

EXT. COLLEGE CAMPUS - DUSK

STUDENTS wander through the snow covered campus, nestled in the middle of a busy city. Day quickly turning into a cold winter's night.

INT. REHEARSAL ROOM - NIGHT

A hand presses play on a phone. JOHANNES BRAHM'S WALTZ FOR PIANO NO. 4, fills the room. A pair of bare feet glide across the floor, every movement meticulous yet graceful.

The dancer is ALEXEI (21, long and lean, born for ballet). He's lost in the dance when a FIGURE appears out of the corner of his eye. He does a series of pirouettes, with each spin the figure moves closer until...

ALEXEI

Fuck!

Alexei stumbles onto his backside. The figure's hand reaches out to him, it's JACOB (22, cute in a 'beer and baseball' type of way).

Alexei grabs Jacob's hand and lifts himself to his feet.

ALEXEI

You scared the shit out of me.

Jacob laughs.

JACOB

I'm sorry. You looked beautiful. I couldn't help myself, I'm only human.

ALEXEI

Oh, is that so? You know you're not supposed to be in here.

JACOB

And you were supposed to meet me twenty five minutes ago, so I guess we're both being a little bad.

ALEXEI

Shit, what time is it?

He goes to grab his phone.

ALEXEI

I'm sorry, this audition is like seriously getting to me and I-

Jacob places his hand on Alexei's shoulder.

JACOB  
Shh. Stop it.

He walks over to the mirrored wall and sits himself down against it.

JACOB  
Go on. It's like I'm not even here.

Alexei stares at him.

ALEXEI  
You're kidding.

JACOB  
No! I never get to see you do your thing. I'll be as quiet as a mouse. Promise.

Alexei shakes his head, unplugging his phone from the speaker.

ALEXEI  
Sorry sir, this is a closed rehearsal.

JACOB  
Just one dance? I got singles.

ALEXEI  
Oh my god, shut up.

Jacob stands back up, he wraps his hands around Alexei's waist.

JACOB  
C'mon, do that one from the Nutcracker play. I know you know it.

ALEXEI  
You're gonna have to be just a bit more specific.

JACOB  
Y'know...

He begins to hum TCHAIKOVSKY'S WALTZ OF THE FLOWERS. Alexei snorts with laughter.

ALEXEI

Yeah, I think I have a video of me doing that somewhere when I was like five.

JACOB

It's my favorite.

Jacob pulls him in even closer. They take each other in for a moment, as if they're about to kiss. Alexei breaks the silence.

ALEXEI

Ok, give me like fifteen. I'll hit the showers and then we can go.

JACOB

No, don't shower, it's sexy.

Alexei playfully pushes him away.

ALEXEI

You're so gross!

JACOB

I like it a little musty, baby!

Jacob smacks Alexei's ass as he bends down to gather his things. Alexei rolls his eyes, giggling.

ALEXEI

Disgusting.

Jacob chuckles to himself as he watches Alexei head out of the room. His gaze lingering on the boy. He loves him.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Alexei and Jacob are walking back from their date night, mid conversation. The streets are empty.

JACOB

Okay, so then what would my name be in Russian?

ALEXEI

(in Russian accent)  
Jacob.

JACOB

Wow. How boring.

ALEXEI

No, it's cute. Jacob, moy tsvetok.

JACOB

What's that mean?

Alexei yawns, wrapping his arm around Jacob.

ALEXEI

Jacob, my flower.

He nestles his head into Jacob's shoulder.

JACOB

Cold?

Alexei nods.

JACOB

Ah, we'll get you nice and warmed up soon.

He puts his hand on the small of Alexei's back.

The two reach a crosswalk, the light is red. They can't cross. Traffic flies by.

A DRUNK (50's, bloodshot eyes, tangled beard), sits on the corner, resting against a building. He's mumbling to himself. Alexei accidentally makes eye contact with him.

DRUNK

Faggot.

Alexei quickly averts his gaze, back onto the road in front of him.

ALEXEI

Ah, fuck.

Jacob glances back.

JACOB

Just ignore him.

DRUNK

Fucking faggot. Fuck you looking at?

Alexei grabs hold of Jacob's hand and squeezes it.

DRUNK

Talking to you, fucking pussy faggot, don't ignore me, fucker!

The drunk gets to his feet, revealing himself to be quite large, easily towering over the two boys. Jacob rubs Alexei's back.

JACOB  
Just relax, he's clearly out of it.

ALEXEI  
No, I know. Just hate this shit.

The light turns green. The road is clear. Eerily empty.

JACOB  
C'mon.

The two begin to briskly walk away.

DRUNK  
Hey!

The drunk picks up a glass bottle and chucks it, hitting Alexei in the small of his back. He screams out in pain, dropping to his knees.

Jacob whips back around and charges at the man.

JACOB  
What the fuck!? The fuck you think  
you're doing!?

Alexei lifts his head, only to find Jacob standing toe to toe with his assailant.

JACOB  
Who's the fucking faggot, bitch!?  
I'll fucking kill you!

ALEXEI  
Jacob! Stop!

Fighting through the pain, Alexei brings himself to his feet and to Jacob's side, grabbing his shoulders in an attempt to hold him back.

ALEXEI  
Stop it! Let's just go! Jacob!

His words fall on deaf ears as Jacob shoves the drunk against the building.

JACOB  
Let's go big man, I'm such a fag-

CRACK, Jacob goes down. Hard. In the drunk's hand is a hammer. He lifts it up again, delivering another blow to Jacob's head. Alexei desperately tries to pull the man off Jacob. It's no use.

ALEXEI

Help! Somebody please! Get off of him! Get the fuck off!

The drunk turns around, swinging the hammer full force at Alexei's leg. It connects to his kneecap with a CRUNCH.

BLACKOUT.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - NIGHT

Lying on a gurney, Alexei goes in and out of consciousness as HOSPITAL STAFF urgently rush him down the hallway. His face is badly beaten. He glances down at his pant-leg, which is soaked with blood. He fades out of consciousness once more.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

EXT. PHYSICAL THERAPIST OFFICE - DAY

Super: 2 Months Later.

INT. PHYSICAL THERAPIST OFFICE - DAY

Alexei, now donning a knee-brace, stands across the room from DAN (30's, Alexei's excitable, 'Pollyanna' of a physical therapist).

DAN

Okay, you got this!

Alexei begins to walk towards Dan. It's slow and uncomfortable, but he can do it.

DAN

Good, good, Alexei.

Dan reaches his hands out to Alexei, who grabs onto them as he completes the exercise.

DAN

Good!

(in Russian  
(MORE))

DAN (CONT'D)  
accent)  
Strong like bull!

Alexei shoots him an unamused look. Dan catches it. He makes a note on his clipboard while Alexei takes a seat.

DAN  
You're making some really good progress.

ALEXEI  
How long until I can dance?

A beat. Dan avoids Alexei's cold gaze.

DAN  
Let's just focus on walking for now.

Another beat.

DAN  
How are you feeling, Alexei?

ALEXEI  
Good. Really good.

DAN  
Okay. You're a really strong kid, you know that?-

ALEXEI  
Is that it?

DAN  
Oh, um.

He checks his phone.

DAN  
Yeah, yeah that's about time.

ALEXEI  
Great.

Alexei grabs his crutches and pulls himself to his feet. He begins to head towards the door.

DAN  
Ok so, same time next week or-

ALEXEI  
(not turning back)  
Yup.