



# Grace

by  
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Second Revised Network Draft 1.7.11

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ACT ONE

1 INT. MICHAEL'S DANCE STUDIO -- DAY -- DAY ONE

1

In a light, bright, open dance studio with wooden floors, mirrored walls, and an industrial edge, MICHAEL GRACE, 60, is rehearsing his dancers. They're five men, five women, young and hot, and as much as we're drawn to them, they're drawn to Michael. Like he's God. He's all charisma, charm, sex appeal, intensity, passion. He moves like a panther through the room loving his dancers for loving him, hurting them only when it'll make them better.

MICHAEL

Use your hips, Lisa. Eat him, don't  
charm him!

Like its choreographer, the dance is primal, visceral, sexy. The style is a blend of brutal contemporary fusion and stunning athleticism. And Michael seems driven by more than what he's seeing in front of him. There's a world behind his eyes, a vision, and he's driving his dancers toward it.

INTERCUT:

1A INT. MICHAEL'S IMAGINATION -- BLACK BOX STAGE -- ANYTIME

1A

*In the BLACKBOX THEATER OF MICHAEL'S MIND*, the dancers are in full costume, make-up, lighting, hair. It's a full production number, splashing water, special effects, impactful, incredible. Only shouts to the dancers bring us back to the rehearsal studio.

MICHAEL

STOP LOOKING IN THE MIRROR, JACOB!  
Dance from your balls, not your ego!

BACK IN THE STUDIO:

As the dancers continue with their rehearsal, in a corner of the studio, we find SARAH GRACE, 30, smart, funny, intense. She's wearing a suit and heels, dressed for her Beverly Hills law practice, but her eyes are riveted to the dancers; to the dance. Right now, she's talking to Michael's assistant choreographer, NICKY, 35, funny, smart, gay like he means it. He named himself after the Prince song "Darling Nikki." Seriously.

SARAH

He's in a mood.

NICKY

They hired someone else for  
Timberlake.

SARAH

Ouch.

NICKY

Yeah.

Sarah checks her watch. She's late.

SARAH

He's killing me here.

NICKY

Watch this next part.

SARAH

(impressed)

Who's the new guy?

The new guy is JAVIER DERENZIO, 30, A RIPPLING WALL OF HOTNESS. As they study him...

NICKY

You mean the man of my dreams?

SARAH

Your team or mine?

NICKY

Yours. But only 'cause I haven't gotten him alone yet.

Sarah laughs -- these two are like siblings. The dancers perform an athletic, dangerous lift.

SARAH

(re: the dance)

Nice lift.

NICKY

You miss the lifts?

SARAH

I don't miss the bruises. Or the broken ribs.

But it's clear, she misses the lifts. Finally, the dance ends. The dancers are exhausted, sweating, panting.

MICHAEL

That was weak and messy. Work the drop.

And Michael approaches Sarah.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

What do you think of the new guy?

SARAH

I think I'm married.

MICHAEL  
Married or blind?

Sarah thrusts paperwork at him.

SARAH  
I'm also late. Hurry up and sign  
your statement.

NICKY  
(re: the lawsuit)  
You think this one's gonna go away?

SARAH  
(yes)  
It's only sexual harassment if the  
attention was unwanted--

NICKY  
Please. She was on him like a queen  
at a sample sale.

MICHAEL  
I should sue *her*. Defamation of  
character.

SARAH  
Let's not push it.

As Michael signs papers...

MICHAEL  
Did Nicky tell you about my  
retrospective?

SARAH  
Your retrospective?

MICHAEL  
A retrospective of my life's work -  
my best dances, from the concerts,  
the tours, the movies --

SARAH  
(for the 100th time)  
Oh God. It was ONE flop.

MICHAEL  
(suddenly pissed)  
*And my phone hasn't rung since!*

Michael does this. It's his artist's temperament. When his  
mood swings, it gets a little scary.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

One movie doesn't open... And do they blame that ridiculous director? No. Because *one critic* calls me "outdated," the phone stops ringing.

NICKY

(sotto to Sarah)

He likes to pretend it was just one critic.

MICHAEL

I'm OUTDATED? I invented contemporary fusion. This kid with Timberlake's new tour? He steals my moves, but because he's twenty five, he's fresh and I'm *outdated*.

Michael spins on the dancers who are listening from a distance and trying to pretend they're stretching.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Did I or did I not say to WORK THE DAMN DROP?

And they are instantly on their feet, working on the drop. Nicky gives Sarah a quick kiss...

NICKY

Love you, miss you, mean it.

He trots over to do his job.

MICHAEL

(back to Sarah)

So I stage a retrospective. Get it? It's ironic. It's like I'm embracing "outdated." I remind them who I am, and then, at the end -- I surprise them with something new. Something devastating. I bring down the house and the phone starts ringing again.

SARAH

Any plans for how you're gonna fund a big retrospective?

And as quickly as he was angry, Michael is now laughing. He pulls her in, kisses her head like she's a silly child.

MICHAEL

Don't be banal your whole life, Sarah.

Sarah smiles, tucks the papers away in her briefcase.

SARAH

Okay, Dad, next time you get sued, you're taking the drive to Beverly Hills. This killed my whole lunch hour.

MICHAEL

You could've sent a clerk, Sarah. You take the trip downtown to smell the sweat and sex and remember what it's like to be alive. --Eileen, for the love of Pan, TIGHTEN THE BEAUTIFUL ASS GOD GAVE YOU!

And just like that, he's back to work. Sarah leaves, loving him and hating him all at the same time. As Michael approaches a dancer, pulls her into him and begins to correct her form, and she lights up as if she's been touched by God himself...

**GRACE OPENING CREDITS**

2 INT. SARAH'S LAW PRACTICE -- BRENTWOOD -- DAY -- DAY ONE 2

The law practice, KNOWER & GRACE, is small but respected -- 3 or 4 partners, a few associates. Sarah greets her husband, ADAM KNOWER, 40, with a kiss. Adam is the kind of man most women want to marry -- handsome, good, successful at everything he does. And what he lacks in warmth he makes up for in reliability. These two look good together. They walk and talk...

SARAH

Did you eat?

ADAM

Taco truck on Canon.

SARAH

Ooh! I want tacos!

ADAM

I thought you had lunch plans.

SARAH

I had to deal with my dad instead.

Sarah calls to her assistant, TARYN, 20'S, great at her job.

SARAH (CONT'D)

I need tacos!

TARYN

On it.

ADAM

You drove downtown to meet him?

SARAH  
Traffic wasn't bad.

ADAM  
You planning to bill him this month?

SARAH  
What's he gonna pay me in? Old  
Capezios?

ADAM  
You should at least bill him for  
your gas.

SARAH  
Damn, you look good in that suit.

ADAM  
(with a smile)  
My wife has good taste.  
(then)  
I just don't get it. He's famous.  
He's *well-paid*. He sells out shows  
at Royce Hall every month!

SARAH  
Royce Hall pays peanuts and he has a  
company to support. He needs a movie  
or a tour.  
(then)  
That suit makes me want to take it  
off of you.

ADAM  
Like right here? Cause I could get  
into that.  
(they share a smile,  
a quick kiss, then)  
You should bill him.

SARAH  
Adam, he's my father. He's not gonna  
pay me any more than he's gonna  
apologize for my drastically  
inappropriate childhood. It is what  
it is.

A lawyer, KIRSTEN STODDARD, 30'S, confident, striking and  
perfectly put together, approaches.

KIRSTEN  
Hey Sarah. Did you get a chance to  
look over the Jacobsen brief?

SARAH  
Not yet. Sorry. I had a family  
thing.

KIRSTEN

Another one? You must have a big family.

She says it lightly -- but nothing about Kirsten can be taken at face value.

ADAM

I went over it; I have some thoughts.

As Kirsten follows Adam to his office, Sarah answers her RINGING cell phone.

SARAH

(answering the phone)

Can we talk about the associate who's making me look second-rate because she doesn't have constant family drama like I do?

INTERCUT:

3 INT. SHAY'S VENICE BEACH BUNGALOW -- DAY -- DAY ONE 3

SHAYNA (aka SHAY), 30, mixed-race, is beautiful, bright, talented and irreverent. She's an artist, making a meager living as a photographer in Venice Beach. Headshots, weddings, seascapes... Her bungalow is small but light and bright and right on the beach.

SHAY

You want me to beat her up?

Sarah laughs, grateful for the offer.

SARAH

She's not worth it. Sorry about lunch.

SHAY

I'm telling you, I'm totally psychic. I knew you would cancel on me, didn't even change out of my pajamas.

Taryn hurries over and hands Sarah a bag from the taco truck.

SARAH

(covering the phone)

Bless you.

(back to Shay)

Why are you still in your pajamas at 2pm?

SHAY

Because I can be. Don't judge. So what's Dad's latest drama?

SARAH  
Same old, same old.

A knock at Shay's door interrupts the conversation.

SHAY  
Hang on.

Shay goes to her door to find DYLAN, 30, a sexy man-child. If he weren't so damn charming, he'd probably be in jail by now.

SHAY (CONT'D)  
Hey -- I'm on the phone with my sister.

DYLAN  
Joe got arrested.

SHAY  
What? Joe's in school.

SARAH  
Is that Dylan? Oh my God, Please tell me you're not back with Dylan.

SHAY  
(to Sarah)  
I'm not!

DYLAN  
Except he kinda skipped school.

SHAY  
(to Dylan)  
He skipped school--?

SARAH  
Remember, "If I ever get back with Dylan, you have permission to beat the crap out of me?"

DYLAN  
--And we kinda hopped a fence and I guess we were trespassing--?

SARAH  
I am so coming over there to beat the crap out of you.

SHAY  
You guess--?

DYLAN  
And then the cops came and I guess I outran them but Joe didn't.

SARAH/SHAY  
Oh my God! He ran? / YOU RAN?

DYLAN  
I--

SARAH/SHAY  
And he didn't go back? /Did you go  
back?

DYLAN  
No--

SARAH/SHAY  
He just let him get arrested?? /You  
just let him get arrested??

And now Shay talks into the phone again.

SHAY  
Are you hearing this?

Sarah is standing in the middle of her office, with a taco hanging out of her mouth.

SARAH  
I'm coming. I'll meet you at the  
Venice police station.  
(to Taryn)  
Cancel my afternoon.  
(into the phone)  
I can't believe you're back with  
Dylan!

And they both hang up. Off Sarah, on her way out...

4 INT. MICHAEL'S STUDIO -- DAY -- DAY ONE 4

Michael and Nicky are watching a dress rehearsal of a piece Michael has staged for a performance at Royce Hall -- one of the venues he sells out on a regular basis. The dance number is sexy, seductive, fun -- featuring primarily the female company dancers.

5 INT. MICHAEL'S STUDIO -- LOBBY -- DAY ONE 5

EDEN RUIZ, 18, mixed-race, beautiful, vulnerable and tough, is watching the dress rehearsal through the window, mesmerized, when Nicky emerges.

NICKY  
This is a private studio. You like  
to watch? I know an old guy who likes  
to dress up in a bear suit.

EDEN  
I-- Sorry. I need to talk to Michael  
Grace.

NICKY  
Regarding?

EDEN  
It's...personal.

NICKY  
This is a dance studio, Sweetie,  
nothing's personal.

EDEN  
It's... he's right in there. Can I  
just talk to him for a minute?

NICKY  
No.

EDEN  
Look, it's -- it's like, a legal  
thing, okay?

With a sigh, Nicky moves to the desk...

NICKY  
The older he gets, the younger they  
get.  
(hands her a business  
card)  
Sarah Grace handles all of Michael's  
"legal things."

But Eden's eyes are on the dance again.

EDEN  
What are they rehearsing?

NICKY  
He does a monthly show at Royce Hall.

EDEN  
Right. ...Is it true he had an affair  
with Madonna? And she wrote "Crazy  
For You" about him?

NICKY  
Everything you hear about Michael  
Grace is true. Except his last name.  
His real last name is Gracinski.

And he escorts Eden out the door.

6 INT. POLICE STATION -- DAY -- DAY ONE

6

Shay and Dylan sit on a bench outside the police station.  
Tense silence.

DYLAN  
I'm sor--

SHAY  
No.

DYLAN  
Shay--

SHAY  
No. No talking. No.

A long silence.

DYLAN  
I'm goin' in--

SHAY  
No! You are not allowed to talk to  
me and you are most certainly not  
allowed to talk to the police.

More silence.

DYLAN  
I didn't tell him to cut school. I  
caught him cutting school. I saw  
him on the corner, he was with some  
pretty rough kids, so I followed  
him. I was trying to look out for  
him.

A beat.

SHAY  
You think he's doing drugs?

DYLAN  
I don't know. ...I watched him jump  
the fence. And I went after him and  
then there were sirens, and-- You  
know how freaked out I get around  
cops. It was just like a gut reaction  
to run. ...I'm really sorry.

SHAY  
Yeah, well. Not as sorry as you're  
about to be.

Dylan looks up to see what she's talking about. HELEN GRACE,  
55, black, is approaching from a distance.

Helen is a force of nature, a mother lion; powerful, funny and wise from a life that didn't go the way she planned. Dylan is more than a little bit afraid of her.

DYLAN

Aw, man. You called your mom?

SHAY

I may not always be the best mother  
but I always know where to find one.

And then Helen is upon them.

HELEN

Are you kidding me? Is this a joke?  
Please tell me, Dylan Doran, that  
this is a PRACTICAL JOKE and that we  
are all about to start laughing.

DYLAN

No ma'am, it's not a joke.

HELEN

Oh, Child. Child, I was hoping it  
was a joke. I was hoping, the whole  
way here, that you were all throwing  
me a birthday party. A surprise  
party --

DYLAN

Is it your birthday?

HELEN

NO IT IS NOT MY BIRTHDAY!

DYLAN

Look, I'm really sorry, okay?

HELEN

No, it's NOT okay. It is NOT okay  
for you to corrupt my only grandson  
the way you corrupted my only daughter  
when she was the age that Joe is  
now.

SHAY

Sing it!

HELEN

-- Are you planning to visit my  
grandson in Chino every weekend? Is  
that your plan?

DYLAN

We just hopped a fence. He's not  
going to prison.

HELEN

Oh, you *just* hopped a fence, did you? Well unlike you with your Irish Catholic blood and your blue, blue eyes, MY grandson has some black in him. And they find ways in this state to land black boys in Chino for *less* than jumping a fence.

DYLAN

(to Shay)

Can you please make her stop?

SHAY

I asked you to stop a long time ago; look how that turned out.

As Helen continues to rant...

7 INT. POLICE STATION -- DAY -- DAY ONE

7

Sarah is talking to the arresting officer, SAM JONES.

SARAH

Is there any chance -- any chance at all -- that you can let him off with a warning?

OFFICER SAM

He's had warnings before. Two of them. I think he's looking at time in juvie.

SARAH

He jumped a fence.

OFFICER SAM

And then he ran. He shouldn't've ran.

SARAH

Would you believe me if I told you that was his father's idea?

Sam just looks at her. Sarah's speech is rapid-fire, unemotional; she pauses only to grab breath to keep going.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Here's the thing, Sam. May I call you Sam? This kid is my nephew. And he's fourteen in L.A. so right now? He could go either way. Good kid or criminal. We send him to juvie, he's gonna become a criminal in which case my sister Shayna will take up residence on my sofa and *never*

(MORE)

SARAH (CONT'D)

*stop crying* which will be bad for my marriage. And my sister's mother?

OFFICER SAM

Your sister's mother?

SARAH

Same dad, different moms, long story. Point is, my sister's mother is gonna KILL young Joseph's derelict father. As surely as I am standing here, she will buy a sword at a pawn shop and chop off his drug-addled head. And then where will I be? I'll be in court. Defending her. And I won't be able to bill her because she's family and my husband, who is also my law partner, will *never let me hear the end of it*. My point is, you send my nephew to juvie, it affects me, on pretty much every level. And Sam? I look like I've got it together cause I'm good at accessorizing and I'm a performer at heart. But the truth is, I'm secretly popping anti-depressants and spending a fortune at a shrink's office trying to figure out why I feel so totally dead inside my perfectly put-together life.

OFFICER SAM

Wow.

SARAH

Yeah. So. How about this? You let Joe go with a warning *this one last time*. And I will personally see to it that he gets an after school job and that he goes to it every day. In addition, I'll give you my card and the next time you need a divorce, or a will or someone you love gets arrested, I'll remember how good you were to me on this very bad day.

Off Officer Sam looking intrigued, or disturbed, or maybe just a little exhausted...

8 EXT. POLICE STATION -- DAY -- DAY ONE

8

Helen is still berating Dylan when Sarah emerges with JOSEPH in tow. Joseph is 14 and has his parents' looks and charm. This kid gets away with murder. He looks at his mom and his grandma, with not nearly enough apology in his voice...

JOSEPH

Dad told you this was his fault,  
right?

SARAH

You need to get him a job. *Today.*

9 INT. SARAH'S LAW FIRM -- DAY -- DAY ONE 9

Sarah arrives, frazzled. She stops at Taryn's desk.

SARAH

Did Adam notice I was gone?

TARYN

I told him you were in a briefing.

SARAH

That's why I love you.

As Sarah rifles through messages...

TARYN

Jody Turner called three times, and  
you have to file the Elkin case today,  
and there's a woman in your office.

SARAH

You let a woman in my office?

TARYN

She says it has to do with Michael  
Grace.

SARAH

Are you kidding??

TARYN

Wish I were.

Off Sarah's heaving sigh...

10 INT. SARAH'S OFFICE -- DAY -- DAY ONE 10

Sarah walks in to find Eden waiting; quickly assesses.

SARAH

Pretty girl, dance-bag in tow. Let  
me guess, sexual harrassment?

EDEN

What?

SARAH

I'm Sarah Grace. You're waiting to  
see me?

EDEN

Oh. Yeah. Are you like, Michael  
Grace's wife or something?

SARAH

No. No, I'm not his -- can we please  
just cut to the chase? You're suing  
him?

EDEN

I guess, yeah.

SARAH

And you don't have a lawyer?

EDEN

If I could afford a lawyer, I wouldn't  
need to sue my father.

A beat.

SARAH

I'm sorry, what?

EDEN

Michael Grace? He's my father. And  
he never paid my mother any child  
support. So I'm suing him for that.

Off Sarah, holy shit...

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

11 INT. MICHAEL'S DANCE STUDIO -- VIEWING ROOM -- DAY ONE 11

Michael is in his viewing room, (a room off the studio with a projector, a white wall and ratty sofa) watching videotapes of old movie musicals. Busby Berkeley, Fred Astaire and the like. Michael and Nicky are studying the moves as Shay pleads with Michael. Joseph is there too, headphones in his ears, oblivious, watching the dancers out in the studio.

SHAY

He'll be here every day. And he'll work hard.

MICHAEL

(to Nicky)

You see that spin? We use it, but twist it. Send it up. Make it new again.

NICKY

Ironic.

MICHAEL

Exactly.

Shayna walks right in front of the screen, blocking their view.

SHAY

Dad? I'm offering you an opportunity here to make up for the total lack of interest you showed in MY childhood. It'll be good for you. And it'll be good for Joe too. I mean, besides avoiding juvie, he could use a good male role model.

MICHAEL

I've been called a lot of names in my life, but that's a first.

SHAY

I was talking about Nicky, not you.

NICKY

You want Joseph to drop out of high school to dance back-up for Lisa Lisa and the Cult Jam?

Shay can't help but laugh. Nicky gets up.

NICKY (CONT'D)

I'm getting caffeine.

As he's walking past, he whispers to Shayna...

NICKY (CONT'D)

Put down the violin and grab a hammer.  
We need new pictures for the  
retrospective.

And Nicky is out the door. Shay smiles. Takes a beat.

SHAY

Dad? Give Joe a job and I'll  
photograph your dancers -- your new  
company -- for free. The shots in  
your lobby are all way outdated.

At that, Michael smiles.

MICHAEL

Did you say outdated just to dig at  
me?

Shay smiles, maybe she did. Michael glances at Joseph,  
brooding to the beat of his iPod.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

(grudgingly)

He can clean the studio. First time  
he's late, he's fired.

Off Shay, relieved...

12 INT. SARAH'S LAW FIRM -- ADAM'S OFFICE -- DAY -- DAY ONE 12

Sarah and Adam are sitting side by side on his sofa. She's  
upset. He's being supportive.

ADAM

Honey, this just isn't that  
surprising. Your dad is a notorious  
cad.

SARAH

There's a difference between sleeping  
with your dancers and fathering  
children you don't bother to raise  
or support!

ADAM

...Again, not sure how we're so  
surprised. He left Shayna and Helen  
for you your mom. And if your mom  
had stuck around--

SARAH

Please stop, okay? I get it. I'm  
an idiot. I'm the only one who's  
ever surprised that my Dad is some  
kind of uber-villain.

Adam pulls her closer, strokes her hair.

ADAM

You're not the idiot. Your dad is the idiot. You're the incredibly good daughter who always sees the good in people and it's one of the things I love about you.

SARAH

Thank you.

ADAM

But Sarah? He made his bed. He makes his bed *all the time*. At some point, you have to let him lie in it.

SARAH

It's not just his bed though. I have a new *sister*.

ADAM

Is she asking you to be her sister? Or is she asking for Michael's money? Because there's a difference.

SARAH

That's...wow. Do they have awards for sensitivity? Cause I'm totally gonna nominate you for one.

ADAM

I'm just saying, you have your own life. We have a business to run and a family to build and you've worked so hard to get away from that world -- from all of that drama. Don't let him suck you back in!

Sarah sits up, suddenly realizing...

SARAH

Maybe he didn't know about her.

ADAM

Sarah --

SARAH

If it was some kind of one-night stand, if the mother never told him she was pregnant, then there's a way to defend him in this.

Adam can see that Sarah didn't hear a word he said. Her love for her dad and her eternal optimism tends to block out his realism and he's pretty used to it.

ADAM

Sarah--

SARAH

I know. I know, and if he knew about her, I'm done with it. It's all his. I promise. Okay?

ADAM

(with a sigh)

I have a working dinner tonight. I'll see you at home.

SARAH

You think maybe he didn't know about her?

Adam takes her in. Sees her hope, her need to believe in her dad.

ADAM

...Maybe.

SARAH

Thanks.

And she kisses him and she's gone. Off Adam, knowing this is going nowhere good...

13 INT. MICHAEL'S DANCE STUDIO -- LATE AFTERNOON -- DAY ONE 13

Michael is working with the dancers and Shay is photographing them when Sarah walks in.

NICKY

You're back? What happened?

SARAH

Love you, miss you, can't talk.

She heads straight for Michael who has his arms wrapped around a dancer, demonstrating a move. He takes Sarah in.

MICHAEL

Your face is red. Not a good color on you.

Michael lets the dancer go, pats her on the ass to send her off.

SARAH

Please tell me you have no idea about the existence of Eden Grace Ruiz.

The company dances behind them, their dance adding subtextual tension to the scene as Sarah waits, holding her breath.

MICHAEL  
Eden Ruiz. Right. Where on earth  
did you meet her?

SARAH  
(furious)  
Oh my God, Dad. Exactly how many  
siblings do I have that you've never  
bothered to mention or support?

And Shayna, who worked her way across the room, heard that  
last part.

SHAY  
What's this now?

Shay takes in Michael and Sarah, then calls to the dancers...

SHAY (CONT'D)  
You all need to take five.

14 EXT. MICHAEL'S DANCE STUDIO -- LATE AFTERNOON -- DAY ONE 14

Sarah and Shay are sitting outside. Michael is fumbling  
with nicotine gum.

MICHAEL  
Damn it, I need a cigarette.

SARAH  
Who is her mother?

MICHAEL  
She was one of my dancers.

SARAH  
No surprise there.

MICHAEL  
Arabella Ruiz. When she said she  
was keeping the baby -- I thought  
she was insane.

SHAY  
Or there.

MICHAEL  
She was a brilliant dancer in her  
prime. It made no sense to wreck  
her body like that.

SHAY  
Like my mother wrecked hers?

SARAH  
And my mother wrecked hers?

SHAY

Even if you can't stop sleeping with  
your dancers, *have you never heard*  
*of a condom?*

And Sarah starts to unravel just a little bit.

SARAH

I can't do this. I have a job. I  
have a job and I have a life and I  
have a husband and I have bitchy  
associates and no time to freakin'  
eat and I'm not doing this!

SHAY

Good girl. Walk away.

SARAH

Right. Thank you. I'm walking.

And Sarah starts to walk away. But Michael calls after her.

MICHAEL

She said she didn't want anything  
from me!

SHAY

Keep walking, keep walking!

And Sarah can't help but stop and turn back.

SARAH

Did you sign paperwork? Did you  
sign away your parental rights?

MICHAEL

(No)

*She said she didn't want anything.*

SHAY

Well, she wants something now.

SARAH

Eighteen years of child support plus  
interest? That's at least a quarter  
million dollars. You'll have to take  
a second mortgage on the studio.

A beat as she takes in his face. And she knows him so well.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Oh God, Dad. Please tell me--

MICHAEL

Times have been tight, Sarah.

SARAH  
You've already mortgaged it?

MICHAEL  
The phone stopped ringing!

SARAH  
Did you max it?

After a beat...

MICHAEL  
All I need is one good tour...

SARAH  
Oh my God.

SHAY  
If he doesn't have it?

SARAH  
They'll take the studio--

MICHAEL  
It's all I've got--

SARAH  
They'll practically hand her the  
deed. This state isn't very  
sympathetic to deadbeat dads.

MICHAEL  
Just talk to Arabella--

SARAH  
I have a JOB!

MICHAEL  
--She wouldn't let her daughter do  
this.

SARAH  
YOUR daughter. She's YOUR daughter  
and she's our sister. And even if I  
can make the legal part of this go  
away? That part's not freaking going  
to!

MICHAEL  
Oh Darling, so much drama. I doubt  
the girl is even mine. Dancers...  
they're notoriously slutty.

And with that he walks away, heading back into the studio.

SARAH

I hate him. I hate him, I hate him,  
I HATE him.

SHAY

(sympathetic)

Oh, baby sister. I told you to keep  
walking.

This is hard for Shay too, but they both know it's harder on Sarah.

15 INT. ARABELLA'S RESTAURANT -- LATE AFTERNOON -- DAY ONE 15

Sarah looks around the small, hip, bustling Silverlake neighborhood joint as a HOSTESS approaches.

HOSTESS

Table for one?

SARAH

No. I'm sorry -- I'm looking for  
the owner. Arabella Ruiz?

The hostess looks around and then points to a woman who is chatting with some regular customers.

HOSTESS

She's right over there.

The hostess is pointing at ARABELLA RUIZ, 40, Latina, a beautiful former dancer whose light has dimmed a little. Arabella is gentle and forgiving by nature but can be fierce, like any mother, where her daughter is concerned. When they make eye contact, Sarah instantly recognizes her.

SARAH

(to herself)

Oh my God. Belle.

16 INT. ARABELLA'S RESTAURANT -- MOMENTS LATER -- DAY ONE 16

Sarah is sitting across from Arabella -- Belle -- who is marvelling at Sarah.

BELLE

I can't believe it -- Sarah Grace --  
look at you. You're all grown up!

Sarah smiles, almost too choked up to speak yet.

BELLE (CONT'D)

The last time I saw you you were  
just a little thing -- 11 or 12 --  
and already an incredible dancer.

SARAH

Thank you.

BELLE

You still dance?

SARAH

I went to law school; I'm a lawyer.

BELLE

Wow. Did your Dad ever forgive you?

SARAH

No.

BELLE

Do you like it? Being a lawyer?

To her own surprise, Sarah's eyes fill with tears. She looks away.

SARAH

I'm sorry. ...It's so strange to see you. ...I used to write you letters every week, but I didn't know where to send them.

BELLE

I'm sorry I just disappeared like that. I was...

SARAH

You were pregnant.

BELLE

...But we were your family. The dancers. We raised you in that studio.

SARAH

Do you remember what you told me before you left?

Belle shakes her head no.

SARAH (CONT'D)

You said to get an education. You said there was more to life than dancing. You said, "What's left for a dancer after she turns thirty?"

BELLE

And you listened to me?

SARAH

I listened to you. Completely.

BELLE  
You don't dance at all anymore?

Sarah shakes her head no.

BELLE (CONT'D)  
Baby, that isn't what I meant.

A beat as Sarah takes that in. And then she tries to shake it off...

SARAH  
Eden came to see me today, Belle.

BELLE  
What? She came to see you where?

SARAH  
At my office. She says she's suing Michael for child support.

Belle takes that in. She's shocked, but maybe not all that surprised.

SARAH (CONT'D)  
You didn't know?

BELLE  
No.

SARAH  
My dad says you said you didn't want anything from him.

Belle nods, sad, remembering.

BELLE  
I didn't want anything. I wanted everything. Everything or nothing. So... I told Eden not to do this. But she's...She's a dancer. Stubborn.

Sarah takes a breath and forces herself to ask...

SARAH  
Belle. Are you sure Eden is Michael's?

Belle smiles sadly at Sarah.

BELLE  
Oh sweetie. I'm so sorry your dad made you ask me that.

And she pats Sarah's hand, gets up and walks away. Leaving Sarah to hate herself almost as much as she hates her father.

17 INT. MICHAEL'S DANCE STUDIO -- NIGHT -- NIGHT ONE 17

With Nicky standing by, Michael is working, creating a seductive duet on Javier and a female dancer, when Sarah enters, on a mission to talk to her father.

MICHAEL  
(demonstrating)  
It's boom, boom BANG. She-POW! You got that?

SARAH  
You couldn't have mentioned that "Arabella" was *Belle*?

But Michael ignores her and keeps working.

MICHAEL  
Yes, like that. She-POW! All the emphasis is on the downbeat.

SARAH  
"You know, Sarah, my girlfriend who was your *favorite person in the world*? The one you *begged me to marry*?" Maybe just a little warning?

MICHAEL  
(ignoring her)  
She-POW! Good.

Sarah is used to this and so she kicks off her shoes.

SARAH  
(to the female dancer)  
Excuse me -- can I just step in?  
Thanks. I'll just be a minute.

Seamlessly, her father works with her, teaching Javier the lift he's envisioning.

MICHAEL  
Stronger on the hold. Quicker on the push.

Now Sarah holds him captive audience as Javier practices the lift on her body.

SARAH  
You need to hire a lawyer.

MICHAEL  
Why would I hire a lawyer when I sired a lawyer?

Javier laughs.

SARAH  
You think that was funny?

JAVIER  
Sorry.

MICHAEL  
(to Javier)  
Try again -- stronger this time.  
She resists, you seduce.

Javier does as he's told.

SARAH  
I'm serious. If you want to fight  
them on the child support, you're  
gonna need a lawyer because I'm not  
doing it. Belle was too important  
to me -- I'm not neutral.

Sarah gasps a little as Javier pulls her into him. Indeed,  
he's seducing with the dance. And she has to work to resist.

MICHAEL  
You're not neutral? What does that  
mean? You think she's right? --  
Damn it, Javier, *make her need you.* --  
You think I should hand her the deed  
to my studio?

SARAH  
No, I think you should do whatever  
you're gonna do and leave me out of  
it. Belle practically raised me.

MICHAEL  
Resist him!

Sarah pushes Javier away. A sexy, challenging dance move,  
which forces him to start over. To pull her in again.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
I raised you.

SARAH  
You *trained* me. There's a difference.

MICHAEL  
She brought you microwave burritos  
from the 7-11.

SARAH  
Which is more than you did!

He goes for the lift, but she slips a little, dangerous.

MICHAEL

Hold her lower and harder.

Javier slides his hands down Sarah's body.

JAVIER

...It's okay?

MICHAEL

Don't treat her like a piece of china!

SARAH

It's fine.

MICHAEL

You gave up everything -- your body --

SARAH

I didn't *give up* my body--

MICHAEL

Your gift -- your BIRTHRIGHT -- you gave up your *career* to go to law school and now you don't want to be a lawyer?

SARAH

No, Dad. I just don't want to be YOUR lawyer. Not on this one.

(snapping at Javier)

You need a tighter grip -- and lower.

She grabs his hands and moves them down her body. Way down.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Right there.

JAVIER

Thank you.

SARAH

No problem.

MICHAEL

This isn't you. This is Adam talking. He's in your ear.

(snapping at Javier)

Boom boom BANG! Now LIFT!

And Javier lifts Sarah into the air -- a powerful, beautiful lift. From the lift, she keeps talking to Michael.

SARAH

(back to Michael)

Be that as it may, Adam's right.

This is your mess.

(MORE)

SARAH (CONT'D)

So for once in your life, you need  
to grab a freakin' mop, cause I swear  
to God, Dad? I'm done.

With that, she looks down at Javier.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Hey, new guy? That's your cue to  
put me down.

And he does. Then he looks her in the eye. Extends his  
hand.

JAVIER

Javier DeRenzo.

SARAH

Sarah Grace.

She offers her hand to shake, and he holds onto it a beat.

JAVIER

For whatever it's worth, I agree.

SARAH

You agree...?

JAVIER

That you didn't give up your body.

And Sarah cannot help but blush.

JAVIER (CONT'D)

On that point, I'm with you.

With that, Sarah smiles, and leaves. Javier watches her go.

MICHAEL

Your extension has gone to hell,  
Kid!

But Sarah just keeps walking. After a beat, a pissed-off  
Michael turns to Nicky.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Call around. Find out where Eden  
Ruiz dances.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

18 EXT. SHAY'S VENICE BEACH BUNGALOW -- DAY -- DAY TWO 18

Shayna goes home, finds Dylan waiting, apologetic. He wrote her a funny, sweet, short apology song which he plays for her on his guitar.

DYLAN

(singing)

*I ran from the cops, and I feel like  
a fool. / I'd been doing so well,  
I'd been playing by the rules. /  
I'd almost won your heart, but now I  
haven't got a clue / if I should  
even try to keep loving you...*

He's adorable. But Shayna just shakes her head; she can't quite believe she's back in the situation.

DYLAN (CONT'D)

I'm still working on the bridge.  
Obviously.

He's being playful, but she's not in the mood.

SHAY

You said you wanted to spend time  
with Joseph. You said that was why  
you were back.

DYLAN

You know why I'm back.

He holds her gaze, deadly serious.

DYLAN (CONT'D)

You know I'm sober, you see me in  
meetings, you see I have a sponsor,  
you see how hard I'm working.

SHAY

I know. You haven't had a drink or  
a drug in three hundred and sixty  
two days. But I have spent those  
same three hundred and sixty two  
days meditating and praying to become  
a stronger woman and a better mother.  
So it's gonna take more than a cute  
lyric this time, Dylan. Cause I'm  
over you.

DYLAN

I don't believe you.

SHAY

Dylan--

DYLAN

I don't believe you cause I know you  
and I know when you're lying. You  
get this little crinkle -- right  
here, by your eyes. The first time  
I saw it was when we cut gym class  
and your mother caught us out on the  
pier and you lied and said school  
got out early. Right here.

He touches her face, gently. She melts a little.

SHAY

I'm over you.

DYLAN

Crinkle.

SHAY

(laughing)  
I hate you!

DYLAN

Crinkle. Crinkle.

SHAY

Stop it!

And he kisses her -- just like that. Fast. Before she can  
stop him. After a beat, she pulls away.

DYLAN

It's been a year, Shay. I'm almost  
a year sober. And the band's staying  
in town -- we're cutting a record so  
no more tours. Not for awhile. I'm  
back. I'm here. For good.

She looks at him a beat. So scared to let herself care again.

SHAY

I am over--

DYLAN

No, you're not. You're not over me  
cause you're Shayna and I'm Dylan  
and we don't get over each other.  
We never will.

She takes him in. Knows he's right, but really needs to  
fight it for just a little longer. He tries to kiss her  
again, but she stops him this time.

SHAY

If I let you back in and you hurt us  
again--

DYLAN  
I won't. Shayna, I swear to God, I  
won't.

And their faces are still really close together when Joseph  
arrives home.

JOSEPH  
You two are messin' with my head,  
you know that?

DYLAN  
Dude. You're supposed to be working  
with me here.

JOSEPH  
You ran from the cops! Now I gotta  
mop sweat off my gramps' floor.  
That ain't cool.

He walks away smiling. Happy that his dad is around again.

SHAY  
It kills him when you go away.

DYLAN  
I'm not going anywhere ever again.

Shay studies him.

SHAY  
Get a year. A whole year. Then  
we'll talk.

And she follows Joseph inside. But she too leaves smiling.

19 INT. HOT DANCE STUDIO -- HOLLYWOOD -- DAY TWO 19

It's a young, hip dance studio full of energy and Michael  
moves through it, on a mission. He looks in doors and sees  
hot young choreographers working with hot young dancers.  
All different styles of dance are represented here. As he  
passes dancers in the hall, he hears whispers...

YOUNG DANCER  
(sotto)  
Oh my God, is that Michael Grace?

YOUNG DANCER TWO  
You mean that old guy? No way.

It hurts, but he keeps moving.

20 INT. HOT DANCE STUDIO -- EDEN'S REHEARSAL ROOM -- DAY TWO 20

Eden is alone in her rehearsal studio, dancing. She's  
incredible, passionate, alive.

Her style is younger than Michael's. Jazz-influenced with some Street mixed in. On a spin, she spots a face in the doorway and stops. It's Michael. She catches her breath. She's stunned, but she's tough and good at covering.

EDEN  
(defensive)  
How much did you see? I was just marking it.

He approaches smiling, all charm.

MICHAEL  
That was some marking. I'm Michael Grace.

EDEN  
I know who you are.

MICHAEL  
I'm putting together a retrospective. And I'm expanding my company.

EDEN  
Okay...?

MICHAEL  
Would you like to dance for me?

She takes him in a long beat. She's so fucking confused and what comes out of her mouth is--

EDEN  
Yes.

MICHAEL  
Come tomorrow. Three o'clock.

He turns to go.

EDEN  
I tried to just talk to you, y'know. Your assistant wouldn't let me in.

MICHAEL  
Nicky. He's such a bitch, isn't he?

And he's gone. And we are on Eden, who looks a little like she just got run over by a train.

21 INT. SARAH'S LAW FIRM -- LATE AFTERNOON -- DAY TWO

21

Sarah is behind her desk, trying to catch up on all her cases. She rubs her eyes and gets up from her desk to stretch. She stretches her arms and her legs and then, because she can't help it, she lifts her leg straight up over her head -- so clearly still a dancer.

She puts her leg down, and then she walks across the hall to Adam's office.

22 INT. ADAM'S OFFICE -- LATE AFTERNOON -- DAY TWO 22

Sarah pushes the cracked door open. Adam is behind his desk and Kirsten is leaning over his shoulder, going over a document. Sarah watches for a beat, unnoticed. Kirsten is once again a little too close for Sarah's comfort. There's an energy between them, and it's discomfiting.

SARAH  
Hey Kirsten? Are you enjoying his  
new cologne?

Kirsten and Adam both look up, startled.

ADAM  
Right now, my cologne is raw onions  
and B.O. It can't be pleasant.

KIRSTEN  
It absolutely isn't.

Kirsten is casual, charming. But then she looks over at Sarah and holds her gaze a beat too long -- a challenge?

KIRSTEN (CONT'D)  
You heading out? Hope it's not  
another family crisis?

Sarah smiles, a little fuck you behind her eyes.

ADAM  
Can you give us a minute, Kirsten?

KIRSTEN  
Of course.

Once she's gone, Sarah looks at Adam.

SARAH  
If this were a high school movie?  
My nebulously gay best friend would  
be warning me to watch my back around  
that girl.

ADAM  
(laughing)  
What?

SARAH  
She's all over you.

ADAM  
She has never laid a hand on me.

SARAH  
Energetically, she's all over you.

Adam smiles, wraps his arms around her.

ADAM  
If you haven't noticed, you're much  
hotter than Kirsten.  
(he kisses her)  
Any word from your dad?

SARAH  
No.

ADAM  
You did the right thing.

SARAH  
I know.

And he kisses her again. She looks in his eyes a beat...

SARAH (CONT'D)  
I still have a hell of a high kick.  
I could kick Kirsten's teeth in right  
now.

Adam laughs.

ADAM  
How 'bout we avoid any assault and  
battery charges and put those stretchy  
legs to better use?

He kisses her again. And she gives in, reluctantly appeased,  
for now.

23 EXT. MICHAEL'S DANCE STUDIO -- LATE AFTERNOON -- DAY TWO 23

Michael arrives back at the studio and spots Joseph, who has  
hooked up with some rough-looking guys in a nearby alley.  
Some of the guys are street dancing. Breaking, popping,  
rough but skillful moves. Joseph's watching. Michael watches  
too, getting inspired....

23A INSIDE MICHAEL'S MIND 23A

The B-Boys are now on the black box stage and music, rhythm  
has overtaken the scene. Michael's studying it, integrating  
it, when he hears--

B BOY  
YO GRAMPS, you like 'em young, huh?

SMASH CUT TO:

THE SCENE ON THE STREET: Michael has been startled out of his imagination, out of his work, and he's beyond irritated, beyond offended. Joseph is slapping hands with the boys, and they're all having a laugh at Michael's expense. Michael approaches Joseph, cold, angry, not at all intimidated by the street kids.

MICHAEL

Get inside and pick up a mop before  
I call the cops and send you to juvie.

JOSEPH

I already did it, alright? It's  
clean enough.

MICHAEL

It's clean *enough*?

JOSEPH

Yo, Gramps, I see pictures from back  
in the day, right? But I don't see  
any players walking through your  
doors, so yeah, it's clean enough.

Suddenly furious, Michael grabs Joseph by the scruff of his shirt and yanks him toward the studio.

MICHAEL

Do you have any idea who I am? Do  
you have any idea...? That studio  
was a warehouse when I found it. It  
was a warehouse and I was a kid off  
the street and now? Do you know  
who's walked those floors? Name a  
name, name a star, and they've danced  
for me or they've begged me to let  
them. It's clean *enough*? *Make it  
perfect.*

And he all but shoves Joseph through the doors.

24 INT. CHURCH -- NIGHT -- NIGHT TWO

24

Sarah watches as Helen rehearses her choir, soaking in the soulful music. Helen with her music is like Michael with his dance.

HELEN

One of you sopranos is so far above  
the note, dogs are howling in Encino.  
Don't make me make you take it one  
at a time.

Helen glances over and sees Sarah waiting. Sarah smiles -- she can wait.

HELEN (CONT'D)

Take it back to the top of the chorus.

25 INT. CHURCH -- A LITTLE LATER

25

Helen is now sitting beside Sarah as they talk and the choir rehearses. Sarah's having a crisis, and Helen is her defacto mother figure. Helen is everyone's defacto mother figure.

HELEN

Oh no. Her mother is *Belle*?

SARAH

Did you know Belle?

HELEN

Only because you never stopped talking about her. "Belle this, Belle that, my daddy's gonna marry Belle." You cried for weeks when she left.

SARAH

Months.

HELEN

Months. Oh baby. I'm sorry.

A beat.

SARAH

Adam said I should just walk away. So I did. I tried. I told my Dad to handle it himself.

HELEN

Oh Child.  
(laughing)  
Child...

SARAH

He's gonna lose the company. He's gonna lose the whole building. He's gonna be homeless.

And Helen is laughing at the thought.

SARAH (CONT'D)

It's not funny.

HELEN

It's a little bit funny.

SARAH

So you think Adam's right? I just...do nothing? Don't help my father? Don't bother with this new sister? With Belle's *daughter*?

HELEN

What I think doesn't matter, Baby.  
And what Adam thinks doesn't matter  
all that much either. What matters  
is what you can live with. And I  
hate Michael as much as the next  
woman he screws over will hate him,  
but I also know he's not an easy man  
to walk away from.

Sarah nods. It's true.

SARAH

I don't want him to lose the studio.  
I grew up there. It's my home. And  
I miss it.

HELEN

I know. I know you do. You pushed  
so hard against him. You tried so  
hard to become the opposite of him.  
And I think you left a little bit of  
yourself behind in the process.

And Sarah's eyes fill with tears. After a long beat...

SARAH

...How did you know my dad was having  
an affair?

HELEN

Why do you ask? Is there someone I  
need to smite?

SARAH

No. I don't think so. I don't know.  
I just... I don't know.

Helen takes in Sarah's vulnerability.

HELEN

Well, let's see. How did I know?  
When your crazy-ass mother was seven  
months pregnant, she showed up at my  
Christmas party, had a couple  
cocktails and started telling everyone  
that her baby was Michael's. Before  
that, I had no idea. ... But there  
were signs. There are always signs.  
I just wasn't paying attention. I  
was asleep at the wheel. And getting  
blindsided when I should have *known*,  
that was the worst part. So you  
only have to ask yourself one  
question...Are you asleep at the  
wheel? And if you are... What's it  
gonna take for you to wake up?

Off Sarah, without an answer...

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

26 INT. MICHAEL'S DANCE STUDIO -- WAITING AREA -- DAY THREE 26

A group of dancers are clustered together, waiting to audition. Eden is among them, stretching, nervous.

DANCER 1  
Did you hear he worked with Fosse?

DANCER 2  
He was Fosse's protege.

DANCER 1  
Amazing.

Nicky emerges.

NICKY  
Eden Grace Ruiz?

Eden jumps up.

EDEN  
Hi. That's me.

DANCER 1  
Love the middle name.

DANCER 2  
Did you add it just for this audition?

As they snicker, Eden ignores them.

NICKY  
(to the dancers)  
Kitty cats? Retract the claws.  
(to Eden)  
After you.

And from the way Nicky treats her, it's clear that he now knows exactly who she is as he shows her into the studio.

27 INT. MICHAEL'S DANCE STUDIO -- DAY -- DAY THREE 27

As the female company dancers rehearse a number that looks like it's straight out of a Beyonce video, Michael meets Eden on the dance floor.

MICHAEL  
You look just like your mother did.

EDEN  
Thanks. I hear that a lot.

28 INT. MICHAEL'S DANCE STUDIO -- WAITING AREA -- DAY THREE 28

Sarah enters, looks around at the waiting dancers. Nicky, emerging from the studio, greets her.

NICKY  
Here for an audition? Cause we *do*  
have an age limit.

SARAH  
Oh my *God*, I hate your guts.

NICKY  
Oh please. You hate your dad, you  
love my guts.

Sarah waves paperwork in his face.

SARAH  
They're settling the latest harassment  
claim.

NICKY  
Hallelujah. You drove all the way  
here to tell him that?

SARAH  
No, I drove all the way here because  
I'm a glutton for punishment.  
(needs to know)  
How's it going? Did he hire a lawyer?

NICKY  
Not exactly.

Nicky nods to direct Sarah's eye into the studio where Eden is learning some moves from the dancers.

SARAH  
Oh no. Is that Eden?

NICKY  
He's working his charm.

SARAH  
That's his plan? His whole plan?

NICKY  
No one has ever accused him of not  
being a narcissist.

Fascinated, Sarah moves for the door of the studio. Nicky follows her in.

29 INT. MICHAEL'S DANCE STUDIO -- DAY THREE 29

Eden is still learning the choreography from the dancers when Michael approaches.

MICHAEL

Okay. Let's see it. 5,6,7,8...

With two of the dancers flanking her, Eden performs the routine. She's a little messier than the dancers, but promising.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Alright, now to music. Nicky.

Nicky hits the music. Eden does a decent job.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

(to Eden)

Take it up a notch -- let's see your heat. Make them all doubles and then reverse the last section.

Eden dances with the other dancers but can't keep up with the pace -- and the speed with which they've learned to take his adjustments. Hair is whipping, legs are flying, the girls are generating some serious heat but Eden loses her focus and falls out of a spin.

EDEN

Damnit. Can we start over?

MICHAEL

No need.

EDEN

I can do it. Let me try again.

Michael offers her a hand, helps her up.

MICHAEL

There's no need. You were excellent. You have a spot in my company if you want it.

Sarah and Nicky exchange a look like, oh no. This is going nowhere good. Eden blinks, stares at him -- suddenly furious.

EDEN

I was not excellent. I was crap.

MICHAEL

Alright. You were crap.

EDEN

Can I just dance again? I don't want you to coddle me.

MICHAEL

You want to dance again or you don't want to be coddled? Which is it?

She stares at him, blinking back tears. Michael speaks quietly, patronizingly, like she's a young child who understands nothing about how the world works.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Smile, Eden. Smile and thank me and walk out. Then call your lawyer, drop the lawsuit and show up for rehearsal tomorrow night at eight.

Eden takes it like a punch in the gut.

EDEN

You can't buy me off with a spot in your stupid company. You're famous and you're rich and you owe me and you owe my mom. And I don't have a lawyer yet, but now I'm gonna hire the BEST one in L.A. And God -- you're an even bigger bastard than my mom said.

And she storms out, right past Sarah.

SARAH

Nicely done, Dad. Way to take a bad situation and make it catastrophic.

Off Michael, knowing she's right...

30 INT. ADAM'S OFFICE -- DAY -- DAY THREE

30

Sarah opens Adam's closed office door without knocking, talking as she enters.

SARAH

You are not gonna believe what my father just--

Kirsten is sitting on his sofa, her shoes off, poring over a brief. Adam is beside her on the sofa. They both look a little ruffled, a little out of breath, like they were just interrupted and scrambled to look like they weren't. Kirsten keeps her eyes riveted to the folder. Adam locks eyes with Sarah.

ADAM

Hey, Babe -- we're just going over the Jacobsen--

SARAH

The Jacobsen brief. Right.

She stands there a beat, holding his gaze. And then Sarah walks out. We hold on Adam, guilty as sin, but not about to admit it.

31 INT. LAW OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS 31

Sarah storms across the hall, past Taryn's desk, and slams the door to her own office.

32 INT. SARAH'S OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS 32

She's pacing, furious. She throws a book, smashes a paperweight, so much adrenaline. Her eyes land on a photo of herself at 18, dancing. She picks it up and we think she might throw it but she studies it instead, an idea forming. Then she picks up the phone and dials, still barely able to breathe.

SARAH  
Nicky? I need to talk to my dad.

33 INT. TREATMENT ROOM -- DAY THREE 33

Arabella is hooked up to a chemotherapy machine. Eden enters, greets her with a popsicle. Still in her clothes from the Michael audition.

EDEN  
Sorry I'm late. I had an audition.

BELLE  
Oh yeah? For what?

EDEN  
It was stupid. Nothing big.

Belle runs a hand through her hair and some of it comes out. They both see it, and they both ignore it. Eden pulls some playing cards out of her purse.

EDEN (CONT'D)  
Crazy eights?

BELLE  
Yep.

As Eden deals the cards...

BELLE (CONT'D)  
Baby? This thing you're doing with Michael? You don't have to see it through.

EDEN  
Mom, do you have any idea how much money this place charges?

BELLE

I can sell the restaurant.

EDEN

No. That bastard owes us. He owes us.

BELLE

...It isn't how I wanted you to meet him.

EDEN

I know.

And she keeps dealing cards, protecting her mother from all of her own pain...

34 INT. SARAH'S OFFICE -- -- DAY -- DAY THREE

34

Michael is sitting across from Sarah.

MICHAEL

So what -- you'd be my landlord?  
I'd pay you rent?

SARAH

No. I'd be your manager *and* your landlord. I'll run the company, the way it should be run, and the company will pay me rent.

MICHAEL

"The way it should be run?"

SARAH

You're a brilliant choreographer, but you're a crap businessman and you know it. I'll hire a publicist, I'll bring in business... We'll reinvent.

MICHAEL

My retrospective?

SARAH

It'll be huge. I'll see to that.

MICHAEL

...I need to think.

SARAH

There's nothing to think about. No bank's gonna give you a loan and you're not gonna beat Eden in court. So either you sell to me or you sell to someone else but if you sell to someone else you're homeless and so are your dancers.

Before Michael can respond, Adam is standing in the doorway. He's heard just enough.

ADAM

Sarah--

SARAH

I'm busy, Adam.

ADAM

Busy spending our money without asking me?

SARAH

I'm spending some of our money. And it's prime real estate downtown -- it's a good investment.

ADAM

Since when do you not talk to me before--

SARAH

Since you do *all sorts of things* without talking to me.

ADAM

What is that supposed to mean?

SARAH

Really? That's how we're playing this?

ADAM

I don't know what you're talking about.

Sarah stares at him, then just shakes her head, looks away.

MICHAEL

Good to see you, Adam. Nice tie.

ADAM

(ignoring him)

So -- your plan is what here? You're quitting your law practice?

SARAH

No, I'm doing both.

ADAM

In all your copious spare time? You promised you were done with him! That's the last I heard of it! You made me a PROMISE.

SARAH

And then I WOKE UP.

As the fight builds in intensity...

INTERCUT:

34A INT. MICHAEL'S IMAGINATION -- BLACK BOX STAGE -- ANYTIME 34A

*Michael begins to imagine the fight as a duet between Javier and one of his female dancers. It's furious, athletic, intense. We INTERCUT Sarah and Adam fighting with the dancers dancing, in full costume, full lights, full effects.*

SARAH

I need this!

ADAM

You need to be in business with your father?

SARAH

I need my world back! I need this!  
And by the way? Kirsten's fired.  
We're firing her.

ADAM

On what grounds?

SARAH

We are partners. She is not. And I want her fired.

ADAM

Clearly, you're angry with Kirsten--

SARAH

Why do you think that might be?

ADAM

I don't know. Honestly, I don't know what's going on with you at all these days.

SARAH

I am consumed with jealousy, Adam.

ADAM

Of Kirsten??

SARAH

Of Eden! This poor kid - she's desperate and fatherless and broke and she can't decide if she wants to sue my dad or dance for him and all I can think is, she's 18. And she's a dancer. And I hate her for that. And I hate myself for hating her.

ADAM

Sarah--

SARAH

When I was 18, when I was *dancing*, I would not have let another woman pluck my man out from under me without a fight.

ADAM

You don't honestly think--

SARAH

Yes, I do honestly think. And I honestly think Kirsten sees you as available because I'm invisible. A doormat. A mediocre lawyer, who's asleep at the freakin' wheel. And that's my fault. But not anymore.

ADAM

I don't understand--

SARAH

I want her fired.

ADAM

We are not firing Kirsten because you're having some kind of early mid-life crisis! And that's it. My answer is final!

SARAH

I'm not asking your *permission*. I'm not a child!

ADAM

THEN STOP ACTING LIKE ONE!

*As the dance in Michael's mind escalates, the dialogue is overwhelmed by music.* What for Sarah is the biggest fight of her marriage, for Michael is nothing but inspiration. As the dance reaches a fever pitch, the sound of a door SLAMMING pulls Michael back to reality. Sarah is shaking, in tears... Adam is gone. Michael missed the dialogue (and so did we) so no one's quite sure where it landed. Finally, she looks up at him.

SARAH

So are we doing this thing or not?

Off Michael's smile...

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

35 INT. MICHAEL'S DANCE STUDIO -- DAY -- DAY FOUR 35

Michael is choreographing the fight dance he imagined in Sarah's office. He's working with Javier and a female dancer. Sarah and Shay are in a corner, side by side, watching. Shay's snapping photos. There's some tension between them.

SHAY  
(re: Javier)  
That man is a rippling wall of  
hotness.

SARAH  
Don't deflect.

SHAY  
I'm not deflecting.

SARAH  
You're back with Dylan. You're  
deflecting.

SHAY  
I am not back with Dylan. I said  
I'm *thinking* about *maybe*--

SARAH  
You're back with Dylan.

SHAY  
You're in business with Dad which is  
so much worse.

SARAH  
He's gonna wreck you.

SHAY  
Yeah, but he does this thing with  
his tongue--

SARAH  
He's gonna wreck you, Shayna.

SHAY  
You think Dad's not gonna wreck you?

SARAH  
He's gonna wreck you--

SHAY  
He's got a year clean!

SARAH  
And Santa Claus has magical reindeer!  
(MORE)

SARAH (CONT'D)

You think if I jump out the window  
they'll catch me?

But their whispered argument is interrupted when Nicky shows Eden in. She's in dance gear. She looks scared, but determined.

SHAY

I love that you made him call her.

SARAH

You mean, considering that I can't  
stop hating her?

SHAY

You rise. It's good. You're good.

SARAH

I'm not rising about Dylan.

SHAY

Oh, shut up.

ACROSS THE ROOM, Michael approaches Eden.

MICHAEL

You were nervous last time. But  
you're fresh and I need fresh.  
So...show me how good you are. Kayla,  
step out.

The female dancer steps out, and with a wave of his hand, Michael directs Eden to take her spot.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

(directing her)

Reach, contract, ball change, double  
inside to leg out and stick it. Go.

And as he begins to work with Javier and this daughter he's finally going to get to know... Sarah and Shayna watch and whisper.

SARAH

She has no technique.

SHAY

Yeah, but she's got moves.

MICHAEL

Nice -- again.

SHAY

We should introduce ourselves.

SARAH  
I'm not rising that high yet.

SHAY  
Oof.

SARAH  
What?

SHAY  
Middle child syndrome. That's gonna  
suck for you.

Sarah laughs as Michael continues to work with Eden...

36 INT. MICHAEL'S DANCE STUDIO -- LOBBY -- DAY FOUR 36

We find Arabella, watching through the window, nervous, protective, grateful. Joseph approaches Arabella.

JOSEPH  
Is that you?

He points to a picture of Arabella in her prime. She smiles.

BELLE  
Yeah. Yeah, that used to be me.

Michael glances out the window, spots her. There was a lot of love here once. Michael emerges from the studio.

BELLE (CONT'D)  
Michael.

MICHAEL  
Arabella.

She can't help but give him a kiss, a hug.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
You have lines around your eyes but  
they're working for you.

BELLE  
(laughing)  
You're still a bastard.

He just looks at her, smiling.

MICHAEL  
You want to come in?

BELLE  
No. ...No. It's too much. I'll  
O.D. on nostalgia.

And she kisses him again. Square on the lips.

BELLE (CONT'D)

Be good to my daughter or I'll remind  
you what a terror I can be.

MICHAEL

I'd like that.

She shakes her head and goes. Michael smiles, watching her  
go. And then head back into the studio.

37 EXT. LOS ANGELES -- ESTABLISHING 37

Time passes, the light changes as the day begins to fade...

38 EXT. MICHAEL'S STUDIO -- LATE AFTERNOON 38

Sarah emerges from the studio. She's getting some air, when  
Javier emerges.

JAVIER

Hi.

SARAH

Hey. You heading to the theater?

JAVIER

Yes. You'll be there?

SARAH

Absolutely.

A beat. He smiles. God, he's sexy.

JAVIER

There are all sorts of rumors, you  
know.

SARAH

Dancers like to talk.

JAVIER

We do. ...Is it true you're the new  
boss?

SARAH

What if it is?

JAVIER

If it is, then my next question might  
be inappropriate.

SARAH

Really? Now I gotta know what the  
next question is.

JAVIER

Would you like to get a drink with me after the show tonight?

A beat. Sarah smiles.

SARAH

You think if I'm the new boss that question's inappropriate, but my wedding ring doesn't give you pause?

Javier is horrified.

JAVIER

I didn't-- Your name is the same as your father's. I didn't think--

SARAH

In this country, we women often keep our maiden names. Feminism and all that.

JAVIER

I'm very sorry. I'm...very sorry.

SARAH

It's okay. You didn't know. And I'm flattered.

Sarah's laughing at his discomfort. Which allows him to laugh a little too.

JAVIER

Alright then. So... married? Or happily married?

SARAH

Wow.

JAVIER

In my country, there's a difference.  
(then)  
You're blushing.

SARAH

I am your BOSS.

JAVIER

Right. ...So I'll see you at the show then.

SARAH

I'll see you at the show.

He walks away. And she can't help but watch him walk away.

39 INT. MICHAEL'S DANCE STUDIO -- EVENING -- NIGHT FOUR 39

Joe is mopping the floors, but the studio is almost empty now. The floor is clean, the mirrors are gleaming. And he can't resist... he glances around and no one seems to be watching, so he puts aside his broom and he starts to dance. It's street dancing, and he's untrained, unpracticed -- but good. Like, Grace good. Nicky sees it first. Watches for a moment, and then taps on the door of the viewing room where Michael is watching a Lakers game.

NICKY  
(off the game)  
Oh God. That is just so straight of you.

MICHAEL  
Lakers are up by 8. What do you want?

NICKY  
Something you should see.

Michael comes to the door and Nicky directs his eye to Joseph. Michael watches, and his face slowly lights up. In this moment, Joseph became a person Michael will bother with. As Joseph slows down, Michael approaches.

JOSEPH  
Sorry.

He grabs his mop. But Michael pulls the headphones out of his ears.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)  
Dang. I said sorry.

MICHAEL  
How's your six-step?

Joe studies him a beat, a little surprised he knows the lingo.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
Show me.

Joe does. And it's good. Really good.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
You watch the Lakers?

JOSEPH  
Yeah?

MICHAEL  
The way Kobe *relaxes* into the lay-up, the way all the tension just  
(MORE)

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
falls away, that's what you're  
missing.

Joe nods.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
Try again. But relax.

Joe does it again.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
Better.

Michael offers him a hand, pulls him to his feet.

JOSEPH  
Can I ask you a question? If you're  
so big time, how come you're always  
here? How come you ain't out at the  
clubs with all the other players?

Michael smiles. Puts his arm around his grandson.

MICHAEL  
What red-blooded man would be out at  
some club when he could be here  
looking at *that*.

Michael points to a trio of scantily clad female dancers,  
stretching in the corner. Joseph laughs.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
You feel me?

JOSEPH  
I feel you.

MICHAEL  
Good. Come on.

JOSEPH  
Where we going?

MICHAEL  
You'll see.

And Michael walks him toward the door.

40 INT. ROYCE HALL -- LOBBY -- NIGHT

40

A large crowd is milling around, pre-show. Michael is  
smiling, waving, talking to Sarah. Shay is nearby, listening.

MICHAEL  
I say we announce the retrospective  
tonight.

SARAH

No. We wait. We get a publicist.  
We get a venue. We do it right.

MICHAEL

These are my biggest fans; my  
followers.

SARAH

And they'll still be your fans next  
month when we have a publicist and  
we do it right.

SHAY

You need to listen to her, Dad, before  
she fires your ass.

MICHAEL

Very funny.

SARAH

She's not entirely kidding.

Already, the power struggles have begun. As Michael is pulled  
away by an admirer, Shayna grabs Sarah.

SHAY

It's time.

SARAH

No, it's not.

SHAY

I'm your big sister. And you can't  
fire me. It's time.

Sarah sighs heavily, and follows Shayna as they approach  
Eden, who's milling with the crowd.

SHAY (CONT'D)

Eden?

EDEN

Yeah?

Eden looks at her. Doesn't recognize her. Then sees Sarah.

EDEN (CONT'D)

You're Michael's lawyer.

SARAH

Yeah. I'm also his daughter. Sarah.  
I'm the youngest. Or, well...not  
anymore, I guess. And this is Shayna.  
She's the oldest.

EDEN

The oldest...daughter? You're his  
daughter too?

SHAY

Don't let the skin color throw you.

SARAH

We don't mean to ambush you. We  
know things are messy right now--

SHAY

They always are in this family.

SARAH

But we're your sisters.

SHAY

And we were wondering if you want to  
get a cup of coffee after the show.

Eden studies them as the lights flicker, indicating that  
it's show time. Finally...

EDEN

Are you gonna try to talk me into  
giving back his money?

SHAY

No. But I might try to talk you  
into sharing some of it.

A beat. Eden thinks she's serious.

SARAH

That was a joke.

SHAY

You'll learn to appreciate my humor.

SARAH

Or at least tolerate it.

Shay nudges Sarah with her shoulder, playful, sisterly.  
Eden watches them, still a little stunned.

SHAY

So...coffee?

The lights flicker again.

EDEN

Okay.

SHAY

Okay.

SARAH

Okay.

And one by one, they head in to find their seats.

41 INT. ROYCE HALL -- NIGHT -- NIGHT FOUR

41

Michael and Joseph are seated in the front row of the audience beside Nicky. Eden joins her mother, who's seated on her own, resting her eyes. Sarah slides in beside Adam. Shay slides in beside Dylan.

Adam reaches out and offers to hold Sarah's hand, and after a tense moment, she gives it to him. Dylan reaches for Shayna's hand. She looks at him and shakes her head no. Not yet. He gets it. Waits a beat. Then puts his hand on her knee instead. At that, they both laugh as the house lights go down. And the big dance -- our "finale" -- begins.

ON STAGE, the company is amazing, the dance, electrifying. In it, we'll recognize some of the choreography we've seen rehearsing throughout. The dance is big, bold, narrative. The costumes, incredibly sexy, the make up, the lighting -- it's all coming together into something that shows us exactly who Michael Grace was, is, and always will be.

IN THE AUDIENCE, we are on Nicky, watching, proud, thrilled. We are on Joseph, awe-struck. We are on Sarah, Shayna and Eden, all riveted to the dance, while Adam checks his watch. And we are on Michael. Watching. Except he's only half-watching the company in front of him. And he's half-watching his inspiration for this piece, which lives inside his mind.

*So when we find the dancers again, we find Sarah, Shayna, Eden -- our actresses have replaced the dancers in Michael's imagination -- and they are circling a dancer who now becomes Michael. Michael, under bright lights. Michael, in a tux, and top hat. Michael, dancing as his girls, his daughters, circle him, adore him, put him up on a pedestal.*

*Within the dance company, within the dance, we find Adam, a villain, derisive. We find Arabella and Helen, haunting. We find Sarah, Shayna and Eden, adoring. And at the center of it all, Michael, in all his glory. Loving it.*

And then the music ends. The dance is over. We are on Michael in the audience as the dancers become company dancers again and the lights go down and the audience goes wild. A beat. And then Michael smiles to himself.

MICHAEL

They love me.

END OF PILOT

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