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Dance Academy

SERIES ONE

EPISODE 23

"BFFs: Best Friends Forever"

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2ND AMENDMENTS
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1

INT. ACADEMY/STUDIO - DAY 1

1

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

Contemporary class: Patrick is teaching a dynamic contemporary dance. It's athletic, infused with sweat and grit. Bodies at their most powerful. Tara and Christian, Abigail and Sammy, Kat and Sean all dance together.

TARA (V.O.)

*I came home from the first day of
Grade Two with a new best friend.*

Christian's hand reaches out and grabs Tara's, monkey grip. Using his weight, she lifts her body from the floor. (adjust)

TARA (V.O.)

*Layla Carter and I did everything
together. I gave her a pencil
sharpener. She gave me a friendship
bracelet. We gave each other nits.*

Kat and Sean spin out of an embrace and tug-of-war back and forth, their arms gripped tightly, as if they can't escape. (adjust)

TARA (V.O.)

*The following year we were put in
different classes and Layla met
Ruby Simpson.*

Abigail and Sammy break their grip and step apart. Abigail runs and leaps. Sammy catches her. (adjust)

TARA (V.O.)

*Though she tried to deny it, I knew
she had a new best friend.*

Each couple ends up face to face in a dramatic embrace. The music ends.

PATRICK

Good work.

The couples break apart as if they are finishing a maths lesson, not a romantic dance.

TARA (V.O.)

*Mum said it's natural that people
grow up, move in different
directions.*

1

CONTINUED:

1

Tara and Christian, Abigail and Sammy all individually turn and walk away from their partner without a smile or a word. It's as if the dance never existed.

TARA (V.O.)

Some friendships aren't meant to last forever.

2

INT. ACADEMY/STUDIO - DAY 1

2

CHRISTIAN, SAMMY, TARA, ABIGAIL, KAT, ETHAN, N/S FIRST YEARS (GIRLS AND BOYS)

Class is over and everyone is packing up their bags, getting ready to disperse. Ethan sticks his head in the door and addresses Kat and Tara in turn.

ETHAN

Hey. I'm scrounging around for dancers. You have a sisterly obligation. You I just need.

He smiles at Tara, almost flirting. She smiles back. They've become close again lately.

TARA

I'll be there.

KAT

You going to tell us what's it for?

Ethan shakes his head, excited.

ETHAN

Rehearsal room at six!

Ethan leaves. Kat looks around to the centre of the studio where Abigail hasn't finished working. She's practising a series of steps, studying her reflection in the mirror. She stops as Sammy passes with Christian.

ABIGAIL

We should practice that last lift.

SAMMY

I can't right now. Sorry.

Sammy leaves with Christian. Watching him go, Abigail is struck by the feeling she's the only one hurting from their break up.

Kat notices and feels a prick of sympathy.

KAT

Ethan needs dance bodies. I don't think he's picky.

ABIGAIL

Obviously. He asked you.

Kat has to smile - it's classic Abigail. She turns to leave but then makes one more stab.

KAT

You doing anything better?

EXT. ACADEMY/WHARFSIDE - DAY 1

CHRISTIAN, SAMMY, AARON, N/S STUDENTS

Sammy and Christian are walking down the wharf. Christian is carrying his skateboard. Sammy is focused on the task at hand - keeping Christian out of juvenile detention.

SAMMY

So I can come with you tomorrow.
And they've already given me
permission to go to the courthouse
which basically means... I'm by
your side all week.

CHRISTIAN

Am I allowed to go the bathroom
alone or is that a group activity?

But Christian smiles, relieved there's someone in his corner.

SAMMY

It's about keeping the eye on the
prize. Let me hear the magic words?

CHRISTIAN

Suspended sentence.

Sammy pretends he can't hear him.

SAMMY

Sorry? What was that?

Christian doesn't say it any louder.

CHRISTIAN

Suspended sentence.

Good enough. Sammy glances at his watch. He doesn't like leaving Christian alone.

SAMMY

I have Shabbat - got to play nice
with my dad - will you be all right
to... *(stay here by yourself?)*

Christian just looks at Sammy, what do you think?

SAMMY

Okay.

Sammy leaves and Christian looks around, staring out at the water. Once he's alone, we see that the confidence is an act. He's nervous about what the sentencing hearing will bring.

Christian drops his dance bag onto the ground and starts to muck around on his skateboard.

As he gets far enough away from his bag, an unknown skater (AARON) wearing a hoodie, flashes by. He grabs Christian's bag and keeps skating.

CHRISTIAN

Hey!

EXT. HICKSON ROAD - DAY 1

CHRISTIAN, AARON, N/S PASSERS-BY

The thief turns right at the corner of Hickson Road and disappears out of sight. Christian follows, on foot, pelting along the pavement at full speed. As Christian nears the corner, the skater steps into Christian pathway forcing him to pull up suddenly. Christian catapults into the skater.

Aaron grabs him and laughs. Christian realises who it is.

CHRISTIAN

Aaron!

AARON

You missed me that much?

Christian is not in the mood for jokes. He's furious, really worked up.

CHRISTIAN

Where have you been? I have been
freaking out.

AARON

Byron. Up the coast.

CHRISTIAN

Our sentencing hearing is on Friday
and you go on a surfing trip?

Aaron nods - Christian's right. He stops trying to be smart
as he looks his oldest friend in the eye.

AARON

I got scared. I just got on a bus
and...

Aaron trails off, remembering how he felt as he was running.

AARON

When I started thinking again one
thing was pretty obvious.

CHRISTIAN

That they'd find you? Don't you get
how much worse it'd be?

AARON

No, I'd take my chances if it was
just about me.

Aaron looks at Christian, mates till the end of time.

AARON

But I couldn't let you do this on
your own.

Christian stares at his friend. Deep down, he always knew
he'd come back.

INT. ACADEMY/STUDIO - DAY 1

ETHAN, KAT, TARA, ABIGAIL, N/S DANCERS (GIRLS AND BOYS)

A small group of fit dance students, of varying years, have
gathered in front of Ethan. They're in rehearsal clothes.
He's slightly nervous as he addresses them.

ETHAN

Thanks so much to all of you for
coming. I know general consensus is
that I'm an idiot for turning down
a contract with the Company but...

KAT

(grins)

Is this one of those confessionals
where you ask for help?

5

CONTINUED:

5

ETHAN

Kind of. I've been applying for choreography positions and I just heard back from Impresión.

ABIGAIL

Barcelona.

Kat stops smiling, not liking where this is going.

ETHAN

They want to see some of my current work.

TARA

Ethan! That's incredible.

Ethan smiles at her, it really is.

ETHAN

I can't pay you guys but it is a chance to be seen by one of the world's most interesting contemporary companies. I really think we'll do something amazing.

The other dancers nod, good enough for them. Tara is positively beaming. It's only Kat who doesn't seem to think this is good news.

6

INT. ACADEMY/STUDIO - DAY 1

6

ETHAN, KAT, TARA, ABIGAIL, N/S DANCERS (GIRLS AND BOYS)

Ethan's work is taking shape. It's challenging and fast paced. The dancers are barefoot.

ETHAN

That's great everyone. Abigail can I get you to move downstage?

Ethan walks down the room, so he can see it from the back. He reaches Kat.

ETHAN

(sotto voce)
Can you tell I'm excited?

Kat stops dancing and moves over to talk to her brother.

KAT

Yeah but Barcelona? You don't even like tapas.

ETHAN

It's an amazing workshop. And it's only for a year.

Kat flinches - it sounds like a very long time to her. But Ethan is too focused on the dancers to notice.

KAT

Then what?

ETHAN

I sell myself around Europe. Small, experimental companies. Work my way up.

He smiles at the dancers working before him.

ETHAN

Awesome Tara. Exactly that intensity.

Kat spots the flaw in his plan.

KAT

But you don't do poor. You don't do indie. You don't even do facial hair.

Ethan laughs. Abigail looks over and clocks the next part of Kat's argument.

KAT

Plus there are contemporary companies right here.

Ethan stops watching the dancing and turns to his sister.

ETHAN

Are you listening to yourself? You're trying to convince me to stay, when all you talk about is getting out of here.

He walks off to instruct the dancers, leaving Kat convinced he's making a mistake.

Abigail glances at her sideways and continues dancing.

It's late in the afternoon as Christian and Aaron put on their wetsuits, their boards are parked on the beach beside them. Aaron looks out at the surf, reflective.

AARON

How many hours do you reckon we've spent out here? I don't know if I'm going to survive jail.

CHRISTIAN

The legal aid guy doesn't think that will happen if we make a decent impression.

AARON

If you do.

Off Christian's confused expression.

AARON

You're the good kid at a fancy ballet school. I'm the bad influence who led you astray.

Christian's never thought about it from this angle.

CHRISTIAN

I'm not going let them put this all on you.

AARON

I know, mate. But I'm eighteen, I'm the one who took the knife. They're not going to let me out of this with a slap on the wrist.

Christian stares at Aaron. His best mate since childhood is going to jail.

CHRISTIAN

You shouldn't have come back then.

AARON

Yeah I should've.

He came back for Christian.

AARON

Now. Are you going to shut up and surf?

Aaron picks up his board and runs towards the water.

AARON

Or have you lost all your moves?

Christian watches as Aaron runs into the surf and starts paddling out into the ocean. Maybe there's one move he can play...

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CONTINUED:

9

Abigail sees straight through her hypothetical and gets to the heart of the matter.

ABIGAIL

If you want Ethan to stay...

KAT

Who says this is about Ethan?

ABIGAIL

... all you have to do is give him a reason.

KAT

Like?

Abigail rolls her eyes - how obvious can it be? She holds up a leotard.

ABIGAIL

Tara is always sneaking things into my washing. Can she really not afford fabric softener?

Kat looks at Abigail in wonder as she realises what she's getting at.

10

EXT. SYDNEY - DAY 2

10

NIL CAST

It's a new day in Sydney. The sun is shining. Joggers are running beside the Harbour.

11

INT. BOARDING HOUSE/TARA'S ROOM/CORRIDOR - DAY 2

11

TARA, ABIGAIL

Tara comes into her room fresh from the shower. Abigail is sitting on her bed, using a theraband to work her metatarsals. There is a PINK GERBERA on Tara's pillow.

Tara picks it up, surprised.

TARA

Where did this come from?

ABIGAIL

I thought it was time we started over and I wanted to express that in flowers.

TARA

Really?

11

CONTINUED:

11

Abigail turns back to her theraband. No, not really. Tara stares at the flower, wondering who might have left it.

12

EXT. HICKSON ROAD/STAIRS - DAY 2

12

TARA, KAT

Tara is walking towards the Academy, carrying her dance bag. On the path are a trail of GERBERAS in vibrant colours which she stops to collect. This is starting to get strange...

Kat arrives a few minutes behind her, all prepared for the first class of the day. She hides a smile as she sees Tara clutching the flowers.

KAT

Awww, you shouldn't have.

TARA

Does that look like a T to you?

Tara points out an arrangement of flowers on the ground.

KAT

Why would someone be communicating in flowers?

TARA

The better questions is why would anyone get anyone a gerbera?

Kat looks down at one of the gerberas, offended that her flower-choice is being slammed.

KAT

I like gerberas. They're happy flowers.

TARA

No sunflowers are happy. Gerberas are all like - look at me, I'm a gerbera. So attention seeking.

KAT

Right. Well then your secret admirer obviously has different taste in botanicals.

Tara grins, thrilled.

TARA

You really think I have an admirer?

12

CONTINUED:

12

Kat drags Tara towards the Academy, smiling to herself pleased with herself that the plan so far is working.

13

INT. ACADEMY/MR KENNEDY'S OFFICE - DAY 2
CHRISTIAN, SAMMY, MR KENNEDY, JAMES

13

JAMES, the legal aid solicitor running Christian's defence, sits across from Christian, Sammy and Mr Kennedy. He's become much more engaged in Christian's case since we last saw him and has done the groundwork to ensure Christian gets as light a sentence as possible.

JAMES

Christian, can you read your statement and confirm it's an accurate record of events?

Christian picks up the statement and reads as James addresses Mr Kennedy.

JAMES

The plan is to make the case that the robbery was out of character.

MR KENNEDY

(nods)

Christian has been a model student all year.

SAMMY

I'll vouch for that, if it helps.

James nods. Christian just sits, listening, thinking, letting everyone else engage around him.

JAMES

And he has no prior convictions so it's clear he was lead astray by bad company.

Christian flinches at this - Aaron was right. They are going to blame him.

JAMES

This should give the judge good reason to keep him out of juvenile detention.

CHRISTIAN

I need to change this statement.
(MORE)

13

CONTINUED:

13

CHRISTIAN (CONT'D)

It says here I didn't know about
the knife. I did know. It was mine.

James looks like he has just been smacked. His beautiful,
consistent case is crumbling.

MR KENNEDY

Christian, what are you doing?

SAMMY

There's no way it was his knife.
(to Christian)
You told me you freaked out when
Aaron pulled it.

Christian slides James back the statement.

CHRISTIAN

I lied. I'm sorry.

Sammy and Mr Kennedy are stunned. Christian meets his
lawyer's eye, not wavering one inch.

14

EXT. HICKSON ROAD/STAIRS - DAY 2

14

CHRISTIAN, SAMMY, AARON

Sammy walks beside Christian back to the Boarding House,
unable to believe what's just happened. Christian is stone-
faced, giving nothing away.

SAMMY

Do you want to go to juvie?

CHRISTIAN

You heard him. I'm a model citizen.

SAMMY

The knife changes everything.

Sammy shakes his head, bewildered as to why Christian would
do this.

SAMMY

We were on track. I don't
understand.

At that moment, Sammy looks back up and sees...

14

CONTINUED:

14

Aaron, waiting at the bottom of the stairs. He's holding his skateboard, too nervous to actually skate. He looks up as Christian walks over - there's expectation in Aaron's eyes.

CHRISTIAN

(under his breath)

Done. We're sweet.

Sammy stops in his tracks, watching from a distance as Christian and Aaron shake hands like brothers. His mate is lost to him and now he knows why.

15

INT. ACADEMY/STUDIO - DAY 2

15

TARA, KAT, ABIGAIL, MISS RAINE, N/S DELIVERY GUY, N/S FIRST YEARS (GIRLS)

Girls Classical: Class is underway and the girls are performing a pretty enchainment in the centre. Tara has a gerbera pinned in her bun.

MISS RAINE

Epaulement girls. Support under your arms. (*adjust*)

A DELIVERY GUY appears at the door, holding a bunch of gerberas. Miss Raine walks over and collects them.

MISS RAINE

Thank you.

Miss Raine smiles as the man passes her the flowers, for a moment she thinks they're for her. Until she reads the card.

MISS RAINE

Tara?

Miss Raine flicks off the music. Tara blushes bright red as every eye in the room turns to her.

MISS RAINE

I know we all wait breathlessly to be kept up-to-date with your love life, but perhaps this can be confined to outside of class?

Tara runs over to Miss Raine and collects the flowers.

TARA

(mortified)

Yes Miss Raine. Sorry.

Miss Raine turns away, witheringly.

MISS RAINE

Girls get changed into your pointe shoes and come back into the centre.

Tara carries the flowers over to the side of the studio. Kat takes the card and scans it quickly.

KAT

Mystery Boy's inviting you on a picnic. How sweet is that?

Tara starts changing into her pointe shoes, pushing the flowers and invite aside.

TARA

How embarrassing.

Kat reacts, surprised - she never expected this reaction from Tara.

TARA

And like I'm going to go. It could be anyone.

Kat didn't expect this response - she needs to pull out her trump card.

KAT

If I tell you something you have to promise me that you won't go? You've already broken his heart once.

TARA

(quietly)
Christian broke my heart, remember?

KAT

I meant Ethan.

Now both wearing pointe shoes they join the other girls in the centre who are warming up their feet performing a variety of steps.

TARA

(scoffs)
No way. We're just friends now.

KAT

(shrugs)
Maybe. But he did say something the other day...

Tara's eyes are wide. She's totally hooked.

KAT

I can't remember exactly, but it
involved the word soulmate.

15

CONTINUED:

15

Tara falls off pointe.

16

INT. ACADEMY/CORRIDOR - DAY 2

16

ETHAN, KAT, N/S THIRD YEARS, N/S STUDENTS

Kat hovers near the pigeon holes, watching for someone. Ethan and some other third years emerge from the studio.

Kat pretends she hasn't seen them and surreptitiously takes a postcard and a gerbera, from Ethan's pigeon hole, hiding them behind her back. She fakes surprise when Ethan appears at her shoulder.

ETHAN

What have you got there?

KAT

(innocent)

Nothing.

Kat turns to walk away, but Ethan's too quick and takes the card and flower out of her hands.

ETHAN

It's from my pigeon hole. Who's giving me gerberas?

He smells the flower and makes a face.

KAT

(irritated)

Some people like gerberas.

Kat gets back on track.

KAT

And trust me when I say you do not want to read that.

ETHAN

Kat?

KAT

I thought she'd gotten past this.

ETHAN

Kat?!

Kat squirms under his gaze.

KAT

All right. But you have to pinky swear you won't do anything with this information.

Ethan rolls his eyes at her outstretched pinky.

KAT

Tara told me breaking up with you
was the biggest mistake of her
life.

Ethan looks down at the invitation, deep in thought.

17 pt1 EXT. NATIONAL ACADEMY OF DANCE - DAY 2 17 pt1 *
SAMMY, CHRISTIAN, KAYLAH, N/S STUDENTS

Kaylah **approaches** the Academy. She's a little lost; out of her comfort zone. Confident dancers walk past. Sammy races up to her, panicked. *

SAMMY
Thanks for coming.

KAYLAH
Where is he?

SAMMY
Have you spoken to Aaron? You've got to change his mind.

Kaylah just stares at Sammy - she likes him but he's still not going to be let into their inner sanctum. Sammy gets it.

SAMMY
This way.

Sammy leads Kaylah inside the building. *

17 pt2 INT. ACADEMY/CORRIDOR/STUDIO 17 pt2 *
SAMMY, KAYLAH, CHRISTIAN, N/S STUDENTS *

Sammy **and** Kaylah **head towards the** studio where hip hop music is blaring out through the stereo. They watch through the open door for a moment. *

Christian is dancing as though it might be his last. He's really throwing himself into the dance, with an aggressive energy. Barrel turns, other complicated jumps, anything that requires enough concentration to stop him from thinking.

Kaylah walks inside. She has to yell to be heard over the music.

KAYLAH
Ballet boy.

Christian sees Kaylah in the reflection of the mirror - their eyes lock for a second. She grabs the remote and turns the music down a few notches.

KAYLAH
Thought I'd check out the famous Academy. Figured it was my last chance since you're not going to be here much longer.

She taps her foot on the ground, testing the spring.

17 pt2 CONTINUED:

17 pt2

KAYLAH

It's a great floor.

Christian clocks Sammy at the door.

CHRISTIAN

I didn't know you two were friends?

SAMMY

I'll leave you guys to it.

Sammy walks away.

KAYLAH

He's a good mate.

It's a loaded statement. Christian knows instantly what she's trying to say.

CHRISTIAN

You mean unlike Aaron?

KAYLAH

You've changed your life. He's doing the same old stuff, with the same old people.

If anything, this just makes Christian more determined.

CHRISTIAN

Right. I got lucky. You should go home Kaylah.

Kaylah watches as Christian grabs his stuff and goes to leave the studio. Reasoning with him is not going to work.

She turns the stereo back up and executes one of the more difficult, athletic moves that Christian was working on.

KAYLAH

Is that what you were trying to do?

Christian rolls his eyes. He certainly knows what she's trying to do.

KAYLAH

A whole year at a fancy dance school... Maybe I should audition?

Grinning, Kaylah pulls off the move again. It's done with ease. From there, she builds on the move, whipping off a series of different tricks. She's incredible - untrained, and so powerful because of it.

Christian watches. For the first time he feels the pang that this is what he's giving up and is surprised by how much it hurts.

18

EXT. FLOWER GARDEN - DAY 2

18

TARA, ETHAN

Referring to her invitation, Tara wanders through a beautiful garden of brightly-coloured flowers. A bee buzzes on a rose.

Tara reaches a picnic blanket. A picnic basket rests beside it and an ice bucket with a bottle of mineral water. Instead of looking as enchanted as you'd expect, Tara is feeling a sense of dread set in. Ethan's obviously gone to a lot of effort.

Tara sits down and picks up a card with her name on it. Beside it, rests one more perfect gerbera. Tara opens the card and reads it quickly.

TARA
(under her breath)
Some flowers for a flower.

Tara screws up her nose - it's a bit corny - but then plasters on a smile as Ethan approaches from the other direction. He's also dressed up for the lunch.

ETHAN
You look nice.

Ethan awkwardly kisses Tara on the cheek and sits down, opposite her.

TARA
Thanks. This is nice too.

She's referring to the lunch setting.

ETHAN
Isn't it? Really... nice.

They nod at each other for an uncomfortable moment. Both still think the other has organised it.

ETHAN
So shall I serve?

Tara nods. Weirded out, Ethan grabs the basket but as he sits back down a terrible look of pain crosses his face.

ETHAN
I think - Ow. I think I've just
been stung by something.

He's obviously in a lot of pain.

TARA
Where?

ETHAN
On my um... on my... Ow.

He's panicking as he points to his butt. A dead bee rests beside it.

TARA

Okay um...

Tara looks around and grabs a handful of ice from the bucket.

TARA

Do you want... Ice. Here.

Tara hands Ethan the ice but it slips through her fingers and lands right in his lap.

TARA

Sorry. Let me just...

They both bend down at the same to grab the ice and Ethan's head smacks Tara's nose. Now both in pain, they forget about being polite.

ETHAN

What are you trying to do to me?

Tara looks up, clutching her nose.

TARA

I don't know. Why are we even here?

ETHAN

You tell me. You invited me.

TARA

No I didn't. You invited...

It hits them at the same moment.

TARA/ETHAN

Kat.

NIL CAST

We're flying back over Sydney. It's becoming late in the day.

TARA, ETHAN

Tara and Ethan both now have ice on their respective injured body parts - Tara is holding hers in a tea-towel to her nose. Ethan is sitting on his.

ETHAN

Grape?

Ethan throws Tara a bunch of grapes. They're going through the picnic basket, eating the food that Kat brought.

ETHAN

I can't believe you were coming here to let me down gently.

Tara nods, mouthful of fruit.

TARA

I was planning to say "we work better as friends".

Ethan pretends to be wounded.

ETHAN

How is that gentle? At least, I was going to pull out the long distance card.

Tara laughs. They sit, eating, in comfortable silence for a moment before Ethan flicks Tara a glance.

ETHAN

So do you?

TARA

Do I what?

ETHAN

(teasing)
Only like me as a friend?

Tara teases him right back.

TARA

Sure. I like you as a friend.

She doesn't elaborate. Ethan studies her for a moment.

ETHAN

(flirting)
Nah. You like me more than that.

TARA

Really?

ETHAN

Don't I smell like Christmas or something?

Ethan laughs and Tara starts pegging grapes at him.

21

EXT. MAROUBRA BEACH - DAY 2

21

SAMMY, AARON

Sammy stands on the windswept shore of Maroubra beach. It's late in the day and he's been watching Aaron surf. Aaron now emerges from the ocean, carrying his board.

SAMMY

Aaron.

Aaron recognises Sammy as he approaches.

AARON

Dance school. Cheddar's mate.

While Aaron shakes the water off his wetsuit and peels it down, Sammy goes on the attack. It isn't the best plan but he's desperate.

SAMMY

I just wanted to give you a heads up. Christian's lawyer convinced him to stick with his original statement. So you should tell the truth about the knife.

Aaron doesn't believe it for a second.

AARON

And Christian sent you here to tell me this? You don't know him at all do you?

Sammy hasn't known Christian for as long as Aaron, but he's clinging onto the belief that he does know him.

SAMMY

I know he's not a coward. And I know he's loyal. That's what you're relying on, isn't it?

Stone-faced, Aaron grabs his board. The conversation is over.

SAMMY

You can't ask him to lie for you.

AARON

Mates don't have to ask.

21

CONTINUED:

21

Aaron leaves the beach but the talk has shaken him. Once his back is to Sammy, we see the guilt spread over his face.

22

EXT. ACADEMY/WHARFSIDE - SUNSET 2
CHRISTIAN, TARA, KAYLAH, N/S STUDENTS

22

Christian is walking Kaylah out of the Academy. She takes one more look up at the building.

KAYLAH

You're wrong, it's not luck. I
always knew you'd end up in a place
like this.

Christian scoffs at this.

CHRISTIAN

It could've just as easily been
you.

KAYLAH

No. It's like there's this thing
around you. Like a light or
something.

She tries one last time to get through to Christian, taking his hands in hers, forcing him to look at her.

KAYLAH

You've got to stop feeling guilty
about getting chances.

She hugs him tight and Christian finally gives up some of his defenses. He clings to her and for a moment they are just old friends with a lot of history.

KAYLAH

I love him too but you don't owe
him this.

CUT TO:

Tara rounds the corner, carrying a gerbera. Her nose is still red but she looks happy until she sees them together.

Tara stops in her tracks, every thought of her date with Ethan vanishing in an instant as she misinterprets their closeness. With a breaking heart, Tara walks away.

23

INT. BOARDING HOUSE/Common Room - Night 2

23

KAT, ETHAN, ABIGAIL, N/S STUDENTS

Abigail is stretching in side splits, reading an opened magazine and sewing ribbons onto her pointe shoes. Kat is playing pool by herself when Ethan enters. He's breathless, on an absolute high.

ETHAN

I just had the best date of my life.

Kat almost smiles but has enough self-control to play innocent.

KAT

Really? Who would have thought?

ETHAN

It was sort of awkward at first but Tara and I, together, with the flowers... She admitted she still has feelings for me and... I realised I've never gotten over her either...

Kat is thrilled. Her face is all lit up.

ETHAN

So we're running away together.

Kat looks like she's been smacked in the face. She instantly knows Ethan is lying.

KAT

Right.

Ethan's no longer smiling. He's angry with his sister.

ETHAN

Did you just want to embarrass me, one last time before I go overseas? Like your version of a goodbye present?

Abigail shoots a look in Kat's direction.

KAT

(shaking her head)
No I only...

23

CONTINUED:

23

ETHAN

You only what? Tell me Kat. You have my full attention.

KAT

(near tears)

Can we raincheck the lecture? Yell at me as much as you like, just not right now.

Ethan is stunned as Kat leaves the common room, visibly distressed. Abigail watches Kat go, seeing everything.

24

INT. BOARDING HOUSE/TARA'S ROOM - NIGHT 2

24

SAMMY, TARA

Tara is putting her gerberas in vases of water. She's still upset about seeing Christian with Kaylah but trying to push it from her mind.

Sammy enters the room, conflicted.

SAMMY

T I need your help. I wasn't meant to say anything but...

Tara looks up, sees the seriousness on Sammy's face.

TARA

Of course. Anything.

SAMMY

It's about Christian.

Tara's face closes right back up. The last thing she wants to talk about is Christian.

TARA

Then I think you should talk to Kaylah. She's all over it.

Sammy stares at her in disbelief. How can she have it so wrong?

SAMMY

You have no idea what you're talking about.

25

EXT. HARBOUR BRIDGE/SOUTH PYLON - NIGHT 2

25

TARA, CHRISTIAN

Tara finds Christian skating outside in the moonlight. She watches him for a moment - anger, hurt, worry, betrayal all building. When she speaks it's quietly but clearly over the still night air.

TARA

Why didn't you tell me?

Christian looks around. He immediately knows that she knows.

TARA

You know everything about me. Every stupid little thing.

The look of hurt on her face would affect Christian but he's got too many barriers up.

CHRISTIAN

You knew what happened with Aaron.

He starts walking away from her, Tara follows.

TARA

You let me think it was shoplifting. I didn't know it was a knife and a criminal record. How could you not tell me that?

Christian stops skating and turns on her. He attacks her to make her go away... and to convince himself he's doing the right thing.

CHRISTIAN

What do you want to know Tara? You want to know that I robbed a service station? That we scared the guy so much he hasn't worked since? Or do you want to know that for about a year I slept on Aaron's couch every night. That he was the only person who gave a crap?

TARA

Christian...

But he's not finished. His voice breaks as he tells Tara all the things he's kept from her so that he didn't see this look on her face.

CHRISTIAN

Maybe you want to know that my Mum had cancer, I nursed her. Pretty much watched her die. You want to know that every member of my family has screwed up their life and I'm probably going to do the same? Is that the kind of stuff you want to know Tara?

Tara can't answer that. Her innocent face is a mixture of shock and fear.

CHRISTIAN

You don't know me. And if you're honest you don't want to.

25

CONTINUED:

25

Christian skates away into the darkness before Tara can think of what to say.

26

EXT. SYDNEY - DAY 3
NIL CAST

26

It's a new day in Sydney. Grey and wet, not the kind we're used to.

27

INT. BOARDING HOUSE/CORRIDOR/KAT'S ROOM - DAY 3
KAT, ABIGAIL

27

Abigail walks past Kat's open door, carrying her pilates mat, dressed for exercise.

Inside, she sees Kat making cake icing in a bowl with a wooden spoon. She's surrounded by trays upon trays of cupcakes. Abigail goes to walk past but then, despite herself, doubles back.

ABIGAIL

Wow. I haven't seen you do that many since your cat got run over.

Kat looks up, a smudge of flour on her cheek.

KAT

Poor Fred. No road sense.

Abigail sits down onto the opposite bed, moving a tray of cakes out of the way. She really doesn't like that she feels the compulsion to help.

ABIGAIL

So? Do you need to... talk about it or...?

KAT

I'd prefer to express it in cupcake.

Relieved Abigail moves to go, but Kat can't hold it in any longer. She returns to her icing, whipping it into a frenzy.

KAT

But since you asked, I'm just sick of everyone leaving. I mean, I'm used to not being enough to keep my parents around, but I thought Ethan might... for a bit longer.

Kat licks the spoon. Abigail makes a face at so much uninterrupted sugar ingestion.

ABIGAIL

Okay, you have got to stop feeling sorry for yourself.

Abigail can't stand it, she pries the spoon out of Kat's hand and holds it gingerly.

ABIGAIL

Remember, years ago, all those postcards you sent me?

Kat thinks back, she does remember.

ABIGAIL

Amazing places, but you said you couldn't wait until we were both at the Junior School and then we'd be...

KAT

Best friends forever.

Kat stares at Abigail, remembering. Surprised that Abigail obviously does too.

ABIGAIL

Then you came back and decided you were a rebel and that I was a Betty Bunhead.

Abigail says this matter-of-factly, not showing how much it hurt her at the time.

KAT

We grew up. Became different people.

ABIGAIL

Yeah, but you still left me. Not the other way around.

Grimacing, Abigail hands Kat back the licked spoon and leaves the room. Kat looks around at her cupcakes, taking this in.

28

INT. BOARDING HOUSE/SAMMY'S ROOM - DAY 3

28

CHRISTIAN, SAMMY

Christian is getting ready for court. He's in a suit and trying to put on his tie when Sammy enters.

SAMMY

Here...

Sammy walks over and does Christian's tie for him. It brings the boys' faces inches from the other. Sammy looking straight into Christian's scared eyes.

CHRISTIAN

You're not going to try and talk me out of it?

SAMMY

Would it make a difference?

Christian shakes his head.

29

INT. ACADEMY/STUDIO - DAY 3

29

TARA, SAMMY, ABIGAIL, KAT, N/S FIRST YEARS (GIRLS AND BOYS)

Contemporary class: The students are scattered around the room, doing their own warm-up. Kat and Tara are stretching on the ground together.

KAT

I admit, it wasn't my best plan.

TARA

At the start of the year you were diabolically opposed to me dating Ethan.

KAT

People change...

Abigail enters at the moment and they lock eyes. Kat inclines her head, as if to say "come over". Abigail ignores this and goes straight to the other side of the room. What's happened doesn't mean they're now going to be friends.

Sammy appears at the window. He beckons to Tara to come over. They talk quietly so no one can hear them.

SAMMY

Why aren't you ready?

TARA

He doesn't want me there. And I don't know what I'd say to him.

29

CONTINUED:

29

Sammy disagrees but doesn't have time to change her mind. He leaves, disappointed with Tara, on his way to support their friend.

30

EXT. COURTHOUSE - DAY 3

30

CHRISTIAN, SAMMY, MR KENNEDY, AARON, KAYLAH, JAMES, N/S
EXTRAS

Outside the courthouse, the rain has cleared but grey clouds still hang overhead. Christian's lawyer is on his mobile phone, talking quietly.

Sammy, Kaylah and Mr Kennedy all stand in nervous silence, half watching the clock and half watching Christian and Aaron who are sitting together on the steps some distance away.

KAYLAH

Gum?

She offers it around. Mr Kennedy takes a stick.

MR KENNEDY

Thank you.

KAYLAH

(making conversation)

So you're into hip hop?

CROSS TO:

Christian is rattled, talking a lot more than usual. Aaron watches him, guilt and doubt setting in.

CHRISTIAN

After this is over, it's Indonesia.
You, me, surf. The old dream.

AARON

You don't want to go back to ballet
land?

CHRISTIAN

Don't think they'd have me back if
I've been in juvie.

It's news to Aaron that this is an option.

AARON

But... with the references and
everything? Even if you say you
took the knife, you're still going
to get a suspended sentence, right?

Christian doesn't meet his friend's gaze.

30

CONTINUED:

30

CHRISTIAN

Yeah. I'm just saying - worst case scenario.

Aaron studies Christian, wondering what he's about to give up to save him.

31

INT. ACADEMY/STUDIO - DAY 3

31

TARA, ABIGAIL, KAT, SEAN, PATRICK, N/S FIRST YEARS

Mixed contemporary: The class are performing the same dynamic, athletic dance they were learning earlier. We watch as various couples perform it with sweaty conviction.

PATRICK

Find the connection. Trust your partner.

Kat and Sean are dancing together. Abigail and Tara are also paired, their partners absent from class. Abigail is annoyed that she's dancing with Tara whose expression is blank. She's just trying to get through this morning without letting Christian inside her head.

PATRICK

Be there for them. Every time.

Tara stops mid-move causing Abigail to crash into her.

ABIGAIL

Ow.

PATRICK

Tara. Are you with us?

But Tara is frozen to the spot - torn, as to whether to go to court or not. She looks up at Patrick, making a decision.

32

EXT. COURTHOUSE - DAY 3

32

CHRISTIAN, SAMMY, AARON, KAYLAH, MR KENNEDY, JAMES, TARA, KAT, ETHAN, ABIGAIL, N/S EXTRAS

Everyone is standing, no one is speaking. Kaylah and Aaron are holding hands, gripping each other tight.

Christian smiles nervously at Aaron, he tries to smile back but can't quite manage it. The lawyer approaches.

JAMES

They've called us in.

As the others start to move towards the courthouse, Christian grabs Sammy back.

CHRISTIAN

Thanks. For everything. No one's
tried that hard for me before.

Sammy nods but then gets distracted by something over Christian's shoulder. He smiles, despite everything.

SAMMY

Check it out.

Christian follows Sammy's gaze. He's stunned to see Tara walking towards him. Not far behind are Ethan, Kat and strangely, even Abigail is there for him too.

Christian is obviously moved, especially when Tara holds his gaze. They share a moment - she's there for him. No matter what.

MR KENNEDY

Christian? It's time.

Christian smiles weakly at all of them and walks towards the courthouse door. Just as he reaches it, he links up with Aaron who looks so scared he's about to vomit. Aaron stops him from going in.

AARON

I'm telling the judge I was one the one who brought the knife.

CHRISTIAN

Mate. What are you... (*talking about*)

Aaron smiles, trying not to show how scared he is.

AARON

We're not going to argue about this. You know I can beat you up if I want to.

Christian doesn't smile.

AARON

So tell the truth, yeah? I don't want you on my conscience.

Aaron heads through the door, forcing Christian to follow. Tara watches them go.

TARA (V.O.)

My dad says if, when you die, you can count your true friends on one hand then you're beyond lucky.

FLASH TO WHITE

33

EXT. FLOWER GARDEN - DAY 3

33

TARA, KAT, SAMMY, ETHAN, ABIGAIL, CHRISTIAN

MUSIC OVER... The sun has broken through the clouds and we're over the rainbow. Another picnic is underway, amongst the flowers.

TARA (V.O.)

*The Layla Carters will come and go.
With true friends it doesn't matter
how long you're away from them.*

Ethan and Kat sit side-by-side, eating cupcakes from her picnic basket.

ETHAN

(teasing)

You're going to miss me.

KAT

Less by the minute.

Ethan becomes serious for a moment.

ETHAN

You realise, no matter what happens
I'm always going to be your
brother?

Kat smiles. She needed to hear that.

ETHAN

Plus Barcelona knocked me back
so...

KAT

What? They're idiots.

We leave them for a moment and travel over to Sammy who is approaching Abigail. She is standing awkwardly by herself.

TARA (V.O.)

*And it doesn't how many times you
push each other away...*

SAMMY

We need to find time to practice
that lift.

Abigail nods, relieved he's not still treating her like she doesn't exist.

SAMMY

How's now?

Sammy takes her hand and draws her into the pas de deux.

TARA (V.O.)

When it counts you just have to be there.

Sammy glances back over his shoulder.

SAMMY

Let me hear the magic words?

And finally we reveal... Christian and Tara sitting apart from the others, watching everything. He clearly hasn't been sent to juvie and smiles weakly back at Sammy.

CHRISTIAN

Suspended sentence.

Kat and Ethan raise their glasses, toasting this as well.

KAT/ETHAN

Suspended sentence!

Everyone goes back to what they're doing but Christian still can't completely enjoy it. He's thinking about Aaron.

CHRISTIAN

How is Aaron going to cope in there for six months?

Tara shakes her head, she doesn't know.

TARA

I'll come and visit him with you.

Christian smiles and we pull away from the gang of friends as they enjoy the sunshine. Imperfect but together in this moment.

TARA

What are you thinking about?

CHRISTIAN

The future.

END OF EPISODE.