

THE BIG LEAP

Written by

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OVER BLACK:

ROWDY APPLAUSE that gets LOUDER as Wiz Khalifa's BLACK AND YELLOW starts.....

CARD ONSCREEN: MICHIGAN STATE DANCE TEAM FINALS 2012

INT. CESAR CHAVER HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

The CROWD is going crazy for TWENTY DANCERS - black jeans, high tops and T-shirts - doing an energetic hip hop number. They are AWESOME - hard hitting, detail oriented, precise, raunchy and SO MUCH FUN.

ANNOUNCERS VOICE

We saved the best for last. WOW.
Returning champs Caesar Chavez
Academy High School from right here
in Detroit are crushing this.

GABBY TAYLOR, 17 is featured, big hoop earrings, ferocious energy and charisma, a spectacular dancer. Gabby is also heavier than she wants to be.

ANNOUNCERS VOICE (CONT'D)

That is Senior Gabby Taylor, the heart and soul of this team. She's got a bright future in front of her, headed to NYU on a dance scholarship. She choreographed this with Co-Captain Justin Reyes. These two have been dancing together for years now.

JUSTIN REYES 17, tall, sweet and gangly is Gabby's boyfriend, also featured heavily, also a terrific dancer. We watch Justin and Gabby dance together: So much chemistry! The end is a spectacular lift but it's Gabby's friend, KEISIA, stick thin, who gets the star move. Massive applause!

ANNOUNCERS VOICE (CONT'D)

And that's how you get it done!

INT. LOCKER ROOM - LATER

Gabby stands next to a HUGE TROPHY while the whole team jumps around her. She and Justin are all over each other.

JUSTIN

You were everything!

GABBY

You were fire. I love you so much!
I wish we could just fast forward --

JUSTIN

To a year from now?

GABBY

-- When we're living together in
Brooklyn and you're going to
Juliard and I'm at NYU and we
become famous dancers and both win
Tonys? I know! Me too!

PICK UP: Keisia and XAVIER, 18, gay, out and proud, watching.

XAVIER

How does she not know he's gay?

KEISIA

How does he not know he's gay?

BACK WITH GABBY AND JUSTIN: Gabby's mother GINA 52, always in
a good mood, always says the wrong thing. Drug of choice:
attention. Gabby tenses up as Gina pulls her in for a hug.

GINA

Honey you were so good! Your tits
look amazing, by the way.

GABBY

Mom!

GINA

What? Everyone loves boobs. That's
the benefit of being curvy.

(to Justin)

She has never let her weight stop
her. I can't believe she's leaving!
It's been me and her for so long.

Gabby mouths "Oh my god" to Justin who puts an arm around
her.

JUSTIN

I'll take good care of her.

GINA

I just want you to live with me
forever and get a job with good
health insurance. Is that so wrong?

GABBY

That's so weird. Your fantasy is my nightmare! I'm a dancer. You watch, it's gonna be great. You said I could have the house tonight, right?

GINA

I'll be home at one. No drinking.

INT. GABBY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Everyone is drinking. People are dancing and making out. Gabby's house is small and humble but cheery - thrifted furniture, lots of color and personality.

Keisia and Gabby lay on the couch. Keisia takes a pull from a bottle of champagne, hands it to Gabby who tries to drink, but the smell makes her gag. She hands it back, smiling.

GABBY

NYU.

KEISIA

It's amazing, dude. Hey...You and Justin? I'm curious. You've been together so long...How's the sex?

Gabby gives Keisia a serious look, scoots closer.

GABBY

Can I tell you something? Super secret? You have to swe--

KEISIA

You guys haven't had sex.

GABBY

How did you know? He said he wanted to wait so it would be special.

KEISIA

Yeah, that tracks.

GABBY

There's something else. You have to SWEAR --

KEISIA

IknowIknowIknow. Swear.

GABBY

We took a break over Christmas.
Just to be sure. There was this
guy. It was one time.
(re: the champagne)
This guy's dead. I have another
bottle in my closet.

Gabby gets up, heads toward her room. Keisia follows.

KEISIA

You had actual sex!? That's great!

GABBY

One time. But you know, it really
just convinced me that Justin is my
soulmate --

Gabby opens her bedroom door. There, perfectly framed, are
Justin and Xavier, shirtless, fully making out. Keisia's eyes
go wide. Gabby stares. Justin sees her.

JUSTIN

Gab--

Gabby SLAMS the door and stands there. Keisia does triage.

KEISIA

Okay, we were always gonna have
this conversation. I thought we
were going to have it a lot earlier
but... you seem really calm. Is it
because on some level you knew?

Gabby stares at her, her face blank and calm. Then:

GABBY

No. I didn't know THAT MY BOYFRIEND
WHO I'VE BEEN WITH SINCE FRESHMAN
YEAR IS GAY! WHAT IS HAPPENING?

JUSTIN comes out of the room, shirtless. Gabby moves away
from him, toward the bathroom. Keisia follows.

JUSTIN

Gabby!

GIRL IN THE HALLWAY

What happened?

KEISIA

She just walked in on Justin and
Xavier making out.

GIRL IN THE HALLWAY
 Justin's finally gay? Thank God!
 (over her shoulder)
 You guys, Justin's gay now!

There's a well-meant CHEER and comments from the living room:
 "Oh, that's great!" "Congrats!" "That is a burden lifted."

INT. BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Gabby is throwing up. The door opens: Keisia.

KEISIA
 Are you okay?

GABBY
 Do I look okay? Get out!

Keisia shuts the door. It opens again: Justin.

JUSTIN
 Gabby, I'm sorry. It just happened.
 It was just a fantastic thing that
 happened but I'll never do it again
 even though it was amazing and I
 finally know what's been missing.
 But I love you and I feel certain
 that I can put all that aside and
 commit to a life of closeted, low
 grade contentment with you.

GABBY
 Get out!

The door closes. It opens again: Xavier.

XAVIER
 Gabby, I'm sorry. I don't know why
 I did that. My therapist says I use
 sex as power but the thing is --

GABBY
 -- Get out!

XAVIER
 -- No but Justin's already getting
 clingy. Can you take him back?

GABBY
 Get out!

The door shuts. It opens again: Keisia. This time she looks
 at Gabby with suspicion. She closes the door behind her.

KEISIA

Why are you throwing up? You're not pregnant are you?

Gabby looks up at her, puts a hand on her bigger-than-usual boobs, does the calculations in her head: *Oh shit*. DEVO's jittery, catchy version of (CAN'T GET NO) SATISFACTION starts. BIG LETTERS over Gabby's face:

THE BIG LEAP

Over this we PRE-LAP:

GABBY (O.S.)

Sam! We can't be late again...

INT. GABBY'S MOM'S HOUSE - DAY

CARD ONSCREEN: 8 YEARS LATER.

The Devo song continues over morning chaos! Same cheerful cluttered house. Gabby, now 26, wearing business casual from Target is trying to get her adorable son SAM, 7, out the door.

GABBY

We gotta go! How'd you get avocado in your hair?

Gina walks by, hands Sam a pop tart.

GABBY (CONT'D)

Mom! That's like a brick of sugar.

GINA

Um, I invented the thigh gap. I think I know about nutrition.

GABBY

You did not invent the thigh gap. That did not happen. This is too stupid for me to engage with. Sam!

Gabby herds Sam out the door. Gina calls after them.

GINA

Yes I did! I put it on facebook in the Summer of 2012...

Gabby mouths "Oh my god" as she and Sam get out the door.

EXT. DETROIT - DAY

Gabby and Sam share the pop tart as she walks him to his busy school, past brightly colored murals, past other parents saying goodbye to their kids. She's wearing his backpack, quizzing him. Tons of affection here - these two are tight.

GABBY

Two quarters and a nickel.

SAM

Fifty five cents.

Gabby gives him his backpack, leans down to kiss him.

GABBY

You're a genius. I love you.
I'm just gonna be miserable until I
see you again but you? You have the
best day ever.

Gabby watches him walk into the school, her smile fading as she imagines the day in front of her. Then she sees THREE LITTLE GIRLS doing a dance. It makes her smile again.

Behind her, a bus pulls up with a sign on it: A silhouette of a dancer. The sign says: **ARE YOU A DANCER? TAKE THE BIG LEAP.** After a moment Gabby goes on her way. So does the bus.

INT. KAISER PERMANENTE - HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT - DAY

Gabby puts on a Kaiser lanyard as she walks through a sea of cubicles to get to hers. Everything is gray. We see her title: Gabby Taylor, Manager, Human Resources. She sits down, turns on her computer, and sighs, shoulders slumping. This is everything she didn't want.

PRE-LAP: Maroon Five's Memories. Then, a MAN'S VOICE.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Okay, this one's for you. In or out
of the saddle...

INT. SPIN CLASS - DAY

Here is MIKE DEVRIES, 38, leading a spin class. Do you need your tire changed? Mike's your guy. He's fit, good looking and on the verge of a total breakdown.

MIKE

Find the rhythm. 70 to 75 RPM. One
and two and one and two...

(MORE)

MIKE (CONT'D)

Just close your eyes and let go.

(lets the music play)

I want you to picture someone you love standing in front of you.

Someone you love more than anything. And that person is trying to leave you. Are you gonna let that person leave?

(silence from the class)

I said are you gonna let that person leave?

A half hearted "no?" From the class.

MIKE (CONT'D)

No. She's your wife. Go get her! You made a commitment in front of a hundred and fifty people. A wedding by the way, that we're still paying off. *Stay on beat, maybe even give it a little turn to the right. One and two and one and two...*

Everyone looks extremely uncomfortable...

MIKE (CONT'D)

You don't throw eight years of marriage into the GARBAGE just because you've had a few set backs!

A WOMAN, 40's, gets off her bike and leaves.

WOMAN

I am so sick of this crap.

(to Mike)

I'm getting the manager!

MIKE

And stop saying I got fired! IT'S NOT ACCURATE! I GOT LAID OFF! THERE'S A DIFFERENCE! I'm not the bad guy here. General Motors is the bad guy! We're gonna work it out, babe. You watch. *Elbows in, wrists relaxed. One and two and one and two....*

As the gym manager appears in the doorway....

MIKE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I got fired from my spin class...

INT. PAPPY'S DINER - DETROIT - DAY

A cheap and cheerful Detroit diner. The kind of place that has Christmas lights up all year. Mike drinks coffee with friends JOEL, ANTHONY and ELLISON, late 30's, all former GM factory workers - unsentimental blue collar guys trying to adjust to the new economy.

ANTHONY

Did you go off about Paige again?
You gotta let her go, buddy.

JOEL

Have you read that Brené Brown book
I gave you?

MIKE

I haven't had time.

JOEL

Well, Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9
AM just opened up apparently. She
writes a lot about vulnerability
and letting go.

MIKE

You know what I hear when you say
that? I hear "give up". I just want
my life back.

ANTHONY

That life's not coming back, Mike.
The factory is closed. Paige is
gone. That's over.

MIKE

Not true. She just needs room.

JOEL

You gotta get back on your feet.
GM hung us all out to dry. That's
a profound loss. You cannot dismiss
the head game here, Mike-y. We
gotta stay centered. Sometimes you
need help. Why do you think we have
breakfast every day?

ANTHONY

We're trying to say we're worried.

JOEL

We're concerned you're at sea.

ELLISON

Your shit's getting weird, man.

MIKE

Guy's I'm good. Nobody has to worry about me! I'm fine.

But he SLAMS HIS COFFEE DOWN too hard, spilling everywhere. Everyone is quiet. Joel, the diplomat, smoothes things over.

JOEL

No big deal. Just a spill. What do you say we go cobble together a paycheck?

Tone & I's DANCE MONKEY plays us through a MONTAGE of Mike's day in the gig economy...

EXT. PARK - DAY

Mike walks FOUR DOGS, PAST A COLORFUL MURAL (Detroit is full of them). He waits while one goes to the bathroom, pulling a plastic bag from his pocket...

INT. MIKE'S CAR/MOVING - DAY

A LYFT sign is lit in his windshield. QUICK CUTS of different passengers: A TEENAGER, A BUSINESSMAN, AN OLD LADY who needs help getting in the car. Mike has the patience of a saint.

EXT. NICE APARTMENT - DAY

Mike walks up with a bag of take out. Buzzes an apartment.

MIKE

Postmates!

EXT. DETROIT - BUS STOP - NIGHT

Mike gets out of a van and rounds up BIRD SCOOTERS abandoned on the sidewalk. He doesn't notice **THE BIG LEAP** poster on the bus stop.

INT. MIKE'S CAR - MOVING - NIGHT

Now an UBER sign is lit in his windshield.

TWO GUYS sit in the back seat. Out of nowhere one of them THROWS UP. The other one starts LAUGHING....

INT. CAR WASH - NIGHT

Mike hoses out the back of his car, hating his life.

Over this we PRE-LAP:

JULIA (O.S.)

I want to share something that happened to me last week...

INT. THE TORRANCE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - GROSS POINT - DAY

When JULIA TORRENCE'S friends talk about her - *and they do* - the word "smug" comes up a lot. Julia talks into her iPhone. She is 52, beautiful, a serene exterior masking a competitive and insecure nature. This kitchen is ENORMOUS and BEAUTIFUL. She's creating an Instagram post.

JULIA

I was mid warrior 3 pose and this beautiful woman in her twenties walked in. Perfect body, tall... Well, I literally toppled over. I mean it was like, "timber!"

(laughs)

So what's the lesson? Stay on your own yoga mat! Compare and despair. As a former ballet dancer, I've known this for years and even I need a gentle reminder from the universe. Aging is a wonderful journey. We age we shed insecurity. We trade vanity for serenity. We've worked hard to create beautiful loving homes. That's where our joy comes --

SOPHIA, 17, GORGEOUS, scowling, comes in, followed by OLIVIA, her twin sister.

SOPHIA

Mom! Where's my fucking backpack? Can you stop making duck faces into your phone for five seconds?

OLIVIA

Is this another post about how great it is to be old?

JULIA

We don't use the O word in this house. And I'm helping an entire community of women feel less alone.

SOPHIA

Are you sure you're not helping an entire community of women feel like shit?

JULIA

Your backpack is hanging on the hook. Do you guys need me to do cupcakes for the pep rally?

OLIVIA

No.

SOPHIA

Please God no.

JULIA

But what about...

The girls are out the door. Olivia calls over her shoulder.

OLIVIA

Seriously. We don't need anything. Feel free to live your life. Bye!

The door shuts. Julia looks after them, annoyed and wistful.

Julia's husband KEVIN, 52, good looking, fit, conservative, walks in, laptop in hand. She gives him a hug from behind.

JULIA

Hi. You working here today?

KEVIN

Yep.

Julia kisses him on the cheek, then holds out her phone to take a picture. He sees what she's doing and squirms away.

JULIA

I haven't posted us in a while...

KEVIN

Not into it. Gotta go.

Kevin peels away from her and goes down the hall to his office. Julia looks at the closed door, then at her phone.

INT. GYM - DAY

MONTAGE THROUGH Julia's SUPER INTENSE WORKOUT.

-- JULIA does a pilates class...

-- Followed by a ZUMBA class. She's a good dancer.

-- Followed by weight lifting. Two young guys talk next to her while she does rows on a bench. They don't even look at her but stop to check out a GORGEOUS 25 year old...

EXT. GYM - PARKING LOT - DAY

Julia talks to her manager, SCOTT, on the phone on the way to her car.

SCOTT (O.S.)

Bad news. Well, let's not assign a negative or positive value to it. J. Crew is pulling out.

This is turning out to be a real shit day. She's losing it.

JULIA

What? Why?

SCOTT (O.S.)

You just don't have the traffic. Honestly, you're competing against a lot of younger women. You might have a relevance issue.

JULIA

What am I supposed to do with that?

SCOTT (O.S.)

Think about doing something new. A face lift maybe. Or a divorce. I gotta go.

Scott hangs up. Julia looks at her phone. When she gets to her car, there's A FLYER on the windshield. She picks it up and looks at it, eyes widening...

EXT. DOWNTOWN DETROIT - DAY

Mike and Joel are papering a city fence with Posters. They wear vests that say "Temporary Helper". They're almost done.

MIKE

A guy threw up in my car yesterday.
(sighs, defeated)
I feel like I'm naked and everyone else has clothes.

JOEL

That's vulnerability. Brené Brown says its the birthplace of creativity. Lean into it.

MIKE

I don't know what that means.

JOEL

Be open to new things.

MIKE

Paige used to get on me about that.

JOEL

Forget Paige. You need a passion.
Something that makes you happy.
I gotta go. Can you finish up here?

Mike nods. Joel leaves. Mike looks at their work. They have just papered a fence with hundreds of BIG LEAP flyers. Mike steps closer, reading, his eyes widening...

PRE-LAP:

GABBY (O.S.)

I can't shake the feeling that I'm
living the wrong life.

INT. MED MEN STORE - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: Gabby, talking to someone. It feels like therapy.

GABBY

I mean everybody has dreams when they're a kid that don't work out, right? Why can't I get over it? I'm stuck. I've dealt with depression and anxiety all my life but lately it's just so loud, you know? I have looping, anxious thoughts all the time about my future and also about the world. I mean, is this it? You just go to work at a job you hate, meanwhile the world burns and polar bears die of starvation? I thought life was gonna be different. More sparkle and passion and less dead polar bears. So I think I should try maybe medicating? So I'm more content? But it's really important that it not make me eat an entire birthday cake because I gain weight really easily.

REVEAL we're in a MED MEN marijuana dispensary and she's talking to a SALES ASSOCIATE. He looks at her with a mournful expression, sighs, grabs a weed pen off the shelf.

MED MEN ASSOCIATE

This pen is mostly CBD. It's mellow, won't give you the munchies...

(a beat)

But if you want my feedback? If you want to change your life? You gotta change your life.

Gabby stares at him, annoyed.

GABBY

I'll just take the pen. Thanks.

EXT. THE STREET - MINUTES LATER

Gabby leans against her car as she RIPS the cellophane off her new weed pen. She mutters under her breath.

GABBY

No I don't want your feedback. You change your life, weed salesman...

Behind Gabby is A HUGE BIG LEAP BILLBOARD. This one is lit up and animated, with the dancer silhouettes actually moving. "THE BIG LEAP. A SHOW FOR AMATEUR DANCERS. OPEN AUDITIONS."

But Gabby's back is to the sign. She takes a hit off her pen. Then another: nothing. She announces to no one in particular:

GABBY (CONT'D)

This pen doesn't work!

She turns. Her eyes widen as she sees the billboard. She crosses the street, ALMOST GETTING HIT BY A CAR to get a closer look. There's a web address, for more info.

GABBY (CONT'D)

Holy crap.

INT. JULIA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The dinner table. Olivia and Sophia look at their phones. Kevin looks at his iPad, while Julia talks excitedly.

JULIA

It's called the Big leap. It's a reality show. For amateur dancers. There's no age limit --

INT. DIVE BAR - NIGHT

Joel, Anthony and Ellison drink beers and look confused as Mike, more animated than we have seen him, talks.

MIKE

-- All styles of dance welcome.
Auditions are Monday.

JOEL

Since when are you a dancer? I've known you fifteen years, this is the first I'm hearing of it.

MIKE

My mom ran a dance studio. I used to perform. You told me to get passionate about something!

JOEL

I was thinking mountain biking!

ELLISON

Is it an elimination show?

INT. GABBY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Gabby talks to Sam and Gina.

GINA

Is it a dating thing? Is there a rose?

GABBY

Why would there be a rose?

GINA

I thought it would be nice if you met somebody.

GABBY

Can you focus? They pick 20 people and after 12 weeks they do a live performance of Swan Lake.

GINA

You're gonna be a ballerina?

INT. JULIA'S HOUSE - SAME TIME

Olivia, Sophia and Kevin are listening now, horrified.

JULIA

It's not just ballet. It's gonna be modern. Fusion.

SOPHIA

You're going to be on a reality show? No! You're too old.

KEVIN

Is this some kind of freak show? Like Dance Moms or hoarders?

JULIA

No. It all builds to a live performance --

INT. DIVER BAR - NIGHT

Mike's friends stare at him.

MIKE

-- Which is sort of scary but also very exciting!

ELLISON

Again, just worried about the whole premise of you knowing how to dance in the first place.

JOEL

You know what? God bless. I haven't seen you this excited in years.

ANTHONY

That's true.

MIKE

It's a grand gesture! This is how I get Paige back!

JOEL

See, no. You lost me there.

ANTHONY

Same. I withdraw my support.

INT. GABBY'S HOUSE - SAME TIME

GABBY

This is my chance to get my life back. It's my dream!

GINA

Are you sure? I mean, your body's not the same. Remember that time Ryan Locker dropped you during cheerleading tryouts?

GABBY

It was the most humiliating thing that ever happened to me so yes. I do remember that, mom. Thank you.

INT. JULIA'S HOUSE - SAME TIME

Julia takes a big swig of her Sauvignon Blanc.

JULIA

I can document the whole thing on Instagram.

KEVIN

...aaaand it all comes back to social media.

JULIA

I'm doing it. It'll be fun!

INT. DIVE BAR - SAME TIME

MIKE

I'm doing this. I'm gonna audition for that show. It's a grand gesture. I'm gonna get in, I'm gonna get my wife back.

INT. GABBY'S HOUSE - SAME TIME

GABBY

This is a second chance at my dream. I'm gonna do it.

GINA

Okay, I just don't want to see you get hurt.

Gabby looks at her mother, annoyed at the seed of insecurity she just planted.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. HOME DEPOT - NIGHT

It's the same day as Act One. Gabby walks into this big store, scanning the place, dragging Sam along with her.

SAM

What are we doing here?

GABBY

We're looking for someone.
Sometimes when you're nervous about
something it helps to bring a
friend...

Gabby PULLS him away...

INT. HOME DEPOT - PAINT SECTION - NIGHT

Justin Reyes, eight years later, is still the same gangly sweet guy. He wears an orange vest and knee pads. He's helping and UPTIGHT LADY pick out the perfect shade of off-white paint. At least 40 samples are laid out before them. This is taking years off Justin's life.

JUSTIN

Could you be over thinking this?

UPTIGHT LADY

I need more choices. Something
dramatic. Like bleached bones in
the desert. Or an egg in winter.

JUSTIN

Why don't I get some more samples?

He goes to the end of the aisle, starts picking out paint chips. Gabby appears, Sam in tow.

GABBY

Hi!

Justin stares at her, shocked.

JUSTIN

Hi. What are you -

GABBY

I found out you worked here on
Instagram. I just came to say hi.

Justin stares at her, shocked, then recovers, picking out paint samples.

JUSTIN

You just came to say hi after eight years of not speaking to me?

GABBY

Yeah. Well, no. There's this reality show? For amateur dancers? Audition with me.

Justin looks at her like she's crazy.

JUSTIN

What do you need me for?

GABBY

I miss my partner? I was going through my dance stuff and I found our old trophies. I thought maybe we could do it together.

JUSTIN

Yeah, I'm up for a promotion here.
(re: Sam)
Who is that?

GABBY

That's my son, Sam. Say hi Sam.

Sam waves. Justin waves back, eyes wide. He lowers his voice.

JUSTIN

Is he mine?

GABBY

What? No. Are you so gay now that you don't know how babies are made? We never had sex.

UPTIGHT LADY (O.S.)

Young man? Please?

JUSTIN

One sec!

GABBY

Can I ask you something? Are you happy? Because I'm not. Don't you want more? I miss dancing! I think this show could lead to a creative rebirth.

JUSTIN

A what?

GABBY

(a little weak now)
A creative rebirth.

JUSTIN

(angry)
You don't know anything about me. I
have spent a lot of time getting
okay with how my life turned out.
You don't get to come in here
talking about creative rebirths.

GABBY

You're right. I got pregnant and I
was scared and ashamed and
depressed and I couldn't be
anybody's friend. But I'm here now.

JUSTIN

No thanks.

Justin takes his paint chips and walks away.

GABBY

Sam, get the speaker.

STAY ON JUSTIN walking away as T.I and RIHANNA'S "Live Your
Life" starts to BLARE. Justin stops, looking horrified afraid
to turn around. Behind him Gabby has begun to dance.

JUSTIN

Please don't be dancing.

GABBY

Junior year. Partners final. You
and me. I know you remember.

She's lip-syncing too. Justin, watches, a little tempted.

GABBY (CONT'D)

YOUR GONNA BE, A SHININ' STAR/ IN
FANCY CLOTHES AND FANCY CARS/ THEN
YOU'LL SEE, YOU'RE GONNA GO FAR
'CAUSE EVERYONE KNOWS WHO YOU ARE

UPTIGHT LADY

Can you please hurry up?

Justin looks back at the Lady, then to Gabby. Lady. Gabby.
Home Depot and Health Insurance. Gabby and crazy pipe dream.
Then, right as the song hits its ANTHEM-Y CHORUS:

He THROWS HIS PAINT CHIPS IN THE AIR making it rain not-quite-white confetti, then does a KNEE SLIDE toward Gabby!

BIG, FUN DANCE NUMBER AT HOME DEPOT! They fall into sync easily, dancing down the aisle. Remember when Gabby said she wanted some sparkle in her life? She gets it here and it's goddamn delightful. Real life gets elevated, as they dance down the holiday aisle - twinkly Christmas lights turn on at the perfect moment. The song keeps going and we land in...

EXT. HOME DEPOT - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Gabby and Justin sit in her car in the almost empty parking lot. Sam sleeps in back. Justin looks back at Sam.

JUSTIN

He okay back there?

GABBY

Oh, yeah. Once he's out he's out.

JUSTIN

Who's the father?

There's a sad story here but we're not gonna hear it yet.

GABBY

He didn't... he didn't want anything to do with us. I've never told anybody who he is.

(changes the subject)

How are your folks?

JUSTIN

(this is painful)

I came out to my parents. I thought it went well. They said they understood. I went out. When I got home, all my stuff was in the front yard. They haven't spoken to me since. Obviously they didn't want to pay for college. So I went to work. It's okay. Pay's not bad.

Justin gives a little smile and shrug - oh, man, how much heartache this kid's trying to brush off with that shrug.

JUSTIN (CONT'D)

I didn't think it would be like this.

GABBY

What? You mean life?

JUSTIN
I didn't think I'd be so lonely.

GABBY
Let's change all that. Let's kill
this audition.

He smiles. They are friends again. It feels like a win.

EXT. DETROIT OPERA HOUSE - DAY

It's a madhouse! The Detroit Opera House is bursting with rowdy energy. Hundreds of dancers line up around the block. Everyone is excited and happy, jumping around and dancing to keep warm. PA's in headsets walk around interviewing people. CAMERA CREWS are there filming.

FIND Gabby and Justin standing in line, wide-eyed as they pin numbers onto their shirts. There's a guy in a Spiderman costume next to them. They are both a little overwhelmed.

JUSTIN
There's a lot of people here.

GABBY
Oh come on. That's the fifth
Spiderman I've seen. We got this.

But she's fronting. There's a lot of good people here.

INT. DETROIT OPERA HOUSE - LOBBY

Gorgeous. High ceilings, ornate lights, big staircase. Every inch is covered with dancers of all shapes, sizes and ages. CAMERA CREWS are here, picking people to interview.

FIND JULIA getting her picture taken.

FIND Mike, Joel and Anthony together. Mike is filling out paperwork while glancing around at the competition. A MALE BALLET DANCER warms up, looking cool and professional.

ANTHONY
The important thing is you tried.

MIKE
I haven't even auditioned yet.

ELLISON
We're very worried.

Over this we PRE-LAP:

WAYNE SLEEP (O.S.)
Hello Detroit!

INT. DETROIT OPERA HOUSE - SAME TIME

WAYNE SLEEP is a short, gay, joyful British man in his fifties. He's one of the hosts of this show. Right now he's on stage talking to the people waiting to audition. There are CAMERA'S FILMING HIS SPEECH.

WAYNE
How many of you are sick of hearing
the word no?

Everybody cheers.

WAYNE (CONT'D)
The world is full of "No", isn't
it? The London Royal Ballet told me
no because I was too short. Well I
showed them, didn't I? The show
that we are making today is about
second chances. It's about coming
together to make something amazing.
And what better place to do it than
Detroit? A great American City with
a rich musical history that could
use a second chance!

MORE CHEERS!

WAYNE (CONT'D)
So we have come here to say yes!
Yes to dancing, yes to life being
beautiful, yes to taking The Big
Leap!

Everyone cheers. We FIND NICK SMART, 35, in the orchestra pit with MONICA SULLIVAN, 30. Nick is the Executive Producer of the show and is good looking but a little slick. Monica is a co-host and judge. A professional ballerina, she is beautiful, mean and intimidating.

NICK
Good turnout. What do you think?

MONICA
I think everyone in Detroit is
obese and that this is going to be
a disaster.

BACK WITH WAYNE:

WAYNE

Audition in any style you want
today. Forty of you will advance.
Those people will partner dance. We
will pick twenty people and that
will be The Big Leap Dance Company.
We'll start seeing people shortly!

Everybody cheers! Wayne walks down to the orchestra pit to
join Nick and Monica.

NICK

That was great. Couple things
before we start just so we're on
the same page. We're trying to find
personality. Crazy is not
necessarily a bad thing.

WAYNE

I thought we were trying to find
great dancers.

MONICA

All we're going to find is type two
diabetes.

Nick likes her acid tongue.

NICK

Save it for the camera, sister.

AUDITION MONTAGE!

INT. DETROIT OPERA HOUSE - LATER

Monica and Wayne sit in the orchestra.

A SPIDERMAN is on stage crunking. Terrible.

MONICA

Stop! No thank you.

A CRAZY GUY does a JAZZ routine. It's painful.

A GUY walks onstage in a THONG. Before his music starts...

MONICA (CONT'D)

No! Pass! Keep moving.

THEN: Julia's turn. She does a beautiful contemporary ballet
solo. Her lines are gorgeous. Monica waves the music off.

WAYNE

Gorgeous. You are advancing to the next round.

A MARRIED COUPLE does a ballroom routine: They're great!

TAMRA, 22, hot, rough around the edges, is up next. There's something volatile and dangerous about her. She's wearing a ankle monitor. Wayne waves the music off.

WAYNE (CONT'D)

May I ask about your ankle monitor?

TAMRA

I'm on parole.

WAYNE

Really? What for?

TAMRA

Arson.

Nick, across the aisle, gives a thumbs up.

PAULA DIRKS, late thirties, does a TAP ROUTINE. Awesome.

WAYNE

Tap! Wonderful! Monica, can we have tap dancing in Swan lake?

MONICA

I mean... no?

WAYNE

I say yes!

THEN, THE BIGGEST SURPRISE OF THE DAY: Mike's on stage. Jamiroquai's VIRTUAL INSANITY plays and he does a contemporary routine. He is AMAZING.

His friends, sitting in back, HOLLER AND CHEER!

JOEL

Holy shit. Look what he can do!

Even Monica is impressed.

WAYNE

Amazing. Thank you. Thank you. You're advancing.

RAVEN PRICE, 20's, gorgeous, 250 pounds, super chill, confident and comfortable in her own skin, waits while CUTE GUYS set up a stripper pole.

WAYNE (CONT'D)

Tell us about yourself!

RAVEN

I'm Raven Price. I'm an exotic dancer and an adult film actress. I have a new movie I'm super excited about. There's a double penetration and my first fan bang, just in time for the holidays.

From across the aisle, Nick mouths "I love her."

Raven begins to pole dance. It's FANTASTIC and DIRTY and there's LOTS of baby oil involved. Everybody loves it.

INT. DETROIT OPERA HOUSE - IN THE WINGS - SAME TIME

Gabby and Justin wait while PA's clean off the stage. We see that they MISS A PUDDLE OF BABY OIL.

ON THE STAGE: Justin and Gabby. The Rhianna song starts. They get through 15 perfect seconds - enough for the judges to be impressed but then... Gabby slips on the puddle of oil. She falls HARD. Justin keeps going. She recovers, but her confidence is gone. Wayne shuts down the music.

WAYNE

Very nice. Give us a second.

Monica and Wayne put their heads together. Gabby and Justin wait. Gabby has a bad feeling. Wayne sits up.

WAYNE (CONT'D)

Justin, you were excellent. You've advanced. Gabby I'm sorry but this is the end of the road for you.

Oh no! Gabby's face crumples as she absorbs this devastating blow. We all feel for her as she tries to hide her feelings, managing a smile as she hugs Justin, who also feels terrible.

GABBY

It's okay. I'm so happy for you!

Off Gabby, gutted.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. DETROIT OPERA HOUSE - STAGE - DAY

The forty dancers have been paired up. Monica watches, unhappily, as they practice a contemporary ballet waltz. Justin, paired with Julia, looks terrified. CAMERAS are everywhere and it's making everyone jittery.

MONICA

You're rushing. Now you're too slow. Now you're just terrible. STOP.

She adjusts Mike who is partnered with Paula.

MONICA (CONT'D)

Think about posture. Do it again.

The music starts and they begin to dance again. Monica is not happy. She DROPS the mic, startling everyone. Then she walks to the side and gets down on her knees. Silence. The dancers start to shuffle, exchanging glances. Justin leans forward:

JUSTIN

Um, Monica, are you--

MONICA

(holds up a hand)

I'm praying. I'm praying for you guys. I don't know what else to do.

IN THE ORCHESTRA PIT Nick, holding an iPad, approaches Wayne, laughing at Monica onstage.

NICK

She's hilarious. She always like this?

WAYNE

She blew out her knee last year. Her dance career's over. She needs this to work more than either of us.

NICK

That's good story for us. Listen, I just got off the phone with the network. Little worried about the lack of star power. Idea: Reggie Sadler. Tight end for the Detroit Lions.

(MORE)

NICK (CONT'D)

He's been suspended for his third
DUI. Just got out of jail. Crazy as
a loon. Watch this.

ON THE IPAD: Reggie Sadler, gigantic and quick, runs from the
cops in his underwear, laughing. He hides behind a tree with
a skinny trunk. The cops look more weary than amped.

COP #1

Reggie, let's just stop.

REGGIE

You can't see me.

COP #1

Yeah, we can. Just get in the car.

Reggie starts climbing the tree. It's out of control and
funny and also unhinged. Wayne watching this, looks appalled.

WAYNE

No way.

NICK

I know! That's what I said. There's
no way he's gonna do it! But he's
lost all of his endorsements and
Twitter is mad because he called
Michelle Obama's ass fat. Nobody
wants to touch him. We have a
meeting tomorrow. Guy's a lunatic.

INT. DETROIT HOSPITAL - CAT SCAN ROOM - DAY

REGINALD THOMAS SADLER, 30, gorgeous and sober as a judge,
looks nervous as he slides into an MRI machine.

INT. DETROIT HOSPITAL - DOCTOR'S OFFICE - LATER

DR. KAPOOR, 40s, sits across from Reggie and his manager
JADE, 40, hot, well-dressed, smart.

DR. KAPOOR

The MRI is showing lots of micro
infarctions. We think that's the
result of repetitive head injury.
It could explain your memory loss,
mood swings and volatile behavior.

REGGIE

Is it gonna get better?

DR. KAPOOR
Possibly. Unclear.

JADE
You said, "could explain." That means you're not sure.

DR. KAPOOR
We won't know for sure until you're dead and we do an autopsy, at which point you definitely won't get better. You wanted an unbiased opinion. My unbiased opinion is you shouldn't play football anymore.

EXT. DETROIT HOSPITAL - STREET - DAY

Reggie and Jade talk. This is not the Reggie from Youtube. This Reggie is thoughtful and vulnerable.

JADE
What does he know?

REGGIE
He's the head of neurology.

JADE
We'll go back again in a month. See how it looks. You'll play again. However, you do need some income.

REGGIE
Yeah. I'm running out of stuff to sell. Gonna have to move in with my mamma soon.

JADE
I got a call about a reality show. We have a meeting tomorrow. Maybe it'll be something. Who knows.

TWO CUTE GIRLS walk by.

CUTE GIRL #1
Oh my god! Reggie Sadler! Can you take a picture with us?

REGGIE
Absolutely.

The girls get on either side of him, putting their hands all over him. Jade rolls her eyes, but takes the picture.

EXT. SOCCER FIELD - DAY

Sam's soccer game. The sun is out. The grass is green. Flowers are blooming. Everything is cheerful except for Gabby who sits next to Gina in the bleachers.

GINA

Want to go out to pizza tonight?

GABBY

I don't think so, Mom.

GINA

OHMYGOD Sam has the ball!

GABBY

What?! He never has the ball! Wait he's going the wrong way. Sam! NO!

He is going the wrong way! He makes a beautiful run, and then, scores for the other team. A teammate PUNCHES HIM. Gabby cringes, hands to her mouth.

EXT. THE BLEACHERS - LATER

The bleachers are empty now. Sam is bawling his eyes out. Gina sits next to him, Gabby's in front of him pleading.

SAM

I don't want to play anymore.

GABBY

I know you feel terrible, Sam. But life is about coming back from a punch. You just have to keep getting up no matter how many times you get kicked in the teeth...

What she's saying to Sam suddenly strikes her as the hardest thing in the world. She's getting emotional.

GABBY (CONT'D)

...And it's hard. It's really hard.
(fully crying now)
It's really hard to keep going when you can't get a goddamn break...

GINA

O-kay! Everybody's crying now!
Let's - We need ice cream!

EXT. ICE CREAM PLACE - 30 MINUTES LATER

The three of them sit on a bench eating ice cream. Gina puts a hand under Gabby's chin, turns her face. She's kind.

GINA

Go to the show. Tell them they made a mistake. Get a second chance.

GABBY

I had my second chance! I blew it!

GINA

I know that your depression is telling you terrible things right now about yourself and your future but I am telling you, your depression is a liar. You get so many chances in life. You just can't see it. Go down there and talk to them. Nobody's a better dancer than you.

GABBY

Why are you saying this to me? You thought it was a bad idea.

GINA

When you have a kid it's like you project your baggage on them. I wanted you to be okay in a way that I understood. But I see that you're not really okay. Me? I'm happy. I like my wine, my shows, my grandson, going on dates. But you? You need a little more. Go get it.

Gabby has tears in her eyes again. So does Gina.

GABBY

Okay.

INT. DETROIT OPERA HOUSE - ELEVATOR - DAY

Mike stands in an elevator full of SEVEN YEAR OLD BALLERINAS WEARING FAIRY COSTUMES. Mike reads his copy of the Brené Brown book. Paula, the tap dancer is the only other adult in the elevator. She wears headphones. They are TWO FEET taller than the girls. Paula sees his book, pulls an earbud out.

PAULA

You're reading Brené Brown?

MIKE

Oh. Yeah. Got it from a friend.
What's happening?

Paula, smiling, puts her headphones on Mike. He smiles.

MIKE (CONT'D)

The audio book!

PAULA

She helped me so much last year!

MIKE

What do you do?

PAULA

Oh, big corporate job but then I
had some health issues.

The elevator doors open. The ballerinas RUSH past them, ethereal little fairies. Mike and Paula walk to the exit. Mike opens the door for Paula and they walk out to...

EXT. A PLAZA WITH A FOUNTAIN - SAME TIME

The dusky sky is gorgeous and the LIGHTS just went on in the fountain. The little girls twirl around in their costumes.

MIKE

Everything okay?

PAULA

Yeah. Except I'm for sure gonna get
cut. No one cares about tap dance!

MIKE

Stop! You're great. Hey, I know a
little tap.

PAULA

Yeah? Let's see! What do you got?

He drops his bag on the ground and does a little combination.

PAULA (CONT'D)

Alright. Alright. I see you. But
can you do this?

She does a combination. They start goofing around, tap dancing. It's cute and DORKY but Mike is loose he's not obsessing over his problems. Somebody puts five dollars in his duffle bag.

WOMAN'S VOICE

Mike?

Mike looks up to see a pretty blonde woman. It's PAIGE! She holds hands with PATRICK, 40's. They are dressed up for the opera. Mike is blindsided. Is that pity on her face?

MIKE

Paige.

PAIGE

Hi. This is Patrick. Are you... are you street performing now?

MIKE

What? No! I'm doing this dance thing. A reality show.
(off her look)
It's a real thing.

PAIGE

Are you okay, Mike?

MIKE

Yeah. Yeah. I'm good.

PAIGE

Okay. Well it was great to see you.

Paige and Patrick leave Mike with a knife in his heart.

INT. JULIA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Two glasses of wine arranged next to a bottle on the coffee table with rose petals scattered. Julia takes a picture, selects a filter and writes her caption: *A romantic night in with my man. Still crazy in love after all these years. #Marriagerocks.* Julia curls up with Kevin on the couch.

JULIA

I advanced to the next round.

KEVIN

Are you really gonna do this?
People always come out of those things looking awful.

JULIA

Oh stop. It's gonna be fun.

She starts stroking his chest, trying to get something going.

JULIA (CONT'D)
Wanna fool around?

KEVIN
Honey, I'm just tired. No.

Julia pulls back, stinging from the rejection.

JULIA
We haven't had sex in six months.

KEVIN
What are you keeping score?

JULIA
It's not hard. The score is zero.
We barely talk anymore. You just
sit in your office all day long.

KEVIN
I'll tell you what's not getting me
in the mood. You yelling at me
about it.

JULIA
Are you having an affair?

KEVIN
No! Why is this all of a sudden so
important to you? Do you want to
put it on Instagram: "Kevin lasted
fourteen minutes last night."
#MyLifeIsBetterThanYours

JULIA
That's mean.

KEVIN
It's true! Our whole life is
online. And let's talk about this
reality show. I don't want you to
do it.

JULIA
Well it's not entirely up to you.

KEVIN
I want my privacy. It's too much. I
hate it. Please don't do it. I'm
gonna go watch TV in my office.

Kevin goes down the hall to his office and shuts the door.
Julia looks after him, miserable. She pours Kevin's glass of
wine into hers and downs the whole thing.

INT. DETROIT OPERA HOUSE - NICK'S OFFICE - DAY

Gabby walks in to where ERIN, Nick's assistant, 20's sits. Nick's office door is open. There's a meeting in progress.

GABBY
Who's in there?

ERIN
Reggie Sadler. Nick wants him on the show.

NICK (O.S.)
We're prepared to offer you two million dollars.

INT. DETROIT OPERA HOUSE - NICK'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

WAYNE
You'll have to audition of course.

JADE
Whoa! Audition? On camera?

NICK
He doesn't have to audition.

WAYNE
Yes he does. This is a dance show. All the contestants have dance backgrounds.

JADE
No! I have to protect his brand. Come on, Reggie. Let's go.
(back to Nick)
I'm not gonna let him make a fool of himself auditioning to get into your loser a dance show.

Reggie and Jade walk out....

INT. DETROIT OPERA HOUSE - OUTSIDE NICK'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

.... past Gabby, Nick close behind. Wayne and Monica follow.

NICK
Right now his brand is crazy drunk asshole. What else you gonna do?

JADE
We'll figure it out.

Jade and Reggie are gone. Gabby turns to Nick.

GABBY

If I can teach him the choreography
and get him to audition, can I get
another shot?

MONICA

No.

NICK

Yes.

NICK (CONT'D)

You're the single mother we cut
yesterday, right?

GABBY

Gabby Taylor. And that was unfair,
by the way. There was stripper
juice on the stage. Show me the
dance. I'll teach it to him.

NICK

(to Monica)

Show her! He's leaving!

Monica, not particularly gently, grabs Gabby and does the
steps with her. Gabby follows easily, even anticipating.

GABBY

... One two three, passé,
pirouette, sous sous, then repeat.
Easy. See you guys later.

Gabby runs out. Nick calls after her.

NICK

You don't need to do it again?

GABBY

(over her shoulder)

No I got it. Thanks.

Monica looks at Nick.

MONICA

I can't make this work if we don't
have actual dancers.

NICK

Sure you can. People watch figure
skating to watch people fall.
There's a bad, train wreck version
of this show that is a huge hit.

EXT. DETROIT OPERA HOUSE - STREET - DAY

Reggie and Jade are at Jade's car. Reggie is worried.

REGGIE

It's a lot of money, Jade.

JADE

We're in the middle of appealing your suspension. You could be playing football again next week.

REGGIE

Is that a good idea?

Before Jade can reply, Gabby runs up.

GABBY

Excuse me. I'm Gabby Taylor. I'm with the show. You need to do this. You need money. Your reputation is trashed and women hate you.

REGGIE

Uh, that last one's not true.

GABBY

It is true. Women love Michelle Obama almost as much as they hate drunk driving. This'll be good will in the bank. The audition is no big deal. All you have to do is not fall down and everybody will act like you're a god and throw money at you. I can teach you.

JADE

No.

REGGIE

Yeah. Okay. Let's do it.
(to Jade)
I need the money.

GABBY

Your house. One hour. Be ready to work.

Gabby turns and walks away before anyone can reconsider. She exhales, amazed at her own tenacity...

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. THE LOBBY OF REGGIE'S BUILDING/ELEVATOR/HOME DEPOT - DAY

Gabby's on the phone with Justin, as she walks into the lobby of Reggie's fancy building and presses the button for the elevator. Justin practices his moves in the bathroom section of Home Depot.

GABBY

All I have to do is teach this beautiful, volatile, football player to dance, and then I'm in.

JUSTIN

Are you nervous?

Gabby steps into the elevator.

GABBY

I would be if I thought about what I was doing. I'm flying on panache and audacity and pretend confidence. I'm like two clicks away from sociopath.

JUSTIN

Go get him.

Gabby hangs up. The elevator is all mirrors. She looks at her reflection, psyching herself up.

DING! The elevator doors open into Reggie's living room. Reggie is standing there in sweats and no shirt - which is fucking spectacular and it leaves Gabby speechless.

REGGIE

We really doing this?

GABBY

Looks that way!

She moves past him into his living room.

GABBY (CONT'D)

Holy shit this place is huge! Do you store airplanes in here? Oh --

Gabby is surprised to see Jade there, looking at her like she's a shoplifter.

JADE

Yeah it's a great big apartment.
Don't get comfortable.

INT. REGGIE'S PENTHOUSE - LIVING ROOM - AN HOUR LATER

A big huge room with hardly any furniture aside from a GIANT TV on the wall. Gabby is walking Reggie through the steps. It's not going well. He's frustrated. Jade sits on a chair, radiating disapproval.

GABBY

Start in sous sous. Hold my arm.
Wait for me to extend my leg...
arabesque...

Reggie stumbles a little.

JADE

This is a train-wreck.

GABBY

All good! Promenade - fancy word
for walk... ow, that's my foot...
and that's my boob.

REGGIE

Sorry, sorry.

GABBY

It's okay! Don't let a sweet
handful of boob get in the way of
your success.

REGGIE

It's not the boob. The boob is
great.

JADE

This isn't working, Reggie. Im
sorry I suggested it.

GABBY

I think you're doing great. You
have to be a little bad before
you're good. It's just a process.

JADE

He's not bad at things. He's a star
athlete.

REGGIE

Did you not hear what the doctor said about another concussion?

JADE

I don't want you to look stupid.

REGGIE

Well I don't want to be dead or in a coma, Jade. Who are you looking out for right now?

The two of them hold angry eye contact. Gabby speaks up.

GABBY

Okay, I don't know what you guys are talking about but I'm wondering if this might go a little better if there wasn't a person sitting on the couch, crapping all over it the whole time.

Gabby has a point. Jade holds Reggie's look, then sighs.

JADE

Fine. If you need me to get you out of this, just call.

Jade leaves. Gabby looks at Reggie.

GABBY

Okay. Let's hit the reset button. Have you ever seen *Swan Lake*?

Reggie makes a face: *God no*. The music from the love duet of *Swan Lake* starts to play...

INT. REGGIE'S MANSION - BEDROOM - LATER

Gabby and Reggie sit on Reggie's bed watching *Swan Lake*. It's the white swan pas de deux on which their choreography is based. Gabby is enthralled. Reggie tries a joke.

REGGIE

When's the part where Mila Kunis goes down on Natalie Portman?

GABBY

That was in *Black Swan*. There's no ecstasy-fueled lesbian sex scene in *Swan Lake*. *God*.

But they're both smiling. Reggie gives her the side eye, something on his mind. He keeps his eyes on the TV.

REGGIE

Hey, what you heard earlier about concussions and dying and comas...?

GABBY

I didn't hear a thing.

REGGIE

Cool.

Reggie watches the ballet. It's the end of the coda. The male dancer is lifting the ballerina into a gorgeous lift.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

We doing the lift?

GABBY

What? No. God no. That's... no. I don't want to throw your back out.

REGGIE

You let me worry about my back.

GABBY

No. That's like advanced. Plus, if you're the one who gets lifted, you're like special. You're like the best one. The smallest one.

(catching herself)

Oh my god.

REGGIE

Listen to you. Spreading outdated patriarchal beauty standards.

GABBY

What are you worried about the lift for? You know what you should be worried about? Not sucking. Come on. Get up. Partner me.

He gets up, puts his arm on her shoulder, takes her hand.

GABBY (CONT'D)

Eyes on me. All a waltz is, is counting to three. One two three.. One two three...

They begin to dance, getting into a little groove...

INT. JULIA'S HOUSE - KEVIN'S OFFICE - DAY

Kevin is working. Julia knocks. She's holding some sheets.

JULIA

I just want to put some stuff away?

KEVIN

Sure. I'm going for a run. Thanks for understanding about the show.

JULIA

You guys are my priority. Hey, maybe we can go on a date or something?

KEVIN

Sure. Hey, don't worry. We're just getting older. It's just life.

Kevin kisses her forehead and leaves. Julia opens the closet, puts the sheets away....then pulls down a photo album.

We see pictures of beautiful 18 year old Julia in New York 1986. She's dancing and laughing and smoking, always surrounded by dancers, mostly gorgeous guys. Julia looks wild and loose and... fun.

She turns the page. Now we are looking at the same young men in wheelchairs and hospital beds. This is AIDS in the 80s and it is brutal. Tears come to Julia's eyes. She shuts the album, pushing it aside. Then she looks at the picture of her and Kevin on his desk: They look perfect. She puts the heels of her hands to her eyes. Now she needs a tissue...

She opens a drawer. There's Kleenex... next to a gigantic BOTTLE OF LOTION. She looks at this, then at Kevin's laptop on the desk. Then back to the lotion. Then back to the laptop. Then back to the lotion. What the fuck? She opens the computer, and looks at the internet history...

There is no history. None. She closes the laptop.

INT. REGGIE'S MANSION - EVENING

...Over a MUSIC MONTAGE: Little by little, Gabby and Reggie get better. We need an orchestra here! Maybe Hollywood Symphony's cover of Phoenix's LISTOMANIA.

-- Gabby and Reggie practice in his living room. He steps on her foot.

-- They waltz down his hallway, adding some moves now...

-- Reggie does his moves by himself while Gabby sits on the floor, her back to the wall, bossing him around while she cracks open a La Croix.

The music CONTINUES as we check in on other characters...

INT. STRIP CLUB - SAME TIME

A bunch of men look bewildered as they watch Raven do a waltz onstage, adding in a bend at the waist at the end just to keep the tips coming...

INT. PAULA'S BACKYARD - SAME TIME

Paula, our tap dancer, practices in her back yard.

EXT. THE STREET - SAME TIME

Tamara, our arsonist, dances down a busy sidewalk. A man bumps into her. It's not his fault but she SHOVES him anyway.

INT. GROCERY STORE - SAME TIME

Justin waltzes down the cereal aisle, grabbing Cheerios....

INT. BAR - SAME TIME

Mike is NOT PRACTICING. He's getting drunk, downing a shot of whiskey, puts the glass next to three other empty glasses....

THE MONTAGE comes back to Gabby and Reggie...

EXT. REGGIE'S ROOF - SUNSET

The CAMERA SWEEPS ACROSS the roof, a stunning view of the city beyond them as Gabby and Reggie WALTZ, using all the space, adding moves as they go. They're great! It's BIG and ROMANTIC and GORGEOUS.

Gabby and Reggie pause at the edge of the roof, out of breath, hands on knees, smiles on their faces they don't even know about because they're having so much fun. Also? The sunset's doing really nice things for their skin.

After a second, Gabby punches Reggie's shoulder, raises her eyebrow in a challenge: *You ready to go again?* He gives her a cocky look: *fuck yeah, he is.* They start again....

EXT. ROOF - NIGHT - LATER

Gabby and Reggie sit under the stars.

REGGIE
You think I'm ready?

GABBY
I do. We should probably go get
some sleep.

REGGIE
Let's eat first.

He gets up, extends a hand to her, then heads out.

REGGIE (CONT'D)
I know a place, you have to drive,
though. My license is suspended.

GABBY
(following)
That is so hot!

INT. MCDONALD'S - TABLE - LATER

It's late. Not very many people here. The lights are low -
inadvertently romantic. "Crazy For You" by Detroit homegirl
Madonna, plays. Reggie has three hamburgers, two large fries,
and a shake. Gabby eats a salad and steals his fries.

GABBY
I'm really impressed you could get
us in here so last minute.

REGGIE
Yeah, well, celebrity.

GABBY
I don't mean to be a pill, but your
dinner? Is like, 3600 calories.
Wait, I forgot the shake. 4800
calories. And 91 points on Weight
Watchers.

REGGIE
How do you do that?

GABBY
It's my super power. I know how
many calories are in everything.
One time I googled how many
calories are in an Advil.

REGGIE
How many calories are in an Advil?

GABBY
It just referred me to a therapist.

They laugh. Reggie puts down his burger.

REGGIE
Okay. How many calories am I?

GABBY
Oh, you mean like if I killed you
and ate you?

REGGIE
Yeah. Roasted Reggie.

Gabby leans back, studies him, taking this very seriously. They're officially flirting now. UNDER THE TABLE, Reggie's feet bump into hers.

GABBY
What do you go? 220? 223?

REGGIE
212. Pretty good.

GABBY
It's another hidden, useless
talent. Stand by.

Gabby calculates on her phone, brow furrowed. It takes a beat or two. She looks up.

GABBY (CONT'D)
I'm gonna minus out the organs.

REGGIE
Sure.

GABBY
You are... 96,500 calories and...
2135 points on Weight Watchers.

REGGIE
That is crazy. You're insane.

GABBY
I was a dancer growing up. Weight
is important so you can jump high
and be lifted. Small was the same
thing as desirable.

REGGIE

Well, that's your shit. The call's coming from inside the house.

GABBY

Oh, the guy who tweeted about Michelle Obama's big ass says it's all in our heads.

REGGIE

It was a compliment!

The Madonna song is doing its romantic work. Gabby leans forward to make her point.

GABBY

How about this: Don't say anything about anybody's body ever. Period.

Now Reggie leans in to make his point. Their faces are close now. They might as well be the only ones in the restaurant.

REGGIE

How about this: We are physical creatures and attraction is a wonderful thing. Lighten up.

GABBY

Why is the answer always for women to just lighten up? Bullying, harassment, rape. Just lighten up.

REGGIE

Whoa! How'd we get to rape, mood killer?

GABBY

We've been having a national conversation about this for years. It's a slippery slope from commenting on our bodies to wanting to own them. It's gender terrorism.

REGGIE

Do you really think that?

GABBY

Sometimes. Mostly I just want to look pretty. Just kidding. Not really. I don't know. I know you can't tell but I'm a feminist.

Reggie holds her look for so long she feels naked.

REGGIE
You are pretty.

Gabby looks back at him, then because she can't stand it:

GABBY
We gotta get outta here. Gotta
crush that audition tomorrow.

EXT. MCDONALD'S - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Reggie and Gabby walk out to her car, still floating on the good feeling. THREE MEN exit right after them - maybe a little lit. Reggie puts his arm around her, protective.

MAN #1
That Reggie Sadler? Thanks for
getting mowed over last year. You
cost me two grand. Drunk hairbag.

MAN #2
Team's better off without you.

Reggie stiffens. Gabby, alarmed, opens the car door, gets in.

GABBY
Let's go. Who cares?

Gabby starts the car. The THEME FROM *SWAN LAKE* STARTS TO BLARE from the radio. Reggie is still outside the car.

MAN #2
Listen to your fat ass girlfriend.
Get in your car and drive straight
into Lake Michigan, you pussy.

"Fat ass girlfriend" hits Gabby like a punch in the face so she doesn't notice that Reggie has SNAPPED. Before Gabby can get out of the car, he picks up a cinder block and SMASHES the guy's windshield.

GABBY
Oh my god.
(rushes over to Reggie)
Stop! Reggie. Stop!!!

Reggie's blinded with rage. The guys get out and a fight starts. A siren BLARES. Gabby looks over to see the red lights of a COP CAR driving into the parking lot.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

INT. JULIA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - GROSSE POINTE - DAY

Julia has been up all night. She's staring at Kevin's laptop where it charges on the kitchen counter. She paces a little, then finally shakes her head and laughs at herself. This is silly. She walks out of the kitchen. A beat. Then another...

SHE RUNS BACK INTO FRAME, GRABS THE LAPTOP and her keys and runs out, the cord dragging behind her....

INT. MALL - APPLE STORE - DAY

The familiar, modern white of the Mac store. Julia walks in, clutching Kevin's computer, looking a little crazed. SCOUT, a cute 22 year old Apple store guy in a polo shirt walks up.

SCOUT

Welcome to the Apple store!

JULIA

I need to know how much porn my husband is looking at, but he clears his history constantly. Can you help me?

Scout doesn't miss a beat.

SCOUT

Of course. Let's go over to the genius bar.

INT. MALL - APPLE STORE - GENIUS BAR - LATER

Scout sits at Kevin's computer while Julia looks over his shoulder anxiously. Fellow Apple employees, KINGSTON, 23, also cute and clean cut and HUCKLEBERRY, 25, a little beard, longer hair, are leaning in to offer suggestions.

KINGSTON

Look at the cookies.

HUCKLEBERRY

No. Do a system restore, Scout. I did that for a lady last week.

JULIA

You do this a lot?

HUCKLEBERRY

You have no idea.

SCOUT

IgotitIgotitIgotgotit. O-kay. So yeah. This guys hitting it like seven times a day... Razzers, Mofos... Pornhub, obviously.

JULIA

What's Pornhub?

SCOUT

Youtube for porn. Pretty vanilla. Your standard three-hole entry. He's doing webcam stuff too.

JULIA

(upset)

Webcam stuff. That's... that's with a live girl?

SCOUT

Yeah. Hey, don't be so sad. It's not cheating. It's just release.

KINGSTON

Yeah it is!

HUCKLEBERRY

I don't know. This guy's looking at A LOT of porn. I mean this is a real time commitment.

KINGSTON

Anything sexual done outside of the relationship is cheating, Scout.

SCOUT

That's crazy. Everyone looks at porn! It's okay! In fact, porn is the only reason monogamy works!

KINGSTON

(getting louder)

You're entitled to your opinion but I believe that when we separate our hearts from our genitals, every solitary climax becomes more joyless and harder to achieve until we're dead inside!

This silences the entire store. People are looking at them. Julia's had enough.

JULIA

Okay! Thank you for the panel discussion. I'm gonna go... figure out how I feel about all this porn.

INT. JULIA'S CAR - PARKED - MALL PARKING LOT - DAY

We hear the sounds of people having porn sex. Julia is watching porn on Kevin's computer in the car. Her face is unreadable. A little girl walking by with her mother stops to watch through the window, eyes wide with horror. Her mother comes back and sees what's happening and hustles her away.

Julia takes a picture of the laptop. She types a caption. "*My husband has sex with the internet seven times a day instead of with me. I'm old, disgusting and my entire life is a lie.*" #marriageisgross. Her finger hovers over the share button...

But she notices her ballet gear on the passenger seat. She deletes the picture, replaces it with a picture of a rainbow: "Happy Monday Everyone! Make the Day Count!" She posts that instead and starts the car....

INT. GABBY'S HOUSE - MORNING

Gabby is in bed. Sam walks in. Without looking, in a way that tells us this is a morning routine, she raises the blankets and he gets in.

SAM

Don't you have your thing today?

GABBY

Aw, I don't think so, buddy. It kind of fell apart last night.

A KNOCK ON THE FRONT DOOR. We hear Gina answer. She SCREAMS!

GINA (O.S.)

What? No way! Get in here.

Justin and Gina appear in Gabby's doorway.

GINA (CONT'D)

Look who's here.

JUSTIN

Come with me? Moral support. Plus, maybe all the women will break their legs.

Gabby looks at Sam, smiles.

GABBY

Should we go watch Justin kill this
audition?

INT. MIKE'S HOUSE - DAY

Mike is asleep, a nearly empty bottle of Jim Beam next to
him. Pounding on the door. Mike opens his eyes.

JOEL (O.S.)

Open up, Mike! I know you're in
there.

INT. MIKE'S HOUSE - 5 MINUTES LATER

Mike is wrapped in a blanket on his bed. Joel pushes a cup of
coffee at him.

JOEL

Paige called. She was worried.

MIKE

She's completely moved on, man.

JOEL

You're gonna miss your audition. If
you hurry you still have time to
shower.

MIKE

I'm not doing that.

JOEL

Why not?

MIKE

Because it's stupid!

Mike is laid bare here, struggling with emotion, trying not
to break.

MIKE (CONT'D)

I don't know what my place is
anymore. I don't know what's going
to happen to me.

Joel sits down, sighs, turns his palms up to the ceiling,
like "what do I know?"

JOEL

I think a lot of people feel that
way right now.

(MORE)

JOEL (CONT'D)

The world seems really uncertain.
It's a hard time to be alive. Look
at me, I'm reading self help books.
I have a meditation app on my
phone. Can you believe that? But,
I'll tell you what.

(laughs at the absurdity)

I did not know you could dance like
that! I mean, that was crazy. If I
could do that? I would do it every
chance I got. So why not do it? Go
be a part of something. See what
happens.

Mike is almost swayed but still, thinking about Paige.

MIKE

I really thought she'd come back.

JOEL

Is it possible that you don't
really want Paige back? Is it
possible that you want you back?

Truest goddamn thing anybody's ever said. Mike knows it in
his head if not in his heart. He gets up...

Also? This show's set in Detroit! *Why haven't we played any
Motown yet?* The Jackson Fives' "I Want You Back" starts...

EXT. DETROIT - TOWNHOUSE - DAY

A townhouse in a modest neighborhood. We HOLD on a plaque:
The Howard House: A Halfway House for Women. Tamra exits,
ankle bracelet visible and head held high...

EXT. MIKE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Mike hops into Joel's truck and the two of them head off to
the audition.

INT. PAULA'S HOUSE - DAY

Paula, dressed for dancing, opens her medicine cabinet and
takes out four prescription bottles. Anyone who cares to take
a close look at the labels will see drugs like Tamoxifen and
Arimidex - drugs to manage breast cancer. Paula takes her
pills, looks in the mirror: *Let's do this*. And she's off...

EXT. DETROIT OPERA HOUSE - ENTRANCE - DAY

Raven, the stripper walks up to the audition, those same cute guys who set up her stripper pole following her...

INT. DETROIT OPERA HOUSE - LOBBY - DAY

Mike walks up to Paula, warming up. She smiles at him.

PAULA
Hey you! How you doing?

MIKE
Hey there! Whoa, what...

Paula has lost her balance, WINCING, she holds her upper rib cage. Mike catches her, steadies her.

MIKE (CONT'D)
I got you. You okay?

PAULA
Yeah. Just lost my balance.
(changing the subject)
You nervous? I'm nervous.

Mike looks at her, considers the question.

MIKE
No. We got this. We're getting
through. Come on. Let's practice.

Mike pulls her to the center of the room....

PICK UP Gabby and Justin. Justin sits on the floor with his legs apart. Gabby helps him stretch, pushing on his back.

GABBY
You are gonna crush this. Where's
your partner?

A PA walks in.

PA
Auditions in 5!

Julia runs in, sees Justin.

JULIA
Hey. I'm here. I'm here.

Julia puts her arm around him, get's her phone out.

JULIA (CONT'D)
Let's get a picture first...

INT. DETROIT OPERA HOUSE - STAGE - DAY

Mike and Paula dance. Really good.

IN THE ORCHESTRA PIT, Wayne and Monica and Nick discuss.

WAYNE
Yes and yes?

NICK
Yes. You know what's good? He was laid off by GM three years ago and she worked for GM. Vice president of restructuring. Basically, she fired him. Good conflict.

We QUICKLY POP THROUGH the rest of the auditions:

Raven auditions with a MALE BALLET DANCER.

IN THE ORCHESTRA PIT, Raven's head shot goes into the YES pile.

TAMARA AUDITIONS WITH A MALE DANCER WITH A PROSTHETIC LEG.

IN THE ORCHESTRA PIT, Monica watches both their headshots go into the yes pile.

Julia and Justin audition. They're terrific.

IN THE AUDIENCE, Gabby, Gina and Sam CHEER!

Monica and Wayne put Justin and Julia in the yes pile.

Nick walks over to Gabby.

NICK (CONT'D)
Hey. Where's my football player?

GABBY
Couldn't do it. I'm just here for Justin. Sorry.

NICK
Don't be. I mean, feel sorry for me, I'm the one stuck in Detroit for six months. But you don't want to do this. All these people who do this show are going to have their lives turned upside down.

(MORE)

NICK (CONT'D)

We're gonna look for dirt on these people and we're going to exploit it. And I'll feel bad. But not too bad. Because it's my job.

Gabby takes this in. He's telling her the truth but she doesn't care. She still wants to be on the show.

REGGIE (O.S.)

Are we doing this or what?

Gabby looks up. REGGIE HAS WANDERED ONSTAGE and is blinking into the lights. He's all casual like it's no big deal.

Gabby's eyes widen. Gina and Justin and Sam are suddenly around her, all frantic. Justin helps her take off her bulky sweatshirt. Gina fusses with her hair.

JUSTIN

You gotta go.

GINA

Fix your hair.

SAM

She's fine. She looks pretty!

JUSTIN

You're gonna be great.

Nick grabs her and pulls her toward the stage. She stands next to Reggie.

GABBY

I thought you got arrested.

REGGIE

Pff. They both had warrants. They didn't press charges.

(yelling)

Hey, we need music!

The music starts. The lighting changes. Reggie looks at her in that way he has that makes Gabby feel like they're alone. They step into the spotlight: It's perfect, a fantasy, a movie, a romantic dream. It's what's sometimes goes missing from everyday life. Gabby feels thoroughly, totally beautiful. As they come up to the coda, he whispers to her.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

Let's do the lift.

GABBY

No. No no no no.

Too late. He's doing it. Gabby gasps, and then she's over his head! He's huge and strong and he is not going to drop her.

IN THE AUDIENCE: Everyone gasps. A few people tear up. Nick is sitting next to Wayne and Monica now.

Reggie pulls Gabby down gently placing her on her feet and THE ROOM EXPLODES IN APPLAUSE! Gabby's so overcome. She got to be THAT girl. Tears come to her eyes. She's embarrassed, tries to hide them but Reggie notices, leans in.

REGGIE

What? What's this?

GABBY

Nothing. I... that was great. Thank you. Thank you for that.

Reggie wipes a tear off her face, a little bemused but so sweet. Can you blame Gabby for falling in love with him? It's so goddam obvious.

NICK

There it is. That's the story.

WAYNE

What?

BACK WITH GABBY AND REGGIE: They are smiling at each other, buzzed from their performance. Gabby has been warned by Nick but she's forgotten all about that now.

NICK (O.S.)

She's gonna fall in love with him
and he's gonna break her heart.

SMASH TO BLACK:

END OF SHOW