

The Contract Year

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FADE IN:

EXT. SOUTH BEACH - EVENING

It's another dazzling night in NEON-LIT South Beach.

INT. SURF ARENA

A CAPACITY CROWD watches a BASKETBALL GAME played by TWO TEAMS of a FICTIONAL NBA-like league.

ANNCR 1 (V.O.)

Welcome back to game seven of the Great American Basketball League's eastern conference finals! It's half-time and we're all knotted up at fifty-two between the Chicago Towers and South Beach Surf. The winner moves on to play the LA Legends for the championship.

ANNCR 2 (V.O.)

And if you're the Surf you really want this one. They've been here the last two seasons and have come up short both times. A loss tonight would be devastating.

ANNCR 1 (V.O.)

And this capacity crowd knows it. They have been absolutely electric all night.

ANNCR 2

Speaking of electric, I think it's just about time for another electrifying performance by the Surf's incredible dance team.

ARENA TUNNEL

Twenty gorgeous FEMALE DANCERS are huddled around their MALE DANCE DIRECTOR, D.J. BECKETT (35), as he addresses them at the mouth of the tunnel. He's unfiltered arrogance.

D.J.

Half-time is *our* time! The middle of that court belongs to *us*! Your lips, nips and hips own every eyeball and guy-ball in this arena.

(MORE)

D.J. (cont'd)
 That's because you're more than dancers! You're divas! No. No. Fuck that. You're more than divas. You're goddesses! Pelvis-thrusting, booty-shaking goddesses. There has never been another dance team like this one! And why?

The dancers' expressions: here it comes.

D.J. (cont'd)
 Because I'm the best damn dance director in this league!

They roll their eyes. He'll never change.

D.J. (cont'd)
 Now get out there and show me how right I am!

They break huddle and make their entrance to LOUD APPLAUSE.

ARENA ANNCR (V.O.)
 Surf fans, please welcome back the most exciting dance team in the league, the Surfsations!

ARENA COURT

The Surfsations take their position at mid court. A POPULAR SONG begins to play and they launch into an AMAZING ROUTINE unlike anything normally seen in the real-world NBA.

D.J. watches his creation from the tunnel with puffed-up pride. The Surfsations are INCREDIBLE. Every eye in the arena is glued to their moves and curves. They're scintillating. Titillating. In a word:

D.J.
 Perfection...

The Surfsations finish their routine to WILD APPLAUSE. They were awesome and they know it. They continue to PUMP UP the crowd as they exit into the tunnel.

ARENA ANNCR (V.O.)
 Give it up for the Surfsations!

D.J. shifts into bitch mode as the Surfsations return.

D.J.
 You thought that was good?

It knocks the smiles off their faces.

D.J. (cont'd)
 You looked like a dance recital at
 Litchfield. Chelsea, you're still a
 hair late on the second jump.
 Kristina, no one is buying your
 smile. You look like you're at a
 royal wedding. Watch me.

He demonstrates how to smile and not smile.

D.J. (cont'd)
 This. Not this. This. Not this. See?
 Real smile. Kristina's bullshit
 smile. And Shayna, I'm seeing a
 little too much drift around your
 mid. Just a little.

Shayna is a freaking goddess. There isn't an ounce of fat on
 her. He bends down to point out what isn't there.

D.J. (cont'd)
 Just a smidge of fat right here,
 between this rib and this one.

The Surfsations tune him out. This shit got old long ago. He
 stands up.

D.J. (cont'd)
 Every dancer in this league would
 Nancy Kerrigan any one of you to
 dance for me. I could get on my phone
 right now and have a new group of
 Surfsations by the end of the game.
 Am I crystal?

The Surfsations walk away with eye rolls and head shakes.

D.J. (cont'd)
 (sotto)
 Cows.

INT. SURF ARENA - LATER

The game is now in the fourth quarter. We see the
 SCOREBOARD. Final 10 seconds are ticking down. The score is
 tied at 98. The fans are at a FEVER PITCH.

The Surf run a play. The ball is passed to number ZERO,
 JANIS BERKIS (23) (pronounced Yah-niss), for a three-point
 attempt. He is quickly DOUBLE-TEAMED.

ANNCR 1 (V.O.)
Ten seconds to play. Pass to Berkis
for a three. Two defenders quickly in
his face.

Janis passes the ball to veteran journeyman, number ELEVEN,
JOE JEFFRIES (40).

ANNCR 1 (V.O.) (cont'd)
He finds Jeffries wide open on the
wing.

Joe takes the uncontested shot and it rattles IN AND OUT!

ANNCR 1 (V.O.) (cont'd)
Jeffries for the lead! Rattles in and
out!

A Chicago player named COOPER grabs the rebound and quickly
RACES up the court with two seconds remaining.

ANNCR 1 (V.O.) (cont'd)
Rebound, Cooper. In transition. Two
seconds left.

Cooper HEAVES up a shot from beyond mid court...and NAILS IT
at the buzzer!

ANNCR 1 (V.O.) (cont'd)
Cooper puts up a prayer...and it's
GOOOOOOOD!

ANNCR 2 (V.O.)
Are. You. Kidding me!!!!

The Chicago bench clears as TEAMMATES surround Cooper. The
Surf PLAYERS are crushed, some falling to the floor. Janis
puts his arm around Joe.

ANNCR 1 (V.O.)
Cooper with the miracle buzzer-beater
that sends the Chicago Towers to the
Great American Finals!

ANNCR 2 (V.O.)
Just a heartbreaking loss for the
South Beach Surf, who come up short
for the third straight season. You
have to wonder what it's going to
take to get this team over the hump.

The air has gone out of the arena as the celebrating players and COACHES exit the court. Fans are shocked. You could hear a pin drop with the exception of an out-of-place:

D.J. (O.S.)
YES! YES!

ARENA TUNNEL

D.J. is looking at his bedazzled phone, reacting like he won the lottery.

D.J.
WE WON!

The Surfsations, who are also sad, don't understand.

SHAYNA
D.J., we lost.

D.J.
No we didn't.

SHAYNA
Yes we did. We lost the game. The season's over.

D.J.
Yeah, okay, whatever. "Basketball."
Look, I just found out that we've been voted best dance team in the league! It's everything I've been working for!
(quickly correcting)
We've been working for.

The Surfsations walk away disgusted.

D.J. (cont'd)
(playing it off)
Right. Lit. Go get changed. See you at the party!

ARENA COURT

The Surf's brash and surgically-enhanced owner, ISABELLA GARCIA (45), walks onto the court with a mic in her hand as fans begin to exit.

ISABELLA
Don't anybody move!

Everyone suddenly STOPS. She has that kind of power.

ISABELLA (cont'd)

This is not the way this season was supposed to end. Believe me. I'm just as pissed off as you are. As your owner I vow to make any and every sacrifice to bring a championship to South Beach next season. That means NO ONE is safe. I will rip out the eyes and piss on the brain of anyone who gets in my way!

Joe and Janis look at each other in fear.

JANIS

She must have great aim.

A beaming D.J. flitters over to Isabella and takes the mic from her.

D.J.

On an up note...

ISABELLA

(perturbed)

What are you doing?

D.J.

(ignoring her)

Hey! It's me! D.J. Beckett in the hizz-ouse! I just heard that *my* Surfsations were voted the number one dance team in the entire league! Isn't that fire?

The fans respond with SCATTERED APPLAUSE. D.J. reacts, "What's with them?" Isabella rips the mic away from D.J.

D.J. (cont'd)

You people need to get your priorities straight...

He huffs off as she gives him a death stare.

INT. D.J.'S TINY CONDO - LATER

D.J.'s celebration is in full swing. He's holding court with HOT GUYS and FABULOUS DRAG QUEENS, but not a single Surfsation.

D.J.
Number one, bitches!

ALL
Wooooooooo!!!!

HOT GUY
D.J., when do the dancers get here?

D.J.
They're not. And after all I've done
for their ratchet asses.

Everyone shakes their head, "You said it."

D.J. (cont'd)
I made them number one. Me. Let's see
Brooke Babbashaw do that.

HOT GUY
(tipsy)
Who's Brooke Babylon?

D.J.
It's Babbashaw, gaywatch. She's the
dance director in LA, and I just
destroyed her. She's also the highest
paid director in the league. And her
team has never even finished top two.
Pssshhh.

More head shakes and an audible, "That's just wrong."

D.J. (cont'd)
Well that shiz is going to change
because one day I'm going to get
paid. D.J. Beckett is all about the
Benjamins.

ALL
Wooooooooo!!

D.J.
No, for real. I'm all about the
Benjamins. Any boy here named
Benjamin?

DRAG QUEEN
Come on now, D.J. You know money
can't buy you happiness.

They all look at her like, "Is she for real?" She's not.
They all BUST OUT LAUGHING. The party rages on.

TITLE CARD: TWO MONTHS LATER

EXT. STREET - DAY

D.J. catwalks down the street SINGING with his headphones on. He has A GREAT VOICE. We can hear the POPULAR SONG he's singing to. Then SOMETHING catches his eye.

A GROUP of BOYS and GIRLS in their EARLY TEENS are getting into a SCUFFLE on a COVERED BASKETBALL COURT. D.J. removes his headphones and can hear them calling each other "fag." He hurries over.

D.J.
Hey, stop that! Nobody calls anybody fag!

TEEN 1
Why not? He *is* a fag.

TEEN 2
(openly admits)
I am. So is he.

D.J.
You are?

TEEN 1
Uh-huh. We're all gay.

The teens all nod.

D.J.
Oh. Well, hey!

They all "SISTER SNAP" (clapping by snapping your fingers).

D.J. (cont'd)
But it's still not nice. Now why were you fighting?

TEEN 3
(re: Teen 2)
He keeps messing up our steps.

D.J. spots their boombox.

D.J.
You're dancers.

TEEN 1
Duh.

D.J. shoots him a look.

D.J.
 Alright, smartass. Show me whatcha
 got.

The teens instantly sense his authority and fall in line. D.J. presses play. A POPULAR SONG begins. D.J. carefully watches the teens. They quickly mess up. He hits stop.

D.J. (cont'd)
 Okay, hold up. Hold up. Your
 continuity is all jacked up. And your
 arm styling is out of sync. I'll do
 it in half speed. Watch and learn.

He hits play, turns his back to them, then expertly performs what they were attempting. They're instantly impressed.

TEEN 1
 Man, you're good.

D.J.
 Duh. Now do it like I did.

He resets the track and the teens begin to dance, this time better. He walks among them, adjusting moves and body angles.

The dance ends. The teens know they just experienced something on a whole other level.

D.J. (cont'd)
 And *that's* how I made the Surfsations
 number one.

TEEN 3
 For real? You run the Surfsations?
 Yo, teach us something new.

D.J.
 Nuh-uh. It's not ready.

TEEN 2
 Aw, c'mon.

They beg and plead.

D.J.
 Can't do it. I'm still cooking it.
 Not even the Surfsations know about
 it, and they're the only dancers
 alive good enough to pull it off.

TEEN 2

Oh, man! I can't wait to see it now.
What's it called?

D.J.

Well, I'm never one to brag, but it's
called Becky Style. And when I unveil
it, the world is going to be shook.

The teens freak with anticipation.

TEEN 3

This is so cool. I can't believe you
really run the Surfsations.

D.J.

Like a boss.

INT. ISABELLA'S OFFICE - EVENING

Isabella is behind her desk in her posh office, fuming.
Sitting across from her is her beleaguered GM, NATE FISHER
(45), and Head Coach, BILL COLLINS (50).

ISABELLA

What the hell am I overpaying you
numb-nuts for? I want a championship!
So you better come up with a solution
for one!

NATE

We're one star player away, Isabella.
One.

BILL

Nate's right. I've done everything I
can with the roster we have. We're
this close.

ISABELLA

And you're both "this close" to being
out of jobs again.

NATE

Demarcus Price. He's made it very
public that he wants out of
Travisburg.

ISABELLA

Anyone worth anything wants out of
that backwater shithole.

(MORE)

ISABELLA (cont'd)

The Travisburg Twisters have been the worst franchise in the league for years. Fucking expansion. They'll let anybody in.

NATE

He has a summer place here. And he's about to become a free agent. The Twisters have to trade him for equal value or they lose him and get nothing.

ISABELLA

Think they're willing to deal?

NATE

They have no choice.

INT. LOWELL'S OFFICE

LOWELL RICHARDS (60), the owner of the Twisters, is sitting in his modest office, worried. Across from him sit his beleaguered GM, BARRY STUTTS (55), and Head Coach, RON AVERY (40).

BARRY

I'm sorry, Lowell. There's just no way we're keeping Price. He wants out. And we couldn't afford him even if he did want to stay put.

LOWELL

I know, I know. I was just hoping that for once we could convince a star to stick with us. It ain't that bad here, is it?

Barry and Ron look at each other like, "Yeah..."

BARRY

My dog ran off. I don't have the heart to bring him back.

RON

I have a bleeding ulcer and I'm actually starting to enjoy the pain.

Lowell stares at them. It's hopeless. His phone RINGS. He answers.

LOWELL

Lowell Richards. Oh, hey there Isabella. How's things in South Beach? Glad to hear. Oh, things are just fine and dandy. Nothing but sunshine and rainbows here in the 'Burg. Demarcus Price? Well, we might be.

Barry and Ron suddenly look hopeful. They pick up a nearby phone to listen in.

LOWELL (cont'd)

I mean, he sure does consider this place home, but we always keep our options open.

INT. ISABELLA'S AND LOWELL'S OFFICES

ISABELLA

Cut the shit, Lowell. You're about to lose Price and you know it. Let's make a deal before he leaves you with your dick in your hand.

Lowell stiffens.

LOWELL

Alright, little lady, I'm listening. Make me an offer.

Nate and Bill are looking at a piece of PAPER that Nate is writing on. They nod in agreement and Nate passes it to Isabella. She studies it a beat then:

ISABELLA

I'll give you Qyntel Morris, Janis Berkis and Joe Jeffries.

LOWELL

Let me put you on hold.

He hits hold and looks to Barry and Ron.

BARRY

Morris was their number one pick in the draft. A lot of upside. Berkis is a great three-point shooter. And Jeffries is a pro's pro. It's a pretty solid deal.

RON

Damn, it might even make us competitive.

Lowell chews on it, then releases the hold.

LOWELL

I think we could agree to that. But I want something more, just to sweeten the deal.

Nate and Bill, who have also been listening in, are waving their hands at Isabella and mouthing, "NO!"

ISABELLA

You think I'm stupid, Lowell? I'm giving you two young studs and a playoff-tested veteran. I'm InStyle magazine's businesswoman of the year, Lowell. An icon. Not some farm girl you can push around.

LOWELL

You also happen to be a foul-mouthed little tart. And I don't like you. Sweeten the deal...or my next phone call is with Chicago.

Isabella is peeved. Nate and Bill look tense. Isabella looks through the glass wall of her office and sees a Surfsations POSTER in the hall.

She ZEROES IN on a smiling D.J. standing front and center, surrounded by the dancers like a pompous peacock. Her eyes narrow. Then, with a devilish grin asks Lowell:

ISABELLA

How's your dance team?

EXT. HOTEL POOLSIDE PARTY

D.J. is drinking champagne, happily buzzed, and lounging by the swanky pool. Music is THUMPING. Sexy PARTY PEOPLE are everywhere. He's talking to no one and everyone at once.

D.J.

You'll see! One day they're gonna erect a statue of me outside the arena. In pink gold! Just like this champagne.

(MORE)

D.J. (cont'd)
 (tipsy sing-song)
 Champagne. Make it rain. What does
 Superman see in Lois Lane...

His phone RINGS. He answers and has trouble hearing over the music.

D.J. (cont'd)
 Hey, Isabella. Sorry, you have to
 speak up girl. What? I'm being
 raided? Oh my god...
 (shouts to all)
 RAID! We're being raided! CODE PENCE!

Everyone SCREAMS. People scramble. CHAOS erupts.

D.J. (cont'd)
 Take anything you couldn't afford
 before the affair!

Everyone STOPS to take something expensive. D.J. grabs a BOTTLE of Louis Jadot. The chaos resumes. The music stops. He puts his ear back to the phone as he looks for an escape.

D.J. (cont'd)
 Isabella, I'm heading for the safe
 house! Wait, I don't have a safe
 house! I'm coming to your place! I'm
 bringing good champagne! Order sushi!
 (listens)
 What?

He stops running.

D.J. (cont'd)
 Ohhhh...
 (to all)
 Wait! Hold up, everyone. My bad. My
 bad. We're not being *raided*. I'm
 being *traded*...to Travisburg.

The few remaining party goers stop and look at him because they just heard something even more HORRIBLE than a raid. And, as it finally hits him, so has D.J. The phone and bottle FALL from his hand as he PASSES OUT into the pool.

INT. ISABELLA'S OFFICE - DAY

A grief-stricken D.J. paces the floor as a smug Isabella watches. Nate stands off to the side.

D.J.
 You can't do this to me! Travisburg?!
 That place is straight-up pre! And
 the Twister Girls? Those bottom
 feeders come in dead last every year.
 Besides, dance directors can't get
 traded! Can they?

He turns to Nate for help. Nate shrugs helplessly. Isabella
 SLAMS A CONTRACT on her desk.

ISABELLA
 I slipped a trade clause into the
 fucking contract that you insisted we
 agree to. Next time, read the fine
 print, fruit loop.

D.J. leans in to look at the contract.

D.J.
 (bullshitting)
 That's not my signature. It's a fake.
 Who signs a contract in glitter ink?

ISABELLA
 Pack your Hello Kitty bags, munch-
 butt. Your ass belongs to the
 Twisters now.

D.J.
 You're evil! And you're being
 incredibly homo-ffensive to such a
 beloved member of our LGBTQhalfC
 community.

NATE
 What's "half C"?

D.J.
 It's when one conjoined twin is gay
 but the other one isn't. We just
 added it.

ISABELLA
 Have fun in Mayberry, La La Land.

D.J.
 Are you hearing this?

NATE
 I only hear what I'm paid to hear.

D.J. shoots him daggers then turns back to Isabella.

D.J.
 Who's going to run the Surfsations?
 You know you'll never find anyone
 better than me.

ISABELLA
 Oh, please. I could throw one of my
 old implants down Ocean Drive and hit
 someone better than you.

(a beat)
 You really think the Surfsations are
 number one because of you? This is
 South Beach. Every puta out their
 practically J.Lo'd out of her
 mother's chocha. You're just a
 pretentious pain in my ass who got a
 lucky break.

D.J. is shaken. The first sign of self-doubt we've seen. He
 tries to maintain his composure.

D.J.
 If that's the way it's going to be,
 fine. You'll never be number one
 again.

He turns to go then quickly SPINS back and THROWS HIMSELF at
 Isabella, begging.

D.J. (cont'd)
 PLEASE! Please don't send me to
 Travisburg! I promise to be a good
 boy!

ISABELLA
 Out!

He admits defeat. He straightens himself and begins to walk
 out. As he goes:

D.J.
 Nate and I had mad sex in your luxury
 box.

He exits with a FINGER SNAP. Nate looks panicked.

NATE
 I swear, I never touched him. I'm a
 happily married man.

ISABELLA
 Give it up, imitation game.

EXT. TRAVISBURG MAIN ROAD - DAY

The Twister's TEAM VAN travels down a RURAL main road in a deep-red state. We hear a MAN bitching loudly.

MAN (V.O.)

Man, this is some stank-ass bullshit!

INT. TEAM VAN - DAY

The man is rookie QYNTEL MORRIS (21). He's in the rear. Janis sits in front of him. Joe and D.J. sit a row ahead. D.J. is thumbing through his phone, trying to ignore Qyntel.

QYNTEL

Motherfuckers traded me before I even suited up. How am I supposed to launch my brand when I'm playing in roadkill county? No shoe company's gonna sign me if they can't even see me play. I'll show them South Beach cocksuckers. I'm going to light their asses up.

JANIS

What's the name?

QYNTEL

Name of what?

JANIS

Your brand. Is it good name?

QYNTEL

See, I don't know. I need a dope nickname like yours. Agent Zero. That shit's tight.

JANIS

I don't like that name. Make me sound like Russian spy. I'm Latvian. Not Russian.

QYNTEL

Whatever, man. Agent Zero is legit. Hey, how 'bout something like, "The Question." 'Cause ain't nobody got an answer for my game. Or, "The Spinmaster" 'Cause I put suckas on spin cycle.

D.J. rolls his eyes. He's heard enough.

D.J.
How about Maalox?

QYNTEL
Maalox?

D.J.
For all that shit spewing from your
mouth.

Joe and Janis let out little chuckles.

QYNTEL
Hey fuck you, fairy dust. Yeah, I see
you. They gonna love you here.
Welcome your silly ass with open
firearms.

Hearing it makes D.J. uneasy.

JOE
Take it easy now young blood. Save
all that hostility for November
twelve.

QYNTEL
What's that?

JOE
(serious)
The first time we play the Surf.

This quiets Qyntel. Joe turns his attention to D.J.

JOE (cont'd)
I take it this is your first time
being traded.

D.J.
First and *last*. Why? You been traded
before?

JOE
Six times. This makes seven.

D.J.
Seven?! Oh my God! Why do you put up
with it?

JOE
Because my parents worked real hard
just to scrape by. Now they have
vacation homes. And a Rolls.

JANIS

Joe has been in the league sixteen years. And he's made the playoffs every single year. I would be lucky to have a career like that.

(to Qyntel)

So would you.

Qyntel gives him a "whatever" face.

QYNTEL

(to Joe)

Yo, how many rings you win?

JOE

None. Never even been to the finals.

QYNTEL

Sixteen postseasons and no finals?
Damn.

JOE

It's why I've bounced around so much. Everybody wants veteran experience. I don't mind. I've gotten to see more of this country than most people ever think to. It's not a bad place if you know what you're looking at.

JANIS

(looking out the
window)

This doesn't look so bad.

QYNTEL

It's a dump. I'm gonna play out my rookie contract then go sign someplace real.

Joe turns to D.J. and says in a hush:

JOE

You know, Maalox is starting to grow on me.

They share a quiet laugh.

EXT. TWISTERS HEADQUARTERS

The van arrives. Waiting for it is EMMY (24), a perky employee who is sweet as apple pie and always in KHAKIS and a TEAM POLO.

D.J., Joe, Janis and Qyntel get out. We see that D.J. actually does have HELLO KITTY LUGGAGE.

EMMY

Hey guys! Welcome to Travisburg. My name is Emmy. I'm your team liaison. I'm also a ticket sales rep, kids club coordinator, social media contributor, guest relations manager and dance team assistant.

D.J.

When do you find time to cure cancer?

EMMY

How'd you know I want to cure cancer?

The guys don't know if she's kidding or not.

EMMY (cont'd)

We're a small market team, so we wear a lot of hats around here. So if you ever need anything, like a babysitter, or dog walker, or number for a bail bondsman, don't be afraid to give me a ring-a-ding. Go Twisters!

JANIS

You pack a lot of energy into that little body.

EMMY

Uh-huh!

(then)

Now, Joe, Janis and Qyntel, the press conference is just through those doors and down the hall. They'll be waiting for you.

The three players enter the building, leaving a confused D.J. behind.

D.J.

Where's my press conference?

EMMY

Oh, um, dance directors don't get a press conference.

D.J.

But I was part of the trade.

EMMY

I know! Nothing like that has ever happened before. They must have been real sad to see you go.

D.J.

Well, if I don't get a press conference, what *do* I get?

EXT. TINY HOUSE

D.J. and Emmy stand outside a TINY HOUSE in the WOODS. D.J. looks horrified. The house has seen better days.

EMMY

It's the best we could do on short notice.

D.J.

Great, the players probably get McMansions and I'm stuck with little house on the scary.

EMMY

Oh, come on now. Never judge a book by its cover.

D.J.

You don't read a lot of Stephen King, do you?

EMMY

No, not since the book burning. Do you want to look inside?

D.J.

Right after I douse myself with Purell.

INT. TINY HOUSE

D.J. and Emmy enter. The interior has been DECORATED as if a ten year-old girl is living there. A lot of bright pink, teal, yellow, etc.

EMMY

I stopped by last night and spruced it up. I wanted you to feel at home. Do you like it?

D.J.
It looks like Katy Perry blew up.

Emmy isn't sure if that's good or bad.

EMMY
It's only temporary until you find something permanent.

D.J.
Believe me, there will be nothing permanent about any of this. I put my condo on Airbnb and heading back as soon as this nightmare season is over.

EMMY
Oh, that's right. You're in your contract year.

D.J.
What's a contract year?

EMMY
It's when players are in the last year of their contract. They usually perform at a high level so they can get a max deal when they're eligible for free agency. I read your contract. You're in your last year.

D.J.
I am?

EMMY
Didn't you read it?

D.J.
(bullshitting)
Of course I did. I signed it, didn't I?

EMMY
Uh-huh. It's why I bought you glitter pens.

She motions to a CUP OF GLITTER PENS on a table.

D.J.
So I'm free after this season?

EMMY
Yep.

D.J.
 And if I perform at a high level I
 could sign a "max deal" with another
 team?

EMMY
 As long as someone needs a new dance
 director...yeah.

D.J.'s wheels are turning.

D.J.
 So all I have to do is make the
 Twister Girls better.

EMMY
 I guess. I mean, they're pretty good
 now.

D.J.
 They're a shit show.

His insensitivity puts her off.

D.J. (cont'd)
 The Twister Girls are the worst dance
 team on the planet. They're wretched.
 You call coming in dead last every
 year "pretty good?" You people have
 no idea what real entertainment is.

Emmy does her best to hide her hurt feelings.

D.J. (cont'd)
 (thinking)
 No. No. If I'm going to earn a max
 deal with another team I have to make
 the Twister Girls better than good. I
 have to make them the best.

EMMY
 (a dig)
 Sounds like that shouldn't be a
 problem for you.

D.J.
 Oh, it won't be, sister. I made the
 Surfversations number one. And not
 because the dancers "J.Lo'd out of
 their mother's chochas."

Emmy is deer-eyed. She's not accustomed to such language.

D.J. (cont'd)
I did it because *I'm* number one.

EMMY
So what's your plan?

EXT. BBQ JOINT

D.J. and Emmy are eating at an outdoor table. He can't shovel in the food fast enough.

D.J.
I made the Surfsations number one.

EMMY
Yes, you mentioned that.

D.J.
Which means every dancer in the league would kill to dance for me. So I'm going to make some calls and put together a team.

EMMY
But we have a team.

He shoots her a look then continues to chow down.

D.J.
This food is amaze balls. Look at me. I'm eating this pulled pork like a pig.

She smiles. It's the first nice thing he's said. He picks up his phone to make his first recruitment call.

D.J. (cont'd)
(listens, then)
Hey, Candice! It's D.J! Oh, you heard about me being number one? Thank you! I mean, it seems like forever ago. I hardly even think about it now.

Emmy rolls her eyes. She's on to his act.

D.J. (cont'd)
So, hey, listen girl. I'm putting together a new team and you're literally my first phone call. Well, no, not the Surfsations exactly. I'm running a new team now. The Twister Girls. In Travisburg.

(MORE)

D.J. (cont'd)
 Oh no, you would love it here. The
 barbecue is the bomb. What's that
 now? Your grandfather? He was? Oh, I
 don't think they do that now. No,
 they don't even wear the hoods
 anymore. Hello? Bitch hung up.

EMMY
 Now what?

D.J.
 It's only the first one. I'm just
 going to make more calls. You'll see.
 Everyone wants to dance for D.J.

He makes numerous calls as the hours pass. He gets turned
 down each time.

-- A call.

D.J. (cont'd)
 I'm serious, you are literally my
 first call. When I think Twister
 Girl, I think you. Wait, don't--

-- And another.

D.J. (cont'd)
 What? Ridin' with Dua Lipa now? Is
 she looking for any boy dancers?

-- And another.

D.J. (cont'd)
 Travisburg. T-r-a-v...

-- And another.

D.J. (cont'd)
 Of course they do!
 (to Emmy)
 Smile big for me, sweetie.

She does as asked.

D.J. (cont'd)
 I am sitting across from my very
 Southern assistant and not a single
 tooth is missing.

-- And another.

D.J. (cont'd)
 She said what about me?! She's a
 lying piece of trash! I treat my
 dancers with respect!
 (gasps)
 That skank!

-- And another.

D.J. (cont'd)
 Hey, Shayna! How are things in South
 Beach? No, don't hang up! Please. I
 need you to dance for me. I never
 called you fat!
 (remembers)
 Okay, I did do that. I'll listen to
 you hang up now.

EXT. BBQ JOINT - DUSK

D.J. is SLOUCHED OVER with his head on the table.

D.J.
 No one wants to come to this redneck
 outhouse. They don't want to dance
 for me.

EMMY
 It sounds like you were kind of mean
 to some of them. You catch more bees
 with honey than vinegar.

Without lifting his head, he grabs a BISCUIT and THROWS it
 at her.

D.J.
 I don't have a team and my only
 option is to audition the hill women
 of Hee-Haw Junction.

EMMY
 We don't have auditions.

This gets his head off the table.

D.J.
 Say what now?

EMMY
 We formed the current team when we
 got the franchise and stuck by them
 ever since.

D.J.
So there could be better dancers out there?

INT. LOWELL'S OFFICE - DAY

D.J. is making a pitch to Lowell. Emmy is also in the room.

D.J.
I need to have auditions.

LOWELL
Well, alrighty. It's your dance team now.

D.J.
The current squad only has eight. I need more than that. The Surfsations had twenty.

LOWELL
No can do. Can't afford a number that high. We're barely making it work with what we got.

D.J.
But you just said it's my team!

LOWELL
It is. Look, we're a small market team with a history of losing. The fans just aren't as interested as they were the first season. I'm afraid eight is the best I can do.

D.J.
Then why did you bring me to this dust pan! I was happy in South Beach!

LOWELL
Because we thought you could improve the Girls. Now if you wish to refuse, we can start talking about breach of contract with my lawyers.

D.J. feels trapped. He thinks of a way out.

D.J.
I made the Surfsations number one.

EMMY
Get used to hearing that.

He gives her the side-eye then:

D.J.

Not only did I make them number one,
but I also made them a huge money
maker.

LOWELL

(interest piqued)

Go on...

D.J.

Posters. Calendars. Appearances.
Attendance. All of it increased
because of me. My Surf-sations put
butts in seats and money in the
owner's pocket. My Twister Girls will
do the same. But I need more than
eight.

Lowell likes what he hears.

LOWELL

Alright. Tell you what. Find a
sponsor for the Twister Girls and
I'll find the money for a bigger
squad.

D.J.

A sponsor?! Why do I have to find
one?

LOWELL

For calling this place a dust pan.

Emmy smirks.

LOWELL (cont'd)

Do we have a deal?

D.J. finds himself with no choice.

D.J.

Deal.

He extends his hand to SHAKE on it. Lowell is apprehensive
to touch the hand of a gay man.

D.J. (cont'd)

Really?

Disgusted, he leaves with Emmy right behind him. Lowell is
left alone, feeling surprisingly regretful.

EXT. TWISTERS HEADQUARTERS

D.J. STORMS OUT with Emmy catching up.

EMMY

Now what?

D.J.

Round up the Twister Girls.

EMMY

(pleased)

Oh, good! Trust me, you're going to love these girls.

INT. TWISTER GIRLS REHEARSAL SPACE - EVENING

D.J.

You're all fired.

We reveal to see a MOTLEY-LOOKING squad of EIGHT DANCERS standing in the middle of an OUTDATED rehearsal space.

D.J. (cont'd)

Not having to audition made you entitled and lazy. If you want to dance for me, you have to audition. Every season. Without exception. Am I crystal?

They are too stunned to respond.

D.J. (cont'd)

Emmy will send out a notice when auditions will be held. Until then, learn the latest dance moves. Your dose-y-doe days are over.

The dancers slowly walk toward the exit. One of them, a cute and SOCIALLY AWKWARD girl named MANDY (25), begins saying "Busted" and "It's all busted." Emmy comforts her as she leaves.

Another dancer with the physique and attitude of a WWE Diva gets in D.J.'s face. This is AMBER-LYNNE (30).

AMBER-LYNNE

You better reconsider your decision.

D.J.

You better start tweezing those two caterpillars above your eyes.

AMBER-LYNNE
I'm dead serious.

 D.J.
So am I. You have some rogue hairs.
It's really distracting.

 AMBER-LYNNE
 (threatening)
I'll be seeing you.

She walks out.

 D.J.
Not if those eye-staches keep
growing!

EXT. TUCK'S COFFEE & SUCH - MORNING

D.J. crosses the street and enters a local coffee shop.

INT. TUCK'S COFFEE & SUCH

D.J approaches and scans the selections. The owner, TUCK (50), stands behind the counter. He looks uncomfortable due to D.J.'s presence.

 D.J.
Can I get a tall Kenyan with light
cream?

D.J. casually begins to thumb through his phone. Tuck doesn't move. Not a word. After a beat, D.J. looks up and sees Tuck staring at him.

 D.J. (cont'd)
Um, tall Kenyan with light cream,
please.

Tuck still doesn't move a muscle.

 D.J. (cont'd)
I guess we both need our caffeine
this morning. If I could just get a
tall--

 TUCK
 (terse)
I heard you.

He just stares at D.J., who finally gets it.

D.J.

Mmmmkay...

PAYTON (21), a wholesome-looking co-ed, emerges from the kitchen.

PAYTON

Dad! What are you doing? Give the man his coffee.

TUCK

(conflicted)

I'm not 'sposed to.

PAYTON

He's the new director of the Twister Girls.

TUCK

It wouldn't matter if he was Garth Brooks.

PAYTON

Like hell it would. You love Garth Brooks.

TUCK

You watch your talk now.

D.J. has had enough.

D.J.

You know what? Forget it. I'll take my chances at Chick-fil-a.

PAYTON

No, wait. Please don't leave.

TUCK

Let him go.

D.J. turns to go. Payton, desperate to make peace, begins to SING Garth Brooks' "THE DANCE."

PAYTON

LOOKING BACK, ON THE MEMORY OF / THE
DANCE WE SHARED, BENEATH THE STARS
ABOVE...

Her SUGAR-SWEET VOICE stops D.J. in his tracks. Tuck begins to weaken. Garth is his kryptonite.

TUCK
Whatcha' doin' Payton...

PAYTON
FOR A MOMENT, ALL THE WORLD WAS RIGHT
/ HOW COULD I HAVE EVER KNOWN, YOU'D
EVER SAY GOODBYE...

D.J. can't resist. He does a 180 and JOINS IN, harmonizing.

PAYTON/D.J.
AND NOW, I'M GLAD I DIDN'T KNOW / THE
WAY IT ALL WOULD END, THE WAY IT ALL
WOULD GO...

They are surprised by how beautiful their voices sound.
Suddenly, a THIRD VOICE joins in. It's Tuck.

PAYTON/D.J./TUCK
OUR LIVES ARE BETTER, LEFT TO CHANCE
/ I COULD HAVE MISSED THE PAIN / BUT
I'D HAVE TO MISS THE DANCE...

They are overwhelmed by the power of their three-part
harmony. They move a step closer to each other and close it
out with the final lyrics.

PAYTON/D.J./TUCK (cont'd)
YES MY LIFE IS BETTER, LEFT TO CHANCE
/ I COULD HAVE MISSED THE PAIN / BUT
I'D HAVE HAD TO MISS THE DANCE.

There's a long beat. The moment has them MISTY-EYED.

TUCK
How did you learn to Garth like that?

D.J.
I was born in Barfield, Alabama.

TUCK
(surprised)
I was born in Lineville.

D.J.
Howdy, neighbor.
(a beat)
My mother would play Garth and sing
me to sleep. I know every word to
every song that man ever wrote.

TUCK
Your mom sounds like a good woman.

D.J. nods slightly. It's an uncomfortable subject.

PAYTON

I hear you're having tryouts. I dance.

D.J.

You dance as good as you sing?

PAYTON

I don't know about that. But I promise to work real hard if you give me a chance.

D.J.

I'm sure you would. But it really doesn't matter. I won't have much of a team if I can't find a sponsor.

TUCK

What kind of sponsor?

D.J. didn't see that coming. He looks at a beaming Payton. Could this really be happening?

PAYTON

Now how 'bout that coffee?

INT. TINY HOUSE LOFT - EVENING

D.J. is asleep in the loft.

EXT. TINY HOUSE

A PICKUP TRUCK with a confederate flag decal in the back window quietly BACKS UP to the house. It's driven by a young man named RUSS (30). Next to him is Amber-Lynne.

Russ gets out and begins HOOKING UP the house to the truck as quietly as he can.

AMBER-LYNNE

Hurry up, Russ.

RUSS

Shhhh. You'll wake him.

Russ completes the task and hops back in the truck. They slowly begin to PULL AWAY with the tiny house in tow.

INT. TINY HOUSE LOFT

The house begins to SHAKE a little, but not enough to wake D.J.

INT. PICKUP TRUCK

RUSS

Let's teach this son of a bitch who
he messed with.

He hits the gas and the truck TAKES OFF, BOUNCING all over the uneven dirt road.

INT./EXT. TINY HOUSE

D.J.'s body begins to BOUNCE around the loft. He wakes up in a panic.

D.J.

Sweet Patti LaBelle, it's an
earthquake!

He reaches for his phone, but it BOUNCES OUT of the loft. He makes an attempt for the ladder but it also shakes loose and FALLS to the floor.

The truck hits a big BUMP and the house does the same a second later.

The bump LAUNCHES D.J. out of the loft and onto the floor below. Things are FALLING everywhere.

He recovers and hears the truck's engine REVVING. He crawls to reach the phone then stumbles to the window and peers through the blinds. He dials the phone.

INT. TWISTERS OFFICE AREA

Emmy is the only employee in the building. She's inflating helium BALLOONS for a kids club event. She SNEAKS a hit of helium.

EMMY

(helium voice)

Hufflepuff.

It makes her giggle. Her phone RINGS. She answers to hear high-pitched SCREAMING:

D.J. (V.O.)
RING-A-DING! RING-A-DING!

EMMY
D.J.?

D.J. (V.O.)
EMMY!!

EMMY
What's happening?

INT. TINY HOUSE / TWISTERS OFFICE AREA

D.J. is on the floor, trying to brace himself with one hand and hold his phone with the other.

D.J.
I'm being house-napped!

EMMY
Just calm down. Where are you?

D.J.
CALM DOWN?! I'm a gay man in a toy house that's being dragged by the Dukes of Hazard!
(then)
Why do you sound like a chipmunk?!

EXT. TRAVISBURG MAIN ROAD

The truck pulls onto the main road, which smooths out the ride. It ACCELERATES.

INT. TINY HOUSE / TWISTERS OFFICE AREA

D.J. reports it to Emmy.

D.J.
We just pulled onto a main road. Oh God, Emmy! What are they going to do to me? I'm too beautiful to die an ugly death!

EMMY
Hold on tight. I'm coming to get you.

D.J.
Hurry! And bring Simon and Theodore
with you!

EXT. TRAVISBURG MAIN ROAD

The pickup truck passes A SIGN that says, "Thanks for visiting Travisburg. See y'all soon!" It pulls over to the shoulder.

Russ jumps out, unhooks the tiny house with the speed of a pit crew, and jumps back in. He pulls back onto the main road, spins the truck around and begins to HAUL ASS toward town.

RUSS (O.C.)
Don't come back, faggot!

INT. TINY HOUSE

D.J. is sitting on the floor, clearly shaken and breathing heavy.

EXT. TRAVISBURG MAIN ROAD

Emmy arrives in her car, quickly jumps out and RUSHES to the tiny house.

EMMY
D.J.! D.J.! It's me, Emmy!

D.J. (O.C.)
Up here.

She looks up. D.J. is sitting on the roof.

EMMY
What are you doing up there?

D.J.
Listening for banjos.

He makes his way down as she surveys the house for damage. D.J. approaches her as she starts to dial her phone.

EMMY
I'm calling the police. I know it was Amber-Lynne, and probably her knucklehead boyfriend Russel. Pardon my language.

D.J. stops her.

EMMY (cont'd)
What are you doing?

D.J.
Amber-Lynne. Was she one of the Girls
I fired?

EMMY
She was the one who got in your face.

D.J.
She any good?

EMMY
She was our best.

D.J.
Don't.

EMMY
D.J., they could've hurt you real
bad! They committed a serious crime.

D.J.
She's no good to me in jail. I need
every capable dancer I can find.
(a beat)
Please.

Emmy reluctantly puts away the phone. A beat.

EMMY
Why were you listening for banjos?

INT. EMMY'S APARTMENT

Emmy and D.J. enter, carrying his bags.

EMMY
It's a little small, but you're
welcome to stay as long as you like.

She walks into the kitchen and turns on the sink. He walks
around the room and sees CANCER RESEARCH BOOKS on a table.

D.J.
You weren't kidding about curing
cancer.

EMMY (O.C.)

My mother went home to the Lord when I was little. I'm reading everything I can just in case college doesn't work out. It's really expensive.

D.J.

What about your dad?

EMMY

He moves around a lot. Has to go where the work is.

She returns with a GLASS OF TAP WATER for D.J.

EMMY (cont'd)

Did you go to college?

D.J.

Me? No. I left home when I was sixteen. Made my way to South Beach and started dancing on the streets then worked my way into the clubs. Memphis Jookin'. Krumpin'. The Whip. That was my formal education. Been hustling ever since.

EMMY

Why'd you leave home? Is it because you're gay?

He's surprised by her question.

EMMY (cont'd)

Oh, God. I'm so sorry. That was rude. It's just...you're my first, you know...

D.J.

You don't say.

EMMY

Is it that obvious?

D.J.

Honey, you people are so in the dark ages it's a miracle you haven't been eaten by dragons.

A beat.

EMMY

I think I'll take a shower now.

She crosses to the bathroom door then stops.

EMMY (cont'd)

D.J.?

He looks at her.

EMMY (cont'd)

I know it isn't perfect. But when you
make fun of this place...it hurts.

She closes the door. He brushes it off, then SCRUTINIZES the
quality of THE WATER in the glass.

INT. HARDWARE STORE PAINT AISLE - DAY

Amber-Lynne is stacking CANS of paint. Her muscular arms
look imposing through her sleeveless store uniform. D.J.
approaches.

D.J.

I know it was you.

She's not happy to see him.

AMBER-LYNNE

I don't know what you're talking
about. Even if I did, it would be
your word against mine. Who do you
think they're more likely to believe
'round here?

D.J. holds up his phone and plays VIDEO of the abduction. On
his screen we see the back of Russ' pickup truck through the
tiny house's window. We also hear D.J. SHRIEKING like a
girl, which clearly embarrasses him.

She furrows her brow. He's got her.

AMBER-LYNNE (cont'd)

You going to the cops?

D.J.

I'm going to make you a deal. You
audition for me and I delete this.
Don't show up, and I test to see if
they actually prosecute hate crimes
"round here."

He takes a step toward her.

D.J. (cont'd)
Let's see if you're as good as Emmy
says you are.

She takes a more menacing step toward him.

AMBER-LYNNE
And let's see if you're as good as
you *think* you are.

They are just about face-to-face. He's a tad nervous.

D.J.
You tweezed your brows.

AMBER-LYNNE
I didn't do it for you.

D.J.
Of course not.
(a beat)
Can you tell me where the plungers
are? I left a floater in Emmy's
toilet and I want to take care of it
before she gets home.

AMBER-LYNNE
Aisle ten.

D.J.
Thank you.

He carefully inches around her to make his escape.

INT. TWISTERS ARENA COURT - EVENING

D.J. is alone. He's working out steps to BECKY STYLE. We
only get A GLIMPSE, but it's really cool. He finishes...to
single APPLAUSE. He looks up. It's Janis.

D.J.
So you are a spy.

JANIS
You are very good. Why are you not a
dancer?

D.J.

I am. ...Was. I used to dance on the cruise ships, shaking my thing for all-you-can-drink passengers on the Norwegian "booze lines." Then I tweaked my knee. One day, a dance director friend asked me to fill in for her while I was rehabbing, and the rest is historic.

Janis comically performs a quasi soft shoe.

D.J. (cont'd)

Oh, you dance too?

JANIS

Every game. The court is my dance floor. I show you. Stand over there.

He motions to the area under the basket. D.J. is intrigued, so he plays along. Janis moves to the top of the key.

JANIS (cont'd)

You see, beautiful basketball isn't about what you do when you have the ball. It's about the movement away from the ball.

He begins to MOVE around the court, performing a GRACEFUL series of steps and cuts. D.J. watches Janis' feet as he FLUIDLY moves closer to the basket, and to him. Janis stops right in front of D.J. Exactly how HE PLANNED IT.

JANIS (cont'd)

It's all about making yourself open to opportunity when the time is right.

D.J. is flattered, but plays it cool.

D.J.

Very smooth. But it's not going to happen.

He begins to walk away.

JANIS

I'm not your type?

D.J.

You're not a problem I need right now.

JANIS
I wouldn't be problem.

D.J.
No. And that's the problem.

INT. TWISTER GIRLS REHEARSAL SPACE - MORNING

A SIGN on the door reads: Twister Girls Audition Today.
Sponsored by Tuck's Coffee & Such.

Hopeful DANCERS of all shapes and sizes fill the space.

Emmy stands near a table with a neatly stacked pile of forms. D.J. is looking at another nearby table with coffee and PASTRIES.

D.J.
PAYTON!

Payton hurries over.

D.J. (cont'd)
Honey, I'm letting it slide that you're on the team because your daddy's the sponsor. But bringing pastry to my audition is out of bounds. You want to bring food, bring a vegetable tray because nobody eats that mess. After a while it's just a bunch of sad little carrots that look like orange chalk. You girls need to be *skinny*. Like Ariana Grande *skinny*. Grande *skinny*! Am I crystal?

She nods, too scared to say anything.

D.J. (cont'd)
Now get these things out of here.

She quickly takes the tray of pastries and turns to leave.
He grabs a CRONUT before she goes.

D.J. (cont'd)
Wait, just-- Your daddy's cronuts are heaven.

Mandy, the socially awkward girl, approaches and begins repeatedly SHAKING D.J.'s hand.

MANDY

(very fast)

I'm Mandy. You're D.J. I know because I looked you up on the internet. You really like to have your picture taken. I do too. But only when I know it's happening. Candid photos make me anxious. I really want to dance for you, so please don't fire me again. Have you ever been fired before? It hurts. You have soft hands. Do you like otters?

She finally stops shaking D.J.'s hand then, without warning, places a colorful handmade BRACELET on his wrist.

MANDY (cont'd)

I made this for you last night. It's all the loose strands from my favorite sweater. It's fuzzy and looks like Fruity Pebbles which is why I call it my Fruity Pebbles sweater. Promise me you'll always wear it.

D.J. desperately wants this to end, so:

D.J.

Always.

She smiles and walks away as Emmy arrives at his side.

D.J. (cont'd)

What the what?

EMMY

That's Mandy.
(hushed)
She has autism.

D.J.

And she can remember the routines?

EMMY

Oh, yeah. She remembers everything.

D.J. sighs.

D.J.

Okay, let's get down to bitchness.
(to all)
Listen up, ladies.

He has their attention.

D.J. (cont'd)
My name is D.J. Beckett.

EMMY
(before he can)
He made the Surfsations number one.

He gives her a sideways stink-eye.

D.J.
Your only reason for breathing today
is to impress me. Each of you will be
given a chance to dance solo, then
I'll pair you into groups. Only the
very best of you will get to be one
of my Twister Girls. For the rest of
you it's back to the assembly line,
or whatever the hell you people do
around here.

GABRIELA (18), a cute Mexican girl, raises her hand.

D.J. (cont'd)
(annoyed)
What.

GABRIELA
Hi. My name is Gabriela, and I just
wanted you to know that it's been my
dream to be a Twister Girl. And now
that I'm eighteen, I'm old enough. So
here I am.

D.J.
Gabriela is it?
(off her nod)
I don't care.

One more dancer enters. It's Amber-Lynne with her game-face
on. She takes her place with the other hopefuls as she and
D.J. eye each other.

D.J. (cont'd)
Let's get started.

BEGIN AUDITION MONTAGE:

It's the good, the bad and the ugly of dance auditions. We
see:

-- QUICK CUTS of women who have no business being there and some who show promise.

-- Mandy NAILING every step in her routine as Emmy said she would. She's really good, but slightly ROBOTIC.

-- More dancers who are just awful. D.J. throws up his hands in frustration.

D.J. (cont'd)
I feel like I should have a gong. Can someone get me a gong?

-- Amber-Lynne absolutely CRUSHING her solo. She dances with ferocity.

-- A sexpot named CHARLOTTE (28) gets ready to audition as D.J., Emmy and Payton look on.

PAYTON
That's Charlotte. She dances at the Buck Drop Truck Stop.

EMMY
It's a topless diner just outside of town.

PAYTON
(off D.J.'s look)
"Tits and grits."

Charlotte dances exceptionally WELL. She gets really into her audition and begins to REMOVE HER TOP.

D.J.
(stopping her)
Whoa! Save the flotation devices for the water landing.

-- More dancers. Some more hopeless than hopeful. D.J. hangs his head in DESPAIR.

-- Then Gabriela auditions and BLOWS THE ROOM AWAY with her EXCITING routine. D.J. is wowed and sees some light at the end of this dark tunnel.

D.J. (cont'd)
Oh my god, Gabriela. Princessa! Where have you been all my life?

GABRIELA

Well, I was born in Los Cabos. But we had to flee the violence when I was very little. We paid these men who said they could help us. Then we walked for many days and had to dig a tunnel under this big fence and--

D.J.

Thank you! I think we can just stop you right there.

EMMY

How about we break into groups?

D.J.

Yes! Groups. Good idea. You all do your thing while I go barricade the door.

END OF MONTAGE

INT. TWISTER GIRLS REHEARSAL SPACE - EVENING

D.J. is alone and TOTALLY WIPED from the long day. ANNE LUNDY, a no-bullshit woman in her late 50's enters wearing a track suit.

ANNE

Sorry I'm late.

D.J.

Auditions are over. If you're here to pick up your granddaughter she's probably outside.

ANNE

I'm here to audition.

D.J.

Sorry hon, but I have an age restriction and you clocked past it a few centuries ago.

ANNE

That's discrimination.

D.J.

That's life.

ANNE
What's the matter twiggy, afraid I'll
prove you wrong?

D.J.
I'm afraid you'll break your hip.

She begins to remove her track suit...

ANNE
Maybe I'll just break your heart
instead.

...and reveals one of the BEST BODIES we've seen all day.
His interest is suddenly piqued.

D.J.
Damn, golden girl. Okay, I'm feeling
you.

He moves to the stereo as Anne moves to the middle of the
room.

D.J. (cont'd)
I expect my girls to do hip-hop,
break, twerk, shmoney...none of your
"Arthur Murray" box-step bullshit.

ANNE
Just count me down, smart-ass.

He hits play.

D.J.
Five, six, seven, and...

Anne begins to dance and is AWESOME. She moves like a
twenty-year-old, never missing a step in her ULTRA-MODERN
routine. D.J. does his best to mask his delight.

Anne finishes. She's a little winded, but knows she nailed
it. She grabs her stuff and begins to walk out.

D.J. (cont'd)
What's your name?

ANNE
Anne Lundy.

D.J.
Where'd you learn to dance like that?

ANNE
 (as she exits)
 Arthur Murray.

INT. TWISTER GIRLS REHEARSAL SPACE - LATER

Emmy watches closely as D.J. scans the dancer PHOTOS spread across two tables. He's RUTHLESS as he tosses away his rejects.

D.J.
 Too fat. Too flat. Two left feet.
 (grabs one we don't
 see)
 Too--

EMMY
 (grabs his wrist)
 Please, don't.

He tries to release her grip. She pleads with her eyes. He relents and returns the photo to the table. We see it was MANDY'S.

He continues to move photos around until he finally has a selection group of TWELVE. We see familiar faces such as Payton, Amber-Lynne, Gabriela, Charlotte, Mandy and Anne. He sighs.

D.J.
 Twelve. Eight less than the
 Surfversations.

EMMY
 (always on the bright
 side)
 But four more than eight.

D.J.
 I binge-watch Forensic Files. I could
 make you disappear and no one would
 know.

EMMY
 Do you want me to send out the email?

D.J.
 Might as well.
 (a beat)
 Lord help me.

Emmy promptly DROPS to her knees, then quickly PULLS DOWN a surprised D.J. She begins to PRAY.

D.J. (cont'd)
What are you doing?

EMMY
Asking the Lord to help you.

D.J.
This isn't what I normally do when I kneel.

She goes wide-eyed.

EMMY
I'll pray for both of us.

INT. EMMY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Emmy is on the couch with her laptop as she sends out the congratulation email. A sleeping D.J. is peacefully curled up next to her.

EXT. BUCK DROP TRUCK STOP PARKING LOT

Charlotte is leaning on her old car as she looks at her phone. She smiles and slides down the side of her car with relief.

INT. MANDY'S BEDROOM

Mandy sees the email on her phone. She SQUEALS with delight and begins HOPPING around in a joyous circle.

INT. HARDWARE STORE PAINT AISLE

Amber-Lynne pulls her phone from her pocket. She sees the email, half-smiles then puts the phone back like she expected it to happen. Then, she looks around, and cracks an even bigger smile.

EXT. PIG FARM

Gabriela, surrounded by her FAMILY in the middle of their small farm, react with CHEERS as they read the email on her phone.

INT. ANNE'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Anne is sipping a glass of wine as she reads the email on her phone. She smiles.

ANNE

Well I'll be damned.

INT. TWISTERS ARENA COURT - DAY

It's the first day of rehearsals for the new Twister Girls. The squad of TWELVE (the six we know, plus six other dancers without speaking parts) STRETCH at mid court. Amber-Lynne and Mandy are the only two of the original eight.

MANDY

(worried)

Where are the other girls?

AMBER-LYNNE

We're the only ones he picked from the original team. Little bastard.

D.J., wearing a LONG-SLEEVE gym shirt, enters with Emmy and Lowell.

LOWELL

I thought you wanted a bigger group.

D.J.

And I thought that whole thing about rednecks inbreeding was only a myth.

(then)

Look alive, ladies!

They stand at attention.

LOWELL

Hello, girls. I know you'd normally be doing this in your rehearsal space, but I was so excited about this I thought I'd let you use the arena. I just can't wait to see what D.J. has in store for us.

(to D.J.)

Just nothing too racy now. Hear?

D.J. tries to ignore this as he approaches the Girls. Emmy and Lowell take seats.

D.J.

As of this moment, you twelve are the new Twister Girls. I have one goal and one goal only: to turn you last-place losers into the number one dance team in the league.

Lowell quickly approaches, just behind D.J.

LOWELL

Aren't you being kinda harsh?

D.J.

(can smell him)
Aren't you being kinda heavy-handed with the Aqua Velva?

Lowell RETREATS just as quickly.

D.J. (cont'd)

As you know, judging begins immediately after the All-Star break. The league secretly sends judges--

Mandy raises her hand. He's annoyed.

D.J. (cont'd)

What.

MANDY

There are judges?

D.J.

Yes, Mrs. Roboto, there are judges. That's how they judge which team is the best. Didn't you guys know that?

They all shake their head. No one knew. He turns to Lowell and Emmy. They also didn't know.

D.J. (cont'd)

Seriously, why do the aliens choose to abduct you people first?

(then)

The league secretly sends three judges to one home game after the All-Star break. One. We don't know who they are or when they're coming. That means every game could be *the game* that determines who's number one and who's Khloe. So we need to achieve perfection before the break. Am I crystal?

Mandy is about to raise her hand. Amber-Lynne stops her.

AMBER-LYNNE
Clear as a tinkerbell.

D.J.
(glares, then)
Emmy sent you steps. Let's see what
you remember. Um, Cassandra. Let's
get you to the front.

CASSANDRA (25), one of the dancers with a non-speaking role,
does as instructed. Emmy gets up and hurries to the stereo
as the Girls take their positions. She hits play.

D.J. (cont'd)
Five, six, seven, and...

The Girls begin to DANCE. It's PROVOCATIVE. But it's also
not working. Lowell looks worried. The Girls look unsure.
D.J. just looks like he's in for a long season.

D.J. (cont'd)
STOP! Just...stop.

Lowell approaches again.

LOWELL
Don't you think it was a
little..."much."

D.J.
No. I think it was a little "megh!"

LOWELL
I just think that maybe--

A stern-looking WOMAN in her 70's SNEAKS up behind Lowell,
GRABS his arm and starts SWATTING him in the ass like he's a
naughty little boy. This is MOTHER RICHARDS.

MOTHER RICHARDS
(with each swat)
How. Dare. You. Bring. This. Filth.
Into. My. Home!

Everyone is shocked. Except Lowell.

LOWELL
Hello, mother.

MOTHER RICHARDS

That kind of dancing is a perversion!
I demand you put an end to it.

Lowell tries to hold his ground.

LOWELL

Now mother, you signed over majority
control of the franchise to me. And
D.J. and I, we have big plans for the
Girls.

MOTHER RICHARDS

D.J. Is that this "person?"

D.J.

Hey lady, watch who you're calling
"person."

MOTHER RICHARDS

I want that little piece of vulgarity
gone. Now.

LOWELL

I can't. We're an equal opportunity
employer. I'm afraid it's the law.

MOTHER RICHARDS

No wonder we lose.

She scowls at Lowell then marches out. Lowell gets close to
D.J.

LOWELL

Tone it down.

He leaves. With a slight limp.

INT. TWISTERS ARENA COURT - LATER

The Girls rehearse another number with the same lackluster
results. D.J., now feeling more pressure, isn't happy. Mandy
is nailing her steps, but it's still LIFELESS.

D.J.

STOP! Come on, Mandy! Give me
something I can feel! Put some soul
into it!

AMBER-LYNNE

Cut her some slack. It's our first
day.

Mandy gets visibly RATTLED. Sometimes the world is just too big for her.

MANDY
Busted! It's all busted!

D.J. loses it.

D.J.
YOU'RE BUSTED!

Mandy freezes. Everyone does. She has a frightened look on her face that will be hard to forget. D.J. knows he crossed a line.

She RUNS OFF in tears. Emmy chases after her. Before D.J. knows it, Amber-Lynne POUNCES! She has him on the ground and locked in a painful ARM BAR.

AMBER-LYNNE
Talk to her like that again and I'll
rip off your crystal balls.

D.J.
(grimacing)
Got it.

She releases the hold. He gets up. The rest of the Girls stare at him COLDLY then walk away. Rehearsal is over.

INT. TWISTER GIRLS DRESSING ROOM

Emmy consoles Mandy. D.J. enters.

D.J.
How's the humble pie around these
parts?

Emmy gives him the stink-eye, rises and steps up to him.

EMMY
How could you?

She leaves. He sits next to Mandy. He chooses his words carefully.

D.J.
I've been called names my whole life.
Some I've heard so many times they
feel new again. Probably why I'm so
good at it. I guess an apology
wouldn't--

MANDY

Amber-Lynne tossed you, didn't she?

D.J.

Her aggression level is so high!

(a few beats)

It's not why I'm here. I've done some things in my life I'm not proud of. But I've never been more ashamed of myself until I saw that look on your face.

(a beat)

I know what it's like to be different. That's why it was so hard to come out to my parents. They had the same look on their faces. That's why I promise I will never hurt you again. And why I am never, ever taking this off.

He pulls up his sleeve to show her he's wearing THE BRACELET.

D.J. (cont'd)

I really couldn't. You put it on so tight.

She smiles and rests her head on his shoulder. A beat.

MANDY

You're gay?

INT. TWISTERS ARENA COURT - LATER

Joe is alone practicing jumpers. D.J. enters to retrieve a bag he left. He's emotionally drained.

JOE

Tough day at the office?

D.J.

(as if ordering)

Yes, I'll have a cyanide on the rocks with a hemlock chaser.

Joe smiles and passes D.J. the ball. D.J. dribbles once, SHOOTs and SWISHES IT like a pro.

JOE

(surprised)

Nice!

Joe passes him the ball again.

D.J.
You were expecting something like
this?

He takes a shot like a GIRLY GIRL and misses badly.

JOE
Guess I don't know what I was
expecting.

D.J.
Me neither.

JOE
The dance team?

D.J.
I messed up. They're practically
amateurs. I don't know...maybe I am
too.

JOE
I've played for every kind of coach
there is. Veterans. Rookies. Some I
hated. Some, I'd run through a brick
wall for. They're the ones who knew
how to adapt. They didn't try to
force us to be something we weren't.
Once they accepted what they had to
work with, the team was willing to do
the same. And we got better. It made
the game fun again.

D.J.
I never had a coach.

JOE
Maybe not. But it sounds like you're
putting up one hell of a brick wall.

D.J. lets in sink in. He gets it.

D.J.
Thanks, coach.

They continue taking jumpers as we:

BEGIN REHEARSAL MONTAGE

-- D.J. and the Girls continue to rehearse. They're not
nearly the Surfsations. But they're getting BETTER.

-- Amber-Lynne is a dynamo, Payton is working her butt off, and Gabriela is a revelation.

-- Lowell sneaks a peek and looks pleased.

-- D.J. helps Mandy add SWAGGER to her precision. She's getting it.

-- He stops Charlotte from exposing her breasts when she gets too in the moment.

-- He shows them something a little more ADVANCED, but they can't quite master it. He's surprisingly okay with it.

-- They try on different COSTUMES. Some he likes. Some, not so much.

-- They're finding routines that work for them. He finally looks confident.

-- They POSE for the Twister Girls poster with D.J. right in the middle. The proud peacock. CAMERA FLASH.

END OF MONTAGE INTO:

INT. TWISTERS ARENA - OPENING NIGHT

The place is HALF FULL. Another season of low expectations. Emmy is performing one of her many jobs.

D.J. hurries down the

ARENA TUNNEL

Joe passes on his way to the court.

D.J.
Good luck, Joe.

JOE
You too.

Then he passes Janis, who greets him with flirtatious eyes.

D.J.
Give it a rest, Drago.

INT. TWISTER GIRLS DRESSING ROOM

D.J. enters.

D.J.
Tuck it in, ladies!

The Girls are all there, fully in costume.

PAYTON
Hey! What if we were dressing?

D.J.
For reals?

CHARLOTTE
Wouldn't bother me.

ANNE
Would've been the first time a man
saw my "girls" in a year.

AMBER-LYNNE
With *that* body?

CHARLOTTE
You and me need to hang out.

GABRIELA
How do we look?

D.J.
Like a work in progress.

Not exactly the answer she was hoping for.

D.J. (cont'd)
But, you're a whole lot better than I
thought you would be at this point.
And it's a long way to All-Star
break. So let's get out there and
breathe some life into this place.
It's half empty and the walking dead
are half awake.

ANNE
You're an inspiration.

INT. OUTSIDE TWISTER GIRLS DRESSING ROOM

D.J. and the Girls exit. Mother Richards and a TEAM OF OLDER
ADULTS in sparkly jumpers stop them.

D.J.
Oh, look. It's Miss Daisy. What's all
this?

MOTHER RICHARDS
This is *my* equal opportunity to
wholesome entertainment.

PAYTON
(to D.J.)
It's the Travisburg Tappers. They're
legendary.

ANNE
I thought they broke up.

MOTHER RICHARDS
I find that monetary incentive is the
best tool for mending fences.

MANDY
Oooo! I love the Tappers! Are you
going to dance tonight?

TAPPER 1
Yeah. On your graves.

MOTHER RICHARDS
You see, I feel my liberties are
being infringed upon by having your
immorality shoved in my face. I'm
being persecuted.

D.J.
You're being persecuted?

Fuse. Lit.

MOTHER RICHARDS
Yes. So, why don't we let the fans
decide who they want as their dance
team. The Tappers. Or the strippers.

D.J.
You're on, Cruella.

AMBER-LYNNE
What?

D.J.
Excuse me for a moment. She's been
breathing in too many paint fumes.
(turns to Amber-Lynne)
We got this.

AMBER-LYNNE
They're really good.

D.J.

They're just a bunch of old tappers.
But *you* are one fierce bitch.

(also to the others)

If you can't beat them, then you'll
never be number one.

He searches their eyes for any confidence he can find. They nod. They're in. He turns back to Mother Richards.

D.J. (cont'd)

Age before beauty.

MOTHER RICHARDS

More like, the worthy before the
wicked.

INT. TWISTERS ARENA - LATER

The game is nearing the end of the first half. The Twisters lead the NEW YORK EMPIRE 52-40. Qyntel is having a breakout game as evidenced by his hitting a DEEP THREE.

ANNCR 3 (V.O.)

Qyntel Morris again! From way down town! He puts the Twisters up by fifteen.

ANNCR 4 (V.O.)

This kid is on fire! But we've seen this story before. Enjoy him while it lasts.

The horn SOUNDS, ending the first half. The teams head to the locker room.

The ARENA MC (50) steps to center court.

MC

Alright, Twister fans! What an exciting first half! Now, we have a special treat for y'all. For the very first time, you get to pick this season's dance team. Will it be the Twister Girls? Or...the reunited Travisburg Tappers!!

Fans look surprised and pleased. The Tappers are back?

MC (cont'd)
 Okay! First up, making their
 triumphant return, the legendary
 Travisburg Tappers!

The Tappers take the court to WELCOME APPLAUSE. Mother Richards stands courtside.

D.J. and the Girls witness it all from the tunnel. Lowell and Emmy arrive.

LOWELL
 What were you thinking?

D.J.
 ...That your mother needs a spanking.

The Tappers hit their marks. A POPULAR SONG plays and they begin a SURPRISINGLY HIP tap routine. It's more Savion Glover than Fred Astaire.

D.J. and the Girls are understandably nervous.

ANNE
 They're a lot better than I remember.

MANDY
 I always wanted to be a Tapper.

PAYTON
 Pray they hold auditions.

The Tappers kick it into high gear then finish with a flourish to LOUD APPLAUSE. They join Mother Richards. Lowell tuns to D.J.

LOWELL
 Your Girls better be good.

D.J.
 I don't think good will be good enough.

The MC has returned to mid court.

MC
 Wow! Wasn't that fantastic? Alright,
 next up is your one and only Twister
 Girls!

The Girls enter the court to mildly POLITE APPLAUSE. They look at each other. This is it. Do or die time. Literally.

A POPULAR SONG plays and they begin to DANCE. They're a little tentative, but then the track kicks in and they find another gear. And they're GREAT. Not Surfsations great, but:

D.J.
...Not bad.

The Girls give it their all. The fans, especially the YOUNGER ONES, are really into it. The Girls finish. To LOUDER APPLAUSE. They soak it in. D.J. and Emmy arrive.

The Tappers, Mother Richards and the MC return to mid court. Time for the verdict.

MC
Un-be-lievable! What a tough decision y'all have. But we can only afford one team. So, by round of applause, will it be the legendary Tappers?

They receive loud, but NOT OVERWHELMING APPLAUSE.

MC (cont'd)
Or the new and improved Twister Girls?

They receive wild, RAUCOUS APPLAUSE.

MC (cont'd)
It's the Twister Girls!

The Girls can't believe it. They're practically in tears. Mother Richards fumes and GRABS the mic.

MOTHER RICHARDS
(to the fans)
Sick! You are all sick!

The MC manages to get it away from her. She steps up to D.J.

MOTHER RICHARDS (cont'd)
You will burn in hell.

D.J.
Don't use up all the sunscreen before I get there.

She STORMS off, followed by the Tappers.

D.J., Emmy and the Girls leave the court to CHEERS and meet Lowell in the tunnel.

LOWELL
 Heck of a job, Girls!
 (to D.J.)
 And you. You sure are a gambler.

D.J.
 Does that mean I can have more house
 money to play with?

LOWELL
 Not a chance in hell.
 (then)
 Looks like we got ourselves a dance
 team!

Everyone gets the feeling that things are looking up. And
 THEY ARE, as we:

BEGIN REGULAR SEASON MONTAGE:

-- The Twisters get off to a blistering start thanks to
 Qyntel's FLASH, Joe's LEADERSHIP and Janis' sharp SHOOTING.

-- The Girls DAZZLE fans with their performances, even
 though they are still not as advanced as the Surfsations.

-- More and more fans attend games.

-- We see the Girls waving to fans during a game. Anne
 notices a section of MALE GROUPIES her age holding SIGNS
 saying things like: "I (heart) Lundy" and "I Want To Be
 Anne's Man". She blushes.

-- We see GLIMPSES of townsfolk with "Twisters fever".

-- Fans FLOCK to a meet-the-team event. They line up for
 autographs. They buy Twister Girls posters and calendars.
 Lowell looks pleased; cha-ching. Emmy works like a busy
 beaver.

-- The Girls deliver another GREAT PERFORMANCE as D.J.
 watches from the wings. He looks more confident than we've
 seen him since he arrived in Travisburg.

END OF MONTAGE

INT. TWISTER GIRLS REHEARSAL SPACE - MORNING

D.J. approaches the door. Through the window he sees Amber-
 Lynne working with Payton. The eager rookie learning from
 the veteran warrior. He watches their interaction, thinks a
 beat, smiles, then walks away.

INT. TWISTER GIRLS DRESSING ROOM - DAY

D.J., Payton and Amber-Lynne are looking at COSTUME CHOICES. Charlotte enters. She has bad news.

CHARLOTTE

Guys, I just got off the phone with Cassandra. She's quitting the team.

PAYTON

What? Why?

CHARLOTTE

She may or may not have embezzled some money and she's fleeing the country.

D.J.

It's always the quiet ones.

PAYTON

I guess we're down to eleven.

D.J.

No, we need to be twelve. We're too small as it is.

AMBER-LYNNE

Let me call one of the original Girls.

D.J.

Nuh-uh. I don't do rejects.

They hear SINGING and look over at Emmy, who has been on the other side of the room the entire time. She's rolling up posters. While wearing headphones. And DANCING to the music.

Amber-Lynne can see D.J.'s wheels turning.

AMBER-LYNNE

No.

D.J.

Yes.

AMBER-LYNNE

She's not a dancer.

D.J.

She knows what you did to my matchbox house.

AMBER-LYNNE
(faux delight)

Emmy!

Emmy, still dancing, turns to see them SMILING at her.

EMMY
(over the music)
I love this song!
(then)
What...?

INT. TWISTER GIRLS DRESSING ROOM - LATER

Emmy is now ROCKING a Twister Girls COSTUME. It's the first time we've seen her out of her polo and khakis. And she looks HOT. But also self-conscious.

EMMY
It feels a lot smaller than it looks.

CHARLOTTE
You think that feels small?

EMMY
Pasties would feel big on you.

D.J.
You look great. And such a cute little tush.

EMMY
Stop! D.J., I'm serious. I don't want to screw this up for everyone. I'm not a dancer.

D.J.
No, you're Super Emmy. Team liaison, ticket sales rep, kids club coordinator, social media contributor, guest relations manager, dance team assistant and the woman who's going to cure cancer. If you can do all that, you sure as hell can shake your thing.

Emmy is touched by his trust.

D.J. (cont'd)
I'll work with you at home. And Amber-Lynne will make sure you know your steps.

AMBER-LYNNE

Why me?

D.J.

Because you're team captain.

AMBER-LYNNE

Since when?

D.J.

Since now. Got a problem with that?

She's honored, but doesn't let on.

AMBER-LYNNE

No.

D.J.

Good. Because captains buy the first round.

INT. DIVE BAR - EVENING

D.J., Emmy, Payton, Anne, Charlotte and Amber-Lynne sit at a table, celebrating.

ALL

To the captain!

D.J.

(looking around)

Amber-Lynne, when I said let's get shots, I didn't mean tetanus.

AMBER-LYNNE

Shut up and drink, Shirley Temple. Captain's orders.

PAYTON

So, Anne. Have you chosen a man from your many suitors yet?

ANNE

Who said anything about choosing just one?

They all laugh and woop it up.

D.J.

Get it, girl!

More laughing. Then, D.J. looks across the bar and sees a scruffy GUY named LUCAS (28) getting a little too close to Mandy near the jukebox. She isn't aware of the danger. D.J. leaves his seat and approaches.

D.J. (cont'd)

Hey, Mandy. Come join us. There's a virgin daiquiri with your name on it.

LUCAS

She'll drink it later.

D.J.

It's bad luck to keep a good drink waiting. Come on, Mandy.

LUCAS

Why don't you just go on without her. This busted little belle is going to give me a private performance.

(to Mandy)

Ain't that right darlin'?

Oh no he didn't. D.J. steps up to him.

D.J.

Don't ever call her that.

LUCAS

Out of my business queer boy or I'll give you the ass whippin' you deserve.

D.J.

I've been punched by better trash than you.

LUCAS

Warned ya.

Lucas throws A PUNCH that is CAUGHT by the hand of a very angry Amber-Lynne.

LUCAS (cont'd)

Amber-Lynne.

AMBER-LYNNE

Lucas.

She RAG DOLLS him to the ground and locks him in an ARM BAR. He HOLLERS and starts TAPPING OUT.

LUCAS
C'mon, Amber-Lynne! You're breaking
it!

She begins to release the hold when:

LUCAS (cont'd)
(mutters)
Crazy bitch.

On this, she gives a fast TWIST and SNAPS IT! He SHRIEKS in pain. She gets in his face.

AMBER-LYNNE
Don't ever fuck with my team again.

D.J. leans down to get in a dig.

D.J.
Captain's orders.

They collect Mandy and head for the exit with the others.

INT. EMMY'S APARTMENT - LATER

Emmy is sitting in bed with cancer BOOKS and her PHONE. D.J. is on the couch not far away.

EMMY
I still can't believe she just
snapped it like that.

D.J.
I know.

BOTH
Her aggression level is so high.

They laugh.

BOTH (cont'd)
Jinx.

They laugh again. Then, she shows him a PHOTO of shoes on her phone.

EMMY
What do you think of these?

D.J.
Oooo. Snatch.

EMMY
Is that good?

D.J.
Totes.

EMMY
(pleased)
Snatch.

His phone BINGS. He looks at it. We see on his screen: GABL
UPDATE. BROOKE BABBASHAW TO RETIRE AT SEASON'S END.

D.J.
(stunned, sotto)
What?

INT. TWISTER GIRLS REHEARSAL SPACE - DAY

A stunned Payton asks:

PAYTON
What?

D.J.
(repeating)
We're doubling the number of
practices. All-Star break is a week
away and Emmy needs all the time she
can to get up to speed. You want to
be number one, don't you?

We now see that all the Girls are there. They are not
pleased.

AMBER-LYNNE
Yeah, but you already have us
practicing four days a week. What are
you going to do God, create an eighth
day?

D.J.
If I have to.

AMBER-LYNNE
Fine. Double the piss-ant money we're
making.

D.J.
You know we can't do that.
(to Emmy)
Can we?

EMMY

Are you really asking *me* that?

AMBER-LYNNE

Then forget it. I have bills to pay.

ANNE

Yeah, D.J. I work full-time. And I still drive for Uber *and* Lyft.

The Girls begin talking over each other.

PAYTON

I need to help my dad.

CHARLOTTE

I need my shifts.

EMMY

I'm already stretched thin.

MANDY

They'll miss me at the nursing home.

D.J.

OKAY! I get it.

GABRIELA

We all want this just as bad as you do, D.J. But how can we be in two places at once?

He thinks about it. He has a way out. And he isn't thrilled.

EXT. PIG FARM - DAY

D.J., in hip waders and gloves, stands in the slop and tends to a swarm of PIGS as Gabriela's amused family looks on.

D.J.

(to pigs)

Ah! Leave me alone! I swear I'll go vegan!

Pigs rush by his feet, causing him to lose his balance and FALL in the slop.

INT. ANNE'S CAR - EVENING

D.J. is in Anne's Uber/Lyft car, trying to navigate his way around town. He pulls up to the dive bar and two scary looking DUDES get in. He whimpers.

INT. HARDWARE STORE PAINT DEPT. - EVENING

D.J. places a can of paint in the paint shaker, closes the lid, hits power and turns to go. But his store apron is caught in the shaker as it begins shaking, dragging him to the ground.

INT. TWISTER GIRLS REHEARSAL SPACE - EVENING

The Girls, being directed by Amber-Lynne, practice. Amber-Lynne gives special attention to a determined Emmy.

INT. NURSING HOME - DAY

D.J. is trying to teach the RESIDENTS how to dance. But it's not happening.

INT. TUCK'S COFFEE & SUCH - DAY

D.J. is hard at work, grinding beans, rolling dough, displaying pastries, wiping tables, etc. as Tuck looks on impressed.

INT. TWISTERS OFFICE AREA - DAY

A frazzled D.J., in team polo and khakis, is running a kids club event for a group of rowdy kids. Joe, Janis and Qyntel walk in and the kids cheer. D.J. catches Janis' flirtatious smile. He mouths, "No."

INT. BUCK DROP TRUCK STOP - EVENING

D.J. emerges from the kitchen to serve three plates of food to TRUCKERS sitting at the counter. One of them looks at him and says:

TRUCKER
What's with the shirt?

D.J.
What?

TRUCKER
You're supposed to be topless.

D.J.
Uh, no.

TRUCKER
Rules are rules. Let's see it.

The other truckers nod. They don't mind. D.J. glares at them then takes off his shirt. The truckers smile. D.J. kind of likes the attention and grabs the coffee pot.

D.J.
Who wants a refill?

INT. ANNE'S CAR - DAY

D.J. pulls up to a large house. Waiting at the curb is a smiling Janis with FLOWERS in his hand. D.J. just keeps going.

INT. TWISTER GIRLS REHEARSAL SPACE - DAY

The Girls, still being directed by Amber-Lynne, continue to work hard and are getting better. Even Emmy is nailing her steps.

EXT. PIG FARM - DAY

D.J. tends to the pigs and he's got the hang of it. It even looks like he's enjoying it. Gabriela's family is impressed.

INT. HARDWARE STORE PAINT AISLE - DAY

D.J. uses his sense of style to help a COUPLE settle their differences over a paint color. He and the wife fist bump.

INT. BUCK DROP TRUCK STOP - DAY

A bare-chested D.J. dances and laps up the attention of thrilled truckers as he delivers plates of food with skill.

INT. TWISTERS OFFICE AREA - EVENING

D.J. carries a box of brochures through the office and into Emmy's cubicle. He sets down the box. He sees a cute PHOTO of he and Emmy, and smiles.

INT. ANNE'S CAR - DAY

D.J. has a blast with various passengers as they sing along to a POPULAR TUNE ala "Carpool Karaoke." We see a MONTAGE of CHURCH-GOING WOMEN, COLLEGE-AGED KIDS, INDUSTRIAL WORKERS, MILITARY PERSONNEL, etc.

INT. NURSING HOME - DAY

D.J. and the residents have had a breakthrough. He's taught them how to TWERK. And they're LOVING IT.

INT. TUCK'S COFFEE & SUCH - DAY

D.J.'s behind the counter. He's writing something -- presumably a name -- on a CUP of coffee. He approaches the customer. It's Janis. He sets the cup down and walks away. Janis picks up the cup and sees: NEVER! He smiles, undeterred.

INT. TWISTERS ARENA - DAY

A beaming Qyntel holds up his ALL-STAR JERSEY as he POSES for the LOCAL MEDIA.

REPORTER (O.C.)

Qyntel! How does it feel to be an all-star?

QYNTEL

Feels great. Proud to represent 'cause we're going all the way this year. Write it down. Cinderella's got nothing on this team.

INT. TWISTER GIRLS REHEARSAL SPACE - EVENING

Amber-Lynne and Emmy are alone as Amber-Lynne watches Emmy NAIL every step of a routine. She finishes. She's wiped. Amber-Lynne gives her a HIGH-FIVE.

AMBER-LYNNE

You're ready.

INT. EMMY'S APARTMENT - EVENING

An exhausted D.J., in POLO AND KHAKIS, and an equally exhausted Emmy, in DANCE ATTIRE, enter and collapse on the couch.

D.J.
How do you do it?

EMMY
I was going to ask you the same thing.

They sit for a moment.

EMMY (cont'd)
You want to watch Drag Race?

D.J.
Okay.

They see the REMOTE a few feet away on the coffee table. Neither of them have the strength to get it.

D.J. (cont'd)
We could just talk.

EMMY
Yeah. Talk. Talking is good.

INT. TWISTER GIRLS REHEARSAL SPACE - DAY

D.J. is in the space for the first time in what feels like forever. He's working on BECKY STYLE. Lowell enters.

D.J.
Mr. Richards...

He turns off the music.

LOWELL
Aw, call me Lowell.

D.J. nods.

D.J.
What's up?

LOWELL
I just wanted to check in and see how Emmy's doing.
(MORE)

LOWELL (cont'd)
I understand we added another
function to her long list of
responsibilities.

D.J.
She's doing great. Please don't take
her away from me.

LOWELL
No, no. Wouldn't think of it. I
figured she'd fit in. She's a special
kid. Speaks very highly of you.

D.J. smiles.

LOWELL (cont'd)
In fact, lots of folks around town
have been singing your praises. I
hear you've been working a little
overtime yourself.

D.J.
Second half of the season starts
tomorrow. The judges could be at any
game. Sometimes you just have to do
what's necessary.

Lowell nods in agreement.

LOWELL
Well, I just want to say thanks for
all you've done so far, in spite of
the challenges. I'm real glad you're
here D.J. And I'm glad to see this
ol' dustpan is growing on you. We
sure have a tough time holding on to
our stars.

And with that, he leaves. D.J. looks conflicted.

EXT. AIRPORT - DAY

Three ADULTS with luggage wait for their Uber to arrive.
They're too HIP-LOOKING to be locals. Anne pulls up wearing
a baseball CAP. She gets out to help load their bags.

ANNE
Hey, guys. Welcome to Travisburg. Let
me help you with those.

Some BINDERS fall out of one of the bags. Anne notices a cover that reads: GABL DANCE TEAM SCORING. Holy shit. The judges.

She helps to pick it up and the bags are loaded. They all get in the car and she LOWERS her cap to hide her face. They pull away.

INT. TWISTER GIRLS REHEARSAL SPACE - LATER

Anne shares the news with D.J. and the Girls.

CHARLOTTE

Are you sure it was them?

ANNE

Positive.

GABRIELA

The game's tomorrow afternoon. What do we do?

PAYTON

What can we do? We just have to go out there tomorrow and crush it.

AMBER-LYNNE

No. We need something more.

MANDY

Ooo! We could do the dance D.J. taught them at the nursing home!
(innocently)
They say the residents have been "very stimulated" since he did.

AMBER-LYNNE

Mandy's right. We need something crazy. Something they've never seen. D.J.? Any ideas?

D.J.'s been quietly thinking the entire time. He isn't sure he should say it, but:

D.J.

There is something I've been working on. I mean, it's so good it'll throw the world off its axis.

GABRIELA

What is it?

D.J.
It's called, "Becky Style."

ANNE
Have you always lacked an ego? Or did
it just vanish over time?

GABRIELA
Will you teach us?

D.J.
By tomorrow? No way. The Surfsations
are the only dancers who could pull
it off. And they would need way more
than a day to learn it. And Emmy just
learned our best routine. Let's stick
to that.

PAYTON
Do you think our best is good enough
to make us number one?

He hesitates, which is all the answer they need.

PAYTON (cont'd)
Then what do we have to lose?

He's still hesitant.

GABRIELA
Please.

MANDY
(in his face)
Please. Please. Please. Please.
Please. Please. Please. Please.

D.J.
Okay. Okay. But we're going to have
to work all night.

GABRIELA
I'm in.

PAYTON
Count me in.

AMBER-LYNNE
Let's do it.

He looks to Emmy. It's a lot to ask of her.

EMMY
I wouldn't be Super Emmy if I
couldn't.

D.J.
Alright. *But*, if we don't nail it, we
stick to the other routine. Crystal?

ALL
Crystal.

They begin to move around the space.

CHARLOTTE
(composing a text)
Is there a polite way to cancel a
threesome?

ANNE
(reaching for the
phone)
Here, let me...

BEGIN THE BECKY MONTAGE:

- D.J. teaches them BECKY STYLE, and it's a struggle.
- They continue to FAIL, but refuse to give up.
- They force themselves to stay awake as they work into the late hours.
- Slowly, they begin to GET IT.
- We see FLASHES of it, but we never see it fully.
- Finally, we see them perform THE FINAL STEPS. They smile. Did they nail it? D.J. smiles. THEY DID!

END OF MONTAGE

INT. TWISTERS ARENA - GAME DAY

Fans are pouring into the arena. The players are warming up. The three judges sit in different sections so they can each have a unique vantage point.

OUTSIDE THE DRESSING ROOM

D.J. is pacing. Janis walks up. The last person he wants to see right now.

D.J.

Janis--

JANIS

Let me be your Latvian lover.

D.J.

You did not just say that.

JANIS

Why not? Is it my hair? Too short?
Too long? You like Mohawk?

D.J.

Go away.

JANIS

Why you push me away? Tell me.

D.J.

Look, Janis. You're really cute. I
could skinny-dip in those dimples all
day. And Lord knows I have a soft
spot for Euros.

JANIS

I have soft spots.

D.J.

Would you please...

(a beat)

I just spent the last week grindin'
coffee, dishin' grits, piggin' slop
and drivin' every back road of this
town so my Girls could be ready for
this moment. I'm going on two hours
of sleep and feel like a cramp. So
the last thing I need in my life
right now is a sexed-up baller
COMPLICATING THINGS!

JANIS

(hurt)

You're right. Two men loving each
other. It's too complicated.

He walks away. D.J.'s nerves are fried. Then, Emmy
approaches with TWO ADULTS (60s) straight out of an old
Sears-Roebuck catalog.

EMMY

D.J.! Look who I found outside!

He is ROCKED by the sight of HIS PARENTS. Things just went from bad to worse.

D.J.

Mom. Dad.

MRS. BECKETT

Hello, Delbert.

EMMY

(snickers)

Your name is Delbert?

MRS. BECKETT

...Junior. After his father.

D.J.

Why are you here?

MRS. BECKETT

We're driving the camper to visit your Aunt Franny and thought we'd stop and see you.

MR. BECKETT

Your mother wanted to surprise you.

(to her)

I told you this was a bad idea.

D.J.

He's right. This is like the worst time ever, so...

He gives them the hint to leave.

MRS. BECKETT

Oh, well, Emmy here gave us tickets to the game. So we could see your dance team.

He gives Emmy a look. She gives him one back.

D.J.

Yeah. Sure. Enjoy the game.

EMMY

I'll show you to your seats. Oh, D.J., I have to stay late, so could you pick up some rocky road on the way home?

(to his parents)

I've been really been craving sweets lately.

His mother's eyes LIGHT UP. She has the wrong idea.

D.J.
 Seriously? She's letting me stay at
 her place.

MRS. BECKETT
 I'm sorry. I just thought--

D.J.
 What? That I converted?

MR. BECKETT
 That's not fair. We never asked you
 to--

D.J.
 But you wanted to.

Their expressions give them away.

MRS. BECKETT
 We were confused. It's not like you
 came out with a user's manual.

D.J.
 I'm not an adjustable bed, mom. I'm
 your son. And how do you think I
 felt? One day I'm going to war with
 G.I. Joe, the next day I'm planning
 our wedding in St. Barts.

MR. BECKETT
 How would we know?! You came out, but
 never let us in! You just left!

D.J.
 Oh, give me a break! You were happy
 to see me go so you wouldn't have to
 admit to people you have a gay son!

A beat. It's tense.

MRS. BECKETT
 We'll go to our seats now. Thank you,
 Emmy. We can find our own way.

They walk away.

EMMY
 (to D.J.)
 Why do you have to be so mean?!

She STORMS into the dressing room.

INT. TWISTER GIRLS DRESSING ROOM

A somber D.J. enters. Emmy can't even look at him. The other Girls look to him for encouragement, but he has none to give. Just:

D.J.
Let's get out there.

D.J. and the Girls exit and are faced by Mother Richards, a broken-armed Lucas, and a POLICE OFFICER.

D.J. (cont'd)
Now what?

MOTHER RICHARDS
My gazebo needed repair and I come to find that someone broke the arm of my favorite handyman in a fight when he had already conceded defeat. Now, I'm no lawyer, but my lawyers tell me that is a prosecutable offense.

D.J. slide steps in front of Amber-Lynne to SHIELD her.

MOTHER RICHARDS (cont'd)
I want her arrested.

Lowell arrives.

LOWELL
Mother...

MOTHER RICHARDS
Shut up, Lowell.

D.J.
You don't have to do this.

MOTHER RICHARDS
I do what's necessary.

She steps up to him.

MOTHER RICHARDS (cont'd)
Leave my town. Never come back. And I'll forget the whole thing. Or do you also want me to start wondering about the immigration status of the pretty Mexican girl?

D.J. looks at sweet, innocent Gabriela. He has no choice.

D.J.
Okay. You win.

He turns to the Girls, wants to say something, but can't. He leaves. Mother Richards addresses the Girls.

MOTHER RICHARDS
Well, since you no longer have a
leader, you are hereby disbanded.
Forever.

They suddenly hear the SOUND of tap shoes. The Tappers arrive, dressed to perform.

MOTHER RICHARDS (cont'd)
That was the sound of "taps." Just
for you.

The Tappers snicker.

MOTHER RICHARDS (cont'd)
Back to the brothel now.

The Girls, defeated, confused, angry...leave.

LOWELL
(deeply disappointed)
We finally had a good thing going.
Why can't you just let people be?

He follows the Girls, leaving his mother slightly stung.

EXT. TRAVISBURG MAIN ROAD - LATER

Emmy is driving D.J. home. She's still not talking to him.

INT. TWISTERS ARENA

The arena is PACKED. The judges are in their seats. The game has reached the half. Twisters lead the DALLAS RAMBLERS 62-60. The Girls, now in STREET CLOTHES, gather in the tunnel. The MC walks to mid court. He looks nervous.

MC
Hey, Twister fans! Well, we uh, got a
special surprise for ya. A new dance
team for the remainder of the
season--

Mother Richards, at courtside, shoots him a look.

MC (cont'd)
 --and for all eternity. Here they
 are, the Travisburg Tappers!

The fans are DEAD SILENT and confused. So are the judges. There are a few BOOS and a, "WE WANT THE TWISTER GIRLS!" The Tappers don't move as THEIR SAME SONG begins to play.

TAPPER 1
 (to Mother Richards)
 What do we do?

MOTHER RICHARDS
 Tap, you jackass!

The begin to tap, trying to catch up to the music. But they are too THROWN OFF. It's a DISASTER.

INT. EMMY'S CAR

Emmy and D.J. still sit in silence. He's rubbing the BRACELET Mandy made.

A SMALL OBJECT BOUNCES off the hood. Then ANOTHER. And ANOTHER. It's HAIL. A STORMCHASER truck ZOOMS past them. Emmy looks to the horizon. It's a TORNADO!

EMMY
 Oh, no...

D.J.
 Is that a tornado?!

EMMY
 Why do you think we're called the
 Twisters?

D.J.
 I just thought you people liked
 alliteration!

EMMY
 Stop saying "you people."

D.J.
 This is no time to get Michelle Obama
 on me!

She SPINS the car around.

D.J. (cont'd)
I swear, this is not God punishing
me!

Emmy can see the twister in the rear-view mirror. It's HUGE.

D.J. (cont'd)
Where are we going?

EMMY
The arena. We'll be safe there.

D.J.
Yeah, good. The arena. My parents are
there. My dad will know what to do.
(a beat)
My dad...

Suddenly, he feels like a boy again... who needs his
parents.

D.J. (cont'd)
My parents are at the arena! Can't
this thing go any faster?!

EMMY
Oh, now you're worried about them?

She GUNS IT as the tornado does what tornadoes do: TOSSING
STUFF.

INT./EXT. BBQ JOINT

DINERS, including Russ, are huddled together as they watch
stuff FLYING AROUND through a window. Out of nowhere, the
TINY HOUSE LANDS on RUSS' TRUCK, CRUSHING IT.

RUSS
(whimpers)
Lucille...

INT. TWISTERS ARENA

News of the tornado has reached the arena. The game has been
SUSPENDED. People are PANICKED. Lowell is at midcourt with
the mic.

LOWELL
Everyone please, remain calm. They're
saying it turned east, so we may not
get the brunt of it.
(MORE)

LOWELL (cont'd)
But this is still the safest place to
be until we know more.

The Girls and players are doing what they can to comfort
worried fans. Even Mother Richards and the Tappers are
helping out.

D.J. and Emmy arrive, looking in all directions.

EMMY
I'll find Mr. Richards.

D.J.
I'm going to look for my parents.

They start to split up, then:

D.J. (cont'd)
Emmy!

She stops. Turns. Then, with all sincerity:

D.J. (cont'd)
I love you.

She knows, and:

EMMY
I'm not the one you should be
telling.

EXT. TWISTER GIRLS DRESSING ROOM

D.J. finds his parents outside the dressing room.

D.J.
Mom! Dad!

They embrace.

MRS. BECKETT
Oh, Delbert! Thank God. We were so
worried. When your dancers didn't
perform...we didn't know what
happened to you.

D.J.
It's a long story. I'm just glad
you're safe. It's a mess out there.

MR. BECKETT

We're happy you're safe too. Couldn't stand the thought of losing you again.

This hits D.J.

D.J.

You didn't lose me. I left you. I was just so scared. I love you guys. I'm sorry I didn't give you a chance.

MR. BECKETT

Well, can you at least give your old man a hug?

D.J.

I'd like that.

He hugs his dad harder than he ever has.

D.J. (cont'd)

Hey dad? I'd really like to learn how to play golf. It's all in the hips, right? I'm really good with my hips.

MR. BECKETT

I'm just gonna think you mean dancing, son.

They smile.

MR. BECKETT (cont'd)

And Delbert? I would really like to see my boy perform.

D.J.

For reals?

They release the hug. D.J. is now crying.

D.J. (cont'd)

Boy, look at me. Waterworks. Hooo. I need to--

MRS. BECKETT

You go right ahead. We're going to see if there's anything we can do to help these poor people.

Their charity makes him BLUBBER even more.

D.J.
 (gushing)
 God, you're like a Rockwell painting.

INT. TWISTER ARENA HALLWAY

D.J. exits the men's room into an empty hallway. He hears the SINGING of a TENDER SONG. It's ANGELIC. He follows it into a

STAIRWELL

D.J. opens the door to discover SEVEN CHILDREN SINGING beautifully. They stop when they see him.

D.J.
 Please don't stop.

They sing a few more bars then finish.

D.J. (cont'd)
 That was lovely.

CHILD 1
 It's what we do when we're scared.

CHILD 2
 What do you do?

D.J.
 I dance. But mostly I behave like a real--

He censors himself.

CHILD 1
 Shit burger?

CHILD 2
 Peckerwood?

CHILD 3
 Dickweed?

CHILD 4
 Fart knocker?

CHILD 5
 (the youngest)
 Son of a motherless goat?

D.J.
All of the above.

CHILD 5
Are you scared now?

D.J.
Not anymore.
(thinks, then)
Hey, how far do your voices carry?

INT. TWISTER GIRLS DRESSING ROOM

All of the Girls are packing up their remaining things. D.J. enters ON A MISSION.

D.J.
Look alive, ladies!

Gabriela, Payton and Mandy RUSH to embrace him.

PAYTON
We're so glad you're okay.

D.J.
I'm so sorry I left. I just--

GABRIELA
...We know.

He looks at the Girls. His loves.

D.J.
You're the best dance team I've ever known. And it had nothing to do with me. It was all you. You worked your asses off not because you wanted to please a raging diva like me. You did it because you love this place. And it loves you. You're not my Twister Girls. You're theirs.

MANDY
But we're not. Mother Richards--

D.J.
None of that matters now.

The children from the stairwell enter.

CHILD 1
Hey, shit burger. You ready?

ANNE

Nice mouth. You didn't tell us you had kids.

D.J.

They're not my kids. They're our vocals.

The Girls react, "What?"

D.J. (cont'd)

We owe these people a show.

MOMENTS LATER

Semi-nervous fans, staffers, and others are in their seats, milling about, on their phone, etc. They need A SPARK.

The arena lights LOWER, unnerving everyone for a moment until: a SPOTLIGHT at midcourt on THE CHILDREN from the stairwell. They begin tenderly SINGING a POPULAR SONG. They have everyone's attention.

The Girls, BACK IN COSTUME, JOIN THEM, with Payton adding VOCALS. It's moving people to TEARS. Lastly, D.J. JOINS THE GIRLS, the music kicks in and they launch into BECKY STYLE! The fans are in AWE. The judges are WOWED. People record it with their PHONES. This performance will surely go viral.

Even Mother Richards moves closer to the court, caught up in the moment. She BRUSHES against someone. It's the Becketts.

MR. BECKETT

(re: D.J., proud)

That's our son.

She gives them the once over.

MOTHER RICHARDS

That's *your* son?

MRS. BECKETT

Isn't he a miracle?

Mother Richards watches him. Performing his heart out. Bringing joy. She's conflicted.

The Girls, D.J. and the children approach the nearest fans and lead them ONTO THE COURT. It's now a DANCE PARTY.

The Girls come face-to-face with the Tappers, who BOW with reverence. "We're not worthy." They join in the dancing.

Mother Richards comes face-to-face with D.J. Their exchange is very fast and businesslike.

MOTHER RICHARDS
I like what you did. The Twister
Girls are hereby reinstated. No legal
actions will be taken.

D.J.
Thank you. I know the Girls will be
thrilled.

MOTHER RICHARDS
Your parents are lovely people. But I
still disagree with your lifestyle.

D.J.
And I disagree with your fashion
choices.

MOTHER RICHARDS
What's wrong with them?

D.J.
They do nothing for your figure.

MOTHER RICHARDS
No one's ever had the courage to tell
me before.

D.J.
Maybe it's because your hard-line
views alienate people.

A beat.

D.J. (cont'd)
Wanna dance?

MOTHER RICHARDS
I'm self-conscious about my dancing.
Would you consider private lessons?

D.J.
Let me get back to you.

They part ways.

Meanwhile, the DANCING continues and the cheers get LOUDER
as we audibly transition to:

TITLE CARD: CONFERENCE FINALS GAME 7

INT. TWISTERS ARENA - EVENING

The fans are GOING CRAZY. The Twisters are hosting the South Beach Surf. Twisters lead 95-94 in the final minutes of the game. Even Isabella is there.

ANNCR 3 (V.O.)

Surf up by one with time winding down. Winner takes on the Legends for the championship. What a series this has been!

ANNCR 4 (V.O.)

Listen to this place! The roof is gonna come off!

ANNCR 3 (V.O.)

It's been a historic battle between Qyntel Morris and Demarcus Price. Price is the only answer the Surf's had for, "The Question."

ANNCR 4

You know these two young men want this bad. And so do these fans. With everything Travisburg's been through this season... no one would have picked them to be here.

TUNNEL

D.J. watches the action on the court. He's really getting into it.

D.J.

Come on guys!

A MAN in a well-tailored suit approaches. This is BEN EDELMAN (55).

BEN

It's quite the turnaround.

D.J.

(into it)

They're an amazing team.

BEN

They are. But I was talking about your Twister Girls.

He now has D.J.'s attention.

BEN (cont'd)

Ben Edelman. I own the LA Legends.

He offers A HANDSHAKE without hesitation. This is not lost on D.J. They shake.

D.J.

You here scouting your next opponent?

BEN

...And my next dance director.

Now he really has D.J.'s attention.

BEN (cont'd)

Brooke Babbashaw is retiring. She was good. But you're great. I gave her the best dancers in Hollywood, but she never could have accomplished what you did here. I like winning D.J. And not just rings. I want my Lady Legends to be number one. So I'll make this simple. I want the man who created Becky Style. I'll supply you with the best of everything. Facilities. Staff. Talent.

D.J.

Is that all?

Ben smiles. He knows what D.J. means.

BEN

And you'll be the only dance director in the league with a seven-figure salary. So, are you ready to become a Legend?

D.J. was certain once. But not now.

BEN (cont'd)

I'll expect your "yes" by the end of the week. The clock's ticking.

He makes a head motion to the GAME CLOCK and walks away.

The clock is literally TICKING DOWN. Just six seconds remain with the Twisters now down 106-105.

Qyntel has the ball and is closely guarded by Demarcus. He wants the last shot. He tries to create a little space with his dribble. All Joe and Janis can do is watch.

ANNCR 3 (V.O.)

Morris iso'd on the wing. One-on-one with Price.

ANNCR 4 (V.O.)

You knew it would come down to these two.

ANNCR 3 (V.O.)

Two seconds on the clock...

Qyntel jukes, SLIPS, then takes an OFF-BALANCE SHOT that CLANGS off the front of the rim just as TIME EXPIRES!

ANNCR 3 (V.O.) (cont'd)

He takes an off-balance shot! No good!

ANNCR 4 (V.O.)

Nooooo!

The Surf win and RUSH onto the court. Isabella JOINS THEM in celebration.

Joe and Janis put their arms around a deflated Qyntel.

ANNCR 3 (V.O.)

Qyntel Moris comes up short at the buzzer, and the South Beach Surf have finally punched their ticket to the Finals.

ANNCR 4 (V.O.)

What a season for these Twisters. What. A. Season.

D.J. also looks heartbroken. His phone BINGS. He looks at it. Oh no.

The Surf and Isabella leave the court. The fans, who have been ON THEIR FEET the whole time, don't leave. Instead, they begin APPLAUDING their Twisters. LOUDER AND LOUDER. The players, who were hanging their heads, look up.

Lowell is standing courtside next to an arena EMPLOYEE.

ARENA EMPLOYEE

So much for the confetti.

LOWELL

Hell, after all we've been through this season? Son, make it rain.

ARENA EMPLOYEE
 (into his walkie-
 talkie)
 Release the confetti.

Confetti RAINS from the rafters. Everyone looks up. It adds to the celebration. The Girls hit the court and help lead the CHEERS.

Lowell steps to mid court with a mic.

LOWELL
 Was that a great game, or what?
 Congratulations to the Surf. And how
 'bout a hand for your Twisters!

The fans ERUPT with cheer. The players and coaches appreciate it.

LOWELL (cont'd)
 Some people might say this was a
 flash in the pan. But we'll prove 'em
 wrong next year! We're on the road to
 greatness! We know the way now!
 (a beat)
 Boy, I tell ya, as I look around...
 Travisburg has always been a strong
 community. But this year--
 (he spots D.J.)
 --this year we opened our hearts to
 the idea of what it really means to
 be family.
 (a beat)
 I want to bring out someone who's
 done so much for us this season. The
 leader of your Twister Girls, Mr.
 D.J. Beckett!

The fans cheer WILDLY as D.J. reaches midcourt. Lowell offers A HAND SHAKE. D.J. ACCEPTS, then plants a BIG KISS on Lowell's lips! Lowell, stunned, walks away in a daze and takes his place next to an AMUSED Mother Richards.

D.J. takes a moment as he looks around at the fans, the players and the Girls.

D.J.
 (to all)
 Hey...

ALL FANS
 HEY!

He wasn't expecting that. He gathers himself.

D.J.

I came to Travisburg because Lowell wanted me to teach the Girls how to be a better team. Turns out I'm the one who had a lot to learn. Mostly about accepting people for who they are, so they could have a chance to accept me. Your Twister Girls have been the greatest teachers in the world. But they're so much more than that.

He pulls out his PHONE and HOLDS IT UP high.

D.J. (cont'd)

Because they've been voted THE NUMBER ONE DANCE TEAM IN THE LEAGUE!

The Girls can't believe it. The fans GO NUTS. The Girls RUSH to D.J. who greets them with OPEN ARMS.

EMMY

(to D.J.)

We did it!

D.J.

You did it. I never doubted it for a second.

EMMY

You are a terrible liar, Delbert Beckett.

D.J.

You're really enjoying that, aren't you?

EMMY

Uh-huh.

They HUG. Music PLAYS. Fans RUSH onto the court. It's another DANCE PARTY!

FADE TO:

INT. TWISTERS ARENA - EVENING

The party is over. The arena is EMPTY. Traces of confetti everywhere. D.J. and Joe are sitting on the scorer's table.

D.J.
So what do I do coach?

JOE
You take the max deal.

D.J.
Is that what you would do?

JOE
It's what we all do. Rings aren't guaranteed. The money is. Besides, you're made for Hollywood. You belong there.

D.J.
What if this is where I belong?

JOE
Every time I've been traded they say the same thing. "Joe, you'll always have a place here." It's just something they say to make themselves feel better. So it's on me to make it true. You gave this town something it never had. This is where Becky Style was born. That's history. That's your place here.

(a beat)
Take the deal. Sometimes we don't get a choice.

D.J. lets it sink in. He's made his decision.

D.J.
I'm gonna have a hard time quittin' you.

Joe smiles. A beat.

JOE
What are you going to do about Janis?

D.J. is surprised he knew.

JOE (cont'd)
It's cool. There's more of you in the league than you know. We're just not as out in the open as we could be. But we'll get there.

D.J.
 (about Janis)
 I don't know. He's really cute. And
 goofy. But starting something long
 distance...

Joe nods. He understands. The Girls walk in DRESSED TO
 PARTY.

JOE
 Looks like it's party time.

D.J.
 You coming?

JOE
 I'll catch up with later...Delbert.

D.J. hops off the table and begins to walk toward the Girls.
 He stops and turns to look at the man who has become more
 than a life coach. He's a big brother. One last nod of
 mutual respect before making it to the Girls.

MANDY
 D.J.! Charlotte is taking us to a gay
 bar!

CHARLOTTE
 It's not technically a "gay bar."
 They just play a lot of Nickelback.

D.J. doesn't react.

ANNE
 D.J.? What's wrong?

His expressions says it all.

EMMY
 You're leaving Travisburg.

D.J.
 The Legends. I couldn't say no.

PAYTON
 What about us? Family?

D.J.
 It's a lot of money.

ANNE
 There are more important things in
 life than money D.J.

D.J.
It's a million dollars a year.

ANNE
Promise you'll write us every day.

They all look at each other. So much love and respect.

D.J.
Come on. We still have a victory to celebrate.

AMBER-LYNNE
You're buying.

As they begin to exit the court area:

D.J.
Uh, hello? Captain buys the first round.

AMBER-LYNNE
Captain still gets paid minimum wage and will break your arm.

D.J.
I'm buying! It's the thanks I get for making you number one.

EMMY
Oh, don't start that again.

FADE TO:

EXT. AIRPORT - DAY

The seven main Girls are there to see D.J. off.

PAYTON
You'll have a star on the Walk of Fame.

D.J.
In pink gold baby!

ANNE
What are we gonna do without you?

D.J.
That's up to your new dance director.

He looks at Amber-Lynne. She's speechless.

D.J. (cont'd)
Lowell will be expecting your "yes"
by the end of the week.

Her look says she accepts.

AMBER-LYNNE
(playful challenge)
We're going to kick your Legend ass.

D.J.
You better or I'll come back here and
kick yours.

She and Anne step to the back. Charlotte steps up and
without a word, FLASHES HIM. He goes wide-eyed.

D.J. (cont'd)
Gigi Hadid! Those are spectacular!
Totally worth the wait. Have you seen
these?

The Girls all nod and "yes." They've definitely seen them.

ANNE
I can't *not* see them.

Then Mandy steps up, misty-eyed.

MANDY
You're the meanest person who's ever
been nice to me.

D.J. places a NECKLACE around her neck with a crystal
PENDANT of TWO OTTERS.

D.J.
For the record, I do like otters. But
not as much as I love you.

She HUGS HIM FAST AND HARD.

MANDY
I'll never take it off. And I'll
never, ever forget you.

D.J.
I'm counting on it.

She moves to the back of the line. Gabriela steps up. He
leans in and lowers his voice.

D.J. (cont'd)
Come with me. You'll be a star.

GABRIELA
I couldn't. This place has given my family so much. Being a Twister Girl is my chance to give back. It's home.

D.J.
I know. Just thought I'd ask.

She KISSES him on the cheek and steps to the back. Payton steps up and hands him a bag.

PAYTON
My dad's cronuts. For the flight.

She begins to sing "THE DANCE."

PAYTON (cont'd)
FOR A MOMENT, ALL THE WORLD WAS RIGHT
/ HOW COULD I HAVE EVER KNOWN, YOU'D
EVER SAY GOODBYE...

D.J.
(starts to tear-up)
Don't. Ugly cry. Ugly cry.

Payton also cries and steps to the back. Finally, Emmy steps up. There's a long beat.

D.J. (cont'd)
I've had many "sisters" in my life.
But you're the only sister I've ever
known. I love you Emmy. And I want
you to have this.

He hands her an ENVELOPE. She opens it. It's A CHECK.

EMMY
HOLY SHIT!

She covers her mouth in horror.

D.J.
You are the first and last recipient
of the Delbert Beckett Jr.
Scholarship.

EMMY
Wha...?? How??

D.J.
I sold my condo. Now go cure cancer.

They share the WARMEST HUG in the history of hugs as we:

FADE TO:

EXT. HOLLYWOOD SIGN - DAY

We see the famous sign high above the fabled city.

INT. LEGENDS ARENA DANCE FACILITIES - DAY

D.J. explores his new work environment alone. It's everything Ben said it would be and more. It's A PALACE.

-- The Lady Legends have their own workout facility.

-- The rehearsal space is MODERN and enormous.

-- The dressing room is TO DIE FOR.

-- D.J. looks at large POSTERS of each Lady Legend. All PERFECT TENS.

INT. LEGENDS ARENA COURT - MOMENTS LATER

D.J. stands alone at midcourt. The arena is state-of-the-art. It's the big time. Suddenly, the JUMBOTRON comes to life and plays a PLAYER'S INTRODUCTION.

INTRO ANNCR (V.O.)
At forward, from Valmiera, Latvia,
Agent Zero, Ja-nis Ber-
kissssssss!!!!

D.J. is confused until he sees Janis walk onto the court in LA LEGENDS GEAR. He's happy to see him.

D.J.
I thought you hated that nickname.

JANIS
Hate is a complicated emotion. More like, annoyed. The fans like it so, let them have it.

D.J.
What are you doing here?

JANIS

I got traded. You're not the only one who was in a contract year.

(looking around)

So this is Hollywood.

D.J.

Land of make believe.

JANIS

It can also be the land of something real. Like love.

D.J.

Wow, you are smooth.

JANIS

Like dancer.

He does a playful little DANCE.

D.J.

Eh...not that smooth.

(about his feet)

Not with those boats.

They begin to circle each other.

JANIS

Oh, come on. You've seen me move on the court.

D.J.

And you've seen *me* move on the court. No contest.

We begin to pull back as their flirtation continues.

JANIS

You know what they say about men with big feet.

D.J.

Yes I do. I also know what Joe told me he saw in the locker room.

JANIS

No. No. It was winter. The heater was out. Small market team.

D.J.

Mmmmm...that's not the "small" he was talking about.

JANIS

He's old man. Has bad eyes.

D.J.

Trust me. That man sees more than you
know.

JANIS

What do you see?

He looks around. Some much possibility. He looks at Janis
and sees the same thing.

D.J.

You.

FADE TO BLACK