

TEAM SPITZ

"Pilot"

by
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COLD OPEN

SCENE A

FADE IN:

INT. AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

ON A BANNER: Westminster Prep - Home of the Cyclones

JEFF SPITZ, in a not-very-stylish blazer and khakis, rises into frame. He takes a microphone, pauses dramatically, and speaks.

SPITZ

My name is Jeff Spitz. And I am an addict. (BEAT) I am addicted to winning football games.

APPLAUSE from the unseen crowd.

SPITZ (CONT'D)

And I've won a hell of a lot of games. How do I do it, you ask? Am I the best strategist in the high school game? No. Am I the best trainer? No. Actually, I probably am the best trainer. And I'm also the best strategist. I mean, my record is 121 and 11. I know, you're probably asking yourselves, "121 wins? How can that be? The man can't be a day over 30!" Actually, I'm 35. But thank you.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD - MORNING

SHOT: Spitz stands alone on the 50 yard line at dawn, the sprinklers going off behind him.

SPITZ (V.O.)

So, what's my secret? What makes my
teams winners? Character.

SHOT: Spitz crouches, rips out a piece of turf. He crumbles
the soil and inhales, savoring the smell.

SPITZ (V.O.) (CONT'D)

What defines them is selflessness,
hard work, and determination.

SHOT: An old man on a riding mower waits. Suddenly, Spitz
runs through frame, grunting as he pushes a tackling sled at
full steam.

SPITZ (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I won't settle for anything less. I
do this for one reason: because I love
it. I love helping a kid realize what
he's capable of. That's my thing.

Once Spitz clears frame, the old man starts mowing again.

DISSOLVE TO:

COLD OPEN

SCENE B

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

The first day of a new year. Kids smash their oversized backpacks to squeeze them into their lockers. The kids all turn to look as Coach Spitz rounds the corner.

SPITZ

Morning kids! Whoa, look out, comin'
through! Nice shoes!

KIDS (VARIOUS)

Hey Coach!/Welcome to Prep, Coach!

SPITZ

Mornin', kids! Great to be here!
How're ya doing?

Spitz smiles, slapping kids on the back. He straightens one kid's sideways baseball cap.

SPITZ (CONT'D)

Don't wear your cap like that, son, makes
you look ignorant. Hey, big fella!

Spitz turns a corner and spots a freshman girl (LIZZIE).

SPITZ (CONT'D)

You! You're in violation of dress code.

The girl looks up at him. Crap! Spitz smiles.

SPITZ (CONT'D)

Nobody in this school is allowed to be
that pretty.

LIZZIE

(MORTIFIED) Hey Dad.

SPITZ

So, made any friends yet?

LIZZIE

I've only been a student here for six
minutes.

Lizzie gradually shrinks away from him into the bank of lockers, glancing around self-consciously.

SPITZ

Well you'll make friends in no time
Lizzie, pretty as you are!

LIZZIE

Please stop talking about how pretty I am.

SPITZ

Are you trying to get inside that locker?

LIZZIE

People are staring.

SPITZ

Because you're so pretty! (OFF HER LOOK)
Oh, right. Look, I know you miss your
old school. But this school is top-
notch, and we get free tuition! Plus,
since me and your mom split up I haven't
seen nearly enough of you and your
sisters. Now, you and me get to hang
every day! Yeah! Pound it out, BFF!

He holds out his fist for a bump. She bumps him as discreetly as she can, which doesn't stop him from "blowing it up."

A GROUP OF FOOTBALL TYPES approach Spitz, laughing and cocky.

PLAYERS

(VARIOUSLY) Coach Spitz!/How's it hanging?!/What up, Coach?

SPITZ

(HIGH-FIVING) Hey hey hey! I believe I met some of you boys at the booster club picnic. Jake, right?

PLAYER #1/JAKE

You know it!

SPITZ

Listen -- I sure hope I can count on you guys to try out for the team.

JAKE

Try out? We are the team! I'm your quarterback.

PLAYER #2/TY

Ty Purcell, your wide receiver.

SPITZ

(AMUSED) Did you hear that, Lizzie? They're telling me what positions they're going to play. I love it!

THE KIDS MOVE ON. Lizzie looks at Spitz, dreading his reaction.

LIZZIE

You don't love it.

SPITZ

(SMILING) No ma'am, I do not.

CUT TO:

COLD OPEN

SCENE C

INT. PRINCIPAL KERSEY'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

KEN OBERDORFFER (mid-thirties, slight, outwardly bookish but fiercely passionate) BLOWS ONE NOTE ON A BENT TROMBONE. It's ear-splitting. CHARLES KERSEY (maybe fifty, nervous, and flop-sweaty) covers his ears.

KERSEY

That's awful.

KEN

That's what I'm saying. The slide is broken. We need a new trombone.

KERSEY

Sorry. We don't have the money.

Ken blows into the trombone again. Awful.

KERSEY (CONT'D)

Will you stop that?!

KEN

Get used to it. That's what you'll be hearing at every game, every rally, at the Christmas concert. That's the only note it plays. Would you like to hear "We Are The Champions"?

Ken plays the same note over and over (and we don't have to pay Freddie Mercury one cent). Kersey covers his ears.

KERSEY

Stop it! We have no money! Stop it!

Suddenly, the door swings open, slamming Ken against the wall. He stops playing. IT'S SPITZ.

KERSEY (CONT'D)

Thank the lord!

SPITZ

Ooh. Sorry. Oh god, I broke your
horn.

KERSEY

What can I do for you, coach?

SPITZ

I was just checking out the equipment
room, and we could use a few things.

KERSEY

Whatever you need. Blank check.

KEN

(TO KERSEY) I'm sorry, have you not
seen this trombone?

SPITZ

I feel terrible about that.

KEN

You didn't do it.

SPITZ

Oh, good. Can you even play it?

KEN

Yes. Would you like to hear the theme
from "Rocky"?

SPITZ

Hell yeah!

Ken starts to play the trombone again.

KERSEY

No! Ken, I think we're done here.

KEN

Of course. We're done. And, in what has become a predictable ritual, athletics gets everything it wants, while arts education continues its slow, sad trudge to the graveyard of irrelevance. Rah rah, siss boom bah.

KERSEY

Okay, thanks for coming by, Ken. My door is always open.

Kersey tries to shut the door. Ken steps back in.

KEN

Just keep this in mind, Charlie. This trombone could be some kid's calling, maybe even his ticket to college. But thanks to you, he won't get that opportunity. Would you like to come down to my classroom and tell this kid why he won't be going to Juilliard?

KERSEY

What kid are we talking about here?

KEN

It could be any of them. We'll never know!

KERSEY

Then no, I'm not talking to him.

KEN

(TO SPITZ, RESENTFUL) Enjoy your new
jock straps.

SPITZ

Actually, we're pretty well set for
jock straps.

KEN EXITS. Kersey shakes his head.

KERSEY

Sorry about that, Coach. Ken's a good
teacher, but he never shuts up about
how I'm stiffing his kids.

SPITZ

Ah. (POINTED) Are you?

Kersey tries to laugh this off. Spitz lets him dangle for a
beat, then finally laughs along. Kersey is relieved.

KERSEY

Anyway... I cannot tell you how happy
we are to have you here at
Westminster. Last year, we were seven
and five, the parents were screaming
at me -- do something! But you should
have heard the applause when I got to
tell 'em "Rest easy, I got Mr. 121-and-
11 to the rescue!"

SPITZ

"You can call off the search for a new
principal!"

Another shared laugh. Kersey suddenly stops.

KERSEY

Did you really hear that?

Spitz laughs and slaps him on the back, "Gotcha!"

KERSEY (CONT'D)

Haa! Oh man! You! So, what is it I
can do for you?

SPITZ

Oh right. We're going to need forty
practice jerseys...

KERSEY

(JOTS IT DOWN) Got it.

SPITZ

A new tackling sled...

KERSEY

Not a problem.

SPITZ

Oh, and one trombone.

KERSEY

(NERVOUS LAUGH) Ha! Good one.

SPITZ

(LAUGHS) Yeah. (THEN, SERIOUS) Do it.

Spitz smiles and exits.

FADE OUT.

END OF COLD OPEN

ACT ONE

SCENE D

FADE IN:

INT. AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

Spitz, in front of the banner, addressing the unseen crowd.
(This is a continuation of the very first scene.)

SPITZ

I know I have a bit of a reputation.
You've all heard the stories about
"Crazy Coach Spitz." That I'm brash.
Impetuous. Intense. That I once got
so mad I heaved a cooler full of
Gatorade through a scoreboard. (OFF
THEIR REACTIONS) You hadn't heard that?
Oh. It was no big deal, really.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT OFFICE - DAY

A small office just off the door to the boys' locker room.
Spitz unpacks boxes and puts photos and personal stuff on his
desk. He pulls out a football and spins it in his hand.

SPITZ (V.O.)

If I'm intense, it's because I believe
in what I'm doing. If you believe in
what I'm doing, then I want you on
Team Spitz.

KEN ENTERS.

KEN

Hello?

SPITZ

Ken! Go long!

KEN

Excuse me?

SPITZ

Go long! Back! Back back back!

Ken backs up a few steps. Spitz throws him the ball. Ken bats it away, like it's attacking him.

SPITZ (CONT'D)

Not so into the football, huh?

KEN

No. Look, I hear I have you to thank for a new trombone.

SPITZ

Hey, a team needs a marching band, a marching band needs a trombone. Kersey just needed to be shown the light.

KEN

Kersey is a gutless bureaucrat who was sent to earth by Satan to destroy arts education.

SPITZ

So, you two don't golf together.

KEN

Are you going to go through every sport with me, or should we just establish now that I'm not the sporting type?

SPITZ

All I know is Kersey told me you're a pain in his ass. I like that. It shows you have a passion for what you do. You care about your kids. That's why we're going to be buds.

Ken picks up a framed family photo off Spitz's desk. It shows three adorable little girls (including Lizzie) and a woman whose face is covered with a post-it note.

SPITZ (CONT'D)

(PROUD) Those are my girls.

KEN

Who's under the post-it?

SPITZ

That's my ex-wife. Fran. I don't want her scaring off potential dates, should the opportunity arise. We get along fine, now that she doesn't have to live with me. She's started going out with a guy. Glen. Optometrist. Seems nice. I suppose they're probably doing it by now. You know how it is.

KEN

I've never been married.

SPITZ

Ah. You gay?

KEN

No.

SPITZ

Cool. But if you end up being gay,
I'm totally down with that. So don't
not be gay for my sake.

KEN

Noted. (HESITANT) So... how is it Mr.
121-and-11 wound up here?

SPITZ

I chose to leave my last school.

KEN

I heard you punched a parent in the face.

SPITZ

That made my choice easier. See, this
loudmouth ran onto the field, yelling
at his son. That's my job, A. B, this
kid was out there killing himself.
I'd be proud to lose with a kid like
that! Not that we lost, we were
undefeated that season. Point is, I
wanted to hug him, and this jack-hole
won't stop screaming at him, so I just
gave him one of these -- bink!

Spitz mimes a delicate little punch.

SPITZ (CONT'D)

The way he reacted, you'd think I shot
him with an elephant gun.

(MORE)

SPITZ (CONT'D)

"Ooh, it hurts, look at all the blood,
I can't find my tooth!"

KEN

I wouldn't recommend punching any
parents here.

SPITZ

For your information, that was the
first time I've ever punched anybody.
At a school. At a school where I was
currently the coach.

KEN

I'm just saying, this is a private
school. The parents are used to
getting their way. Kersey's terrified
of them.

A bunch of swaggering FOOTBALL PLAYERS saunter past the door
on their way to the locker room. Among them are JAKE and TY.

JAKE/TY/OTHER PLAYERS

(VARIOUSLY) Coach!/Dude!/Cyclones
rule!

They cross out. Spitz grits his teeth.

SPITZ

I tell ya... every year, the parents
get worse and the kids get more
coddled. But don't worry. I know how
to handle kids like this. You want to
hang out and watch the Spitz Method?

KEN

I've got a class. Good luck.

Ken turns to leave. Spitz grabs the football.

SPITZ

Luck will not be necessary. Now come
on, go long.

KEN

I really -- no.

SPITZ

Go medium.

KEN

No.

SPITZ

Go short.

KEN

Please don't throw the football at me.

SPITZ

I'm throwing it to you!

CUT TO:

ACT ONE

SCENE E

INT. LOCKER ROOM - LATER

The locker room is full of guys in gym clothes, horsing around, loud. Jake and Ty are among the alpha dogs. Spitz stands in front of a dry erase board, eyeing them, a smile on his face. He cuts through the noise with his tone.

SPITZ

Why do we play football?

The crowd starts to quiet down.

SPITZ (CONT'D)

It's a simple question. Why do we
play football?

He writes the following words on the board: FUN. FAME.
GIRLS. The GUYS HOOT AND HOLLER their agreement.

SPITZ (CONT'D)

You're all on board, huh? This is
what it's all about, right? Whoo hoo!
Yeah! Partay! Am I right?

The players are loving it. Suddenly, Spitz's smile disappears, and he PUNCHES a hole through the board. A hush falls over the team. Spitz remains calm.

SPITZ (CONT'D)

No. That is not why we play football.

Spitz flips the blackboard over. The other side says "HONOR,
SAC---ICE, and CHARACTER."

SPITZ (CONT'D)

This is why we play football.

Spitz realizes that the hole in the board has obscured the second word.

SPITZ (CONT'D)

That second word is "sacrifice." I should've left more room for my fist hole. (REGAINING MOMENTUM) But I'm actually glad I did that, because ironically enough, after our first practice, you are going to need to (POINTING) ice your sac!

ANGLE ON: THE PLAYERS, as they cast nervous glances at each other. Is this guy for real?

SPITZ (CONT'D)

I don't care if you're a star. I don't care how many touchdowns you've scored, or how many interceptions you've got. Those are individual statistics. You are not individuals. Your only value is as a part of a larger organism known as a team.

Spitz quickly draws a paramecium-looking thing on the board and scrawls "TEAM" on it.

SPITZ (CONT'D)

Is anyone here unclear on the organism concept?

Jake raises his hand, throwing his buddies an "I'll handle this guy" look.

SPITZ (CONT'D)

Yes?

JAKE

Uh, my dad told me I was like
guaranteed starting quarterback.

SPITZ

Ah. Let me ask you something, Jake.
What does your dad do for a living?

JAKE

He's a surgeon...?

SPITZ

Okay. I think I'll go into his
operating room and sew a patient's
spleen onto their face. (INTENSE)
Because if he's going to do my job, I
might as well do his! Does anyone here
think that's a good idea?! Spleen on a
face?! Show of hands?! No?! Good!

Jake shrinks back into his chair. Spitz calms down slightly.

SPITZ (CONT'D)

Now, when I look at you, I don't see
boys. I see men, waiting to be born.
Fetal men. And today, you fetuses
begin your journey to manhood. Kiss
your weekends goodbye, tell your
girlfriend you'll see her in January.
It's on.

Jake and Ty exchange a look -- this is bullshit!

SPITZ (CONT'D)

I won't sugarcoat -- It will be a
nightmarish metamorphosis of pain.
But if you do what I ask of you, if
you sacrifice everything for the good
of the team, you will come out the
other side as men. Anyone not willing
to go on this journey? Because if so,
you're welcome to leave, right now.

Jake nods at Ty. Screw this!

Jake exits. Followed by Ty. And immediately by half of the
other kids there. It doesn't take long, but suddenly Spitz
is left with a small, earnest, apprehensive group of players.
He doesn't flinch.

SPITZ (CONT'D)

All right, who's familiar with the
nickel defense?

CUT TO:

ACT ONE

SCENE F

INT. ATHLETICS DEPT. OFFICE - A LITTLE LATER

ON KERSEY, who is hyperventilating. Spitz sits at his desk, watching Kersey pace back and forth.

KERSEY

(CONTINUOUS) This can't be happening!
How can you just sit there? It's insane!
We have no football team! You're still
sitting. You had me order those practice
jerseys. Who's going to wear them?! The
photography club? Why would they? That
would be insane! I can't believe you're
still just sitting there!

Spitz obliges by standing up.

SPITZ

Okay.

KERSEY

Not just standing! Freaking out!

SPITZ

I gave those kids a choice. Work
hard, or leave. They chose to leave.
I'm not going to back down from my
principles because a few whiners can't
handle constructive criticism. By the
way, we're going to need another
blackboard. Better make it two.

KERSEY

Do you have any idea how many parents have called me about this, just in the last fifteen minutes? Come on. Guess.

SPITZ

Thirty?

KERSEY

Thirty?! In fifteen minutes? That's way too high! Clearly I'm not getting thirty calls in fifteen minutes! Was that a real guess?

SPITZ

How many, then?

KERSEY

Maybe seven. Which is a lot in fifteen minutes! You know what they said? "How dare he? How dare he speak that way to my son?!"

SPITZ

(MOCK SCARED) Oh my!

KERSEY

But I assured them that you were going to apologize to the team, and everything would be fine.

SPITZ

You've got to be kidding! What the hell do I have to apologize for?

KERSEY

What? What the-- Are you serious?!
You were mean to the children!

SPITZ

I'm sorry I wasn't meaner to them!

KERSEY

You're not even a teacher. Why do you
hate me?

SFX: CELL PHONE RING

KERSEY (CONT'D)

(PICKS UP) Charlie Kersey. (GRATIFIED)
Yes Alicia! As a matter of fact, I
did hear what the new football coach
did! (TO SPITZ) It's the school
counselor, and what do you know, she's
outraged. (INTO PHONE) Yes. Believe
me, you have no idea how many calls
I've already gotten. (IRRITATED) Well,
no, not that many, it was only fifteen
minutes ago. Uh huh. Absolutely. (TO
SPITZ, SMUG) She would like to see
you.

Spitz groans and rolls his eyes.

DISSOLVE TO:

ACT ONE

SCENE G

INT. AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

Spitz, talking to the unseen audience, as before.

SPITZ

My oldest daughter has eight soccer trophies. In those eight years, her team has won a total of three games. (SIDE OF HIS MOUTH, SING SONG) Lady coaches. (THEN) Here's what all the trophies are teaching our kids: Why bother putting in the blood, sweat, and tears? Winning and losing are the same thing! Well I'm here to teach your boys that they are not.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ALICIA'S OFFICE - DAY

THROUGH A BIG FISH TANK, we see SPITZ march into the room.

SPITZ

Okay, here's the deal ("AH-LEESH-A")
Alicia.

ALICIA (O.S.)

("A-LISS-EE-A") Alicia.

He comes around and gets his first look at ALICIA. She's 30-ish, tall, dark, and smoking hot. Spitz is taken aback.

SPITZ

What? Oh. Well, you know, Aleesha,
Aliss-ya. Same difference.

ALICIA

But only one is my name. Coach, I was
very concerned when I heard about your
speech to the players today.

SPITZ

I'm divorced.

ALICIA

What?

SPITZ

I just didn't know if you knew that.
Not married.

ALICIA

I didn't. (THEN) From what I'm told, you
were extremely critical of the players.

SPITZ

Yes I was.

ALICIA

Did you not realize that you could be
damaging their self-esteem?

SPITZ

That's what I was trying to do. Their
self-esteem is too high. They needed
to be taken down a peg.

(MORE)

SPITZ (CONT'D)

(THEN) I just thought you might know I
have a daughter at this school.

ALICIA

What?

SPITZ

If you did, you might reasonably
assume I'm married. Which I'm not.
Still very close to my three
daughters, though. Involved dad.

ALICIA

Okay. Coach, are you familiar with
Chaslow?

SPITZ

Yes. Not overly. What's Chaslow again?

ALICIA

Dr. Milton Chaslow. Have you read his
book on the development of esteem?

SPITZ

(NO) Maybe. What's it called?

ALICIA

"On The Development of Esteem."

SPITZ

Oh. No, I haven't read it.

ALICIA

Well, in it, he explains that in
teens, development of self-confidence
demands frequent affirmation, and only
by nurturing morale can we help them
construct a positive self-concept.

SPITZ

I literally don't understand a single
word you just said.

Alicia turns to her bookshelf.

ALICIA

I can lend you the book.

SPITZ

Here's the thing ("AH-LEESH-A") Alicia...

ALICIA

("A-LISS-EE-A") Alicia.

SPITZ

("A-LISS-EE-A") Alicia. I happen to
know a thing or two about kids, and
discipline, and what I know, you don't
find in books. I'm a role model, I'm a
leader, and if you need proof, my
coaching record is 121 and 11. So if
you want to learn something, close your
books and watch me in action.

ALICIA

I intend to.

SPITZ

(INTRIGUED) Oh, do you now?

ALICIA

I didn't mean it like that.

SPITZ

Whatever you say.

He turns to leave.

ALICIA

I'm saying that's not what I meant.

Spitz turns around; was she checking out his ass?

SPITZ

(RE: HIS FACE) Excuse me, I'm up here.

He exits, gratified.

ALICIA

I was just avoiding eye contact!

CUT TO:

ACT ONE

SCENE H

INT./EXT. CAR - MOVING - DAY

SPITZ drives LIZZIE home.

SPITZ

It's all good.

LIZZIE

How is it all good? Everybody in the whole school is freaked!

SPITZ

All part of the Spitz system, kiddo. Beginning of the season, you flush out the bad apples. Let's talk about your first day. You make new friends?

LIZZIE

Most of the team quits every season?

SPITZ

Not most. Usually just three or four kids. But it's all good.

LIZZIE

By what definition is no football team "all good"?

SPITZ

It was more than I expected, yes. I'm just saying I can take it. I've just got to stick to my guns. It's all good.

LIZZIE

Well, I'm glad. (BEAT) Everybody at school hates me.

SPITZ

What? They don't hate you.

LIZZIE

No, they hate you. But you're big and scary, so they're taking it out on me! Two cheerleaders stood up in the cafeteria and announced that the pep rally was cancelled, and then they both stared right at me. But it's all good!

SPITZ

Come on, Lizzie, that's not such a big deal.

LIZZIE

Then one of them kicked my book bag and the other one said, "Nice hair, skank." But don't worry about it, because it's all good.

SPITZ

(PISSSED) Okay, who were they? I want their names!

LIZZIE

It's all good!

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31.

SPITZ

Stop saying that!

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

SCENE I

FADE IN:

EXT. FRAN'S HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - MINUTES LATER

Spitz has his daughter CAROLINE (7) on his shoulders, while his other daughter NATALIE (10) dangles off his arm. His ex-wife FRAN stands in the doorway, shaking her head.

FRAN

Wow. Wow. First day and everybody's mad at you. That's a new record.

SPITZ

Hey, I can't help the way people react when they're wrong and I'm right.

Lizzie appears behind Fran.

LIZZIE

What if you get fired?

SPITZ

I'm not gonna get fired.

LIZZIE

Yes you are, Dad. (VOICE CRACKS) And then I'll have to go to Jefferson High, and you'll be god knows where!

Lizzie exits. Spitz tries to shrug it off.

SPITZ

Teenagers. A couple of hours ago, she said she didn't want me at her school.

Lizzie suddenly reappears.

LIZZIE

I don't!

Lizzie exits again. Fran stares at Spitz.

FRAN

Jeffrey, let me ask you something.
How many schools do you think you can
get fired from before nobody within a
hundred miles will hire you? Then
what do you do? Move to another town?

NATALIE

No! Daddy, don't move away!

SPITZ

Don't worry, sweetie. Daddy would
never move away from you. (TO
CAROLINE) Caroline, baby, it's hard
for Daddy to talk with your fingers in
his mouth. You two go play.

He takes Caroline down and ushers the girls into the house.

FRAN

It's just like when we were married.
You're unable to compromise on
anything, ever.

SPITZ

Not when I'm right. Which I am. I've
been in these situations before. I
can ride it out.

FRAN

I know you can. But can Lizzie?

SPITZ

She's a Spitz. She's strong.

FRAN

She's a fourteen year old girl.

SPITZ

I know! But what am I supposed to do?

Just drop trow and let the forces of
evil have their way with me?

FRAN

It's worth a try. For her.

Spitz grimaces. He has no answer for this, but he starts to answer anyway, and he winds up sounding like the Hulk.

SPITZ

I... I... aaaaaaggghhhh!

Caroline appears in the hallway.

CAROLINE

Why is daddy growling?

SPITZ

Because your mom's... not wrong.

FRAN

Thank you. And Lizzie will thank you.

SPITZ

You realize you're killing me, right?

FRAN

Yes. So, you want some dinner?

SPITZ

Wow. Inviting me in for dinner? You haven't done that since we --

FRAN

Actually, I made it to go.

She hands him a few tupperware containers.

SPITZ

Ah. Thanks.

FRAN

You're welcome. God knows what you're eating in that horrible apartment.

SPITZ

Okay, my apartment is not horrible...

CAROLINE

It smells pooey.

SPITZ

(HURT) It does not! Fran, I am a grown man, and I happen to be doing an excellent job of taking care of myself, thank you very much.

Spitz starts to cross out with the food. Then he stops.

SPITZ (CONT'D)

Could I borrow a fork?

DISSOLVE TO:

ACT TWO

SCENE J

INT. AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

Spitz in front of the banner. Again, this is the same speech we saw at the top.

SPITZ

I'm not saying winning is easy. We'll
face our share of fourth and longs.
But I'll tell you this: the word
"quit" is not in my dictionary. I
mean that literally. I tore the damn
page out.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MUSIC ROOM - MORNING

SPITZ sits at a drum set, POUNDING THE HELL OUT OF THE DRUMS.
It feels good. It doesn't sound good. But it feels good.

SPITZ (V.O.)

And I'm going to teach your sons to
hate the Q word as much as I do. So
if you've got a fancy dictionary, hide
it now.

Ken enters and sees Spitz drumming.

SPITZ (CONT'D)

Yeah!... (GRUNT)... All right!... Big
finish! (SPOTS KEN) Oh. Morning, Ken.

KEN

What are you doing here?

SPITZ

Just blowing off some steam. I've got to do something I really don't want to do. Your pal Spitzzy is about to eat a turd sandwich.

KEN

Why would you do that?

SPITZ

This whole mess has made my daughter's life harder than it already was. So I'm going to back down. I'm going to apologize to the team and ask 'em to come back.

KEN

That's what a turd sandwich is?

SPITZ

Yes. You've never heard that saying?

KEN

No. Look, are you really going to cave? I mean, these parents are meddling jerks, once you give into them --

SPITZ

Yeah, but parents today don't care about their kids having a mentor. A builder of character.

(MORE)

SPITZ (CONT'D)

They want a personal trainer to turn
their spoiled brats into stars.

What's the point? Plus I've got to
fight that Kersey jerk and that
sanctimonious lady counselor. She
seeing somebody?

KEN

Alicia? She brought a guy to the
spring fundraiser.

SPITZ

(SLY) Into guys. Question answered.

KEN

Wait wait wait. If you apologize, the
bad guys win. You can't just give up.

Spitz smiles.

SPITZ

I'm glad to hear you say that, Kenny.
Because actually, the turd sandwich is
Plan B.

KEN

(WORRIED) What's Plan A?

SPITZ

You're Plan A, buddy!

CUT TO:

ACT TWO

SCENE K

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

LIZZIE sees a group of ninth graders heading her way, deep into a conversation. She tries to time her entry into the conversation.

LIZZIE

Are you talking about "Twilight"? The new movie was awesome. (NOTHING) But not as good as the book. (NOTHING) It completely sucked. (NOTHING) I hate "Twilight."

The other kids keep walking. Lizzie might as well be invisible. Spitz crosses to the water fountain next to her, pointedly not looking at her.

SPITZ

The cavalry is on the way.

Lizzie looks around. Is he talking to her?

LIZZIE

What?

SPITZ

I'm going to fix this. Hold tight, Sweetie.

He winks at her. She impulsively hugs him.

SPITZ (CONT'D)

Whoa. I thought you --

LIZZIE

(SUDDENLY SELF CONSCIOUS) Don't talk to me.

Lizzie crosses off. Confused, Spitz watches her go. He spots Alicia further down the hall and jogs to catch up with her. He catches her by the arm.

SPITZ

Hey, quick question. What do you do if a teenage girl doesn't want you around, but also doesn't want you to go away?

ALICIA

Well, the key is you have to learn to be physically absent while remaining emotionally present.

Spitz thinks about this for a beat.

SPITZ

Nope. That's just nonsense.

ALICIA

It so happens that --

SPITZ

(CHEERFULLY) I'll call you.

Spitz crosses off, and we...

CUT TO:

ACT TWO

SCENE L

EXT. PARKING LOT/FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

A group of football players, including Jake and Ty, walk to their cars, having a good time and giving each other crap.

TY

JAKE

Come on, you're out of your
mind!

I'm telling you, dude, she
said it!

Ty stops talking as something catches his eye.

TY

What the -- What the hell is that?

ANGLE ON: FOOTBALL FIELD, where a full football practice is in progress. Spitz stands on a blocking sled like a gladiator on his chariot. SEVERAL EXTREMELY NON-ATHLETIC KIDS in practice jerseys push against it ineffectually.

SPITZ

That's it! Lower your shoulder and
pound it! Take me for a ride!

ANGLE ON: PARKING LOT. The players look on, mouths agape.

JAKE

He's got a team? No freakin' way...

ANGLE ON: FOOTBALL FIELD, where nerds throw themselves at a tackling dummy and bounce off like flies.

SHOT: Another nerd hikes the ball into his own nuts.

SHOT: The tire drill turns into a nerd pile-up.

Ken stands on the sidelines, barely able to watch. Spitz bounds over to him, still yelling back toward the field.

SPITZ

Hit 'em low! Come on, guys, focus! (TO
KEN) Ken, this turn-out is incredible.

(MORE)

SPITZ (CONT'D)

You're a natural leader. These kids
would march through hell for you.
(YELLING OFF) Come on! Grind it out!
Push that mother to the end zone!

KEN

Jeff, go easy on them. For god's
sake, they're woodwinds.

SPITZ

Sorry, Ken. Got to make it look good.
I've got an audience.

Spitz casually nods toward the parking lot, where a growing
crowd of football players looks on.

SPITZ (CONT'D)

Look at 'em. It's killing 'em. You
just know they want to be out here.
(DIABOLICAL) That's right, you spoiled
babies. Have a look. You're
witnessing your own doom.

KEN

You make a terrible James Bond
villain.

SPITZ

I'm not a villain. I'm the good guy.

ANGLE ON: PARKING LOT. The players watch the practice, rapt.

JAKE

No way. They're terrible.

TY

He wouldn't actually play these guys.

(BEAT) Would he?

DREW

I heard he's crazy. Somebody told me
he threw some kid's dad through a
scoreboard.

The other players start muttering, worried.

JAKE

Come on, dudes! He can't!

DREW

You said he was going to beg us to
come back, Jake!

TY

(RE FIELD) That Asian kid with the
special shoes is wearing my jersey!

DREW

(STARTING TO PANIC) Oh man, oh man,
this can't be happening, I'm supposed
to have a shot at a scholarship!

JAKE

(LOSING IT) Shut up, Drew!

ANGLE ON: FOOTBALL FIELD, where Spitz watches the scene in
the parking lot out of the corner of his eye.

SPITZ

And the rats slowly start to turn on
one another...

A group of band nerds approaches, exhausted and battered.
One particularly un-athletic kid steps forward.

LEANDER

Coach, sir? We can't do this anymore.

I need to lie down and have a snack.

Spitz glances toward players in the parking lot.

SPITZ

No, Leander! No lying down! Ken, get
all your men over here. Huddle up.

RESET TO:

EXT. THE FIELD - HUDDLE - MOMENTS LATER

CAMERA POV: STRAIGHT UP from the grass into the huddle --
musicians and Spitz. Spitz looks them square in the eyes.

SPITZ

All right, listen to me. You are not
football players. You are not big,
and you are not strong. Frankly, some
of you have the upper body strength of
a toddler.

LEANDER

Is this supposed to be a pep talk?

SPITZ

Yes. Because you marching band guys
have something that all those "star
athletes" watching us now do not. You
are part of a team.

(MORE)

SPITZ (CONT'D)

Under the guidance of Ken "The Maestro" Oberdorffer here, you have learned what it means to work together for the greater good. And that's what you're doing today.

Spitz lets this sink in for a beat.

SPITZ (CONT'D)

And tomorrow.

LEANDER

We have to do this again tomorrow?!

KEN

(DEFENSIVE) I was not told that.

SPITZ

Maybe not! Worst case scenario, today, tomorrow and potentially the first game or two. (OFF THEIR GROANS) You can do this! Now, who wants to return a punt?

LEANDER

Return it where?

SPITZ

(MUTTERING) Sweet Jesus... (SPIRITED)

To the endzone! Yeah! Hustle!

The band nerds trundle back onto the field, as we...

CUT TO:

ACT TWO

SCENE M

INT. LOCKER ROOM - LATER

The nerd squad is there, exhausted, tending to their wounds. Spitz is taping a kid's glasses back together with first aid tape. Ken just shakes his head.

SPITZ

There you go, Cameron. Good as new.

(TO EVERYONE) You guys made me proud out there today. Ben, you stayed on the field even after it got dark and you thought you saw a monster. That took courage. And hey, nobody got hurt.

LEANDER

I think my coccyx is shattered.

SPITZ

Walk it off, buddy!

Spitz notices, out of the corner of his eye, a group of the star players enter the locker room. He ignores them.

SPITZ (CONT'D)

Now, tomorrow, we're gonna focus on --

JAKE

Um, coach. Can we --?

SPITZ

Just a minute. (BACK TO THE NERDS) You showed me real guts out there today.

(MORE)

SPITZ (CONT'D)

You did everything I asked of you, and
I can't ask any more. I'll see you
tomorrow.

Finally, Spitz turns to the sheepish stars.

SPITZ (CONT'D)

Can I help you?

TY

We, uh... want to come back to the team.

SPITZ

(PLAYING DUMB) The football team?

JAKE

Yes sir.

SPITZ

Well I've already got a football team.

JAKE

We know, but they're...

SPITZ

They're what? Good soldiers? Team
players? Exemplary human beings?

JAKE

Yes sir. But maybe you could use us too.

Spitz takes a deep breath, milking it.

SPITZ

Let me ask you this -- Are you boys
willing to play ball my way?

PLAYERS

(VARIOUSLY) Yes coach./Sure./Uh-huh.

SPITZ

Are you prepared to do everything I
demand of you, without hesitation?

PLAYERS

Yes coach./Definitely./Yes, sir.

SPITZ

Are you ready to make the ultimate
sacrifice for the good of your team?

TY

You mean die?

SPITZ

Okay, not the ultimate sacrifice.
What's one down from that?

KEN

The penultimate sacrifice.

SPITZ

Yes! Thank you. The penultimate
sacrifice?

PLAYERS

Yes coach./You got it./Uh-huh.

Spitz lets them dangle for a beat, as he "considers".

SPITZ

All right. Welcome back.

The players cheer and high five each other. Spitz man-hugs
the players, and slaps their backs.

SPITZ (CONT'D)

We are going to bring us home a state
championship!

PLAYERS

Yes sir!/You know it!/Absolutely!

SPITZ

All right! Now go run a hundred laps.

The players fall silent.

TY

For real?

SPITZ

Yes. Go.

JAKE

Can we put on our gym clothes?

SPITZ

No. Now move, move, move!

The players all run out. Spitz turns to the band.

SPITZ (CONT'D)

Marching band? You have served with
honor. You may return to your
instruments.

The nerds celebrate as they exit.

CUT TO:

ACT TWO

SCENE N

INT. MUSIC ROOM - THE NEXT DAY

As students file out of Ken's class, Spitz enters, on top of the world, his mojo back. Kids high-five him as they pass.

SPITZ

Yeah! Up high! That's right. Good
morning, handsome! Whassup?

The kid with the sideways cap passes him. Spitz grabs it off his head.

SPITZ (CONT'D)

You can have it back when you're ready
to wear it right.

Spitz puts the hat on Ken.

KEN

I don't wear hats.

SPITZ

It looks great. Hey -- thanks again
for yesterday.

KEN

Don't mention it.

SPITZ

You know, you and I make a great team.

KEN

We're not a team.

SPITZ

Yes we are.

Spitz grabs Ken in a headlock. Ken endures it.

KEN

Please let go.

SPITZ

Not until you say we're a team.

KEN

I'm not a fan of the horseplay.

SPITZ

Say we're a team!

KEN

We're a team.

Spitz releases him, and they exit to the hallway.

RESET TO:

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY

As Spitz and Ken emerge, a smiling KERSEY PASSES THROUGH.

KERSEY

Hey! Team's looking good, Coach! We
going to beat St. Francis?

SPITZ

You know it, Charlie.

KERSEY

All right! See you people at the pep
rally! Great hat, Ken.

Ken immediately removes the hat. ALICIA APPROACHES.

ALICIA

Mr. Spitz. I just got off the phone
with Stephen Metcalf's mother. He's
the clarinet player?

(MORE)

ALICIA (CONT'D)

She says Stephen is showing signs of trauma from what he went through on the field.

KEN

I'll leave you two alone.

SPITZ

No. Whatever she wants to say, she can say in front of Team Spitz.

KEN

(TO ALICIA) I'm not on his team.

SPITZ

Yes you are.

ALICIA

The boy already has body image issues, and apparently you made him shower with the football team.

SPITZ

I had to. The kid peed himself when they blitzed him.

ALICIA

I'm very serious about this.

SPITZ

I see. So you'd like me to come by your office later?

ALICIA

Yes. (THEN) Why? What do you mean by that?

SPITZ

Just that you want to see me.

ALICIA

I do. I'm still not sure what you mean by that.

SPITZ

(WINKS AT HER) Message received.

ALICIA

(TO KEN) How can you be on his team?

Spitz spots Lizzie at her locker. He approaches, casually.

SPITZ

Permission to speak?

LIZZIE

(ROLLING HER EYES) Granted.

SPITZ

Can I assume my little triumph has improved your quality of life?

LIZZIE

(FLAT) Yes. I'm the most popular girl in school, and they just voted me homecoming queen.

SPITZ

You're too pretty to be sarcastic.

LIZZIE

(WARMING) Things are better. I've made a couple of friends. Thanks.

Spitz smiles. LEANDER APPROACHES Lizzie.

LEANDER

Hey Lizzie. You want to go to the pep
rally?

Lizzie looks up at her Dad. Spitz isn't sure he likes this.

SPITZ

Ah. You have made a male friend.
(FORCES A SMILE) Good good good. Run
along. You've got the spirit, I wanna
hear it!

Lizzie smiles back and exits with Leander. Spitz watches
them go. Ken approaches Spitz.

KEN

You know what they say about oboe
players. They're all hands. (OFF SPITZ'S
LOOK) Not a funny subject? Okay.

SPITZ

No, you know what? She's happy, I'm
happy. It's all good. (THEN) He touches
her, you'll need a new oboe player.

Spitz smiles at Ken, then heads back down the hall, high-
fiving students as he passes.

SPITZ (CONT'D)

'Sup my man? Loving the shirt! Hola,
amigo!

SPITZ (V.O.) (CONT'D)

You've entrusted me with your boys. I
take that trust very seriously.

DISSOLVE TO:

ACT TWO

SCENE O

INT. AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

Spitz addresses the crowd.

SPITZ

But when I give your boys back to you
at the end of the season, you won't
recognize them. "Who are you?" you'll
ask. "What are you doing in my house?
And where'd you get that humongous
trophy?" And you know what he's going
to say to you? "I earned it, Dad. I
earned it." Thank you, god bless you,
and god bless the future division 2-A
state high school football champions,
the Westminster Prep Cyclones! Yeah!

MUSIC: BUST-A-MOVE

Applause erupts, and the Cyclone mascot (a foam rubber
tornado-ish thing with an angry face on it) joins Spitz on
the stage. Spitz enthusiastically does "The Bump" with the
Cyclone. But he's too forceful with his bump and sends the
Cyclone spinning off the stage.

SPITZ (CONT'D)

Cyclone down!

He goes to help the Cyclone as we...

FADE OUT.

END OF SHOW