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Dance Academy

SERIES ONE

EPISODE 5
BLOCK 1

"Real Men Don't Dance"

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2

CONTINUED:

2

MISS RAINE

What did I say about focus?

CUT BACK TO:

Inside Tara and Abigail's room: Tara has a pair of scissors poised over the photo of ETHAN.

TARA (V.O.)

*One hundred percent focus demands
one hundred percent commitment, and
that means some things have to be
sacrificed.*

But she can't quite bring herself to destroy the photo - instead she places it into the waste paper basket. Stuffing a whole lot of paper and other junk over the top of it.

CUT BACK TO:

Miss Raine moves through class on to Sammy who is a picture of sweaty concentration.

Sammy wobbles, and then stumbles out of a turn. He stops, looks up to Miss Raine who shoots him a withering look.

MISS RAINE

I don't even know where to begin.

SAMMY

I'm trying my best.

MISS RAINE

That's what's worrying me.

Sammy deflates. But Miss Raine has now caught sight of Christian who is slouched next to the mirror. Miss Raine claps her hands angrily in his face.

Christian stands up casually.

MISS RAINE

Mr Reed, are you with us?

Christian starts the pirouette. He does it perfectly. The camera lingers on Tara and Sammy watching. It's not fair - Christian makes it look so easy.

Miss Raine nods.

MISS RAINE

See that, that's what I want.

3

INT. ACADEMY/CORRIDOR - DAY 7

3

TARA, KAT, SAMMY, ABIGAIL, N/S STUDENTS

Sammy and Kat, now changed into street clothes, walk down the corridor on their way to collect their English exams.

SAMMY

Someone kept moving my spot. I swear.

Abigail breezes past them, and with carefully studied indifference passes Sammy a photograph.

ABIGAIL

When you see Tara, can you give her this? I think she must have accidentally dropped it in our bin.

Abigail walks on. Sammy and Kat look at the photograph. Kat: you've got to be kidding.

SAMMY

It's sort of blurry.

KAT

It's sort of Ethan.

SAMMY

Oh.

Kat and Sammy stop at their pigeon holes and each take their exam paper out of a pigeon hole. Sammy is rendered silent by horror as he looks at his grade.

Tara catches up to them. Kat confronts her by shoving the photograph at her.

KAT

(challenge)

Did you throw this in the bin?

Tara takes great satisfaction in being able to answer this.

TARA

Yup.

KAT

Not because you found a better shot of him?

TARA

Nope. Because he's distracting and frustrating and generally bad for me. From now on, I'm sticking with my friends.

Kat is surprised but pleased.

3

CONTINUED:

3

KAT

Gold elephant stamp for you, Tiara.

Tara is very pleased with herself. Sammy has other things on his mind.

4

EXT. ACADEMY CAFÉ - DAY 7

4

TARA, SAMMY, KAT, PATRICK, N/S STUDENTS

Sammy paces around the table freaking out about the English exam. Tara and Kat sit at the table trying to calm him down.

SAMMY

I'm a dead man.

KAT

It's only English.

TARA

And you got a B plus not an F.

SAMMY

Dead, dead, dead. There is no pulse. I am six feet underground.

KAT

For a corpse you're doing a good job of topping every class.

SAMMY

Are you serious? This is a dance school, in my dad's opinion it's easy to top. I promised him straight A's...

He takes a deep breath, weight of the world on his shoulders.

SAMMY

Straight A's and synagogue every Saturday.

Kat shakes her head, dreaming of the possibilities.

KAT

You know, I would love an excuse like that to get out of class.

SAMMY

It's not an excuse, it's a web of lies. One week I'm telling my dad that I'm too sick to go to Temple so I can do class. The next week...

4

CONTINUED:

4

TARA

... you're telling the school
you're too sick to dance, so you
can go to Synagogue.

KAT

You realise it's not possible to
keep that up? You risk serious
implosion.

Kat's right.

SAMMY

You're right. I can't. I'm one
person.

Sammy is suddenly charged with new resolve.

SAMMY

Okay, I have to go to Synagogue
tomorrow, 'cause I promised Dad
I'll do a reading, but that's it.
I'll be firm... unless it's a
special occasion... or something...

PATRICK (O.S.)

Young Lieberman.

Sammy turns to see Patrick looming.

PATRICK

How's your health? No tickle in
your throat? Haven't eaten a bad
sausage?

SAMMY

I'm fine, Sir.

PATRICK

Then we'll have the pleasure of
your feet in my Saturday class
tomorrow?

SAMMY

Um... Well, about that...

PATRICK

(over)

You do know the meaning of the word
compulsory, as in compulsory
Saturday class?

SAMMY

Yes. I'm kind of living it.

PATRICK

Good.

4

CONTINUED:

4

Patrick walks on. Sammy lays his head down on the table and bangs it repeatedly.

KAT

Brain the size of a football field
and this is what he's reduced to.

TARA

Sad really.

5

INT. ACADEMY/MR KENNEDY'S OFFICE - DAY 7

5

CHRISTIAN, MR KENNEDY

A sullen Christian sits while Mr Kennedy, leafs through Christian's file.

MR KENNEDY

...100% attendance rate in
class...you haven't broken curfew
once. And you've managed to keep
your nose clean.

Mr Kennedy closes the file.

MR KENNEDY

You've ticked all the boxes.

Christian takes this as meaning he can go. He stands.

MR KENNEDY

Sit.

Christian sits - stares at Mr Kennedy.

MR KENNEDY

I've spoken to your teachers. All
agree, you have real potential, but
that potential is under-utilised.
You go through the motions
Christian - you lack commitment.

Christian shrugs. Mr Kennedy sighs.

CHRISTIAN

I'm here aren't I?

MR KENNEDY

Agreed. You are fulfilling your
bail requirements. But ...

Mr Kennedy stares at Christian.

5

CONTINUED:

5

MR KENNEDY

You have the opportunity to be up there with the best in a challenging and rewarding art form

...

Christian lets out a yawn. Mr Kennedy stops his spiel.

MR KENNEDY

How do you see your future?

CHRISTIAN

I don't know. Get a job I guess.

MR KENNEDY

Packing supermarket shelves?

CHRISTIAN

What's wrong with that?

Mr Kennedy: no point going down that path.

MR KENNEDY

I have to ask. Why did you audition for the Academy?

CHRISTIAN

I promised my Mum...

Mr Kennedy is about to speak. Christian doesn't want to hear anymore. He cuts him off.

CHRISTIAN

... to audition. Not to be the best.

6

INT. BOARDING HOUSE/SAMMY'S ROOM - DAY 7

6

SAMMY, CHRISTIAN

Christian enters his room to find Sammy rushing to find his lost yarmulke ready for Shabaat. Christian looks around the room - it's a pig sty; Sammy's stuff is strewn all over the place.

SAMMY

Hey.

Christian doesn't acknowledge Sammy - he just stares at the mess. A dark look on his brow. Sammy finds the yarmulke stuffed into one of his pointe shoes.

SAMMY

Sorry - my stuff in the way?

Christian kicks Sammy's clothes out of his path and flops down on his bed... only to find crumbs all through it.

6

CONTINUED:

6

CHRISTIAN

There are crumbs in my bed.

SAMMY

Oh, right... that'll be poppyseed cake.

CHRISTIAN

You ate cake on my bed?

SAMMY

My bed had things on it...

Christian simmers. He can't believe what he's hearing.

SAMMY

(reaching for a tupperware container)

Here, have some - it's really good. Mum only baked it yesterday.

Christian just stares - not moving for the cake. Sammy back tracks.

SAMMY

I get it. And I'll clean up...

He looks at his watch.

SAMMY

... the second I get back from Shabaat.

And Sammy starts for the door.

SAMMY

You wanna come?

Christian shakes his head.

CHRISTIAN

I've got my own family stuff.

7

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY 7

7

CHRISTIAN, GROUNDSMAN

It is late afternoon and the shadows are long.

A marble angel spreads white wings against the impossibly deep blue of the Pacific Ocean. Perched on the edge of a high cliff overlooking the ocean is an elegant, nineteenth century cemetery adorned with marble and granite statues.

Woosh, we pick up Christian as he skates between the rows at breakneck speed... holding a modest bunch of gardenias close to his chest.

7 CONTINUED: 7

Reveal a GROUNDSMAN, whipper snipper in hand - he sees only a youth on a skateboard and he's not impressed.

8 **EXT. CEMETERY - DAY 7** 8
CHRISTIAN, GROUNDSMAN

Christian stops by a grave stone, and bends over and places the flowers next to the grave.

Christian reacts - someone has tagged the head stone with texta. He tries to rub it clean, with his sleeve and some spit, when a voice rings out.

GROUNDSMAN (O.S.)
Oi you - get out of it.

Christian looks up, to see the groundsman (from earlier scene) advancing towards him, looking between him and the graffiti.

GROUNDSMAN
I said get out of there.

CHRISTIAN
I heard you.

The man, still walking - takes out his phone.

GROUNDSMAN
You want me to call the police?

Christian has a last look back at his mother's grave, and then he flips up his skateboard and heads off.

9 **EXT. LIEBERMAN HOME - SUNSET 7** 9
NIL CAST

Establish a gracious, suburban home in a leafy street in Sydney's exclusive eastern suburbs.

10 **INT. LIEBERMAN HOME/DINING ROOM - NIGHT 7** 10
SAMMY, DR LIEBERMAN, MRS LIEBERMAN, ARI, N/S GRANDMOTHER

DR LIEBERMAN's deep baritone voice reading of the kiddush takes us over a montage of Shabbat in the Lieberman's home: (NB: This is a rough translation of the Kiddush, which will be need to be said in Hebrew by Sammy's dad.)

Sammy's parents live in a comfortable and well furnished home. The family are close, this is a well practised and happy Friday evening ritual.

10

CONTINUED:

10

MRS LIEBERMAN lights the chanukiah candles. Sammy and ARI, Sammy's ten-year-old brother, stand side by side at the table. Across the table stands Sammy's GRANDMOTHER. Dr Lieberman is silent. Stony faced. All the males wear yarmulkes.

DR LIEBERMAN

Blessed art though, Adoni our God,
King of the universe, who has
sanctified us with his
commandments.

Mrs Lieberman closes her eyes, and begins swirling her hands above the flames.

DISSOLVE TO:

Dr Liebermann washes his hands in a bowl of water - the others follow suit.

DR LIEBERMAN (O.S.)

.... For it is the day beginning
for holy convocations, a memorial
of the exodus from Egypt. For you
chose us and sanctified us from all
the other nations.

DISSOLVE TO:

Everyone stands around the table now as Dr Lieberman breaks off some bread, and passes it around along with the cup, as he continues the prayer.

DR LIEBERMAN

And your holy Sabbath we love and
favour, you gave us a heritage...

11

INT. LIEBERMAN HOME/DINING ROOM - NIGHT 7

11

SAMMY, DR LIEBERMAN, MRS LIEBERMAN, ARI, N/S GRANDMOTHER

Sammy helps his brother clear the family dinner table at the end of Shabbat meal. Ari performs a clumsy arabesque as he leans over to clear Sammy's plate. Dr Lieberman laughs. Mrs Lieberman and her mother-in-law don't.

MRS LIEBERMAN

Ari.

ARI

But I'm dahhhhn-cing.

Sammy swings a kick towards his brother, but Ari pirouettes out of the way, laughing, dirty plates in hand.

11

CONTINUED:

11

ARI

Don't you think I'm beautiful when
I'm dahhhn-cing?

Sammy starts after Ari. His father has Sammy's exam paper
which he pulls out and puts on the table - this is serious.

DR LIEBERMAN

(to Sammy)

Sit.

Dr Lieberman looks down at his son from across the table. Mrs
Lieberman keeps a warning eye on Ari.

DR LIEBERMAN

I thought we had an agreement: this
dancing school wasn't supposed to
interfere with your studies or with
proper religious observance.

SAMMY

I attend synagogue.

DR LIEBERMAN

On and off. When the mood takes
you.

Sammy starts to say something but his father holds up a hand.

DR LIEBERMAN

You're not a B plus. You're top
percentile. You could have any
career you want.

SAMMY

As long as it's a cardiologist.

Grandmother smiles. Dr Lieberman tries to make a joke of it.

DR LIEBERMAN

Nonsense. There are plenty of other
specialties. I know we don't admit
it publicly, but your grandfather
was merely a dermatologist.

ARI

Sammy wants to be a
balleriniologist.

MRS LIEBERMAN

Ari! Enough!

DR LIEBERMAN

I worry that you are sacrificing
your education, and taking
liberties with your faith.

(MORE)

11 CONTINUED: 11

DR LIEBERMAN (CONT'D)
You tell us you're one of the best
dancers at the Academy...

MRS LIEBERMAN
And he is. You've seen him dance.

DR LIEBERMAN
... But what will that give you
long term?

Sammy: if only they knew.

12 **INT. BOARDING HOUSE/Common Room - Night 7** 12
KAT, TARA, ETHAN, ETHAN'S MATE, N/S STUDENTS

Tara and Kat enter the common room carrying the bits and pieces necessary to applique flowers onto a dress. In the background Ethan is playing an aggressive game of pool with ETHAN'S MATE.

As the girls sit down and arrange the sewing gear, Ethan wins his game and puts on a bit of a performance.

ETHAN
I am the champion. Poetry in
motion. Bow down to me and hail the
reigning pool shark.

The third year boy walks away.

ETHAN
Best of three?

ETHAN'S MATE
Dude. I'm done.

He keeps walking, Ethan calls to Kat who is sewing a flower onto the dress.

ETHAN
Kitty-Kat, a quick game?

Kat continues to sew - needle between her teeth.

KAT
Busy. You can help me appliqué?

Ethan: As if.

ETHAN
Tara? You wanna play?

Tara turns then freezes. Ethan is smiling, holding up a pool cue. This is the moment she's been waiting for. Tara goes to get up, then stops.

12

CONTINUED:

12

TARA

Sorry, I'm busy too.

ETHAN

One game won't hurt.

He's wrong about that... She shares a look with Kat.

TARA (V.O.)

*One hundred percent focus demands
one hundred percent sacrifice ...*

TARA

I'm helping Kat.

On Kat - really? Tara sits down firmly.

13

INT. LIEBERMAN HOME/HALL - NIGHT 7

13

SAMMY, MRS LIEBERMAN

Mrs Lieberman presses a couple of plastic containers of food onto Sammy, hugs him, and whispers into his ear.

MRS LIEBERMAN

Sammy, I support you in your dancing, always - but you made a promise. You have to attend synagogue. It will break your father's heart if you keep missing it.

It's more a plea than anything - not to rock the boat. Sammy just nods.

SAMMY

Don't worry Mum. I'll be there. I promise.

Mrs Lieberman looks relieved.

14

INT. BOARDING HOUSE/CORRIDOR- NIGHT 7

14

TARA, SAMMY

Tara is on her way back from the toilet when she hears a muttered voice further down the corridor.

SAMMY (O.S.)

Come on... just do it.. Don't be a coward.

Tara approaches a figure. It is Sammy with his right hand in the door jamb of a broom cupboard - and his left hand on the door - he's summoning up the courage to swing it shut.

14

CONTINUED:

14

SAMMY

One, two, three.

Sammy closes his eyes. The door slams shut... Sammy opens his eyes - looks to his hand that has somehow made it outside the door jamb - Sammy looks at his right hand with disgust.

SAMMY

Call yourself a man!

TARA

Sammy?

Sammy looks up to see Tara standing there.

TARA

Why are you slamming your hand in the door?

SAMMY

It will get me out of class.

TARA

A sore hand won't get you out of anything.

SAMMY

Needing to go into town to get an X-ray will.

TARA

Walk away from the door Sammy.

A tired Sammy slumps to the ground. Tara joins him.

SAMMY

I dunno. Three generations of Liebermans managed to make it through med school without ever feeling the urge to pirouette. Why did I get the curse?

TARA

I'm going to ask you something. Dancer or Doctor?

No hesitation.

SAMMY

Dancer.

Tara, takes his hand and gives it a comforting squeeze.

15

INT. BOARDING HOUSE/SAMMY'S ROOM - NIGHT 7

15

SAMMY, CHRISTIAN

Christian is reading a heavily-thumbed novel.

SAMMY
(stressed)
Hey.

Nothing from Christian. Sammy looks around - now he realises -

SAMMY
Where's my stuff?

CHRISTIAN
I chucked it.

SAMMY
You what?

CHRISTIAN
It's in the garbage.

SAMMY
You can't do that.

Christian closes his book... he moves past Sammy and to his wardrobe - he pulls out a garbage bag full of Sammy's gear - and pushes it into Sammy.

CHRISTIAN
If I ever have to clean up after
you again, I'll get violent.

Something clicks in SAMMY's brain.

SAMMY
Is that a promise?

Christian's look - he doesn't get it. Sammy grabs the plastic bag and upends it - strewing his clothes back onto the floor.

SAMMY
Hit me.

He moves right up to Christian.

SAMMY
Hit me. You know you want to.

CHRISTIAN
(Bewildered)
What?

SAMMY
I won't tell a soul. Come on - free
shot. Go the nose... lots of blood.
(MORE)

15 CONTINUED: 15

SAMMY (CONT'D)
It'll look great. Actually it'll
heal by morning - maybe the mouth.
Yeah - nice big fat lip.

Sammy, desperate, takes the poppyseed cake out of the
tupperware container and begins crumbling crumbs onto
Christian's bed.

SAMMY
Look - crumbs - you hate crumbs.
Ooh reckless.

Christian doesn't take him seriously and leaves.

Off Sammy, scrap that plan - now he's got nothing for
tomorrow.

16 **EXT. ACADEMY/WHARFSIDE - DAY 8** 16
NIL CAST

Stock shot. Establish a new day. Taking in the Academy and
the beautiful blue of Sydney harbour.

17 **INT. ACADEMY/STUDIO - DAY 8** 17
TARA, KAT, SAMMY, CHRISTIAN, ABIGAIL, PATRICK, N/S FIRST YEAR
STUDENTS (MALE AND FEMALE)

Mixed Saturday class. Patrick is teaching.

PATRICK
Okay girls, change into your pointe
shoes. Tara, at the barre. Boy's
come into the centre.

The girls break to get their pointe shoes... Patrick moves to
the centre of the room.

Pick up a nervous Sammy as he bounces up and down - one eye
on the clock - it reads 10:15.

PATRICK
Mr Lieberman. It's just so nice to
see your Saturday face.

Tara watches as Sammy forces a smile.

As Patrick eyes Christian - slumped, leaning against the
wall.

PATRICK
Dude - I need you warm.

CHRISTIAN
I'm ready.

17

CONTINUED:

17

PATRICK

No you're not. You've been bludging
all morning.

Tara approaches Sammy who is hanging back looking sweaty and
unwell.

TARA

What's wrong?

SAMMY

Synagogue starts at eleven. I feel
sick. The guilt is eating me up.

TARA

Sammy! He's not going to buy this
again.

SAMMY

It's real.

PATRICK

Boys - form a circle.

The boys fall in.

PATRICK

Okay, we're going to break down
pirouettes a la seconde.

On Sammy as he keeps one eye on the clock. Sweating and
anxious. The pressure is killing him.

DISSOLVE TO:

LATER: Patrick moves around the boys as they practice
releveing. Sammy meanwhile is bent over. He's not feeling
well at all.

SAMMY'S POV - the clock now reads 10:30.

PATRICK

Focus on keeping that supporting
leg strong so that it anchors your
working leg, locking it at the same
height.

He looks to Christian whose leg is turning in, when he
releves up.

PATRICK

Christian... you're turning in.

Patrick moves in to correct Christian's stance. Christian
bristles at Patrick's touch...

17

CONTINUED:

17

CHRISTIAN
Are you right there?

Christian backs away.

PATRICK
Is there a problem?

CHRISTIAN
Yeah you.

Christian turns away and mutters something unintelligible under his breath.

PATRICK
Did you say something?

CHRISTIAN
This class is a waste of time.

Christian looks at him defiantly.

PATRICK
Does anyone else think it's a waste of time?

Sammy stares at the clock - tick, tick, tick.

PATRICK
What are we gonna do, waste your time, or everybody else's?

Christian turns with a surly, snarly expression and walks out.

Kat watches Christian go; intrigued.

PATRICK
Okay - let's keep going.

But Sammy is again doubled up - and swallowing hard.

PATRICK
Sammy?

SAMMY
I'm not feeling so good.

PATRICK
You'll have a rest in a minute.
(to the boys)
Now, this time, I want you to incorporate a turn.

Cut to the boys as they practise their turns... Patrick moving along.

17

CONTINUED:

17

PATRICK

Okay that's good... nice... Sammy -
focus more on your supporting leg.

But Sammy's not in a good way, he is dizzy and wobbling in
his turns ... He comes to a stop and starts vomiting.

Everyone reacts. Adlib - 'yuks'... and 'grosses'.

Abigail flicks something from her tights.

ABIGAIL

Is that... (vomit)

Patrick moves over, full of compassion for Sammy.

PATRICK

Okay sport... my fault for pushing
you. You better go wash your face.

TARA

I'll take him.

PATRICK

Thanks Tara.

Tara helps Sammy off. Patrick watches them go.

PATRICK

Someone find a mop please.

18

INT. ACADEMY/BOYS' DRESSING ROOM - DAY 8
SAMMY, TARA

18

Tara follows Sammy into the dressing room.

TARA

Are you all right? You look
terrible.

SAMMY

My stomach's in knots. I'd be sick
again if there was anything left.

TARA

Sit down.

Sammy kicks off his dance shoes - and picks up his sneakers.

SAMMY

Can't. I've got twenty minutes to
make synagogue or I'm history.

TARA

You're not still going?

18

CONTINUED:

18

SAMMY

I need you to cover for me.

TARA

This is crazy Sammy.

SAMMY

Please.

There's something about the desperate hangdog Sammy that melts Tara's resolve.

TARA

Go.

SAMMY

Thank you.

He grabs his yamulke from his locker, and bolts..

19

INT. ACADEMY/CORRIDOR/STUDIO- DAY 8

19

TARA, PATRICK

Tara approaches the door to the studio - just as she's about to open it - Patrick comes out to check on Sammy.

PATRICK

How is he?

TARA

Fine, I mean not fine. He's sick obviously...

Patrick tries to go around Tara, who backs down the corridor, blocking his way.

TARA

You don't want to go in there.

PATRICK

Maybe we should call a doctor.

TARA

Well not that sick, but pretty sick... not doctor sick, but pretty close.

Patrick looks at Tara, and smiles.

PATRICK

You know I've worked out something about you Tara - you have a total inability to lie. Where is he?

Off Tara.

20

EXT. ACADEMY/BACK OF SCHOOL - DAY 8

20

KAT, CHRISTIAN

Kat sits nearby watching Christian skate.

As he makes his run up, Kat calls out.

KAT

So are you homophobic or what?

It's enough to put Christian off... he pulls out of the jump at the last moment. His board skittles off.

Kat laughs.

KAT

Whoops! Must have touched a raw nerve.

Christian picks up his board, and starts to walk off. Kat follows him.

KAT

You need to chill out... Patrick's one of the few alright people working here.

CHRISTIAN

He got in my face. I don't like people getting in my face.

KAT

He was correcting you.

Christian keeps walking.

CHRISTIAN

I don't like people touching me either.

KAT

Must make you a fun date.

CHRISTIAN

You'll never get to find out.

KAT

Can I have that in writing?

Christian is about to go, but just as he moves off Kat grabs his arm - pulling him back, in close.

KAT

This too close?

CHRISTIAN

What are you doing?

20

CONTINUED:

20

KAT

People pay their shrinks thousands of dollars for aversion therapy, I'm prepared to do it for free... in ten words or less describe how me touching your arm makes you feel?

CHRISTIAN

It makes my skin crawl.

Kat smiles, and moves her hand, so her palm is now over his heart.

KAT

And now?

CHRISTIAN

Same.

She places her palm softly on his face. Cupping it.

KAT

What about that?

Christian doesn't reply; instead he takes her hand and gently places it by her side.

KAT

I've changed my diagnosis. You're not homophobic... you're people phobic.

Kat smiles.

KAT

It's okay, I don't think it's incurable.

She moves off. Christian watches her go - his scowl changing to a wry grin.

21

EXT. ACADEMY/WHARFSIDE - DAY 8

21

TARA, SAMMY, N/S STUDENTS

Tara sits outside on the Academy steps when Sammy returns - triumphant - he made it.

SAMMY

I was five minutes late, but I got there for the reading.

TARA

Great. That's great.

21

CONTINUED:

21

SAMMY

Dad was happy.

TARA

Good.

Sammy thinks he is off the hook. He sits down and throws his head back in relief.

TARA

Patrick not so much. He saw straight through me... I had to tell him everything.

Sammy stands up. His worlds have collided. There is no good way out. He needs to be alone and walks away.

Tara calls after him.

TARA

I'm sorry Sammy.

22

INT. BOARDING HOUSE/SAMMY'S ROOM - DAY 8

22

SAMMY, CHRISTIAN

Sammy enters and dumps his bag on the ground.

CHRISTIAN

Move the bag.

Sammy's look -

SAMMY

Excuse me?

CHRISTIAN

It's on my side.

SAMMY

We have sides now?

Sammy moves to his bed; leaving the bag in situ. And that's it for Christian - he's up and moving over to Sammy.

CHRISTIAN

I said move the bag.

SAMMY

Yeah I know... or you'll get violent... well you missed your chance for a free hit buddy - you want to have a go - I'll come straight back at you. I've had such a crap day I've got nothing to lose.

22

CONTINUED:

22

CHRISTIAN

What? Your mum forget to bake your cake?

And that's it for Sammy he takes a wild swing at Christian, but it's way off target and Christian easily steps out of the way, this enrages Sammy further and he tries a couple of ineffectual pushes at Christian, which are easily evaded.

CHRISTIAN

You done?

Sammy stares... breathing heavily. He lets his hands fall to his side, enough pathetic behaviour for today.

SAMMY

Yup. Yeah. Done.

The two boys just stare at each other for a moment.

22A

EXT. SYDNEY - DAY 8
NIL CAST

22A

The city winds down after another sparkling day.

23

EXT. ACADEMY/WHARFSIDE - SUNSET 8
TARA, SAMMY

23

The last rays of sunset light up the harbour in a golden, pink glow.

Sammy staring into the middle distance when Tara rushes up excited and sits next to him. She has a sheaf of pages printed off the internet.

TARA

Hey - good news.

Sammy looks up -

SAMMY

You've created another day in the week.

TARA

Almost. I've done some research. The Academy can't stop you from attending Synagogue. It'd be illegal.

Sammy shrugs -

SAMMY

So..?

23

CONTINUED:

23

TARA

So - go to Mr Kennedy - tell him you have to have Saturday classes off. He can't say no.

SAMMY

I need those Saturday classes Tara. I'm so behind and I've told my Dad I'm top of the class. Six months down the track I'll be even more behind... and one day I'll be kicked out of the Academy because I 'lack focus'.

TARA

You're not going to get kicked out.

SAMMY

I am the bottom of every single class.

TARA

No you're not. You're equal with me. Are you saying I should go home?

SAMMY

Of course not.

TARA

So as long as we stick together, we can nail this year. Am I right?

SAMMY

Probably not, but you sound convincing.

TARA

Close enough. Deal?

She holds up a hand. Sammy aims a half-hearted high five at her, but misses.

SAMMY

Deal.

24

EXT. ACADEMY/WHARFSIDE - DAY 9
NIL CAST.

24

Stock shot. Establish a new day.

25

INT. ACADEMY/STUDIO - DAY 9

25

TARA, KAT, SAMMY, CHRISTIAN, ABIGAIL, PATRICK, N/S FIRST YEAR STUDENTS (MALE AND FEMALE)

Monday class mixed ballet.

Tara and Kat are warming up. Sammy alongside them. Patrick enters. Sammy and Tara share a look - they're in this together.

PATRICK
Morning everyone.

He locks eyes with Christian who is studiously not warming up.

PATRICK
Mr Reed. You're back.

Christian barely acknowledges him... and then he nods to Sammy.

PATRICK
Sammy - Mr Kennedy wants to see you in his office.

SAMMY
Oh.. Okay.

PATRICK
Now.

SAMMY
Right.

Tara and Kat watching, as Sammy walks out.

PATRICK
Okay, lets get started.

26

INT. ACADEMY/CORRIDOR/MR KENNEDY'S OFFICE- DAY 9

26

SAMMY, MR KENNEDY, DR LIEBERMAN

Sammy knocks and enters Mr Kennedy's office and is mortified to see his father sitting across from Mr Kennedy. - a very solemn look on his face.

MR KENNEDY
Close the door after you Sammy.

Sammy closes the door and looks between his father and Mr Kennedy. The lies he has been telling - Saturday illness, being top of his class - are clearly exposed.

Dr Lieberman watches his son walk slowly towards the empty chair beside him.

27

INT. ACADEMY/STUDIO - DAY 9

27

TARA, KAT, CHRISTIAN, ABIGAIL, PATRICK, N/S FIRST YEAR STUDENTS

Meanwhile in the dance studio... Patrick is continuing his lesson on pirouettes a la seconde. He notices Christian leaning back on the barre - yawning.

PATRICK

Mr White? You look bored.

CHRISTIAN

Sorry. Did you say something?

PATRICK

I asked if anyone would like to demonstrate.

Christian shrugs. Whatever.

The other students fall in. Tara and Kat included. They want to see this.

PATRICK

When you're ready.

Christian starts to turn. He whizzes around, incorporating double turns into the sequence, spinning so fast he's almost blurring. He pulls his working leg back to retire, and turns around two, three, four times, and then sticks the end.

Christian's turns look to the untrained to be pretty spectacular - he even earns a scattered applause from some of the students.

It looks as though Patrick has lost face.

PATRICK

Not a bad turn, for a first year.
But you let yourself down with that
wavering working leg ... you were
fast but technically sloppy.

Kat and the others watch Christian, wanting to know how he's taking it. And by the look on Christian's face, he's trying very hard to keep his composure.

PATRICK

This time I want just one single
turn, nice and slow, controlled
with perfect technique.

It's a challenge... and Christian knows he has no choice but to accept it if he's to save face.

PATRICK

In your own time.

27

CONTINUED:

27

Christian does the move - but he falls off balance.

Patrick moves to the centre.

PATRICK

There is a reason we do the boring exercises.

He starts turning, slowly but with perfect technique. He builds in power as he executes more pirouettes. His move is more spectacular than Christian and much more technically accomplished.

He stops. Tara, Kat and the others are applauding.

Patrick locks eyes with Christian. And Christian despite himself is impressed. He's just too proud to say it.

28

INT. BOARDING HOUSE/SAMMY'S ROOM - DAY 9

28

TARA, SAMMY, CHRISTIAN

Tara watches Sammy stuffing his belongings into cardboard boxes.

SAMMY

It's over. When Dad thought I was the best, it was only barely acceptable. Now he knows I'm the worst.

TARA

But we're working on that, we're gonna be good..

SAMMY

His point is, I'm already good at other things.

TARA

But you don't care about any of those.

SAMMY

Doesn't matter, Dad's pulling me out of the Academy.

Tara absorbs that Sammy is betraying her.

TARA

Must be a big relief.

Sammy snaps his head around - he wasn't expecting that response.

28

CONTINUED:

28

TARA

I just figured it out. You actually want to leave.

SAMMY

How does that work?

TARA

You won't ever have to face up to the question of whether you're good enough.

Sammy shakes his head, and starts to move off with a box - Tara gets in his way - blocking him.

TARA

Instead you can just say "Dad didn't let me".

SAMMY

It's not my choice.

TARA

But, you said dancer not doctor.

She moves aside so that Sammy can walk freely out the door. And Sammy is about to then he stops...

TARA

Don't be like Christian... that guy, he's got talent dripping from his toenails, but he's too gutless to do anything with it.

And with that, Tara leaves Sammy thinking... as she walks out the door, she sees Christian, - she realises he must have heard everything. She moves on.

29

EXT. ACADEMY/BACK OF SCHOOL - DAY 9

29

SAMMY, DR LIEBERMAN, TARA, TARA (V.O)

Sammy carries a box of his gear out of the Academy... as he passes by the skip he takes his much hated pointe shoes and hurls them in. It should feel good, but it doesn't.

He steals a look back at the Academy - soaks it up - what he's leaving behind... and then continues...

...his pace again slows... and then he comes to a complete stop.

He puts the box down on the ground. And after making sure he's alone, he begins to dance - "Pirouettes a la Seconde" But he's awkward; it's still new to him.

29

CONTINUED:

29

Music over: Montage of Sammy as he tries again, and again to perfect the move - and then he nails it, complete balance, total control. And he stops - frozen in a moment of perfection - and the knowledge that he can do it. Sweat streaming down his smiling face.

And then he looks up to see his father. The two lock eyes.

Hold on that look.

CUT TO:

Tara stands nearby - her POV - Sammy with his dad. She can't hear what's being said as the two remonstrate with each other - mid argument.

LATER:

Sammy is perched on the edge of the rubbish skip rifling through the rubbish for his pointe shoes. Tara arrives.

SAMMY
(cajoling)
Here pointy, pointy, pointy ...

TARA
Sammy. What are you doing?

SAMMY
Looking for my pointe shoes.

Tara's heart skips a beat.

TARA
You're staying?

SAMMY
Yeah.

Tara scrambles up onto the side of the skip to hug him, sending them both tumbling into the skip. They're both covered in rubbish but they're grinning.

TARA
I told you your dad would understand.

Sammy's look says otherwise.

TARA
He didn't?

SAMMY
Not even close.

29

CONTINUED:

29

Tara and Sammy each find a pointe shoe under some rubbish. Sammy grabs them both and leaps out of the skip. He holds out a hand to Tara.

Just before she gets out of the skip, Tara notices the PHOTOGRAPH of Ethan lying among the rubbish.

TARA (V.O)
*Sometimes the things you commit to
aren't going to please everyone.*

Tara picks up the photograph and slips it into her pocket.

30

INT. ACADEMY/STUDIO - NIGHT 9
CHRISTIAN, PATRICK, TARA (V.O)

30

Christian practising "Pirouettes a la Seconde".

TARA (V.O.)
*Putting yourself on the line comes
at a cost.*

Christian stops... irritated with himself. Then he sees Patrick - he's just stepped in.

PATRICK
Don't mind me.

Patrick moves over to retrieve his water bottle. He's about to head back out when Christian calls out.

CHRISTIAN
Hey.

Patrick stops.

PATRICK
Yes?

Christian's look - this is really hard for him.

CHRISTIAN
Could use some help here.

PATRICK
No worries.

Patrick goes over to talk Christian through it.

TARA (V.O)
But if you want to be the best...

31

INT. BOARDING HOUSE/TARA'S ROOM - NIGHT 9

31

TARA, TARA (V.O)

Tara in her bedroom... pulls the photograph of Ethan out of her pocket.

TARA (V.O)

...sacrifices have to be made.

And Tara looks at it. She opens a book and lays the photograph inside...

TARA (V.O.)

...maybe not all at once.

... she slams the book shut. Out of reach - for now.

END OF EPISODE.