

FADE IN:

INT. LOS ANGELES DANCE COMPETITION, BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

A dingy backstage. A LOW ROAR is heard from just offstage. WILLIAM and GRETCHEN pant, fresh from their routine.

GRETCHEN

Did you bring it?

WILLIAM

Of course I brought it. You were out there with me. I flipped in the air... twice.

GRETCHEN

I saw what you did. I also saw our score. So, I'll ask you again: did you bring it?

WILLIAM

I'm really getting tired of the 'hard work beats talent if talent doesn't work hard' bullshit.

GRETCHEN

I just want us to be the best team we can.

WILLIAM

Don't you think I want that too? Just because some things come naturally to me doesn't mean that I don't leave it all on the mat out there.

GRETCHEN

I'm wondering if you even bring it all out with you in the first place.

WILLIAM

What the hell is that supposed to mean?

GRETCHEN

Do you even like this? Or are you just here because someone told you that you were good at it when you were a little boy flouncing around in your spandex? Did you like that? Did you like how they made you feel?

WILLIAM

Fuck you. If I hate this so much,
why am I still here getting
mediocre reviews with you?

GRETCHEN

That's easy. You're addicted. You
need the highs, so you stomach the
lows. Plus, you're afraid, no one
even looks at you for any other
reason, and you don't know how to
think of yourself as a nobody.

WILLIAM

I'm out of here.

Gets up to leave.

GRETCHEN

If you leave, we're done.

WILLIAM

Dating?

GRETCHEN

No, I don't think you really give a
shit about that. You can always
find something else to stick your
dick into. I meant as partners.

WILLIAM

What's the difference?

GRETCHEN

Because I see you out there. You're
not trying to be good; you're
trying not to make a mistake.
That's why you aren't bringing it.
If I leave, it's all on you, and
your ego can't handle that kind of
ego tear-down.

WILLIAM

So you think you insulate me from
failure? Could have fooled me out
there. How fucking hard is a back
handspring?

GRETCHEN

Don't change the subject.

WILLIAM

Change the subject? We're talking
about dancing!

GRETCHEN

We haven't been talking about dancing in a long time. (Beat) When was the last time you fucked?

WILLIAM

We had sex yesterday.

GRETCHEN

Stop answering the question you want to answer. When did you fuck last, because you haven't fucked me since Ohio, and that was in 2012.

WILLIAM

(quietly)
May.

GRETCHEN

What?

WILLIAM

It was in May. You were out of town and I was bored. I went to a salsa class, advanced. I pretended I was someone else. They were all over me: men and women. Except one. She was a little older, not terribly attractive, but that didn't matter. She saw what I was doing. She avoided partnering with me all night, but she would touch me every time we were near each other. Afterward, we had a smoke. Then we fucked. Three times. She knew who I was the whole time. She was there in Ohio. She can actually cum.

GRETCHEN

You mean you can actually make her cum.

WILLIAM

Fuck you.

GRETCHEN

Shit. I didn't think that would actually hurt.

WILLIAM

Why? I know about Ted from next door. Be an adult about this.

No one speaks. A STAGEHAND enters.

STAGEHAND

You two cleared the semis. Finals
in 20.

GRETCHEN

Well are you gonna bring it this
time?

WILLIAM

Are you?

FADE OUT.