod. I danced perfectly. The adjudicator read out the places. Fourth, third, second. Then Mum just started squealing - we knew I'd won. Afterwards Dad took us out for dinner. Me, Mum, my sister, Kat...

ADAM

Kat?

ABIGAIL

Ex-best friend. Now frenemy. Irrelevant. We all ordered desserts, only desserts. Two each.

ADAM

And what about that made you happy? Winning? Dancing perfectly? Eating whatever you wanted?

Abigail searches, slightly warily, for the right answer.

ABIGAIL

Feeling very supported. Sharing with my family and friends.

Adam can't hide his disappointment at another rehearsed answer. Abigail checks the time, the session is almost over. It's now or never. She moves forward with all her charm.

ABIGAIL

Adam, the strength and self-belief I've learnt from you, makes me certain I'm ready to start dancing on Monday.

Adam looks at Abigail very closely. She smiles a little more brightly. Adam passes Abigail her diary.

ADAM

Read me anything you've written.

ABIGAIL

(reads)

Where ever I am I will do my best and that is all I will ever expect of myself.

ADAM

... and is that something you truly believe or is it an affirmation you copied down from an internet site?

Abigail looks up sharply. Sprung.

ADAM

You're being the perfect patient, writing the perfect diary, eating the perfect diet. But your need to control every situation isn't helping you.

Adam passes her a sheet of unpopped bubble wrap.

ADAM

You're making progress Abigail, and that's great, but you're not yet strong enough to return to ballet.

Abigail's face goes blank - her body tight, her shoulders tense. She inadvertently pops one bubble, then two, yet keeps a grip on her emotions.

ABIGAIL

I eat everything the nutritionist tells me to.

ADAM

And that's wonderful, but this is not about food. It's about ...

Abigail cuts him off. She doesn't want to know.

ABIGAIL

I am ready to dance. I need to dance.

ADAM

Then go dancing, dance with a friend. Dance for the love of it. But no ballet, no classes, no practising in the studio. Nothing that could trigger unhealthy thoughts.

Abigail let's the facade drop.

ABIGAIL

Adam, you're just wrong. I'm ready for class on Monday.

5

EXT. ACADEMY/WHARFSIDE - DAY 4

5

SAMMY, ABIGAIL, N/S EXTRAS

Abigail emerges from the administration area onto the wharfside.

Loyal Sammy waits there. Abigail knows exactly where to look for him. He's on the phone to his grandmother.

SAMMY

Bubbeh let it go.

(pause)

Okay, I'll ask her.

He asks Abigail the question he has been asking all holidays.

SAMMY

I'm teaching salsa again tomorrow.

Grandma and friends. Can you come?

Abigail gives him a withering look and walks on.

SAMMY

She has a life. You'll meet her

alright. Gotta go. Love you.

Sammy quick steps to catch up with Abigail.

SAMMY

How was it today?

ABIGAIL

(sarcastic)

Breakthrough. He hypnotised me and made me cluck like a chicken.

SAMMY

Are you allowed to go back to class?

Abigail would really love to push Sammy into the water right now.

ABIGAIL

Are you allowed to stalk me?

SAMMY

Stalk?

ABIGAIL

You've been here every day of the holidays. Don't you have anything better to do?

Sammy considers this seriously.

5

CONTINUED:

5

SAMMY

Not so much. No.

6

INT. ACADEMY/STUDIO - DAY 4

6

TARA, CHRISTIAN, KAT, LUCAS, MISS RAINE

Music plays in the sunny studio. Tara wears immaculate new pointe shoes. She is dressed in her full practice gear, exercising at the barre, warming her feet.

Christian watches her, his chin on the barre, like a young man slowly recovering from a long period of boredom. He realises Tara is looking at him curiously.

CHRISTIAN

What?

TARA

You're watching me warm up. How bored are you?

CHRISTIAN

I've been stuck here for the past three weeks.

KAT (O.S.)

Hi honey. I'm home.

Kat's voice echoes through the studio. Kat and LUCAS (18), Kat's new boyfriend, walk towards them.

TARA

Kat!

Tara drops off pointe and attempts to run towards Kat. She is completely out of practice at running in pointe shoes and only manages an excited waddle.

KAT

Slow it down, T. You'll go derriere over toe shoe.

TARA

When did you get back? Was Europe amazing? Did Natasha really ground you in the hotel?

Tara throws her arms around Kat. Lucas greets Christian.

LUCAS

How goes it, Champ?

CHRISTIAN

(sarcastic)

Unreal.

Tara steps back.

KAT

Roommate meet boyfriend. Boyfriend ditto. But other way around.

That is two surprises for Tara. She doesn't know which question to ask first. Lucas answers one question, teasing Kat at the same time.

LUCAS

We're official already? I thought we were just holding hands?

Kat slugs him and answers the other.

KAT

Rumi didn't make the cut for second semester. So you're moving in with me.

MISS RAINÉ

There will be deeper cuts at the end of this term, Katrina.

Miss Raine has appeared in the studio without warning - a silent assassin.

MISS RAINÉ

I hope you've all managed some classes during your break.

Kat gives Lucas a what-did-I-tell-you look. They both laugh.

MISS RAINÉ

Tara has a private lesson.

LUCAS

You mean we can't watch?

Kat bundles Lucas out. Christian must pass Miss Raine to get to the door.

MISS RAINÉ

(to Christian)

Tara's balance will change in pas de deux now she's en pointe. You should spend what's left of your holiday practising.

Christian nods and leaves. Tara takes her place at the barre.

MISS RAINÉ

Are you ready?

Tara nods.

MISS RAINÉ

Relevés in fifth position. (*adjust*)

Tara begins her first barre exercise en pointe.

CUT TO:

LATER

Tara is performing a barre exercise. Her feet flying quickly from position to position.

MISS RAINÉ

Really work each muscle through the floor ...

Tara is focused on the exercise, this is going well.

MISS RAINÉ

You know, when you first arrived we talked about choosing your friends wisely... And relevé - Up! ... You didn't.

Tara looks down and concentrates on the exercise to hide her discomfort. She glides along the floor.

MISS RAINÉ

Keep it moving. Control your ankles.

Tara tries to keep her emotions in check.

MISS RAINÉ

The school has taken a leap of faith giving you the scholarship this semester.

TARA

Yes, Miss Rainé. Thank you.

MISS RAINÉ

Pique pas de bourrée. Rise up out of your shoes... better...

Miss Rainé speaks gently, but she means what she says.

MISS RAINÉ

You need to decide what's more important - your training or other distractions.

Tara's face burns - a mixture of anger and shame.

7

INT. BOARDING HOUSE/TARA'S ROOM - DAY 4

7

TARA, KAT, SAMMY, ABIGAIL

Tara and Kat pack Tara's trophies and books into dance bags.

KAT

He's a diplobrat I picked up in Paris. His mother's an attaché case or something.

She looks at Tara who is pre-occupied.

KAT

Natasha loathes him. It drove her crazy when he kept turning up.

Kat waits for Tara to say something, but Tara has her own issue.

KAT

What? Don't you like him?

TARA

(distracted)

It's not that. Miss Raine just gave me the third degree. According to her I can't hang out with you and be serious about dancing.

Kat is unconcerned.

KAT

She can't tell you who to be friends with. What is this - primary school?

While Tara thinks about that, Abigail comes into the room followed by Sammy acting out the plot of a film.

SAMMY

... as he opens his mouth to scream the blood drips from the ceiling and straight down his...

KAT

Samuel. How can you bear to leave these arms so tragically empty?

Sammy's face lights up and he is hugging Kat in an instant.

SAMMY

How was Europe?

KAT

I can say "you're grounded young lady" in four languages.

Abigail looks at Tara coolly.

ABIGAIL

More junk? This semester there are going to be rules.

TARA

Rumi's not coming back so... I'm moving in with Kat.

Sammy stops hugging and looks between Tara and Abigail. Abigail covers her momentary sad reaction with a quick drip of acid.

ABIGAIL

How sweet. Bambi and Thumper together at last. You so deserve each other.

Kat is uninterested in further discussion.

KAT

Kaythanksbye.

Tara and Kat take a bag each and leave the room.

Sammy waits for a reaction from Abigail.

ABIGAIL

Why are you still in my room?

Sammy realises he needs to take a different approach. He leaves.

Alone in her now empty room, Abigail looks at Tara's stripped bed, the empty wardrobe, the bare dressing table and feels deserted.

She looks at herself in Tara's cracked mirror and hates the girl she sees.

INT. BOARDING HOUSE/KAT'S ROOM/CORRIDOR - DAY 4
TARA, KAT, SAMMY

Kat dump the bags she is carrying at the doorway to the room.

KAT

I'll get more bedding. Sleepover means pillow-fights.

Kat disappears. Tara lugs her bags through the door and dumps them on the spare bed in Kat's room. Sammy enters, he's annoyed about Tara deserting Abigail.

SAMMY

Nice timing T. Really sensitive.

8

CONTINUED:

8

Tara knows immediately what he's talking about.

TARA

You heard her. She's glad.

SAMMY

Last semester Abigail got sick enough to collapse before any of us noticed.

TARA

She hates me. It can't be good for her to live with me.

Kat walks in with an armful of sheets, registers the tension and ploughs in tactlessly.

KAT

Are you guys in a fight?

TARA

No.

Yes.

SAMMY

Kat doesn't care.

KAT

Wanna see holiday pics? It'll be quick, I did a spicy edit in the airport lounge.

Kat inserts herself between Tara and Sammy. They have no choice but to table the discussion.

9

EXT. BOARDING HOUSE - SUNSET 4

9

NIL CAST

Establish sunset. Seen from high on the ridge of The Rocks the sun goes down behind Anzac Bridge. The suburbs stretch to the horizon.

10

INT. BOARDING HOUSE/KAT'S ROOM - NIGHT 4

10

TARA, KAT

INTERCUT WITH:

11

INT. REGIONAL THEATRE DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT 4

11

ETHAN

Evening is falling, Tara sits with her lap-top on her lap talking to Ethan on video conferencing. Tara's bed and dresser are a tiny island of tidiness in a wash of Kat's dirty clothes. Kat has clearly transferred her holiday laundry directly to the floor.

TARA

... I'm sure the audiences love
you.

(joking)

I hear them chanting - Ethan.

INSERT Ethan is visible on Tara's computer screen. He is in a dressing room with his lap-top on the bench.

ETHAN

(computer)

Let 'em chant. I can't wait to see
you.

Kat bursts into the room ignoring the fact that Tara might be busy.

KAT

Hey T, what should I wear to
Dystopia?

Tara indicates the lap-top.

TARA

Busy.

ETHAN

(computer)

Kit Kat - long time. I'm told
Natasha sent you home in disgrace.

Kat reaches across Tara and shuts the laptop.

KAT

Bye Ethan. She'll call you back.

Tara re-opens it, irritated, but the connection has been cut off. Kat has already turned on some loud music and is searching through the clothes on the floor looking for something clean.

KAT

I'm thinking Rockstar. Kate Moss at
Glastonbury.

TARA

It's almost curfew now.

KAT

So I window hop.

Tara turns down the music and tries to re-establish her connection with Ethan. Kat holds up an item of clothing for comment.

KAT

Trashy in a good way?

15

CONTINUED:

15

TARA

Um. Help.

CHRISTIAN

Nosedive.

Christian scoops her up just before she face plants. Once Tara's in safe arms, they both laugh at themselves.

CUT TO:

Tara and Christian continue to work together, murmuring instructions to each other.

They grin as Tara makes it all the way around in the promenade.

CUT TO:

Tara and Christian have progressed to a more challenging sequence. Christian lifts her firmly, taking her high into the air.

Tara pirouettes around and around with his hands on her waist. Her pointe-shoed foot turning strong and assured. Tara grins at Christian surprised - it's actually easier than turning in flats.

We dissolve between snatches of them working together. They're beautiful and happy. True synchronicity.

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EXT. ACADEMY/WHARFSIDE - DAY 5
SAMMY, ABIGAIL, N/S STUDENTS

16

It is afternoon and more National Academy students are drifting by, some in civvies carrying luggage others in sweats and with dance bags, ready for the new term.

Abigail sits on the wharfside in the place she met Sammy after therapy the previous day. She is feeding the seagulls with the left-overs from her lunch. Sammy rushes up keen to catch her before she leaves. Abigail didn't expect to see him.

SAMMY

I hope you ate some of that.

ABIGAIL

(resists snapping)

I eat what the diet plan specifies.

Abigail stands to go.

SAMMY

So, for one night only I'm teaching my salsa class here.

ABIGAIL

The yenta centre burnt down?

SAMMY

Close. Pest inspection. Failed badly. Studio one is booked and it's two steps away. So there's no excuse not to come.

ABIGAIL

Except that it's a parade of saggy, geriatric bodies shuffling around a studio achieving ... what? Grace? Beauty? Technical perfection?

SAMMY

They don't have to achieve anything.

ABIGAIL

That's a relief.

SAMMY

Just come by and watch.

ABIGAIL

Therapy is enough pointless exercise for one day.

Abigail heads off to the 'pointless exercise' of therapy. Sammy watches her go.

INT. BOARDING HOUSE/KAT'S ROOM - DAY 5

KAT, TARA

Tara is stretching on the floor in space she has cleared by pushing aside Kat's junk. Piled up around her are Kat's still unwashed clothes and additional piles of photographs. Most of them are close-ups of feet from various statues or paintings Kat has photographed in Europe.

Kat walks in. She has big news for Tara.

KAT

Cease to crunch, little one. We are going out.

TARA

Only three sets to go.

KAT

The Kiefers are playing a warm-up gig...

Tara stops crunching, she is excited. Best band ever.

TARA

The Kiefers.

KAT

... at a private warehouse, all ages. Our names are on the door.

Tara remembers.

TARA

It's the first day of term tomorrow, we've got Miss Raine classical at nine am.

KAT

Starts at six. We'll be back before curfew.

TARA

We'll be wrecked.

KAT

Tara how many times have I said no to you?

TARA

But you're going with Diplobrat. Why do you need me?

An accusation.

KAT

You don't like him.

Tara searches for a safe response.

TARA

I barely know him.

KAT

Then make an effort.

Tara gives in to Kat. Kat knows she has her.

KAT

When we are old, we will look back on this as the defining moment of our friendship.

Tara looks at Kat in surprise. Is this really a friendship issue?

18

INT. ACADEMY/DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY 5

18

ADAM, ABIGAIL

Abigail's hair is loose. She is wearing dance sweats. She has a piece of bubble wrap in her hands and is popping it furiously. She has clearly run out of patience with Adam.

ADAM

We should talk about the future.
You are going to get stressed
again.

ABIGAIL

Are you going to let me dance or
not?

ADAM

We all want to feel you're strong
enough to cope with ... *(the extra
pressure that ballet puts on you)*

ABIGAIL

(interrupting)
Is that a yes or a no?

ADAM

You're not ready, yet.

Again Abigail's face goes blank. She stops popping the bubble wrap. Her body tightens, her shoulders are tense. The emotion she is holding is anger.

ADAM

I can see you have a reaction to
that.

Abigail doesn't flinch.

ADAM

Tell me how you feel when I say you
can't go back to ballet.

ABIGAIL

Fine.

ADAM

Be more specific.

With nothing to lose, Abigail stops covering.

ABIGAIL

(slowly rising intensity)
I feel like I eat and eat, exactly
what I'm told to. And I write my
stupid diary. And imagine my stupid
coping strategies and you won't let
me dance.

ADAM

That's good. I want you to be honest.

ABIGAIL

You want honest? I'll give you honest, Adam. It's unfair. I will fall behind. There are performances at the end of the year. Someone else will get my role.

ADAM

Everyone wants you to dance again. We just want you to be healthy too.

ABIGAIL

Why are you doing this to me? You are just like ballet.

ADAM

How am I like ballet?

ABIGAIL

I give it everything and I never get anything back. I love ballet. Ballet just doesn't love me.

ADAM

Ballet doesn't have feelings Abigail. It can't love you or not love you.

Abigail stands up.

ABIGAIL

Are we done?

ADAM

All your teachers say you are a wonderful dancer. If you choose you can have a professional career.

Abigail stops.

ADAM

Or you can follow an unhealthy path that will make it impossible for you to dance.

Abigail is torn. She doesn't know which way to go.

ADAM

Today you have choices. If you don't deal with this you'll lose that power.

19

EXT. ALLEYWAY OUTSIDE CLUB - NIGHT 5

19

TARA, KAT, LUCAS, SOLOMON, N/S PARTY GUESTS

Kat, Lucas and Tara, stand in the queue outside an old brick warehouse. The queue is full of assorted music fans, all of them much older than Tara and Kat.

Lucas has an arm around Kat and is talking only to her. He has positioned himself to make it hard for Kat and Tara to talk to each other. From Tara's expression it's clear she's not a Lucas fan.

LUCAS

... I had to walk through cattle class with all those people. I don't know how they do it.

KAT

(teasing)
Awww we can't all take daddy's jet.

LUCAS

(grins)
But seriously First Class is bad enough these days. It's almost worth writing off Europe. Don't you think?

He turns to Tara who can't muster a response - he is so pretentious. The queue starts moving.

TARA

About time.

As they shuffle forward Lucas speaks without even looking at Tara.

LUCAS

Relax T. We'll get you home before you pumpkin.

They reach SOLOMON, the bouncer, an intimidating, muscular Islander, who has a clip-board with a list.

LUCAS

Lucas Hewett.

He waves Kat and Lucas through but stops Tara.

KAT

She's with us.

SOLOMON

It's Lucas plus one.

LUCAS

Kassim told me to bring hotties.

Lucas indicates Tara and Kat, Solomon is impassive.

SOLOMON
You and one other.

KAT
(to Lucas)
We'll stay here. You go in and find
Kassim.

SOLOMON
Plus one goes in now, or not at
all.

LUCAS
(to Tara)
We'll take five minutes. You're
okay with that aren't you?

TARA
By myself?

KAT
We'll sort it. Five minutes?

Tara is shocked that Kat is prepared to leave her alone.

TARA
(meaning the opposite)
Okay. I'll be fine. Alone.

Kat deliberately ignores the subtext and allows Lucas to
pushes her inside.

KAT
Defining moment.

Tara is left alone with the bouncer.

INT. ACADEMY/REHEARSAL STUDIO - NIGHT 5
ABIGAIL, SAMMY (O.S.)

Abigail turns the lights on in the rehearsal studio. She is
dressed in her full dance gear - pink leotard, pink skirt.
She strides to the barre purposefully. No-one tells Abigail
she can't do ballet.

Salsa music and the muffled sound of Sammy giving a lesson
drift into the rehearsal studio from the main studio across
the corridor.

Abigail takes off her cross-over and rests a hand on the
barre. She takes a preparatory breath - ready.

Abigail can't do it. She looks at herself in the mirror. She
is going to do this.

She is going to disobey the therapist and dance. She rises to her toes and then drops back on her heels and looks away from the accusing mirror.

Abigail actually needs to hold the barre to keep herself there.

A burst of laughter comes from next door. Sammy's voice rises over the top of it and the music becomes louder.

SAMMY (O.S.)

Take your partners. Ladies choice.

EXT. ALLEYWAY OUTSIDE CLUB - NIGHT 5

TARA, SOLOMON, KAT (O.S.), ETHAN (O.S.)

Tara checks her watch. The queue has disappeared and she is left alone with the bouncer, Solomon. It is dark and lonely she has no idea where she is or whether Kat will come back for her.

She reaches into her pocket for her mobile phone. It isn't there.

She thinks - all of her stuff is in Kat's bag.

TARA

Excuse me? Hi. My friend has my money and my phone. Could I just go in and grab them? I'll come straight out.

The bouncer shakes his head. He clearly doesn't believe her.

TARA

I'm not lying.

Solomon takes pity on Tara, he pulls out his phone and offers it to Tara.

SOLOMON

Call your Mum. Tell her to pick you up.

TARA

My friend will come back for me.

SOLOMON

I can tell you for nothing - you're not on the list, I'm not letting you through that door tonight.

Tara takes the phone and dials a number. (Kat)

TARA

(babbles to Solomon)

Thing is I didn't even want to come. Now I'm stuck in the middle of I don't know where. And I have class tomorrow and...

Kat's voicemail message broadcasts loudly.

KAT (O.S.)

(phone)

It's Kat. Don't speak. I don't want to talk about it.

TARA

... voicemail...

She hangs up.

TARA

Can I please make one more call?

She dials (Ethan). He picks up immediately.

TARA

Ethan. It's me.

ETHAN (O.S.)

(phone)

How're you doing?

TARA

Not so good.

INT. ACADEMY/STUDIO - NIGHT 5

SAMMY, ABIGAIL, BUBBEH LIEBERMAN, JOE, GRETA, N/S OLDER JEWISH PEOPLE

Abigail silently enters the studio where Sammy's salsa class is underway. She stands near the door and watches around half a dozen older ladies and two older men dance salsa in pairs under Sammy's instructions. Sammy is dancing with GRETA, a flamboyant woman.

Abigail watches fascinated as the couples move, graceful and rhythmic. Absorbed in their dance.

SAMMY

On one step. Left forward one, two, three. Neutral position. Back, five step seven. (*adjust*)

As Sammy scans the class he sees Abigail and gives her a searching look. Greta takes the opportunity to give his bum a squeeze.

SAMMY

Ow.

Sammy's Grandmother, BUBBEH, who is dancing with another woman reprimands Greta sharply.

BUBBEH

Greta Rothstein, keep your hands
off my grandson's buttocks.

Even Abigail can't repress her laugh. Sammy smiles at her.

SAMMY

Step on two. Left forward marks
one. Gentlemen step forward, ladies
step back. Two, three, six, seven.
(adjust)

Bubbeh dances past Abigail.

BUBBEH

You must be Abigail.

ABIGAIL

I was just leaving.

JOE an elegant gentleman in his seventies pauses in front of Abigail.

JOE

May I have this dance?

GRANDMA

Go on, Abigail. Make his day.

Joe takes Abigail in his arms and begins to dance with her. A couple of the old ladies give her a smile and a clap, but most continue dancing. Abigail didn't intend to dance, but it's now out of her control. Joe guides her around the studio.

Abigail scowls and looks down trying to focus on the steps.

JOE

Abigail? It means father's joy in
Hebrew. You must be the delight of
his life.

Bubbeh dances nearby.

BUBBEH

Is this a Jewish girl, Shmuel?

SAMMY

No Bubbeh.

Sammy makes a little face to amuse Abigail.

JOE
(to Abigail)
The gentleman is supposed to lead.
Just go with me.

Abigail relaxes into the dancing. Joe smiles at her.

JOE
Lovely.

And it is lovely. The couples turn on the dance floor to the rhythmic salsa music.

Sammy swings by with Greta and catches Abigail's eye.

SAMMY
You came.

ABIGAIL
Shut up. I'm dancing.

Greta's hand creeps its way down towards Sammy's butt again.

GRANDMA
Greta! I'm warning you.

Joe shakes his head but smiles at Abigail.

EXT. ALLEYWAY OUTSIDE CLUB - NIGHT 5

TARA, SOLOMON, CHRISTIAN

Tara chats to Solomon in a happy friendly way. He is showing her the range of movement in his knee post reconstruction.

SOLOMON
... third game of my first season
in the NRL and and I got crunched.
Did my ACL.

TARA
No! That's awful.

SOLOMON
My family had flown out to
Australia to watch and they saw the
whole thing.

Tara is so deeply engrossed in the conversation she doesn't notice Christian has arrived in a cab and is now standing beside her.

CHRISTIAN
According to Ethan, your life is in
danger.

23

CONTINUED:

23

TARA

Christian!

Tara is so pleased to see him she hugs him.

24

INT. BOARDING HOUSE/Common Room - Night 5

24

SAMMY, ABIGAIL, N/S STUDENTS

Sammy and Abigail are in the corner of the common room playing darts.

SAMMY

Bubbeh Lieberman took a shine to you.

ABIGAIL

(imitating Grandma)

Shmuelly. You behave yourself now.

SAMMY

She does think you could do with some meat on your bones. She's offered to cook you her special dumplings.

The happy mood between them is soured by the mention of food. Abigail makes a big decision and says something really hard.

ABIGAIL

You have to stop hassling me about food.

SAMMY

I... That wasn't what I was doing.

Abigail nods - yes he was.

ABIGAIL

It makes it harder.

Sammy takes this on board and admits something as well. He can't stop thinking about her lying there, unconscious on the floor.

SAMMY

Last semester, what happened. I feel responsible.

ABIGAIL

It had nothing to do with you.

SAMMY

But maybe I could have helped.

24

CONTINUED:

24

ABIGAIL

No. You couldn't have. No-one could.

Sammy accepts this and hands Abigail the pile of darts. She takes one and throws it at the board.

25

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE WAREHOUSE - NIGHT 5

25

KAT, LUCAS, SOLOMON

Kat swings open the door of the warehouse and bats away Lucas who is trying to cajole her back in.

KAT

Hi. My friend was waiting here? Yay tall, jeans (*adjust*), big Bambi eyes.

Solomon does not approve of Kat's behaviour at all.

SOLOMON

Friend, you say? Standing here by herself?

KAT

That's her.

SOLOMON

She left.

KAT

When?

SOLOMON

Five minutes ago. Her boyfriend collected her in a cab.

Kat's face is troubled as Lucas pulls her back into the party. Solomon watches them unimpressed.

26

EXT. THE ROCKS - NIGHT 5

26

TARA, CHRISTIAN

Tara and Christian climb out of the taxi. They are happy. They've been laughing on the way back.

CHRISTIAN

You'd think fifty bucks would get us home.

TARA

Curfew's not for twenty minutes. Let's walk slow.

Tara walks a couple of steps and then stops. She turns around and laughs, surprised by the sight of Christian walking in super slow motion.

TARA

Changed my mind. Giant steps.

Christian and Tara both walk with giant steps.

CHRISTIAN

Stop right there.

Tara freezes, in her exact position mid-stride.

CHRISTIAN

Race you to the pylon.

TARA

Okay. Ready, set ...

Tara starts to run and Christian realises she's got the jump on him.

CHRISTIAN

Cheat.

He races off after her and they fly down the road, exhilarated and enjoying each other's company.

TARA, CHRISTIAN

On the grass beneath the Sydney Harbour Bridge, Tara and Christian re-enact the pas de deux they were practising earlier in the studio.

This time they're not worried about placement or technique. They're just having fun, moving together.

Grinning, Tara runs into the "Dirty Dancing" lift. For one perfect suspended second, Christian holds her high above his head... but then his knees buckle underneath him.

Laughing, they both collapse to the ground in a mess of tangled limbs.

CUT TO:

LATER

Tara and Christian lie side by side below the pylon of the Harbour Bridge amidst the huge industrial bolts and cables that hold up the bridge.

CHRISTIAN

... so Gloria sees this little grey mouse in the kitchen. Edgar's trained it to eat from his fingers, but what he's feeding it is ...

Christian pauses. Tara completes his story.

TARA

Her passionfruit sponge cake.

Christian nods. Tara smiles.

TARA

Travesty.

There is definitely a blossoming connection between these two.

CHRISTIAN

Why are you going out with Ethan?

TARA

What?

CHRISTIAN

Just asking.

Tara searches for the words.

TARA

He is perfect, in every way.

CHRISTIAN

Okay.

TARA

You might not be able to see it, but I feel it and ...

Tara falls silent.

CHRISTIAN

(gently)

I said okay.

The sound of a train approaches. Tara gratefully changes the subject.

TARA

Train's coming.

Christian turns to watch her excited face as the train rushes overhead.

Tara is so exquisitely beautiful that Christian lifts himself up on an elbow and leans over her. He stares into her eyes.

27

CONTINUED:

27

Tara doesn't move. She senses what is coming but doesn't stop it. Eternity passes as they look into each others eyes.

The train fades into the distance. Tara turns her face away from the potential kiss. She rolls to one side and clammers to her feet.

TARA

We should get back. We'll miss curfew.

Tara starts walking towards school. Christian still lies on the ground where she left him. What was that?

28

INT. BOARDING HOUSE/KAT'S ROOM - NIGHT 5

28

TARA

Tara tosses and turns uncomfortably in bed.

Ethan's photo stares down at her from the corkboard beside her bed.

She sits up and feels her pillow. There is something wrong about it.

Tara peels back some of the pillow case and examines the pillow within. It is marked in large black texta letters - ABIGAIL. Tara has the wrong pillow.

Tara gets out of bed. Kat's bed is still empty.

29

INT. BOARDING HOUSE/CORRIDOR - NIGHT 5

29

TARA, ABIGAIL

Tara strides into the corridor. Abigail has her pillow and she wants it back.

At the bottom of the staircase Tara runs into Abigail coming down also holding a pillow also irritable and unable to sleep.

Tara points at the pillow in Abigail's hand accusingly.

TARA

That's mine.

ABIGAIL

You the one who moved things. If there's a pillow thief it's you.

TARA

(grudging)

You're right. I'm sorry.

Tara holds out the pillow. They swap.

TARA

Can't sleep. Kat's not home.

Abigail rolls her eyes, Kat's so predictable.

ABIGAIL

Four students didn't make the half year cut. You'd think it was time to get serious.

Tara nods at this, remembering Miss Raine's words. Abigail doesn't look at Tara.

ABIGAIL

Your bed's still empty. If you don't want to be trampled by Kat climbing through the window.

Tara looks at Abigail. That was a big concession in Abigail terms.

TARA

Isn't the room tidier without me?

ABIGAIL

Yes.

But not the same... It's a big concession for Abigail and Tara registers it. She follows Abigail up the stairs to her old room, knowing it's not only the right thing to do but where she wants to be as well.

INT. BOARDING HOUSE/TARA'S ROOM - NIGHT 5

TARA, ABIGAIL, KAT

Kat, still in her going out clothes, creeps into Tara's room. She stands in the doorway and looks at Abigail and Tara each asleep in her usual place.

Kat feels sad that she is on her own again, but knows she has no-one to blame but herself.

EXT. SYDNEY - DAY 6

NIL CAST

It's a new day in Sydney and the sun is gleaming over the Harbour. The seagulls have stopped fighting for food and now soar peacefully overhead.

32

INT. ACADEMY/DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY 6

32

ABIGAIL, ADAM

Abigail is dressed in civvies. She knows she will not be allowed to dance today. Her hair is neat but not in a bun, she isn't made-up. Adam reads Abigail's diary.

ADAM

This is important. Being honest to your friends about what you really need is brave and strong. And healthy.

ABIGAIL

Thank you.

He watches her closely, judging.

ADAM

You understand that we support you? Your parents, your teachers, your friends.

ABIGAIL

Yes.

ADAM

Recovery isn't always smooth. If you need me, I'm here.

ABIGAIL

I know.

The session is over. Abigail stands up.

ADAM

So ... when were you going to ask to go back to dancing?

Abigail looks back at him, defenses down. Honest.

ABIGAIL

I guess you'll tell me when I'm ready.

33

EXT. ACADEMY/WHARFSIDE - DAY 6

33

TARA, KAT, SAMMY, CHRISTIAN, ETHAN, ABIGAIL, N/S STUDENTS, TARA (V.O.)

Kat and Tara walk onto the wharf together on their way to warm-up before first class of the day, classical ballet. Around them other students are preparing for class too.

KAT

I am so sorry. If it makes it better, standing in the queue with you was the most fun I had all night.

TARA

The Kiefers?

KAT

Never showed. And Diplobrat's friends are hard work.

Tara makes her own confession.

TARA

I think I'm moving back in with Abigail. I feel too bad leaving her alone.

Kat finds the excuse that allows them both some dignity. She makes a joke.

KAT

Our friendship probably wasn't gonna survive living together anyway. I belong in small doses.

Sammy appears from nowhere and inserts himself between Tara and Kat.

SAMMY

I hope you've been practising.

KAT

Please Sammy. Enough with the salsa.

Sammy grabs Tara by the hand, and drags her into a salsa dance.

TARA (V.O.)

I already miss the wide-eyed girl from Patche. Sure, she didn't have a clue but there's a kind of freedom in that.

As Christian approaches, Sammy spins Tara out and into Christian's arms, then grabs Kat and salsas with her. Christian and Tara look at each other uncomfortably.

TARA (V.O.)

Not knowing stuff makes things less complicated.

ETHAN

May I cut in?

Tara turns and for a moment can't work out that it is Ethan. She then embraces him enthusiastically.

ETHAN

What? Did you forget you had a boyfriend?

Christian stares at Tara hugging Ethan, he has the same question in his eyes. Well did you?

Abigail walks out onto the wharf towards the rest of the group. Around her a stream of students fills the wharfside all heading towards their first class of the semester.

END OF EPISODE