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# Dance Academy

SERIES ONE

## EPISODE 3 BLOCK 1

### "Behind Barres"

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TARA (V.O.)  
*But here it's like everywhere I  
turn, it's a dead end.*

CUT TO:

STREETS: Christian surges around a corner, Aaron and Joel  
flanking him -

- but Aaron trips over a discarded milk crate and goes down,  
clutching his leg in pain.

AARON  
Arrrrghh!

As Joel disappears down the street, Christian hesitates, then  
jogs back to the fallen Aaron.

CHRISTIAN  
Come on!

He helps him up, and urges him on -

- but the SIRENS draw closer and we hear the SOUND of WHEELS  
SCREECHING TO A HALT, lights flashing from the off-screen car  
around the corner. Two uniformed POLICE burst around the  
corner -

POLICEWOMAN  
Hold it!

The policewoman grabs Christian and the policeman grabs  
Aaron.

POLICEWOMAN  
Hands behind your back! Now!

Christian and Aaron both do as they're told. As the police  
start to cuff them -

TARA (V.O.)  
*I'm still dancing, but it's behind  
bars. I might as well be in a  
cage.*

CUT TO:

Tara enters, her dance clothes sweaty. She's exhausted, and  
heads straight for her wardrobe, barely glancing at Abigail,  
who stiffens with antagonism.

TARA  
(flat)  
Hey.

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CONTINUED:

3

Abigail ignores the greeting and looks Tara up and down with something resembling pity.

ABIGAIL

They should just put you out of your misery.

Tara bristles, but controls herself. Abigail tucks her shower kit under her arm and exits.

Tara dumps her dance bag into the wardrobe, and lets the door hang open as she sits on her bed, revealing an assortment of photos of dance school students, including Abigail. She takes a dart from the dresser and throws it -

- hitting the picture of Abigail right between the eyes.

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**INT. JUVENILE DETENTION CENTRE/INTERVIEW ROOM - NIGHT 1**  
CHRISTIAN, LEGAL AID LAWYER

4

Christian sits despondently at a table in the middle of the room. He looks up as a harried, overworked Legal Aid Lawyer enters and dumps some manila folders on the table, along with a small plastic box containing Christian's backpack.

LEGAL AID LAWYER

Okay. The trial date will be set within the next few days. Until then, you can be released to your parents. They'll need to come and get you.

She waits for Christian to speak, but he says nothing.

LEGAL AID LAWYER

What's your mother's contact number?

Beat.

The Lawyer sighs, tired and frustrated.

LEGAL AID OFFICER

I'm on your side, Christian. You need to work with me.

(beat)

Can I have your mother's number?

Christian flexes his jaw, touchy, avoiding eye contact.

CHRISTIAN

(mutters)

She's dead.

LEGAL AID LAWYER

I see. And your father...?

CHRISTIAN

Not applicable.

The Lawyer nods, taking this in.

LEGAL AID LAWYER

Where have you been living?

CHRISTIAN

I've been crashing at a mate's place. I'll just go back there.

The Lawyer looks at him in disbelief.

LEGAL AID LAWYER

This is a serious charge. If there's nobody who'll take responsibility for you, you could be in detention for months before you're placed in a refuge.

Christian looks away, and mutters.

CHRISTIAN

I've got a brother.

LEGAL AID LAWYER

An adult? A responsible adult --

CHRISTIAN

(over, mockingly)

-- Yes, an adult. He's got a wife, a kid, a little picket fence.

LEGAL AID LAWYER

Does he work?

CHRISTIAN

In the mines. Broken Hill.

The Lawyer nods, and slides the crate containing Christian's backpack and change over the table.

LEGAL AID LAWYER

Okay. Call him and we'll make the necessary arrangements.

Christian slips his mobile out of the front pocket of the backpack and dials a number.

LEGAL AID LAWYER

Will he vouch for you?

Christian bristles.

CHRISTIAN

Of course he will, he's my brother.

A long moment passes as the Lawyer starts to fill out a form. Christian buttons off.

CHRISTIAN  
(flat)  
No answer.

The Lawyer sighs.

LEGAL AID LAWYER  
You'll have to stay in juvenile  
detention.

This hits Christian hard. He looks at the floor.

LEGAL AID LAWYER  
Unless there's somebody else you  
can call...?

Christian hesitates, then takes a crumpled letter from his back pack, and unfolds it. The National Academy of Dance logo is printed on top, a letter of offer below.

**EXT. NATIONAL ACADEMY OF DANCE - DAY 2**

TARA, CHRISTIAN, MR KENNEDY

A new day dawns. The National Academy of Dance is half in light and half in shadow.

A car pulls up at the kerb. Mr Kennedy gets out the driver's side, and a moment later, Christian gets out the passenger side.

Mr Kennedy is hoping for some sign Christian is pleased to be here, but Christian looks wary.

MR KENNEDY  
Most new students are excited to be  
at the National Academy.

CHRISTIAN  
It's probably not one of their bail  
conditions.

MR KENNEDY  
A new situation for both of us.

Christian shrugs his backpack onto one shoulder and walks towards the school.

Mr Kennedy watches. He is now the wary one.

As Christian enters the building, he passes Tara, who is heading out with a pilates ball, dressed in her sweats. Typical country girl, she gives him a nod of acknowledgement. He looks straight past her and walks on.

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CONTINUED:

5

Tara stares after him in disbelief.

6

**INT. ACADEMY/CORRIDOR - DAY 2**

6

TARA, KAT, SAMMY, ETHAN, ISABELLE, N/S STUDENTS (MALE AND FEMALE)

Kat, Tara and Sammy head to mixed ballet class, Kat looking peeved.

KAT

It's like Rumi's coughing up  
hairballs and stashing them in the  
bottom drawer.

As she talks, they pass Ethan and Isabelle, looking like a couple. Tara stops walking, and stares dreamily after them.

KAT

It smells so completely vile, I  
could just puke.

But Tara is still staring dreamily in the direction Ethan went. Kat snaps her fingers in front of Tara's eyes.

KAT

Earth to Tara...?

Tara quickly covers.

TARA

Sorry? Puke?

KAT

New room-mate. She's hoarding  
something morbid. It reeks. I'm  
living in a fog of revoltingness.

SAMMY

See. Now you miss me.

TARA

I wish we were sharing.

KAT

You and me?  
(gently mocking)  
Tara, I'm touched.

It's a quip, but we see there's an element of truth to her words. Sammy gets on board.

SAMMY

Why don't you get Abigail to sign a  
room exchange form - surely she  
doesn't want to live with you  
either.

6

CONTINUED:

6

Kat just looks at Sammy. She holds out her hand to shake -

KAT

Bet you ten bucks she says no.

Sammy shakes.

HARD CUT TO:

7

INT. ACADEMY/STUDIO - DAY 2

7

TARA, KAT, ABIGAIL, SAMMY, CHRISTIAN, MR KENNEDY, MISS RAINE,  
N/S FIRST YEAR STUDENTS (MALE AND FEMALE)

Abigail bends forward, stretching.

ABIGAIL

No.

But Tara persists.

TARA

Come on, Abigail. This isn't  
working for either of us - at least  
consider swapping rooms.

ABIGAIL

Okay...

She feigns thoughtfulness, then -

ABIGAIL

No.

She turns her back and walks off.

Kat holds her open palm out to Sammy.

KAT

Cough it up.

Sammy reluctantly slaps a ten dollar note onto Kat's palm. As  
she tucks the tenner away, Kat reacts as -

- Mr Kennedy enters with Christian, and leads him over to  
Miss Raine. Tara and Kat see him.

Miss Raine frowns - an interruption, an extra student and he  
doesn't look ballet at all.



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INT. ACADEMY/STUDIO - DAY 2

8

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

Mixed ballet class. A few moments later. Kat, Sammy, Abigail and the rest of the class are in the centre working under Miss Raine's instruction, Tara in her prison at the back of the class, working through basic barre exercises. Christian starts to warm up next to her.

He knows she is aware of him and blanks her again. Tara scowls at him and snorts air through her nose.

Christian looks at her questioningly, then shakes his head and continues warming up.

Tara mutters at him.

TARA

You're seriously pretending I don't exist? I know you saw me this morning.

Christian pretends not to know who she is.

CHRISTIAN

Sorry?

Off her grimace.

CHRISTIAN

We didn't hook up or something did we? Because you're not really my type...

TARA

(revolted)

No. Audition week, remember?

Christian deliberately looks blank.

TARA

You humiliated me because I went to the wrong change rooms...

Christian has let her squirm for long enough.

CHRISTIAN

You're the little girl with the training bra! High-pitched voice, habit of spying on guys in the bathroom. That's you right?

Tara attempts to keep her speech between her and Christian, but as she builds in intensity the students around her fall silent and listen.

TARA

Firstly, look around. We're in the same class which probably means we're the same age. Just because someone is on the smaller side of average it's not okay to make judgments about their underwear. Secondly, I was not spying. Even if I had been spying I wouldn't have been spying on you, and thirdly, my voice isn't high pitched --

But she breaks off as she realises the whole class has stopped and everybody is staring at her.

CHRISTIAN

Yep. It's all coming back to me.

**INT. ACADEMY/CORRIDOR - DAY 2**

TARA, CHRISTIAN, MISS RAINE, N/S FIRST YEAR STUDENTS (MALE AND FEMALE)

After mixed ballet class. The other students trickle out as Miss Raine gives Tara and Christian a dressing down.

MISS RAINE

In my class, I expect full concentration.

(to Tara)

I thought we understood each other.

TARA

Yes Miss Raine - we do. It won't happen again, I've been working really hard - I've been putting in an extra two hours every night -

MISS RAINE

- I can't see any improvement.

She turns on her heel and walks away, leaving Tara devastated. An amused Christian cringes mockingly: ouch.

TARA

Shut up.

They turn and walk away in opposite directions.

**EXT. ACADEMY CAFE - DAY 2**

TARA, KAT, SAMMY, ETHAN, ISABELLE, N/S STUDENTS

A miserable Tara sits with Sammy and Kat, methodically pouring little mountains of sugar all over the table.

TARA

You know it's possible I'm going to be off pointe and chained to the barre forever? Fifty thousand years from now, aliens will find my skeleton and even they will know I am the loser of the Academy.

Sammy and Kat are amused by her dramatics.

KAT

But they'll also be impressed with your lack of bunions.

But before Sammy and Kat can reassure her further, their attention is grabbed by raised voices across the cafe, belonging to -

- Ethan and Isabelle, who are in an emotionally charged argument.

ETHAN

I'm sorry -

ISABELLE

- You can't be serious! You're seriously breaking up with me?

ETHAN

Look, it's not you. It's me. It just... doesn't feel right.

ISABELLE

So how does this feel?

Isabelle scoops up a milk shake from their table and throws it all over him, then storms back through the café, pausing as she sees Kat.

ISABELLE

What is with your brother? Why does he do this?

Kat holds up a hand.

KAT

You knew the ground rules. Don't dump your toxic waste on me.

ISABELLE

(over)

- you'd tell me if he liked someone else wouldn't you?!

On Tara, the comment hitting her like a truck. She gulps, and looks longingly across at Ethan, who is cleaning milk shake off himself with a paper napkin. He looks up, catching her watching him, and gives her a rueful, sheepish look.

Sammy watches Tara's every move as Isabelle continues accosting Kat.

ISABELLE

Please Kat, I need to know. You've got to talk to him for me.

She moves towards Kat for a hug, but Kat holds her arm up, blocking her.

KAT

(cold)

Three words, Isabelle. "Told you so."

Kat folds her arms, freezing Isabelle out. Isabelle straightens and walks away.

ISABELLE

You Karamakovs are a chip off the same iceberg.

Kat heads for a vending machine.

KAT

I need to go eat my feelings.

As she leaves, Sammy stares at Tara.

SAMMY

No... What was that?

TARA

What?

He means the way she was looking at Ethan.

SAMMY

(sotto)

You like him!

TARA

No I don't. That's just ... (oh no, caught!)

Tara blushes.

SAMMY

(sotto)

Tara! You can not go there.

TARA

Really?

SAMMY

Uhh - hello? Did you not see Kat regurgitate Isabelle just now?

TARA

It'd be different if it was me.

SAMMY

You're deluded.

Tara just gives him a helpless, lovesick look.

TARA

We'd be ... sort of ... sisters.

Sammy: Not believing her for a second.

SAMMY

Uh huh.

He stands: you're coming with me.

**EXT. ACADEMY/WHARFSIDE/STAIRS - DAY 2**

TARA, SAMMY

Sammy and Tara sit on the stairs, Tara's laptop open on Sammy's lap.

SAMMY

When Marny went on exchange we ...

TARA

This is Marny, your imaginary girlfriend?

Sammy ignores the jibe.

SAMMY

We wrote up the pros and cons of a long distance relationship. It clarified our feelings.

Tara looks dubious. Sammy ploughs on talking as he types -

SAMMY

(typing)  
Ethan Karamakov.  
(to Tara)  
Okay, lets start with cons.  
(types)  
Kat.

TARA

I really don't think she'd mind.

Sammy shakes his head.

SAMMY

You mean how she "didn't mind" with Isabelle? Any more cons?

TARA

Well, I guess it's distracting. I should be concentrating on dancing.

Sammy types this in, then looks up.

SAMMY

I'm putting that first, where it should be. What else you got?

TARA

The first time I spoke to him I was so nervous I swear that a little vomit came up in my mouth.

SAMMY

Gross.

TARA

But ...

Tara tilts her head back against the wall, smiling the way lovesick people do. She sighs deeply.

TARA

... he also changes the way my heart beats.

SAMMY

That could be a common arrhythmia.

TARA

It's not a -- whatever that is.

Sammy looks unconvinced, but types as Tara continues.

TARA

When he's walking, he never looks back. Like he knows exactly where he's going and that everyone is following.

Sammy dutifully continues typing.

KAT, ABIGAIL

Kat knocks on Tara's door, and Abigail answers.

ABIGAIL

What?

KAT

Oh, I just thought I'd swing by and see if we could brush each other's hair.

Abigail is not amused.

ABIGAIL

Tara's not here.

She goes to close the door on Kat, but Kat sticks her boot in the door jamb.

KAT

Why are you doing this? Are you such a desperado that you have to hold people captive?

She shoves a form through the gap in the door.

KAT

Tara doesn't want to room with you, so just sign the form.

Abigail doesn't even glance at the form. She opens the door further, looking coolly at Kat, and smiles mildly.

ABIGAIL

Has it occurred to you that the reason I won't change rooms is because you want me to?

On Kat: ouch.

Abigail closes the door in Kat's face.

TARA, KAT, SAMMY

Tara has moved to the step above Sammy watching him type.

TARA

He smells like Christmas.

SAMMY

I swear, a little bit of vomit just came up in my mouth.

Tara: You're not funny.

SAMMY

That can go down as a con.

TARA

It's a pro!

Sammy and Tara consider the completed list for a moment.

SAMMY

I guess we can both at least agree on what this list proves.





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CONTINUED:

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With her back to Tara, Abigail reacts with distaste at an old-fashioned mirror hanging on the wall. But she turns to Tara, expressionless.

ABIGAIL

(dead-pan)

Of course - it's your room, too.

She goes to the kitsch old mirror and starts re-touching her make-up.

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**INT. ACADEMY/STUDIO - NIGHT 2**

15

CHRISTIAN, ETHAN, MR KENNEDY, ISABELLE

A sweaty Ethan has finished up a solo practice session, and towels off. He looks up as Mr Kennedy enters, a reluctant Christian a couple of steps behind.

MR KENNEDY

Ethan. I want to introduce  
Christian. He's just joined us.

Christian and Ethan give each other a minimal nod of acknowledgement.

MR KENNEDY

I'd like him to look to you as a  
mentor of sorts.

(to Christian)

Ethan's in third year. I'm sure  
he'll be happy to answer any  
questions.

He leaves them with a nod, and exits.

An awkward beat.

ETHAN

So. What do you want to know?

Christian shrugs.

CHRISTIAN

Nothing.

As Ethan screws his towel up and shoves it into his bag, Christian slouches against the mirrors.

ETHAN

Look, forget the mentor thing. It's  
a stupid word. Let's just call it  
'mates.'

CHRISTIAN

I already have mates.

Beat. They're interrupted as a strained Isabelle enters.

ISABELLE  
 (holding tight emotions)  
 Ethan. Can I speak to you please?  
 Alone.

Ethan sighs and follows her out of the studio, and we hear sotto grabs of their conversation -

ETHAN (O.S.)  
 What's up?

ISABELLE (O.S.)  
 This whole thing makes no sense. I  
 want to know what I did to you that  
 was so bad?

Meanwhile, Christian glances down at Ethan's bag, which is open, a leather wallet visible on top of some other belongings.

ETHAN (O.S.)  
 (rehearsed)  
 Isabelle. I'm a guy who needs a lot  
 of space. This just doesn't feel  
 right.

ISABELLE (O.S.)  
 Which part doesn't feel right?  
 Which part exactly?

Christian leans down and slips the wallet from the bag. He takes a couple of notes leaving the rest in the wallet.

ETHAN (O.S.)  
 Look, just hang on.

Christian is just about to put the wallet back as Ethan comes in. He quickly conceals it.

ETHAN  
 This is gonna take longer than I  
 thought.

He zips his bag closed and exits -  
 - leaving Christian holding the wallet.

16 **INT. BOARDING HOUSE/TARA'S ROOM - DAY 3** 16  
 TARA, KAT, SAMMY

INTERCUT WITH:

17 **INT. BOARDING HOUSE/TARA'S ROOM - DAY 3** 17  
 ABIGAIL

Kat holds up a stick of deodorant to Tara.

KAT

Observe.

She rolls the deodorant on the carpet.

FLASH TO:

Abigail inspects the deodorant, which has spindly bits of hairlike fluff all over it.

Without even blinking, she drops the deodorant in the bin and opens her dresser drawer, revealing an impressive stock of personal supplies, including a neat row of spare, new deodorants. She selects one.

FLASH TO:

Kat quickly swipes a pink razor up the hairy leg of a baffled Sammy.

FLASH TO:

Abigail inspects the curlies on the razor.

She pops the razor head into the bin, opens her stockpiled drawer and clicks on a new one. Not even slightly rattled.

FLASH TO:

**INT. BOARDING HOUSE/TARA'S ROOM - DAY 3**

TARA, KAT, ABIGAIL

Later. Tara squeezes a dose of toothpaste onto her toothbrush as Kat paces, confused.

KAT

Maybe we need to crank the sabotage up a notch. Find a weakness and target it - really hit her where it hurts.

She is interrupted as Abigail enters and speaks to Tara.

ABIGAIL

(feigning regret)

Tara... you probably shouldn't use that on your teeth.

Tara pauses.

ABIGAIL

Since you felt comfortable enough to use my toiletries, I didn't think you'd mind if I used that brush to clean my toenails.

Tara gags. Abigail puts one bare foot up on the edge of the bed, and inspects her toes.

ABIGAIL

They came up really well...

She turns on her heel, grabs her dance bag and exits.

As Tara washes her mouth out, Kat's eyes narrow.

KAT

(impressed)

She's good.

**INT. ACADEMY/STUDIO - DAY 3**

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

Patrick is taking mixed contemporary class, Miss Raine observes the class.

Tara bounces on her toes keeping warm and keen as Kat takes her turn performing a sequence of leaps from the corner.

Christian slouches against a wall, but the moment Kat finishes he steps forward and performs the same sequence, higher and more graceful. The students are surprised and impressed.

PATRICK

(also surprised)

Good natural elevation.

Christian just gives him a nod of acknowledgement.

Tara is next. Her leaps are low and awkward. Unfortunately the sequence lands her near Miss Raine whose face reveals how unimpressed she is.

Tara makes her way to the side, completely exasperated with herself.

PATRICK

That's it everyone. I'll see you tomorrow.

(to Christian)

Nice jumps. Stick around, I'll run you through the beats.

But Christian just walks out of the studio, ignoring Patrick.

Miss Raine passes Tara, a grim look on her face. Tara watches her go - she's never going to impress this woman.

Kat and Sammy approach Tara.

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CONTINUED:

19

KAT

Come on T.

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**EXT. HARBOUR BATHS - SUNSET 3**

20

TARA, KAT, SAMMY, N/S HARBOUR BATHS PATRONS

It is sunset. Kat, Sammy and Tara approach the baths, carrying towels.

KAT

No bombing, no posing, no sashaying. And avoid the high tide mark. It's where we bury the bodies of those who give away the secret location.

Tara has a quiet word with Sammy.

TARA

See? She's bringing us to her getaway place! I bet she never brought Isabelle here.

Sammy just shakes his head.

SAMMY

You're going down in flames, Tara.

They push through the turnstile. As they try to find a place to dump their stuff -

TARA

So Kat, this morning with Isabelle. Did you not like her?

KAT

No way. She's a peach. We used to be like that.

She holds up two crossed fingers.

KAT

But Ethan was a deal breaker. Practically every friend I've ever had has fallen for him, it's pathetic.

She pulls her shirt off in one motion. Tara and Sammy strip to their swimmers.

KAT

I warn them about him - tell them he'll be a regular prince charming until he gets bored, and then he'll dump them in a nanosecond. So what happens? They do it anyway.

Tara pales, and Sammy cringes in sympathy, as Kat looks out to the beckoning water and drops her shorts.

KAT

And I'm expected to open my arms  
and let them snot all over me. No  
thanks.

She dives into the water, and Sammy and Tara exchange a pained look. Kat surfaces and swims back to the edge.

KAT

Coming in?

TARA

Kat?

Sammy's face registers alarm.

KAT

What?

Tara hesitates, then -

TARA

(blurts)  
Karaoke.

KAT

(confused)  
Karaoke? I hate karaoke.

TARA

Exactly my point - everybody hates  
karaoke. Including Abigail.

Kat starts to nod slowly, grinning.

KAT

You, my friend, are a genius.  
Karaoke! In your dorm room! The  
perfect torture.

She shakes her head in admiration, and looks to Sammy -

KAT

I'm glad she's on my side.

Tara forces a smile, and Kat grabs her by the wrist, pulling her into the water.

The city lights glimmer, reflecting on the harbour as a ferry chugs through the still waters, the voices of partying city people wafting through the air.

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INT. ACADEMY/STUDIO - NIGHT 3

22

TARA, ETHAN, TARA (V.O)

Alone in the studio, Tara is at work. Her hand rests on the barre.

She starts to move, again working on basic technique.

DISSOLVE INTO: Later, Tara still working hard on basic technique... (a series of developpes).

...And more technique...

...And more technique, Tara sweating from the effort of precise control.

DISSOLVE into another controlled technique, Tara's exhausted legs quivering now. She's totally spent.

She lets her hand fall from the barre, and crumples onto the floor in a sweaty, messy heap, completely wrung out.

But she startles as -

- Ethan enters.

ETHAN

Oh - sorry. I'm just looking for my wallet.

He scans the studio surrounds, but his eyes settle on Tara. He reacts as he sees she's a mess.

ETHAN

Hey, are you okay?

TARA

Oh, yeah. Well, no. Well, sort of.

She tucks a stray strand of hair behind her ear, shy.

TARA (V.O.)

*Excellent opening, Tara.*

TARA

I mean... I'd be better if Miss Raine would get off my back, but apart from that...

TARA (V.O.)

*Shut up Tara.*

TARA

... oh, and of course I'm just terrified that I'll never be good enough, no matter how hard I try...

TARA (V.O.)  
Really! Shut up now!

TARA  
...and my roommate's making my life  
absolute hell...

Beat. Tara blushes.

TARA  
Sorry. I'm fine.

Finally, she shuts up.

ETHAN  
Don't worry. Everyone goes through  
this. Here...

He holds out his hand to help her up. She nervously takes it,  
and gets to her feet.

ETHAN  
I've got a few minutes. I'll take  
you through the developpes.

TARA  
Really?  
(controls herself)  
I mean... as long as you don't  
mind.

Ethan smiles - casual, self-possessed, knowing exactly who he  
is. Tara melts as Ethan peels off his jumper.

**INT. BOARDING HOUSE/TARA'S ROOM - NIGHT 3**  
KAT, SAMMY, ABIGAIL

Kat and Sammy have set up the karaoke and are indeed terrible  
singers, using Tara's bed as a stage.

KAT  
(singing)  
Does he love me, I wanna know-oo-  
oh.... (ADJUST)

SAMMY  
(singing)  
How can I tell if he loves me  
so.... (ADJUST)

Abigail enters in her pyjamas, and barely reacts. Kat jumps  
off the bed, crooning at Abigail.

KAT  
(singing)  
Is it in his eyes...? (ADJUST)



She holds the mic out to Abigail.

KAT

Come on, Abigail, sing it with me.  
Is it in his sighs...? (ADJUST)

Abigail just smiles distastefully.

ABIGAIL

No thanks.

She puts in her ear plugs, slips on her eye mask and gets into bed, as -

KAT/SAMMY

If you wanna know, if he loves you  
so, it's in his kiss... (ADJUST)

Abigail rolls over and goes to sleep. The music ends abruptly.

TARA, ETHAN, KAT

Tara and Ethan walk out of the studio together.

TARA

Thanks for your help, it was really  
... helpful. Really.

ETHAN

No trouble. I'll see you round?

Tara nods, smiling, and Ethan heads off, Tara staring after him as he disappears into the darkness.

She startles as -

- Kat pounces on her from another direction.

KAT

Where have you *been*? We've been  
singing soppy love songs at Abigail  
for an hour and it failed  
completely.

TARA

Oh - sorry, I just umm, lost track  
of time.

Tara glances in the direction Ethan went to make sure he's gone, knowing that one second earlier, Kat would have sprung her with Ethan.

Kat senses that something's wrong.

KAT  
Something wrong?

TARA  
No - no, nothing.

Kat links her arm through Tara's.

KAT  
I hate seeing you so unhappy, T.

She leads her back towards the dorm.

KAT  
But don't worry. I've got a  
perfectly sadistic way to fix it.

She grins mischievously.

**EXT. NATIONAL ACADEMY OF DANCE - DAY 4**  
N/S STUDENTS

Students stream towards the Academy entrance from both sides of the wharf.

**INT. BOARDING HOUSE/CORRIDOR - DAY 4**  
KAT, ABIGAIL, ABIGAIL (O.S)

INTERCUT WITH:

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

Kat loiters in the corridor. As Abigail rounds the corner with her wet towel over her shoulder, Kat presses her mobile to her ear.

KAT  
She's on the move.

CUT TO:

TARA'S ROOM: Abigail enters. Tara is still lounging around.

ABIGAIL  
Taking your time? You of all people  
can't afford to be late.

Abigail places her phone and key on the bed, and goes over to the cupboard to get out her pullover.

TARA  
I'd better get a move on, then.

Tara surreptitiously swipes Abigail's phone and key and slips out the door.

Abigail turns back to pick up her key and mobile phone, and reacts as she sees it's gone -

ABIGAIL

Hey!

- Just as the door closes behind Tara.

CUT TO:

CORRIDOR: Kat secures an external lock with an OLD FASHIONED KEY.

KAT

(grinning)

Perfect.

Abigail pounds on the door.

ABIGAIL (O.S.)

What do you think you're doing!?  
Open the door!

KAT

(mockingly)

Abigail - is that you in there?

Abigail bangs on the door.

ABIGAIL (O.S.)

Let me out!

KAT

It's not like you to be late for  
Miss Raine's class...

ABIGAIL (O.S.)

I mean it, Kat, open the door!

KAT

Don't worry, I'm willing to unlock  
this door and help you maintain  
your sickeningly perfect attendance  
record.

She slides the room change form under the door.

KAT

All you have to do is sign on the  
dotted line.

Immediately, the form is slipped back under the door.

ABIGAIL (O.S.)

Not in this lifetime.

27

CONTINUED:

27

Kat shrugs and slides the form under the door again.

28

INT. ACADEMY/CORRIDOR/MR KENNEDY'S OFFICE - DAY 4  
CHRISTIAN, MR KENNEDY (O.S)

28

Christian knocks quietly on a closed office door.

MR KENNEDY (O.S.)

Come in...

29

INT. ACADEMY/MR KENNEDY'S OFFICE - DAY 4  
CHRISTIAN, MR KENNEDY

29

Mr Kennedy has an enrolment form in front of him on the desk. Christian slouching in a chair opposite, again drumming his fingers on the chair arms.

MR KENNEDY

I had a long talk to your lawyer,  
you're facing jail time.

Long beat.

MR KENNEDY

She believes your only chance is to  
show the court you've turned your  
life around.

CHRISTIAN

Yeah. I know. An apprenticeship or  
something.

MR KENNEDY

What she said to me was ...

Mr Kennedy reads from his hand written notes.

MR KENNEDY

Proven commitment to training for  
an elite career in dance would be  
compelling evidence that Christian  
would benefit from a non-custodial  
sentence.

Christian looks away.

MR KENNEDY

This could be your ticket to  
freedom.

Christian slips a bus ticket out of his pocket.

CHRISTIAN

Yeah, well this is my ticket to  
Broken Hill.

Mr Kennedy sits back, disappointed.

MR KENNEDY

You got through to your brother,  
then?

Christian shakes his head - no.

MR KENNEDY

Keep trying. You don't want to  
commit to the Academy, and that's  
your decision.

(gently)

But we're not a refuge service.

CHRISTIAN

I've run out of credit. He'll call  
me back as soon as he gets my  
missed calls -

MR KENNEDY

(over)

- Here.

Mr Kennedy slides his land line phone across the desk.

MR KENNEDY

Go ahead.

CHRISTIAN

No, it's okay. He probably won't  
answer a number he doesn't know.

MR KENNEDY

Worth a shot though, right?

Christian hesitates, but Mr Kennedy busies himself with some  
paperwork.

Christian takes the phone, and swivels the chair around,  
facing away from Mr Kennedy.

He dials a number from memory, not expecting any answer.

But he reacts as the call gets through.

CHRISTIAN

(to phone; surprised)

Drew - hey, it's me. Christian -  
yeah I've been trying to call, I'm  
coming to stay...

(listens)

...yeah, yeah, I know, I won't  
cause any trouble...

(listens)

...yeah, I know, don't worry, I'm  
great with kids... well I'll  
learn...

(MORE)

29

CONTINUED:

29

CHRISTIAN (CONT'D)

(listens)

Yeah, but...

(sotto voce)

...It wouldn't be forever.

(listens)

Nah. All good. Yeah. Later.

He hangs up, and stares at the floor, shell-shocked. It is a long time before he lifts his eyes to Mr Kennedy.

30

INT. ACADEMY/CORRIDOR/MR KENNEDY'S OFFICE - DAY 4

30

CHRISTIAN, ETHAN

Christian exits Mr Kennedy's office and walks slowly down the corridor, staring at the floor. But he's ripped out of frame -

- and slammed into a bank of lockers. Ethan.

ETHAN

My wallet?

Christian mutters.

CHRISTIAN

Dunno what you're talking about.

Ethan goes to slam him again, but -

CHRISTIAN

I wouldn't do that again if I were you "mate."

Ethan ignores this and goes in for the kill, but Christian gets the upper hand and turns the tables, slamming Ethan up against the lockers.

CHRISTIAN

I tried to warn you.

Ethan isn't intimidated.

ETHAN

You want my advice, you're never gonna fit in. And it's clear you don't want to be here. So go back to whatever rat-hole you crawled out of and everybody's happy.

Beat.

Christian smiles coldly, and shrugs. No interest in Ethan's opinion.

He lets Ethan go with casual disdain, takes Ethan's wallet from his backpack and hands it to him.

CHRISTIAN

There's some cash missing. I can  
give it back, I just need to return  
-- (some tickets).

ETHAN

(over)  
- forget it. I don't want the  
money.

He takes the wallet and does some alpha male eye contact.

ETHAN

But you owe me.

He holds the stare for a beat -

- then walks away.

31 **INT. BOARDING HOUSE/SAMMY'S ROOM - DAY 4**

31

CHRISTIAN

Christian sits on his bed, silent. He looks at his bus  
ticket, still shell-shocked.

He tacks the ticket to the pin-board on his side of the room,  
and lays back on the bed, staring into space.

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

32

ABIGAIL

Abigail is typing an SOS email on Tara's computer. She talks  
as she types with one very slow finger.

ABIGAIL

S.O.S. --

But she breaks off as she sees:

ABIGAIL

Ethan?

ABIGAIL'S POV: a document titled "Ethan" on Tara's desktop.  
She double-clicks the icon.

33 **INT. ACADEMY/STUDIO - DAY 4**

33

TARA, KAT, N/S FIRST YEAR STUDENTS (MALE AND FEMALE)

Tara warms up next to Kat, regret setting in.

TARA

I can't do this, Kat. It's not  
right - I can't stoop to her level.

KAT

Relax, I'll stoop for both of us.

Beat.

TARA

I've got to let her out.

Kat turns to Tara exaggeratedly.

KAT

On a meanness scale of one to  
Abigail this isn't even a seven.

Tara smiles, but heads out.

KAT

(calls after Tara)

You are no fun.

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

TARA, ABIGAIL

We hear somebody unlocking the door, as Abigail clicks the  
'attach' button on a mass email entitled "SOS."

Tara enters, apologetic.

TARA

I'm really sorry, Abigail.

Abigail clicks 'send' and stands.

ABIGAIL

Don't be.

She tears up the room exchange form and walks out, letting  
the pieces drift down and settle around Tara's feet.

**INT. ACADEMY/STUDIO - DAY 4**

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

INTERCUT WITH:

**INT. ACADEMY/CORRIDOR (CONTINUOUS) - DAY 4**

TARA, N/S STUDENTS (MALE AND FEMALE), TARA (V.O)

STUDIO: Sammy and Kat are laughing together, as a BEEP gets  
Sammy's attention.

Still grinning, he plucks his phone from his backpack, and  
opens the attached email.

His smile fades.



Kat reacts as she sees this.

KAT

What?

Sammy just looks at her with dread.

Kat takes the phone from his hand. As she reads we hear:

TARA (V.O.)

*Ethan Karamakov, by Tara Webster.  
Pros...*

CUT TO:

CORRIDOR:Tara heads back down the long hallway, passing clusters of amused students, all crowded around phones. Some of them glance at her with recognition as they laugh.

TARA (V.O.)

*When he's around the whole world  
goes blurry but he's always in  
sharp focus, 'cause he kind of just  
knows who he is... the way the rest  
of us are just pretending.*

Tara turns into the studio...

...where her fellow dance students are similarly crowded around their gadgets.

TARA (V.O.)

*The way he eats, the way he talks  
about things... real things and...  
he smells like Christmas.*

A pale Sammy cringes as he sees Tara enter, Kat still reading  
-

TARA (V.O.)

*Negatives. I need to concentrate on  
dancing. And Kat ...*

A baffled Tara reacts as Kat shoves Sammy's phone into her hand, letting her read the email.

KAT

So I'm a negative, huh? That's good to know, Tara.

Tara pales, and starts babbling, in damage control.

TARA

Wait - Kat ... (I can explain)

KAT

(over)  
No - don't. Just don't.

She goes to the centre and continues her warm-ups.

A pale Tara turns to Sammy, baffled.

SAMMY

(gently)

Abigail. She emailed your pros and  
cons to the whole school.

In disbelief, Tara turns to look at Abigail, who is at the barre beginning her stretching routine as if nothing has happened.

Every other student is focused on Tara and her humiliation.

Christian looks over, bemused. Tara ignores him.

And she is alone, her place in the world uncertain - her secrets revealed to everyone.

This truly is a strange and new place.

END OF EPISODE.