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Dance Academy

SERIES ONE

EPISODE 10
BLOCK 2

"Through the Looking Glass"

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1

INT. ACADEMY/STUDIO - DAY 9

1

TARA, KAT, CHRISTIAN, SAMMY, ABIGAIL, SEAN, MISS RAINE,
N/S FIRST YEARS (BOYS AND GIRLS), TARA (V.O)

Pas de deux class: Track along a line of perfectly turned out pink satin pointe shoes -

TARA (V.O.)

*Back home there's this lizard -
the Thorny Devil. It's kind of like
a chameleon...*

- ending on Tara - in flats.

Tara and Christian, Kat and Sean, Abigail and Sammy, are all doing the same choreography. They're working hard, concentrating - complete focus. We see a camera set up on a tripod, filming the class.

TARA (V.O.)

*On grass, it turns green. And then
when it walks back onto the dirt,
it's dirt-coloured again.*

Tara and Christian, Kat and Sean dance well. They get it. But Abigail and Sammy struggle, have no rapport.

TARA (V.O.)

*You can be looking right at it and
never quite see it.*

Abigail works hard to earn praise, but Miss Raine is all about Tara and Christian.

MISS RAINE

Yes, Tara, Christian. That's not as dreadful as I've seen it.

Tara beams. Dances on. The couples begin a lift sequence. Abigail's timing is off. Sammy struggles, staggers. Can't get her fully airborne. Miss Raine doesn't miss it.

TARA (V.O.)

*Here, it wouldn't matter what
colour you turned.*

MISS RAINE

I said like a gazelle, not an elephant.

Abigail stumbles to the ground, furious.

MISS RAINE

Go to the back. I'm sick of the sight of you.

1

CONTINUED:

1

TARA (V.O.)
None of us can hide for very long.

2

EXT. ACADEMY/WHARFSIDE - DAY 9
ABIGAIL, MISS RAINE, N/S STUDENTS

2

Abigail chases Miss Raine along the wharf. Miss Raine doesn't slow her pace when Abigail catches up.

ABIGAIL
Miss Raine! I just wanted to say that I see your point entirely, it's obvious that I need a new partner.

MISS RAINE
Is it?

ABIGAIL
I've taught Sammy all I can. I need someone who's at my level.

MISS RAINE
Abigail, the problem isn't just Sammy.

Abigail: what then?

MISS RAINE
He had to do all the work in the lift because you were a sack of potatoes.

ABIGAIL
Me - potatoes?

MISS RAINE
A dancer who blames her partner isn't popular in a company. I suggest you assess your own shortcomings.

And she walks off leaving Abigail - what just happened?

3

INT. BOARDING HOUSE/TARA'S ROOM - DAY 9
ABIGAIL

3

Abigail stares at her reflection in the mirror.

She might be the only one to see them, but all her imperfections are real to her.

WIDE, Abigail stands before an antique wall mirror propped against the bed. Abigail turns one way and the other.

3

CONTINUED:

3

Hating herself, she lashes out and kicks the mirror - it topples and we hear an awful cracking sound.

Abigail turns the mirror over. A huge chunk of antique frame is gone. A large crack fractures her unhappy reflection.

4

INT. ACADEMY/STUDIO/CORRIDOR - DAY 9

4

CHRISTIAN, SAMMY, PATRICK, AARON, N/S FIRST YEARS (BOYS)

STUDIO: Boys' ballet class: Patrick takes them through a difficult exercise on the floor. The class moves in synch, focused. All except Sammy - who is stuck at the barre in his pointe shoes doing strengthening exercises.

Patrick watches Christian, pleased with his progress.

PATRICK

That's it Christian, watch your placement. (adjust)

Suddenly Christian starts to laugh and falls out of the move.

CUT TO:

CORRIDOR: Aaron, through the window, makes a spectacle of himself, 'recreating' Christian's dance moves.

CUT TO:

STUDIO: Patrick's not amused.

PATRICK

(to Christian)
Friend of yours?

CHRISTIAN

(stifling laughter)
Never seen him before sir.

Aaron waves at Christian, takes a comic bow and heads off. Christian laughs out loud. We've never seen him look so happy.

5

EXT. ACADEMY/WHARFSIDE - DAY 9

5

CHRISTIAN, AARON, KAT, N/S STUDENTS

Aaron leans against a bollard, on his mobile.

AARON

(into phone)
... yeah, tonight. It's all sorted,
I'm here right now.

Kat lies on her stomach nearby taking photographs of seagulls David Attenborough style.

AARON
(into phone)
...Looking at this really ugly
chick. Unfortunate...

He's piqued Kat's attention.

AARON
(into phone)
Yeah, you're right mate, gotta be
hard going through life like that.

KAT
Hey!

Aaron hangs up.

AARON
You know, listening to other
people's phone calls is creepy.

KAT
So is loitering. Are you lost?

AARON
(teasing)
What, you don't think I belong
here?

KAT
Depends, are you man enough for
tights?

Aaron laughs - this girl has something.

AARON
Huh, I've got a formal invitation.
Visiting my brother.

KAT
Who's that?

CHRISTIAN (O.S.)
Mate!

They see Christian striding towards them.

AARON
Cheddar!

Christian and Aaron man hug.

CHRISTIAN
Aaron, what are you doing here?

KAT

Visiting you apparently, although
you don't look like brothers.

There's a moment of unease from Aaron. Christian drapes his
arm around him.

CHRISTIAN

This guy, closer than brothers.

AARON

Tear to my eye Cheds.

Kat looks between the two of them.

KAT

Well Aaron, "Cheddar".

She grins cheekily at Christian.

KAT

Leaving you to your man-love.

She walks off. Aaron looks around at the school buildings and
Kat's retreating back.

AARON

Sweet set up.

Christian waits until Kat's out of earshot to allow for
private conversation.

CHRISTIAN

So, why are you really here?

Aaron comes clean.

AARON

Gran kicked me out. Says she's had
a gut-full of me "wasting my life".

CHRISTIAN

Yeah, heard you'd been hanging with
the Longleys.

AARON

Don't believe everything you hear.

Christian sees right through it.

CHRISTIAN

I thought you were smarter than
that, we always said... (*they were
no good*).

5 CONTINUED:

5

AARON
(interrupts)
Don't worry, I know what I'm doing.

Christian lets it pass.

AARON
So you gonna be like Gran and let
me sleep on the streets?

CHRISTIAN
(smiles)
Nah, I'll lend you a cardboard box.

They smile, old friends. Aaron's obviously staying.

6 **INT. ACADEMY/STUDIO - NIGHT 9**

6

TARA, ABIGAIL

Abigail works by herself in the studio. She dances a combination of steps, grim. Repeats them. Still not working. Exhausted, she stares into the mirror. Banging on the glass wall startles her.

Tara stands in the doorway brandishing the broken mirror frame. Any vulnerability that Abigail was feeling evaporates.

TARA
This was my grandmother's. And you
don't even bother telling me?

ABIGAIL
That whiney voice is seriously
unattractive. Just so you know.

Tara can't believe her attitude. Abigail rolls her eyes.

ABIGAIL
I'll replace it tomorrow.

TARA
You can't just replace it! It's all
I've got of her's.

ABIGAIL
What do you want me to say? The
ugly mirror's broken which is
tragic, yes, but also irreversible.
So aside from me writing an apology
in my own blood, all I can do is
get you another.

Tara nods slowly.

TARA

Well I suppose... So long as you know that you can't break something and just pretend like nothing's happened. It's common...(courtesy).

Abigail makes the universal hand gesture for "quiet" by closing her fingers on her thumb.

ABIGAIL

Stop talking.

Abigail collects her things, leaves Tara with her victory.

INT. BOARDING HOUSE/Common Room - Night 9

CHRISTIAN, KAT, ETHAN, SAMMY, AARON, TARA, N/S STUDENTS

Tara enters the common room to see Christian, Aaron, Sammy and Kat playing doubles pool (Christian and Sammy vs Aaron and Kat).

AARON

(to Sammy)

Let me get this straight, they're forcing you to wear the girl's shoes?

Christian and Kat enjoy Sammy's discomfort.

SAMMY

(defensive)

It's just temporary and they're not exclusively girl's shoes.

KAT

They so are.

SAMMY

Come on, men sometimes do pointe. Character roles.

CHRISTIAN

Yeah, what about the Ugly Sisters in Cinderella?

KAT

(teasing)

Wow. Someone's been paying attention in dance history.

SAMMY

Can I borrow your notes?

They all laugh and tease Christian - Aaron feels left out as Tara approaches. To her surprise, Aaron is staring at her.

AARON

No way.
(to Christian)
Dude...

TARA

What?

AARON

(about Tara)
Lucy Gladewright. Dead Ringer.

Christian is embarrassed - starts to blush.

CHRISTIAN

No she's not.

Aaron ignores him.

AARON

This guy had the biggest crush on
Lucy Gladewright.

Kat can't believe the expression on Christian's face. Tara is also wide-eyed.

AARON

They were ten, he thought they were
gonna get married.

Kat watches Christian who looks uncomfortable.

KAT

Wait, is that a blush?

Christian wrestles Aaron to stop him talking. Aaron holds up his hands, he gives in.

KAT

(about Aaron)
I love this guy.

AARON

You gonna feed me then?

Kat takes him over to the kitchenette. Christian looks up briefly to find Tara also looking at him, he looks away. Ethan approaches, watches Aaron flirt with his little sister.

ETHAN

Who's that?

CHRISTIAN

Old friend. He's staying tonight.

Ethan's face registers surprise.

7

CONTINUED:

7

ETHAN

How'd you get permission?

Christian just laughs at him - he obviously hasn't.

CHRISTIAN

They promote you to hall monitor,
Ethan? Should get you a nice badge,
or something.

8

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

8

Abigail walks into her room eating an apple and regards a collection of treasures on her dressing table, some old some new. Some paperweights, a fan, some figurines, a hand mirror, a couple of bracelets. She runs her hands over the collection as she finishes her apple.

Some of her trophies have been displaced and are now on the floor.

Abigail throws the apple in the bin and sits on the floor to start her sit ups.

9

INT. BOARDING HOUSE/SAMMY'S ROOM - NIGHT 9
TARA, KAT, CHRISTIAN, SAMMY, AARON

9

INTERCUT WITH:

10

INT. BOARDING HOUSE/CORRIDOR - NIGHT 9
CHRISTIAN

10

ROOM: Kat, Tara and Sammy sprawl in the bedroom as Aaron holds court.

AARON

Funniest guy I know.

The others can't believe it.

KAT

Christian? He doesn't speak.

TARA

I've seen him smile about twice.

SAMMY

And one of those was a partial grimace.

AARON

Trust me. Funny story. One night...

Tara tries to be casual.

TARA
Was Lucy there?

Aaron takes a little bit of pleasure in her question.

AARON
No.
(gets back to the story)
So we get pulled over. Cop says,
why are you speeding? Christian
says, sorry mate, the servo we're
about to rob closes in five
minutes. Cop just laughs and lets
us through.

KAT
No way.

Aaron shrugs.

AARON
We were only going about five k's
over. Funny thing, same cop. Half
an hour later, picks us up for
robbing the servo!

Aaron laughs but the others are silent.

TARA
That didn't happen.

SAMMY
Why would you do that?

KAT
Guys, come on. It's obviously a
joke. Right?

Aaron enjoys their reaction.

CUT TO:

CORRIDOR: Christian, carrying a pillow and blankets, hears
the talking drift from his room.

CUT TO:

ROOM: Aaron continues.

AARON
Why do you think he's here in a
ballet school? He's got no choice.

TARA
(quietly)
Christian robbed a service station?

Aaron looks up. Christian's in the doorway, looking straight at Tara. Unhappy.

CHRISTIAN
(over, to Aaron)
Getting late.

Awkward tension. Hard to miss. Sammy and Kat share a look.

SAMMY
I should... We should... Anatomy
homework...

TARA
What homework?

Kat drags Tara out, followed by Sammy.

Silence. It drags on.

AARON
You hadn't told them.

CHRISTIAN
No kidding.

Christian avoids looking at him.

Aaron finally reaches for his skateboard.

AARON
Might get some air.

Christian doesn't look up until Aaron's gone.

Aaron skates under a lamp on the wharf. Christian comes up and watches. Aaron sees him and kicks his board into his hand.

AARON
You know I've got a big mouth.
It's always getting me in trouble.

CHRISTIAN
I didn't tell them for a reason.

Aaron is manipulative.

AARON

I thought they were your friends.
Why would they care?

CHRISTIAN

You don't get this place.

AARON

But it's only temporary right?

CHRISTIAN

Sure.

AARON

Good. 'Cause once this whole court
thing's over, I reckon we head
straight to Indonesia. Been talking
about it long enough.

CHRISTIAN

Yeah? And what if we go to jail?

AARON

Why so negative? A few more months
in ballet land, quick hello to the
judge and we're outta here.

Christian starts to buckle, Aaron sees the weak spot.

AARON

Bo's got a mate with a charter
boat.

CHRISTIAN

(sarcastic)

Oh Bo Longely's got a mate?

Aaron ignores him.

AARON

We can cruise the islands, surf all
day. Live the dream.

Christian starts to play along with the familiar
conversation.

CHRISTIAN

I hear Bali's over. Tourists
everywhere.

AARON

Heard the same, Sumatra's the go.

He holds out his skateboard to Christian. Christian takes it.

AARON

Gotta actually do it Cheds.

11 CONTINUED:

11

CHRISTIAN
It's the dream, isn't it?

Christian steps onto the board and skates off down the wharf.

12 **INT. BOARDING HOUSE/SAMMY'S ROOM - NIGHT 9**
CHRISTIAN, AARON, SAMMY

12

In the darkened room, a shadow passes over Christian. He opens his eyes, sees Aaron, trainers in hand, picking up Christian's keys and creeping out. Sammy sleeps on.

Opening the door, Aaron looks back. Checks Christian. He looks sound asleep. The door clicks shut.

Christian's eyes open. He stares at the ceiling. Betrayed.

13 **INT. BOARDING HOUSE/STAIRCASE - NIGHT 9**
CHRISTIAN, AARON

13

Christian sits alone on the moonlit stairs. Aaron sneaks back in and stops short when he sees Christian.

AARON
Mate, you almost gave me a heart attack. What are you doing there?

CHRISTIAN
Didn't know if you could get back in.

Aaron throws Christian's keys back at him, walks towards him and winces.

CHRISTIAN
Are you hurt?

AARON
(lies)
Yeah, stacked my board. Couldn't sleep.

CHRISTIAN
(about the skateboard)
So where is it? The board?

Aaron avoids the question.

AARON
Are you gonna get me some ice or what?

Christian, not believing his friend but not ready to confront him, stands up and leads the way to the common room.

14 **EXT. NATIONAL ACADEMY OF DANCE - DAY 10** 14
NIL CAST

A new day. Morning sunlight dances on the harbour.

15 **INT. BOARDING HOUSE/Common Room - DAY 10** 15
KAT, TARA, CHRISTIAN, SAMMY, ABIGAIL, ETHAN, N/S STUDENTS

INTERCUT WITH:

16 **INT. TELEVISION (PAS DE DEUX CLASS INSERT) - DAY 10** 16
ABIGAIL, SAMMY

As dancers come and go before class, Tara seagulls from Sammy's breakfast. They watch as a single-minded Abigail obsesses over the footage from the pas de deux class the day before. She rewinds one section.

Ethan is getting breakfast in the kitchenette.

TARA

How many's that?

SAMMY

Twenty three. Not including the partial rewind after fifteen.

Abigail doesn't take her eyes off the screen.

ABIGAIL

Sorry to disturb your morning Sammy but I'm not too keen on splitting my head open because you lack upper body strength.

Abigail grimaces as she rewinds the moment when Sammy dropped her.

ABIGAIL

Which means one of us has to deconstruct pas de deux and since I'll be wasting my lunch hour with Tara, this just has to happen now.

SAMMY

(to Tara)

You're spending lunch with Abigail?

TARA

Long story. She owes me a mirror.

Kat enters, searches the couch area. Gets Sammy and Tara to stand up as she moves the cushions and the couch.

Ethan watches her.

ETHAN
Lost something?

KAT
No, I'm working up an interpretive mime.

SAMMY
(to Tara, wry)
I think she lost something.

KAT
(still looking -
distracted)
My camera. And there were a lot of seagulls on there.

Tara helps to look.

TARA
Where'd you have it last?

KAT
In here, last night.

ABIGAIL
(smirks)
What, when you were talking with Christian's friend?

KAT
What's that supposed to mean?

ABIGAIL
Tragically naive. The guy thinks it's funny to rob petrol stations. Of course he'd steal your stuff.

Tara and Kat shoot a look to Sammy - the obvious source of the story.

SAMMY
I only told Abigail!

Ethan is now interested.

ETHAN
Did I just hear right? Christian's friend robbed... (a petrol station)?

KAT
(interrupting)
Yeah, but he wouldn't steal from us, would he?

Backup is slow to come from Tara and Sammy.

Kat exhales, looks away from protective Ethan. Not a great moment for Christian to enter.

CHRISTIAN
He wouldn't what?

ABIGAIL
Your friend took Kat's camera.

Bombshell dropped. Christian looks for confirmation.

SAMMY
It's missing. Could just be a coincidence.

TARA
We're not saying he stole it.

CHRISTIAN
Don't hear you saying he didn't.

ETHAN
Just get it back, yeah?

CHRISTIAN, AARON, 3 X N/S STUDENTS (GIRLS)

Christian watches as Aaron chats to some GIRL STUDENTS, showing them his skateboard.

AARON
You can have a go if you like.
Don't dancers have good balance?

Christian heads over.

CHRISTIAN
(tight, to Aaron)
Hey.

AARON
Here he is.

The girls take the opportunity to leave, laughing and looking back at Aaron as they go.

AARON
You always have this effect on women?

CHRISTIAN
Kat's missing her camera.

Aaron is silenced by the allegation.

CHRISTIAN
Pink one apparently. Seen it?

AARON
You asking or accusing?

CHRISTIAN
You tell me.

Aaron tries to deflect.

AARON
You've really lost it Ched. Those rich kids have done your head in.

CHRISTIAN
So where did you go last night?

AARON
(mocking him)
I snuck into Kat's bedroom to grab her little dinky camera, where'd you think I was?

CHRISTIAN
I really don't know.

Aaron kicks his board into his hand.

AARON
(confronted)
I don't need this.

Upper hand lost, Aaron moves off. Christian stands alone.

18 **EXT. STREET/CAKE SHOP - DAY 10**
TARA, ABIGAIL, N/S PASSERS BY

18

Tara and Abigail walk down the street. Nothing in common.

TARA
Abigail, we've only got half an hour for lunch. Is this place close?

Tara realises Abigail has peeled off - to a cake shop window.

Abigial: transfixed. Tara looks in too. Interested, but not nearly as intent.

TARA
Black Forest. I have dreams about Black Forest.

ABIGAIL

344 calories and 19.3 grams of fat.
But that carrot cake, which people
think is healthier, has 22.8 grams
and 387 calories.

TARA

Okay, that's freakish.

And kind of alarming. Abigail covers fast.

ABIGAIL

We're dancers. We have to know this
stuff.

TARA

How did you suddenly become
encyclopaedic about cake? It's not
like you eat it.

ABIGAIL

(defensive)

I eat cake. Sometimes.

TARA

I have never seen you put so much
as one morsel of cake in your
mouth.

ABIGAIL

It's really comforting to know
you're keeping tabs on my food
intake like that.

TARA

It's not like it's hard to keep
track of a few apples and a couple
of celery sticks.

Abigail, to prove a point heads into the shop.

Bemused Tara follows.

19 **INT. VINTAGE STORE - DAY 10**

19

TARA, ABIGAIL, JULIANNA

Tara and Abigail enter the store, Abigail carries a full cake
bag. She grimaces as Tara licks cream off her fingers.

TARA

How can you not eat that now?

ABIGAIL

It's called self control.

It's also not that simple but Tara's too taken by the store - a bazaar crammed with exotic treasures - to notice that Abigail is gripping her cake bag.

DISSOLVE TO: Tara bathed in the light of a chandelier, hung low enough for her to reach out to its shimmering crystals. Abigail smiles - told you you'd like it.

DISSOLVE TO: Tara confronted by an enormous, real, stuffed animal. Abigail doesn't like it either.

DISSOLVE TO: Tara running her hand along the frame of a beautiful antique mirror. She and Abigail have a moment of peace - almost like friends - as they explore the shop.

ABIGAIL

So much better than that thing in our room.

JULIANNA

It's from Europe. Like me.
(self-deprecating)
It's also very old. Like me.

Tara takes in Julianna, the store's glamorous owner.

TARA

It's beautiful. But out of our price range. Way out of our price range.

JULIANNA

You like antiques?

TARA

My Nana did. She loved that they'd had another life.

JULIANNA

Some mystery.

TARA

Exactly.

Bored Abigail sighs audibly, moves away to browse.

JULIANNA

Your friend doesn't care for old things?

TARA

She is so not my friend.

Julianna smiles and leads Tara away.

JULIANNA

Did you see this?

She offers Tara a handcrafted, wind-up music box. Awed, Tara opens it, revealing a perfect twirling ballerina.

JULIANNA

You're dancers aren't you?

TARA

How can you tell?

Julianna points to her own turnout. Takes one to know one.

Tara smiles, notices that the little ballerina has dark hair.

TARA

Hey Abigail, it's you!

They look around and clock...

Oblivious Abigail brazenly pocketing an exotic paperweight.

JULIANNA

You...evil...girls. You distract me so your friend can steal from my shop!

TARA

(stunned)

No, it's not like that. *Abigail...*

Abigail is strangely defiant.

JULIANNA

I don't think so...

Julianna hustles them toward a rear store room.

TARA

I can explain. Please...

JULIANNA

Explain to the police.

TARA

But...but...

Tara's protest is silenced by the slamming store room door.

CHRISTIAN
You got some sort of problem?

SEAN
(giving in)
No man. No problem.

Christian looks at Sean - he's not worth it.

Christian walks away. As he turns the corner, Sean calls out, taking the coward's option.

SEAN
Go back to where you belong!

CUT TO:

STUDIO: Sammy and Kat continue to justify themselves.

KAT
Kind of almost makes you think that
we...

SAMMY
Don't really know him.

They've arrived at a place neither of them really wants to be, as Christian enters the studio.

Both fall silent. Christian's jaw tightens - *them too*.

CHRISTIAN
Aaron's gone. Said he didn't take
your camera but I'll buy you a new
one.

KAT
(guilty)
You don't have to --

At that moment Miss Raine enters, all business. Sean hurries in after her. The class assembles quickly into partners. It soon becomes clear that Sammy and Christian are missing theirs.

MISS RAINE
Mr Lieberman, Mr Reed. You've
misplaced your partners.

SAMMY
They're coming. They're just...

He stumbles under Miss Raine's withering stare.

SAMMY
Late.

21 CONTINUED:

21

MISS RAINÉ
How observant. Let's begin.

SAMMY
Without partners?

MISS RAINÉ
Mr Lieberman meet Mr Reed.

Sammy turns awkwardly to a seething, retreated Christian.

SAMMY
Who's going to be the girl?
(Christian's steely look)
Oh.

Poor Sammy.

22 **INT. VINTAGE STORE/STOREROOM - DAY 10**

22

TARA, ABIGAIL, JULIANNA

Tara is on the phone, no answer, she hangs up. She looks stressed.

TARA
No answer, class must've started.

She looks around the room - how did they end up here?

TARA
What is wrong with you?

Abigail by contrast is strangely calm.

ABIGAIL
She's being completely unreasonable
to hold us here.

Tara can't believe how calm Abigail is.

TARA
You stole it!
(it hits her)
It was probably you this morning
too, no wonder you accused Aaron.

ABIGAIL
I didn't take anything from Kat.

Tara laughs, humourless.

TARA
No, just stuff you don't need from
nice old ladies.

She starts to look around the room.

TARA

Is it warm in here? It is, isn't it?

(off Abigail's look)

Not good with small spaces.

ABIGAIL

Oh, great.

Tara leans her ear against the shut door to listen.

TARA

She's calling the police.

She turns away, this is the worst day of her life.

TARA

My Mum is going to murder me.

Abigail looks around...

Sees a window high up in the wall.

ABIGAIL

Maybe we could climb out?

TARA

(sarcastic)

Great, let's just run away, that's exactly the right answer.

She looks up at the window, breathing heavily.

TARA

How do we get up there?

As they consider...

INT. ACADEMY/STUDIO - DAY 10

CHRISTIAN, SAMMY, KAT, SEAN, MISS RAINE, N/S FIRST YEARS
(BOYS AND GIRLS)

Pas de deux: The class has progressed and the students are now practising their jumps. Kat and Sean are working well together.

Sammy hesitates as he prepares to jump into Christian's arms. Christian is still angry.

CHRISTIAN

Anytime, Lieberman.

Sean looks across.

SEAN

Looks like your boyfriend wants to drop you.

Kat swats Sean across the back of his head.

KAT

Focus, dumb ass.

Christian is losing patience.

SAMMY

It's nerve wracking being this side. You're gonna buckle, I'm too heavy.

Christian gives him a look - he can handle it.

CHRISTIAN

One... two...

Sammy's lips move, counting, as he launches himself.

As Christian smoothly lifts Sammy skyward...

INT. VINTAGE STORE/STOREROOM - DAY 10

ABIGAIL, TARA

In the storeroom Abigail lifts Tara toward the window with the same move Christian used on Sammy.

ABIGAIL

It's in the timing isn't, you're not actually that much lighter than me.

TARA

(struggling)

Can we concentrate here?

ABIGAIL

What can you see?

TARA

Nothing yet. But if I can open this...

Tara battles a sticky latch.

Abigail's strength ebbs. She's struggling.

ABIGAIL

Okay, you're getting heavier now.

Up top, Tara feels it too.

24 CONTINUED:

24

TARA
Abigail...!

ABIGAIL
Like really heavy...

Abigail starts to stagger. Precarious.

TARA
Abigail...!

ABIGAIL
I know...!

Abigail folds like a cheap card table, bringing Tara down with her. A tangle of not-so-graceful ballet limbs.

Tara stops for a moment, then starts to giggle. Then guffaw. Abigail, despite herself, starts laughing too.

25 **INT. ACADEMY/STUDIO - DAY 10**

25

CHRISTIAN, SAMMY, KAT, SEAN, MISS RAINE, MR KENNEDY,
SGT. ANDREWS, N/S FIRST YEARS (BOYS AND GIRLS)

The students are all dancing together. Stopping to perfect a particular move. Christian lifts Sammy again, the ice has melted, they're having fun.

Then the room falls eerily silent.

Christian's smile fades as he turns, sees...

Mr Kennedy, entering with a uniformed officer, SGT. ANDREWS.

SGT. ANDREWS
Christian Reed?

Detached, Christian crosses, collects his stuff, heads for the door.

Kat, Sammy, Sean and their shocked classmates watch him go.

It takes only seconds, but it feels like an eternity before gutted Christian escapes their gaze.

26 **INT. ACADEMY/MR KENNEDY'S OFFICE - DAY 10**

26

CHRISTIAN, MR. KENNEDY, SGT. ANDREWS

In the hot seat, Christian is uncomfortable.

SGT. ANDREWS
Last night 2am, corner of Alison
and Belmore Roads in Randwick.
(MORE)

SGT. ANDREWS (CONT'D)

There was an attempted smash and grab on a cash machine. What can you tell me about it?

The crime confronts. Christian tries not to give anything away.

CHRISTIAN

Nothing. I haven't been outside the school all week. You can check with anyone.

SGT. ANDREWS

That's not what I'm asking Christian. We've already charged one offender, Bo Longely. He's a known associate of Aaron Dean.

Christian can't meet Mr Kennedy's look, he plays innocent.

CHRISTIAN

Did you want to speak to Aaron? He's gone. He was here last night though.

SGT. ANDREWS

Does he often stay with you?

CHRISTIAN

First time. He arrived yesterday afternoon, needed somewhere to crash. Fight with his Gran.

MR KENNEDY

You understand how serious this is?

CHRISTIAN

Should have asked if he could stay. Sorry sir.

Sgt. Andrews snorts in disdain. Christian holds his head up but can't look Mr Kennedy in the eye.

Abigail and Tara sit side by side on the floor, leaning against the wall of the storeroom. They are calm.

Abigail's cake sits on the floor between them.

TARA

I don't get it, you've got everything.

ABIGAIL

No one has everything.

Tara is still trying to work out what happened.

TARA

But a paper weight? What were you even going to do with it?

ABIGAIL

That's not the point.

TARA

Then what is? Do you want to get caught? Is it like a cry for help or something?

ABIGAIL

(scoffs)

Hardly. If it hadn't been for you, we'd be in class now.

TARA

There's no way this is my fault. And now I'm stuck in a room, waiting for the police... I deserve some explanation.

Abigail is silent. Tara leans back - she gives up.

When Abigail does start to talk, she is quiet, almost as if she's talking to herself.

ABIGAIL

I think it's about the moment I get away with it. Like I can slow down time and then take the thing right out from under their noses. I'm in complete control and, like, powerful.

Tara gives her the space she needs.

ABIGAIL

The only other feeling that comes close is...

TARA

Dancing.

Abigail is surprised that Tara understands anything.

ABIGAIL

Or at least it used to.

TARA

Maybe you should talk to someone
who knows about this stuff.

ABIGAIL

Because I'm so crazy?

Tara just looks at her. Abigail stiffens. Her walls go back
up.

ABIGAIL

Please get out of my head now.

Tara looks at Abigail's cake, the Black Forest cherry sauce
now bleeding through the bag.

TARA

So are you ever going to eat that
cake? Or is that a control thing
too?

Abigail has had enough, she gets up and starts banging on the
door.

ABIGAIL

Hey! Hey!!

TARA

(alarmed)
What are you doing?

ABIGAIL

Getting us out of here.

Christian is alone in the studio, working on his pirouettes
after class (adjust). There's an anger to his moves, nothing
is working for him. He stops and moves back to first
positions.

Aaron appears in the door with his best charming grin.

AARON

Looking good Cheddar.

Christian sees him for the first time and stops. It's clear
Aaron is trying to get back into his good books but Christian
isn't having it.

CHRISTIAN

School knows you stayed last night.
They're not happy.

AARON

Didn't mean to cause you grief.

He asks the question that's actually on his mind.

AARON

How'd they find out?

Christian doesn't like the implied accusation.

CHRISTIAN

Don't worry, I told the cops you were here all night.

AARON

Thanks.

CHRISTIAN

So where were you?

AARON

I got a call from the Longleys last minute, I didn't know... *(it was going to be a smash and grab)*.

CHRISTIAN

(over)

Right. So it was just luck that I was your alibi?

AARON

I swear I wasn't using you.

CHRISTIAN

You know, it was really cool to see you, but I should've known. There's always an angle.

AARON

Don't be like that, Cheds.

CHRISTIAN

Whole reason I'm even here is because of you.

Christian steps forward, he's been holding onto something for a long time.

CHRISTIAN

"Come help me out on something", you said. "No one'll get hurt, it's easy money, a little service station"... Then you bring a knife. And now you bring the cops to my school?

AARON

It's sweet, it'll all be over in a couple of months.

CHRISTIAN

You don't know that.

AARON

Trust me.

Christian laughs - bitter.

CHRISTIAN

Yeah that's worked so well for me in the past.

AARON

So leave. Let's ditch the lot of it. Indonesia's calling.

CHRISTIAN

(containing himself)

Nah... Not this time.

Christian turns away and heads back to collect his gear from under the barre.

AARON

That's it?

CHRISTIAN

Yeah, I'm staying.

Aaron's disbelief turns to anger.

AARON

You think they'll ever let you be one of them? Ballet boy? You can't change. They won't let you.

Christian crouches down by his bag, his back to Aaron. Finally Aaron walks out the room. As the sound of his footsteps recedes down the corridor, Christian turns and slumps against the wall.

Abigail lays it on thick. Julianna listens, arms folded.

ABIGAIL

We've got exams coming up, the pressure is intense. I just lost my head, I've never done anything like this before.

29

CONTINUED:

29

Tara watches. Can't believe it. Are they faux tears?

ABIGAIL

I'm...just...so...ashamed.

Savvy Julianna. Her eyes narrow. She doesn't buy it.

JULIANNA

You'll never come back?

TARA

Never.

JULIANNA

Go.

ABIGAIL

(pretence dropped)

And the police?

JULIANNA

I only called directory assistance for your school's number. Steal from me again, I will call them and they can deal with you.

A threat that resonates for Tara and Abigail.

TARA

Thank you *so* much.

Julianna shakes her head as Tara and Abigail rush out.

30

EXT. NATIONAL ACADEMY OF DANCE - DAY 11

30

NIL CAST, TARA (V.O)

It's dawn over the Academy as a new day begins.

TARA (V.O.)

That lizard I was telling you about comes from the desert, which looks beautiful, but is actually a pretty tough place. Bit like here.

31

INT. BOARDING HOUSE/TARA'S ROOM - DAY 11

31

TARA, ABIGAIL, TARA (V.O)

Tara wears pyjamas as she tries to wrangle bed hair. The mirror still has a crack across the glass but the frame has been glued back together. A perfectly groomed Abigail enters and starts to load her bag.

TARA (V.O.)
*We can't change colour like the
lizard but we all have our own
defense mechanisms.*

ABIGAIL
I'd give up. Just cut it off.

Tara gestures to the mirror, trying to be nice to Abigail.

TARA
Thanks for trying to fix it.

ABIGAIL
It's still ugly.

Abigail exits. Like yesterday never happened.

TARA (V.O.)
*Some of us build an armour so that
no one can get close.*

Tara gives up on her hair, grabs her bag. Starts to cross...

32 **EXT. ACADEMY/CAFE - DAY 11**

32

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

Christian sits alone, students still avoiding and talking
about him. A leper.

TARA (V.O.)
*And others grow thorns hoping to
scare the world away.*

Kat approaches with two bacon and egg rolls on a plate and
puts her pink camera down on Christian's table before him.
Off his muted surprise:

KAT
Found it wedged in the couch this
morning. I'm a bad person.

Kat sweats on his reaction.

CHRISTIAN
That couch is like a black hole.

KAT
So do you want to talk about Aaron,
or petrol stations or...

CHRISTIAN
No.

Kat picks up her camera and goes to walk away.

CHRISTIAN

But I'll take one of those rolls.

His way of forgiving her. And a big concession for solitary Christian. Kat sits down quickly before he changes his mind.

TARA (V.O.)

*But sometimes the best survival
technique is to just accept that
not everyone is your enemy.*

Sammy and Tara approach with breakfast trays. They float for a moment and when they encounter no resistance they also sit at the table with Christian.

Sammy puts his pointe shoes down on the table, they land dangerously close to Kat's bacon and egg roll.

KAT

Get those off my plate.

SAMMY

(about the bacon)

How can you eat that stuff?

He looks down at her plate and reconsiders his pointe shoes.

SAMMY

Think if I dropped them in bacon
fat they'd let me stop wearing
them?

TARA

You could give them to me.

CHRISTIAN

Leave them on the couch. It's a
black hole.

Christian looks around at his new world. For the first time it almost feels like home.

FIND Abigail. Distant, watching the friends. Longing. An untouched breakfast muffin sits before her. She checks nobody is watching, crosses, dumping her muffin in a bin.

As Abigail walks away, Tara, Sammy, Kat and Christian talk and laugh, framed by the beauty and magic of Sydney Harbour.

END OF EPISODE.