

# **stick it**

by

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INT. BLACK VOID

Indecipherable, secret symbols are written onto the screen, morphing into our alphabet (and credits). These seemingly ancient petroglyphs write over the letters, etching onto the back of a cave...

EXT. SUBURB - ECU GAMEBOY SCREEN - DAY

...in a VIDEOGAME. TWO FIGHTER OPTIONS spin on the split-screen: A NINJESS with weapons; and a JUJITSESS with nothing but skill. The player selects the Jujitess.

VOICES (O.S.)

Graham Cracker/Graham Cracker!  
Cracker!

WIDER REVEALS the Gameboy and the player, GRAHAM CRACKER. Hooded in a too-big sweatshirt and black Chuck Connors astride a BMX, hard to tell but probably 16 or 17. An empty McMansion dwarfing his silhouette, he pockets the device like a cloaked gremlin and rolls down, joining his TWO FRIENDS.

EXT. PLANO, TEXAS - MCDEVELOPMENT

SPOKES, TIRES and FEET are flying down pavement, racing a well-worn path with urgency. Rocks fly. Wheels jump curbs and catch air with the exuberant ease of BMX-ERS.

The road becomes a construction site: equipment, dirt and materials. THE THREE BOYS bike the uninhabited McMansion development towards a near-completed construction and into...

EXT. EMPTY SWIMMING POOL

...a giant, empty swimming pool. Tires skidding across the surfaces and marking the newly-poured concrete. Graham Cracker watches at the pool's edge. FRANK and POOT taunt playfully.

FRANK

(re: GC)

What's the point of a new horse if  
ya not gonna ride it?

POOT

Come on - let's dent that shit.

In the DISTANCE, SKATEBOARD WHEELS arriving. Poot is pissed.

POOT

This casa is not su casa. No way.

GC'S POV: as a group of OLDER SKATEBOARDERS arrive at the pool near the giant water slide. It's a stand off. STUSSY, head skater, is unmoved.

STUSSY

Way way. Get out.

POOT

There're six other empty pools.

STUSSY

That aren't as deep!

POOT

This spot's a bust, cause it's totally my boob.

STUSSY

Off the roof, onto the slide and into the pool stays.

WIDER reveals the proposition. It's fucking insane.

POOT

We don't have helmets.

A COHORT'S helmet is tossed to Stussy.

STUSSY

We got an extra.

Nobody moves. From nowhere, Graham Cracker grabs the helmet.

I/E. MCMANSION/MCMANSION POOL - SIUMLTANEOUS

MOVE WITH GC and STUSSY: racing inside the empty McHouse. Follow them up the stairs through the incomplete second floor, out to a terrace and up onto the roof.

ON the BOARDERS and X-ERS clearing the pool, CAT-CALLING and positioning for a view.

FRANK

Lemme use your phone.

Poot reluctantly hands Frank his phone.

POOT

It'll be done by the time anyone gets here.

FRANK

I'm not calling anyone.

(opening phone)

I want to take shots. Of the blood.

ON TOP OF THE ROOF, Stussy and GC as they pause before their descent.

STUSSY

Me first.

They share a competitors stare. Stussy skates off the roof. Onto the water slide and into the pool for a mild hematoma wipe. Scary, but pulled off.

FROM THE POOL, ON GC looking impossibly tiny on the roof.

GC's POV: Looking down on them. It's a nauseating angle even without the height. We see Frank holding up the camera phone eagerly.

Slowly GC rolls back and forth, getting his wheels in position. And...

TIME PLAYS TRICKS as we fly through the air with GC...who pulls a full before landing on the water slide...

THE KIDS freaking out and WHOOPING ENCOURAGEMENT.

...propelling the bike into a catapult off the board, adding an unrequired back-flip before landing...clear over the pool and straight towards...the new home....and into

...a brand new cathedral-height, sliding-glass door that leads from house to pool.

ON POOT ready to vomit from anxiety. Frank shooting it...

ON PHONE CAMERA, the images flickering on the little screen.

BEHIND SLIDING GLASS WINDOW as the bike sails towards this showpiece of the McMansion.

ON SOME KIDS hustling for cover.

SLO-MO on Graham Cracker shattering the plate glass, careening towards, then into, then through, the dry wall.

ON GC hitting the ground and rolling like it's second nature.  
ON GC'S BIKE embedded in the drywall. Stuck.

GRAHAM CRACKER

Whoops.

GC tries pulling it out, it's stuck. SCREAMS, HOOTS, and HOLLERS in b.g. as Frank and Poot peek through what used to be sliding glass. Frank is laughing hysterically.

POOT

(re: bike)

Gots to go -- leave it.

Poot runs to the front door. Frank tries pulling the bike out of the drywall. It ain't moving.

ON POOT opening the front door and, now the ALARM goes ape shit? Frank yanking at GC's bike again and falling on his ass, Poot's phone flying.

POOT

Daaaaaaamn!!!

Now, they're scared. Poot scrambling for his phone as Frank and GC scatter at warp speed.

OVERHEAD SHOT of the McMansion clearing: KIDS on boards, bikes and feet scattering out in every direction like an exploding teenage firecracker.

EXT. MCDEVELOPMENT - MOMENTS LATER

HUMAN BODY HIP-HOP AUDIO #1: AUDIO UP of HEARTBEATS, FEET and MUMBLING woven into a rhythm (like the Nike b-ball commercials).

Mayhem as the trio splits up. The sound of PANTING and HUSTLING slowly including the sound of FIVE-0, yo. SIRENS.

HANG WITH GC running, running from behind we're following feet flying furiously. The THUMPING of DIRT and HEARTBEAT.

TIGHTER, pulling off hood and sweatshirt. Tossing excess clothes in some bushes and rushing out into the street, revealing a cop car cruising slowly behind.

COP (O.S.)

(BULLHORN)

You're pushing it, Haley.

PAN UP THE BODY, revealing Graham Cracker in a brand new light. A twinkle in the eye. Some joy at getting caught. We are up close and unhooded for the first time, and he is actually a very adorable, Avril Lavigne-esque, 17-year-old she. Meet HALEY GRAHAM.

FREEZE FRAME ON HALEY RUNNING. SUDDENLY THE SCREEN CLICKS DOWN LIKE A FILM STRIP TO BLACK.

HALEY (V.O.)  
Okay, this isn't the first time  
I've made out with the law. We've  
had kind of an ongoing flirtation.

FILM STRIP FREEZE FRAME OF Haley running and getting tackled in a mall, outside a TOYS R US.

HALEY (V.O.)  
We've been on some dates. Broken  
up and gotten back together.

FILM-STRIP STUTTER FRAMES OF:

- Haley slinking around a corner, hiding something under her hoodie.
- Haley pulling a Gameboy out of her Hoodie: success!

HALEY (V.O.)  
And I'm not making any excuses for  
the fact that things haven't worked  
out between us.

- Haley sneaking around another corner and...returning the unopened Gameboy to its spot on the shelf, and pulling her own out of her back pocket.

HALEY  
And - don't get me wrong - it's  
been great knowing it's there if I  
need it.

- SECURITY GUARDS lecturing a mournfully nodding Haley. They let her go, and as soon as she turns the corner she's rolling her eyes like 'what dorks.'

FILM STRIP FREEZE FRAME of Haley holding up her BOOKING NUMBERS, facing forward, covered in dirt and wreckage.

HALEY (V.O.)  
But, honestly? Until now, I haven't  
been ready for anything steady.

- And profile right. Followed by profile left. FLASH.

INT. POLICE STATION, TODAY - CONTINUOUS

Haley handing female OFFICER FERGUSON her booking numbers.

HALEY

That's a long number for a girl my height.

OFFICER FERGUSON

Seven is a charm, huh, Haley?

HALEY

You're not counting the three times you let me go, I guess.

OFFICER FERGUSON

Your dad says hello, by the way.

(worried)

He wanted me to tell you he's not coming.

Haley gamely covers her startled reaction.

HALEY (V.O.)

But people change. And I felt like maybe I was really ready to commit to a more serious...courtship.

The SOUND of a GAVEL takes us to black.

INT. JUVENILE COURT

Reveal Haley sitting before JUDGE WESTREICH, who is casually studying the file.

JUDGE WESTREICH

Haley Graham, Haley Graham, Haley Graham. Seven incidents in two months. You're in it to win it, eh, Haley?

DA, LAUREN POWERS rises.

MS. POWERS

Looks to be about fourteen thousand in property damage. That's an estimate, your honor.

Haley's father, BRICE GRAHAM - standard-variety repressed, entitled, big-buckled Texan contractor - coughs.

HALEY  
(off his cough)  
Like he can't afford it.

Haley's exhausted mother, ALICE DEFRANK, looks like she hasn't slept in years as she struggles with a TWO-YEAR OLD and FIVE-MONTH OLD TWINS.

ALICE  
Jesus, Haley, quit it.

HALEY  
You first, Mom.

BRICE  
Save it.

HALEY  
You could've saved all of us and given a shit.

Everyone heard that. The Judge restrains a smile.

JUDGE WESTREICH  
Or that.  
(distracted)  
Where did this happen?

MS. POWERS  
The Crestlake.

The Judge pauses.

JUDGE WESTREICH  
(2 + 2 = )  
The Graham Development? I don't suppose she has permission to run amok amongst the bulldozers?  
(to Brice)  
Mr. Graham?

BRICE  
Permission isn't a word Haley's found a use for, your Honor.

The Judge snorts. He is a bit confounded by the following:



JUDGE WESTREICH

Haley. Are you aware that despite the fact that your father sued your mother for custody and won, he is petitioning to have you placed outside his care?

HALEY

When did he care? I missed that part.

(defiant)

Trust me, your Honor. It's mutual.

ALICE

We'll take her, your honor.

BRICE

Over my dead body.

JUDGE WESTREICH

Your attorney can familiarize you with the remedies available to you, Mrs...

(scanning)

DeFrank.

Haley's parents get uncomfortable. Haley's mom scoffs, juggling the twins. The Judge is sympathetic to Haley.

JUDGE WESTREICH

So "your people" here have come up with two options, and I'm going to let you decide.

(scanning)

Texas Military Academy is one option. Or a facility called

(squinting at paper)

VGA.

Haley sits right up with a jolt.

HALEY

Texas Military Academy, your honor. TMA'd be just perfect, thanks.

The Judge nods and writes something down before picking up his gavel.

JUDGE WESTREICH

(smiling)

Then VGA it is.

Haley reacts and looks at her parents who are....already gone.

INT. CAR - NEXT MORNING

A disheveled Haley drives in a car with SUSIE MACK, a case worker. They pull up to a development monstrosity that can only be described as devoid of heart, soul, spirit and any sense of taste. They sit in the driveway.

SUSIE MACK

It's a three hour drive. Take as much time as you need.

A MONSTER-TRUCK with a CALVIN & HOBBS decal on the rear window pulls into the driveway. METALLICA can be heard BLARING DULLY from inside the cab. Haley's father sits at the wheel, letting the song finish.

Haley ignores him as she gets out and heads inside.

EXT./INT. GRAHAM HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Haley saunters up to her room UPSTAIRS, we hang on THE WALL...which is lined with GYMNASTICS TROPHIES, RIBBONS and YEARLY FAMILY PHOTOS of better days...Haley, her mom and her dad; a unit. The photos stop when Haley is around 12.

INT. HALEY'S ROOM

A thrasher pit. BMX posters. Gear. Crap, more trophies and ribbons buried under skaterat paraphernalia. Haley pulls a skateboard off the wall, revealing a Poster-sized image of a younger Haley as a gymnast...complete with devil horns, a devil tail, pitchfork, etc. The text reads: **Haley Graham, Junior National Champion**. However, she has crossed out the "H" so it reads "**CRAMPION**" Another is SIX GIRLS in US colors waving. It reads, US NATIONAL TEAM. A moustache and soul patch have been Sharpied onto her face. TRICIA SKILKEN, the oldest of the athletes, smiles broadly.

Door opens. Her father slowly walks in, closing the door.

HALEY

I'm sorry. I'm sorry I broke the window. I didn't mean to do it.

BRICE

Yes, you did.

HALEY

No, I didn't. And I'm sorry you had to see Mom today.

BRICE

This has nothing to do with her and everything to do with you.

HALEY

Why did you go through a custody thing when you didn't even want me?

He can't take it. He raises his hand and stops himself.

HALEY

(holding back tears)

Newsflash: hitting me doesn't hurt Mom. It hurts me.

BRICE

I thought we might make this work, but I was mistaken.

HALEY

Why can't you just say it? You think it's my fault Mom left you.

BRICE

Since you knew exactly what was going on and you did nothing to stop it --

HALEY

Dad. I didn't know. I swear.

Her father starts throwing her stuff in her bag.

BRICE

I worked my ass off so you could train two thousand miles away with the best in the world, and you repay me how?

HALEY

And if we'd been here, none of this ever would've happened, right?

BRICE

Your mother is out of control and so are you. I give up, Haley.

HALEY

You have to try before you can give up. It's in the manual. You should read it sometime.

Haley's father smacks her on the head. Haley stumbles, refusing to register any pain - and you almost believe her.

SUSIE MACK (O.S.)

Everything okay?

Haley answers quietly; to herself, to her father.

HALEY

No.

Her father walks out. Haley opens her jaw. That hurt. Haley sadly shoves stuff in her bag and heads out.

INT. SUSIE MACK'S CAR - STREETS OF PLANO, TEXAS - DAY

They are driving as Poot and Frank start chasing them on their bikes. They cruise alongside the moving car.

POOT

Yo, Cracker! What happened? Where you going?

Haley rolls down her window. Susie shakes her head, but relents...they pause at a stoplight.

HALEY

Juvey. Outside Houston. I'll be out soon.

Susie gives a curious look.

POOT

Can we visit?

HALEY

When you bust me out.

Susie gives her another look. Haley's fighting something. Poot and Frank are completely bummed, but trying not to be.

POOT

You know how I feel about the bust. Consider it done.

FRANK

Well done. Charred to a crisp.

Haley starts welling up. The stoplight changes color.

HALEY  
(covering tears)  
Green means go.

Poot shoves his phone/text messenger through the window.  
Haley catches it awkwardly.

POOT  
Use it if they don't take it.

HALEY  
But what will you --

POOT  
I'll steal my brother's.

FRANK  
And I got some really good shots of  
your jump on there --

Susie hits the gas as Haley throws her friends the metal  
salute through the window.

ON FRANK AND POOT in the rearview mirror, just sitting there,  
unable to wave goodbye.

ON HALEY, remembering something and rolling down window.

HALEY  
Get my horse back!

ON FRANK AND POOT

POOT  
Did you catch that?

FRANK  
What? That she's totally obsessed  
with me?

POOT  
Why you always gotta bite my  
moment? Did it taste good?

FRANK  
Delicious.

EXT. SOMEWHERE OUTSIDE HOUSTON - MORNING

The building looks like it is giving off toxic rays. TROOPS of FEET run by with synchronized precision to SCARY MILITARY FIFE and DRUM CORPS MUSIC.

INT. VGA DORM - VARIOUS

A CARETAKER opens the door to a grim cinderblock cell. Haley enters, dropping her stuff. This place blows.

INT. VGA DRILL FACILITY

TIGHT SHOTS of WARDENS pacing as DETAINEES do PUSH-UPS and ROPE CLIMBING to Beasties "Looking Down the Barrel of a Gun."

INT. VGA RESIDENTIAL AREA - VARIOUS

ON HALEY IN COMMUNAL BATHROOMS, brushing her teeth, rinsing her mouth. Re-applying toothpaste to toothbrush and starting over. Foaming at the mouth.

ON HALEY IN DORM, wrapping her unbrushed hair haphazardly into a bandanna and trucker cap. Tube-socked feet into shower sandals. Her regulation shirt and shorts on the bed.

TIGHT ON HALEY'S GAMEBOY, as she stashes it into the back pocket of her chollo waders like a pistol.

EXT. VGA - OLD FACILITY (OLD GYM) - MOMENTS LATER

ON HALEY'S FEET, opening the doors with a groan and a kick.

INT. VGA - OLD FACILITY (OLD GYM) - CONTINUOUS

FROM INSIDE, we see her figure backlit by sun and dust, in dramatic silhouette like a teenage gunslinger. She reaches for some lights, and...

HALEY

Anybody home? Anybody care?

BAM. BAM. BAM. BAM. OVERHEAD LIGHTS flicker to life above four worthy opponents: VAULT, UNEVEN BARS, FLOOREX and BEAM. Sun streams through older windows, dust floating through the air as big, old ceiling fans turn on. Haley is alone.

INT. VGA ELITE TRAINING FACILITY (NEW GYM)

ECU: WEAPONS CHECK. A symphony T-SHIRTS and SHORTS getting pulled off. ATHLETIC TAPE, DOWEL GRIPS, and CHALK DUST exploding into the air like gun powder..

CLOSE ON FINGERS, WRISTS, TOES, ANKLES, FEET, CALVES and THIGHS of warriors wrapping on their protection for battle.

TIGHT SHOTS of EIGHT ELITE GYMNASTS (12-19) ON VAULT, BARS, BEAM and FLOOR, working the equipment.

FROM ABOVE we see the whole space: white walls, blue floors, all business. A state-of-the-art, elite gymnastics training facility.

REVERSE POV reveals a PLEXIGLASS VIEWING BOOTH where a few MOTHERS and SOME SULLEN SIBLINGS scrutinize the proceedings.

DOWNSTAIRS, THE ALPHA MALE of the operation, BURT VICKERMAN, is pacing and surveying his ELITES. Around him swirl IVAN (Russian, 30's) and DORRIE (50's), the Assistant Coaches.

INSIDE, THE ENTRANCE DOORS open. HEADS turn. Haley stands in the doorway, motionless.

HALEY (V.O.)

There is only one thing worse than  
having no control over your life.

THREE OLDER ELITES - JOANNE, DEVON and LACEY - share blatant looks of disgust before returning to their workouts.

THE FIVE YOUNGER ELITES share whispers and looks of excitement. SLO-MOTION CHECK OUT AS SHE ENTERS....

ON THE ASSISTANT COACHES, noting her arrival with disdain.

HALEY (V.O.)

It's being forced to live it with  
people who hate you. And I was  
suddenly the filling in the middle  
of an 'I hate you' sandwich.

Haley enters and plops down. She immediately starts playing her Gameboy.

HALEY (V.O.)

Meet the bread.

SFX: SUDDENLY, the SCREEN OF THE GAMEBOY is SUPERIMPOSED OVER THE GYMNASTS, TELESCOPING IN and INTRODUCING each gymnast as if she were a VIDEOGAME CHARACTER.

HALEY (V.O.)

Joanne Charis. Four-time national champion. Five-time national Haley hater.

FREEZE-FRAME ON: A whitebread white girl making the bitchiest priss face you've ever seen. The following STATS type over her puss. NAME: JOANNE CHARIS. AGE: 18, HOMETOWN: Wichita, KS; TITLES: A crazy amount of gymnastics titles scroll onto screen including FOUR-TIME NATIONAL TEAM MEMBER; TWO-TIME WORLD TEAM MEMBER; INJURIES: insane number of injuries scroll on; FAVORITE EVENT: COMPLAINING; ZODIAC SIGN: BITCH.

THE FREEZE-FRAME STOPS, and we watch Joanne in action, putting on her grips and staring at Haley like bullets are going to fly out of her eyes.

HALEY (V.O.)

You know when you stop being friends with a kid because they are a total jerk to you?

FREEZE-FRAME ON: A muscular midget who looks twelve and way more boy than girl. NAME: LACEY MONAHAN. AGE: 17, HOMETOWN: Undecided. TITLES: 15th in the World; 5TH in World on Bars; 2nd in US on bars. INJURIES: an explosion of minor and major gymnastics related symptoms take up the ENTIRE SCREEN. FAVORITE EVENT: SIGHING. ZODIAC SIGN: LAME.

We UNFREEZE on Lacey in time for her to SIGH. Joanne sidles up and the duo throw Haley some shade.

HALEY (V.O.)

Gymnastics was that kid to me. And Lacey and Joanne were its' best friends.

FREEZE-FRAME ON: WEI WEI and MINA, 14 and 15 respectively. NAMES: UNKNOWN. AGES: UNKNOWN; TITLES: UNKNOWN; INJURIES: UNKNOWN; FAVORITE EVENT: UNKNOWN; ZODIAC SIGN: FRESH MEAT.

HALEY (V.O.)

And a kid like gymnastics doesn't care if you're hurt. Doesn't care if you're tired. Doesn't care if you're sad. It just moves on, and finds someone new to be best friends with.



OTHER YOUNG ELITES get telescoping videogame treatment.

HALEY (V.O.)

Gymnastics is probably the most two-faced friend you could ever have.

BACK WITH HALEY on her Gameboy. Over it all. ASSISTANT COACHES IVAN and DORRIE eyeing Haley suspiciously.

HALEY (V.O.)

And the hungriest. It eats kids for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

TIGHT ON: PURPLE TRACK SUITED LEGS of BURT VICKERMAN striding through the gym with authority, GYMNASTS sitting up straight and looking serious as his figure passes them by.

ANGLE ON: VARIOUS PARENTS in VIEWING GALLERY craning their necks to see Gymnastics Personified.

HALEY (V.O.)

And for the parents who want their daughters to be grilled gymnasts? There was only one chef in town.

REVEAL BURT VICKERMAN, where charm and belligerence collide.

The bad mood can't conceal his beguiling je ne sais quoi, as Burt scratches his head with a well-rehearsed incredulity.

FREEZE-FRAME ON: Burt Vickerman. STATS type over his Signature Glare. NAME: BURT VICKERMAN. AGE: 42. TITLES: Collegiate Gymnastics 1982-1983; NCAA POMMEL HORSE All-American 1982-83; Plano Pontiac Mid-Size Salesman of the Year 1987-1989; Head Coach, VICKERMAN GYMNASTICS ACADEMY, 1991-PRESENT. INJURIES: Dislocated shoulder and torn bicep 1983. FAVORITE EVENT: WINNING; ZODIAC SIGN: OLYMPIC RINGS.

VICKERMAN

(yelling to gym)

Ladies. Read. My. Mind.

HALEY (V.O.)

Burt Vickerman cooked up the best barbecued gymnasts West of the Mississippi.

ON BURT, surveying his domain, pointing to his head.

VICKERMAN

Does my mind say 'relax'? Maybe my mind is saying: 'slow down,' or 'take it easy.

(MORE)

VICKERMAN (cont'd)

' I mean, maybe you can read my mind and it's completely lost. Have I lost my mind? Is that why you're staring off into space?

BAM. The terrified GYMNASTS go from half-speed to high-speed.

HALEY (V.O.)

Personally? I wasn't a fan of his sauce.

Coach Vickerman strides over, looming large, extending his hand, pulling Haley up. The furious Joanne stirs the pot.

JOANNE

What is she doing here?

VICKERMAN

Everyone. Haley Graham has very graciously come out of...retirement to train with us. Being out of shape isn't funny, so don't make fun of her. Get dressed, Haley.

HALEY

I accidentally burned all my leotards last year.

(re: outfit)

Hope this is okay.

It isn't. Vick pauses, deciding he's going to play along.

VICKERMAN

Fine. You warmed up?

HALEY

To you? No.

VICKERMAN

Stretch and join vault rotation.

Let's see where you're at.

Haley begins a series of fluid and familiar leg stretches in the corner, still playing with her Gameboy. She easily but lazily demonstrates impressive flexibility.

JOANNE

Bail-ey, Bail-ey, Bail-ey.

Haley uses her Gameboy as a mic.

HALEY

(doing Elfie Schlagel  
announcer voice)

(MORE)

HALEY (cont'd)

She's not of drinking age, but Joanne Charis is still drunk on power. How is that possible, Tim, and when will she go to rehab?

(doing Tim Daggett)

Well, Elfie, with all those national championships under her belt, Joanne Charis thinks she rules the world.

JOANNE

Had you not bailed on Worlds, we may have ruled the world, but now we'll never know.

HALEY

If the team had been any good they wouldn't have needed my score, now would they?

Haley leaves Joanne and meanders up to the vault. The GIRLS look at her, like, is she really vaulting in chollo culottes and a hoodie? Haley gives the girls the same look in return.

HALEY

You guys are really underdressed.

Haley chalks up and does an exaggerated Will Ferrell-esque preparation at the head of the vault runway.

MINA

We're warming up Yurchenkos.

AROUND THE GYM, the Elite gymnasts are maintaining their workouts while grabbing glances at Haley's pre-vault ritual.

HALEY

I prefer Tsukaharas. How bout we get this party started with a full-twisting butt-a-hara?

VAULT ROTATION GIRLS share a huh? mixed with some awe.

PARENTS ON THE VIEWING DECK, crane their necks to look.

ON HALEY, a stern, focused stare down the runway and a peculiar bounce/skip step combo before her sprint.

ON THE ELITES, now fully stopping to watch.

ON HALEY, throwing a round-off onto the beat board and flying backwards onto the vault, sitting on the vault tongue like a chair, spinning and jumping off with an exaggerated finish.

ON THE GIRLS, in shock at the flagrant rebellion and nervously returning to their workouts with the knowledge that shit and fan are milliseconds from a collision.

ON VICKERMAN, heading with scary calm in Haley's direction.

HALEY

I know. My landing was a little off.

VICKERMAN

Nah. You just need to pick up your run a bit.

Haley smiles. Vickerman leans in smiling, studying her...then picking her up, throwing her over his shoulder and carrying her out of his gym. She wriggles.

The OLD ELITES stifle LAUGHS as Joanne squeals with forced, bitchy laughter behind Vick's back. Vickerman whips around, pissed...still carrying Haley on his shoulder.

VICKERMAN

Having an attitude and being out of shape isn't funny. Who thought that was funny?

Joanne - the culprit - points to Wei Wei and shrugs.

VICKERMAN

Gimme 100 V-ups. Wei Wei.

Wei Wei sucks it up, drops and does one hundred V-ups.

ON HALEY, shooting Joanne a look of disgust from Vick's shoulder.

ON JOANNE, smiling contentedly right back at her.

An AUDIBLE RIPPLE of RELIEF floats through the gym.

VICKERMAN

Shut it. All of you. Down. Now.

The girls ALL DROP and robotically join the V-up madness as Vickerman grabs Haley's knapsack and carries her outta there.

EXT. NEW GYM - CONTINUOUS

Vickerman carries her down the path towards...the Old Gym.

HALEY

Put me down, Shrek.

VICKERMAN

This isn't the real world. This is my world. You don't have to like me or like it here, but you do have to respect it.

EXT. OLD GYM - CONTINUOUS

Vickerman sits her down on a beam. Haley's bristling.

HALEY

Respect? Is that how you respect people? Throw them over your shoulder and violate their personal space?

VICKERMAN

Oh, goody, I heard you were like this, I'm so glad it's true.

HALEY

Like what? And what is it you've done to earn my respect exactly? I missed that part.

Haley nods, rifling through her knapsack for something.

VICKERMAN

We have rules. We have rules for training, and the reason we have rules and coaches is because it's gymnastics. And because it's gymnastics, you could die. You could break your neck, back, an arm, a leg or the whole kit and caboodle.

Haley fake yawns and checks her nonexistent watch.

VICKERMAN

And while danger and risk is the reality of what we do? It's calculated, and it can't be calculated if you don't respect the laws. The Laws of Gravity, for instance.

Vickerman takes Haley off the beam and drops her on the mat.

HALEY

I'm confused. And your point?

VICKERMAN

I get that you don't value your life. I mean, let's face it; how could you appreciate rules that are meant to protect what you don't value? It's not possible.

HALEY

Oh, it's possible. It's just not likely.

Vickerman nods with flourish.

VICKERMAN

I don't particularly care if you like me or not.

Haley stands up. They face off on either side of the beam.

HALEY

And I don't particularly care if you like me or not.

VICKERMAN

You don't have to like me or like it here, but try and respect it.

HALEY

I don't do one-way streets.

VICKERMAN

How bout cul-de-sacs? Do you do those?

Haley's startled. Is humor in the house?

VICKERMAN

Avenues? Back alleys? Boulevards, byways, highways, lanes or parkways?

(beat)

Thoroughfares?

HALEY

Not if they're one-way.

VICKERMAN

Get some rest and be here ready to work out at ten am tomorrow. Or we can call the judge. You decide.

EXT. RUNNING PATH - MORNING

The ELITES sprint by. After a beat, Haley meanders past and towards the old gym.

INT. OLD GYM - MOMENTS LATER

Haley enters the parents' viewing deck as many YOUNGER GYMNASTS of various levels take class behind the plexi.

Haley approaches Vick's office door, listening as he talks to a parent. She's hiding, but he sees her.

VICKERMAN

Madison is very gifted. We'd like to fast track her towards becoming an Elite. It's a big commitment --

MADISON'S MOM

But twenty hours a week? She's six. I have two other children.

VICKERMAN

We'll have her into the TOPS program by the time she's ten. Junior Elite by age 13. That's the gold.

MADISON'S MOM

You mean goal?

VICKERMAN

Right. I guess when I look at Madison, I see gold. Olympic gold.

Haley is gagging as Vick seamlessly escorts Madison's Mom out and ASHLEY'S MOM in without missing a beat.

ASHLEY'S MOM

Hey, Burt. I talked to my husband and if Carly devoted 20 hours a week at seven, so will Ashley.

VICKERMAN

It's a good gold, it really is.  
(catching himself)  
Did I say gold? I guess Ashley and gold are becoming synonymous for me. Don't tell the other parents. I don't want them to feel --

Ashley's Mom smiles and seals her lips and winks.

ASHLEY'S MOM

Say no more. Thanks, Burt.

Disgusted, Haley exits. Vick catches it and smiles.

VICKERMAN

(to another mother)

Mrs. LeDain? Come on in.

INT. ELITE TRAINING FACILITY

ECU CLOCK reads 9:48am. SILENCE.

ON HALEY'S FOOT filling the frame, surrounded by the entrance doors to the gym.

WITH A BANG and BLAST OF LIGHT, the door bursts open as THE ELITES race into the gym. The POV makes Haley's foot look like Gulliver's, surrounded by Lilliputians.

JOANNE

Vick! When can we scrap the old long-sleeved leotards? We need new ones for Nationals. Every college will be scouting me.

(to Haley)

Not that you have to worry about any of that.

HALEY

A new leotard might distract the judges and scouts from your lack of talent. It's a solid strategy.

JOANNE

Gee, Pariah Carey! Wonder why no one's scouting you for college. Oh, I forgot! You don't matter.

Joanne leaves. Vick hands Haley a rag and a scraper. They start wiping the chalk bowls and scraping the bars down.

HALEY

That she can even say the word college is an indictment against the whole institution.

VICKERMAN

Hey, fillibuster? No one cares.



Handing her an empty magnesia wrapper.

VICKERMAN  
More chalk, please. Storage closet.

HALEY  
Is that where you hide the candy?

All the ELITES turn around longingly on the word 'candy.'

VICKERMAN  
Back to work, ladies. If you are  
not going to work out, you are  
going to work. Now. Big pack.

AT THE STORAGE CLOSET

The Elites workout, Joanne on beam. Devon and Lacey work  
flip-flops with consecutive layout step-outs. DORRIE, the  
unfeminine and angry assistant coach, MOANS.

DORRIE  
Pretty feet, pretty feet, point  
them hard and win the meet!

Haley holds up the wrapper to Dorrie who points to the  
storage room. Haley pulls the handle. Locked. Haley sits.

ON WEI WEI and MINA, doing oversplits on stacked mats.  
Dorrie adjusting hips as necessary while eagle-eyeing Joanne.

ON JOANNE doing her routine, and Haley watching. Joanne  
dismounts a simple single-tuck with cowboied legs.

JOANNE  
Deja jealous, Haley? Bring back  
memories? We trained together with  
Chris for - how long?

HALEY  
That'd be too long.

JOANNE  
And he'd give me so much attention  
that you couldn't take it? So  
rather than deal with it, you  
decided to take matters into your  
own hands, didn't ya?

HALEY  
You were getting a lot of attention  
because you sucked, Joanne.

JOANNE

If memory serves, sucking was your specialty, Bailey. Some of us didn't need to sleep with the coach to get attention.

DORRIE

Ladies! Pointy feet, not pointy words. Pointy words are mouth turds!

The ELITES all have their mouths open. Haley turns to the girls.

HALEY

Don't believe everything you hear. The truth is actually much, much worse.

(heading to the beam)

But not as bad as Joanne's pre-school beam routine.

Joanne scoffs. Dorrie tries to calm Haley.

DORRIE

Easy. I choreographed that routine.

Haley starts jumping around and stretching.

HALEY

Your secret's safe with me.

(adjusting beat board)

Since I'm so jealous of Joanne, I memorized her routine already.

JOANNE

I don't think you're in shape.

HALEY

And I don't think you can think. I'm two years out-of-shape and I can do this in my sleep.

Without blinking, Haley mounts the beam like Joanne.

HALEY

Why do a risky flight mount when you can get on safely?

Haley mimics Joanne's safe routine throughout: it is the paragon of lame gymnastics choreography.

HALEY

(to lame hand moves)

Then we have some finger-flicking good choreography.

(into butt stick-out)

The classic butt shelf, followed by some choreographic dust bunnies - useless bits of fluff that get us from Point A to Point B and induce the urge to vacuum.

Haley launches easily into the moves she describes. Joanne is looking around, like, is anyone going to do anything?

HALEY

Then - the standard D connection acro series: flip flop layout step out layout step out, into some dance, dance revolution, a full turn on one leg, and at least one leap with a 180 degree split!

Haley leaps and fake bobbles, dramatically covering it.

HALEY

That was for you, Joanne.

(into front tuck/jump)

Woohoo - punch front, wolf jump - ever since they raised the value of that we've been boring audiences with it for years!

COACH IVAN, MINA AND WEI WEI gaping with their mouths open.

HALEY

Watch as I set up my unspectacular dismount: it's the most points I can get for the least amount of work, so rather than show you what I can really do - which, let's face it, isn't much - let me phone it in...

Haley pretends to dial on a telephone. She points to Mina who is so entranced, she picks up the pretend phone.

HALEY

Hello? What's your name?

MINA

Mina.

HALEY

Hi, Mina, it's Haley. Listen, could you tell Joanne I'm going to take over and do a real dismount?

GASP! Everyone runs from around the gym. Mina pretends to cover the mouthpiece on the phone.

MINA

Joanne? Haley's on the phone. She's going to do a real dismount.

JOANNE

I heard her! What's with all the Closed Captioning? I'm not mute!

\*  
\*

Joanne gives Mina a scary "I'll kill you," look as Haley keeps talking on the phone.

HALEY

How about a triple back? I'll probably cowboy my legs apart, but, that's what Joanne would do. And, after all, it is hard to keep my legs together after sleeping with our old coach for so long. You understand.

Haley hangs up. Then she turns the pretend phone into a fake microphone, covering her ear and whispers into it.

HALEY

She's really going to have to stick the landing...

Haley "tosses" the fake mic, spots the end of the beam and --

VICKERMAN

Haley!!! You are not doing a triple back without training it first!

ON VICKERMAN striding towards her, every intention of pulling her off the beam.

TRICK TIME as Haley launches so high off the beam it's as if she's on tramp, then SLOWS DOWN into her ONE, TWO, THREE BACK SOMERSAULTS. Legs cowboyed, as promised.

VICKERMAN

No triple backs!

Haley approaches the mat and real time catches up. Haley SEVERELY UNDER-ROTATES and crashes hard onto her knees and elbows. She smiles. Looking up at him, she's delighted.

VICKERMAN

You will not throw triples in this gym without training for them first. Over my dead body.

HALEY

You kinda look like you need CPR.

VICKERMAN

(holding back)

Since you know it all, you know what I'm going to say, right?

HALEY

Don't know. Don't care.

VICKERMAN

You don't care. You don't care. For someone who doesn't care, you sure lecture a lot, Professor.

(considering)

You gonna workout or work me up?

HALEY

But I'm so good at both.

VICKERMAN

Get out. Don't come back till you're ready to train.

INT. ELITE GYM

ECU CLOCK: 5:00PM, WIDER IN GYM as the Elites finish workouts. Haley plops down and takes out the Gameboy. Dorrie and Ivan loom over her.

IVAN

(Russian accent)

Put away zee abacus.

Haley doesn't move. Gives them a 'get lost' look. They walk away. Vick enters, quickly assessing the continuing pattern.

VICKERMAN

Okay, ladies...grab some mats.

ELITES

What?

VICKERMAN

Grab some mats. You're gonna start pulling them back and forth until Haley participates.

MOANS. Cries of the injustice.

VICKERMAN

Now.

The EIGHT ELITES grab the mats and begin pulling them back and forth across the gym. Scowling at Haley the entire time.

CLOCK 7:30PM

The girls are still dutifully dragging the mats (and their butts) across the gym.

IN THE VIEWING DECK, ANGRY MOTHERS are standing and watching with their arms crossed.

JOANNE

This is, like, globally unfair.

HALEY

Don't bitch at me. You're the ones choosing to do this. Get some free will.

They keep pulling. Haley doesn't move. The girls are obeying, but glaring at Haley.

IN THE VIEWING WINDOW, cute-as-a-button soccer Mom, MRS. CHARIS, is getting ready to do something.

Vickerman clocks the incoming Mom and makes a call.

VICKERMAN

Okay, ladies. That's it. Good job. Grab some dinner.

Haley rises. Coach looks at her quizzically.

VICKERMAN

Not for you.

Mrs. Charis walks in, looking sweet and really shy.

MRS. CHARIS

Hey, Big Burt. May I have a word?

VICKERMAN

You know parents aren't allowed in the gym, Mrs. Charis. Charming as you are.

MRS. CHARIS

I will not have my daughter's training sacrificed for some little crack-Khorkina.

HALEY

I didn't sleep with my coach for crack, I slept with him because it felt good. Jeez, Mrs. C.

The gym empties, each ELITE staring Haley down or refusing to look at her as they exit. Joanne throws a fit.

JOANNE

If she doesn't leave, I will!

Mrs. Charis grabs Joanne protectively and hustles her away from Haley.

EXT. DORM - NIGHT

Haley trudges to the building and pulls on the doorknob. It's locked. She knocks, peeking inside. Nothing.

ON THE SECOND FLOOR, a window opens. A DUFFLE BAG is dropped, almost hitting Haley on her head. It's Lacey and Devon, who close the window and turn off the light. Mina pops her head out a window. Wei Wei joins her.

MINA

Was there candy in that closet?

Haley shakes her head no.

WEI WEI

Do you know boys?

Haley nods.

MINA

Have you ever been to a concert?

Haley nods as Mina and Wei Wei are blown away. get YELLED AT from inside. They shrug apologetically and mouth 'sorry,' shutting the window. It's a lock out.

INT. OLD GYM - NIGHT

Haley walks in with her knapsack. Plops down. Haley pulls out the text messenger, typing: HATE IT HERE. HATE EVERYONE. HATE MY LIFE. SAVE ME.

Haley curls up on the floor, using her duffle as a pillow.

The text messenger RINGS to life, reading: WE GOT YOUR HORSE! STAY TUNED. Suddenly, Vickerman strolls in with car keys. \*

VICKERMAN  
C'mon Haley, let's talk.

EXT. SONIC BURGER - NIGHT

Haley's laying on a bench outside, staring at the sky. Vickerman arrives with a tray of food.

HALEY  
You're totally leeching off people.

VICKERMAN  
Leeches deserve retirement, too, you know. It's not polite to eavesdrop, Haley.

HALEY  
You got a lot of girls going to the Olympics. What country they gonna represent? The State of Delusion?

Vick chuckles before diving into his burger with joy.

VICKERMAN  
I'm on your side, you know.

HALEY  
Oh, really? And what's my side?

VICKERMAN  
I know what happened to you at Worlds really sucked.

HALEY  
You know? What do you know? You just punished a bunch of girls for something they couldn't control! That's not knowledge, that's an abuse of power.



VICKERMAN

And you cost the US gold at Worlds, so we're even. It's my gym and I couldn't let them think I'd let anyone get away with that kind of behavior.

HALEY

Whatever. I'm hungry and over it.

VICKERMAN

You think I'm full of crap, don't you?

HALEY

Look what you're eating.

The Coach continues eating. It's good. He doesn't offer any.

VICKERMAN

Mmmmm. I talked to Judge Westreich. Told her you were being a jackass and all.

HALEY

I'm pretty sure she knew that already, but thanks.

VICKERMAN

She suggested that if you were to make some restitution financially, it might help her poor opinion of you.

Haley is really eyeing his food. Vick pulls it closer.

VICKERMAN

Am I correct in assuming that college gymnastics is not on your To-Do list?

HALEY

Correct. College gymnastics is one big, fat To-Don't.

Vick savors some fries with excessive appreciation.

VICKERMAN

Great. So in addition to sparing innocent collegiate gymnastics coaches everywhere, that means you can take any purse money you win free and clear.

HALEY

And you get to look like a hero for the comeback story of the year? I don't think so.

VICKERMAN

You forgot my cut. The part where I get twenty-five percent of your winnings.

(eating)

You're here. And I'm running a business.

HALEY

And your business is none of my business. This was chosen for me. So don't expect me to cooperate or behave. I don't want to be here.

VICKERMAN

So you piss off the judge and kiss eighteen goodbye for a while? Your dad's business partners can press charges, you know. They have a year to do whatever they want.

Haley is silent. It's true.

VICKERMAN

I fought to have you here, you know. We both know you can do this. Why not make it work?

HALEY

Because it doesn't matter! This sport is a joke. We have to be accurate and the judges don't! The judging is lame, the rules are lame and the outcomes are lame.

VICKERMAN

And your point is --?

Vick munches thoughtfully. Haley throws rocks at the trash.

HALEY

I could be the best gymnast in the world and if I'm off for one second? It's over. I don't want to work so hard for so little upside when judges aren't held to the same standard.

(MORE)

HALEY (cont'd)

Sorry to diss your life's work and all. No offense.

Vickerman is not unimpressed by her logic.

VICKERMAN

None taken. You might find this hard to believe, but I didn't grow up wanting to work on a leotard ranch.

(solemn)

But my dreams of a life at the leotard aquarium weren't realistic. So I settled.

\*  
\*  
\*

This gets a smile out of Haley.

VICKERMAN

You are incredibly smart, Haley. And if you want to go to Texas Military Academy that badly, we can ask the judge to reconsider. I can't have you here if we can't make it work.

HALEY

Right.

VICKERMAN

The Friendship Cup is in a few weeks. Maybe if you applied yourself, you'd win some cash and we'd have a case.

HALEY

I really don't see the point.

VICKERMAN

How about the fact that you were one of the greatest natural talents this sport has ever seen? You were great once!

HALEY

I was great once? You're not actually pushing the 'you were great once' speech.

VICKERMAN

You were great once. It was only for a minute, but it was a really good minute.

HALEY

You're like a total cliché. You realize that, right?

VICKERMAN

Okay, Miss Original Recipe. Give it your best shot.

Vickerman leans back. Haley gets into character.

HALEY

Talent out the ass, natural ability that half the world's gymnasts would KILL for and you're flushing it! Don't flush your life away, kid! Step away from the bowl.

VICKERMAN

That was terrible.  
(frustrated)  
Come on! Don't you want to be great again? You were great once!

HALEY

I wasn't great. I was obedient.  
(over it)  
I am sick and tired of being judged. I don't need it.

VICKERMAN

Interesting.

HALEY

What?

VICKERMAN

For someone who hates being judged, you're one of the most judgemental people I've ever met.

HALEY

And they say I learned nothing from this sport!

VICKERMAN

Friendship Cup is three weeks away. You compete, you win, you earn the money, and you're out. It's your choice. No one will be surprised if you don't do it, so don't waste your energy rebelling, Haley.

He gathers his trash and rises to leave.

VICKERMAN

Nobody cares what you do, Haley.  
No one cares.

Vick's heading towards his car. After a beat, she follows.

HALEY

Aren't we going back?

VICKERMAN

Okay, Miss Rebel-without-applause.  
If you want to come back, you can  
walk.

Haley's incredulous. Vick gets in his car and starts it.

VICKERMAN

Relax. It's only five miles. Long  
enough to help you make up that  
inquiring mind of yours, right?

EXT. TEXAS ROAD - NIGHT

Dark. Starry. Lonely. Haley walks along the road, hungry,  
tired and miserable. Her misery becoming tears, all  
toughness vanishing. She stops and stares at the moon,  
mouthing "Help," before continuing back. Changed.

INT. ELITE GYM

Morning conditioning. Pan over to Haley who Gameboys as the  
other gymnasts do their workouts. The assistant coaches are  
all looking at Vick like he's lost it for tolerating this.  
Vick sits down next to her.

VICKERMAN

Are you in or out?

Haley keeps playing, thinking.

VICKERMAN

You're making me look bad, you  
know. And I'm quite handsome.

They stare each other down. Parents watching from the viewing  
booth. Haley whispers.

HALEY

Are you being straight with me?  
Cause I've had enough of lunatic  
adults for a while. For real.

People are watching this exchange. Vick is under his breath on this one.

VICKERMAN

I will do what I said I would do.

HALEY

Did you really fight to have me here?

Vickerman nods solemnly. Haley needed that.

HALEY

So you'll call the judge and get me out of here and look into all the restitution stuff? No bull?

VICKERMAN

I will.

HALEY

Then here's the deal: I'll compete for the money so I can get out. But I train on my own until I'm ready. So, just scream at me to get out of the gym.

Haley looks at him like she's not moving unless he screams.

HALEY

We both got face to save, Vick. I'm not struggling in front of those robots --

VICKERMAN

C'mon, Haley. Please.

On a dime, Vick turns into a screaming monster.

VICKERMAN

Haley grab your pointy ears, tail and pitchfork and get up on your hooves and GET THE HELL OUT! NOW!

He winks at her as she runs out of the gym.

INT. OLD GYM - LATER

SPEED TRAINING: Haley lining up her grip-laden wrists and launching into back handsprings on the mat. Five in a row. Ten in a row. Twenty in a row. She stops, panting...looks.

HALEY EATING. HALEY'S POV: The beam staring at her.

POSITIONING: Haley holding pike poses on the floor. Holding layouts. Twists. Holding them for counts and releasing. She eyes THE BEAM again...groans.

BARS: Haley's face popping in and out of frame. Reveal she's kipping up and down on bars. Planches. L-hollows. Hangs by her knees. Face and body covered in chalk.

FINISHING FOR THE DAY: Haley gathering her stuff, looking back one last time: THE BEAM.

She hits the lights and leaves.

INT. MESS HALL - 7PM

Haley's eating dinner in a corner, her hoodie up, Gameboy on. Mina and Wei Wei approach her when they're done eating.

MINA

We just wanted you to know that we don't believe Joanne's stories about you, Haley.

HALEY

What? And have a mind of your own? This is gymnastics! That's crazy!

They stand there for a second, look at each other and leave. Haley finishes and loiters on her Gameboy until everyone else leaves. After the last girl gets up, Haley waits. Rises. And can barely walk, limping out of the Mess Hall.

INT. DORM - LATER

Everyone's asleep. Haley limps past a room, carrying something.

INT. BATHROOM

Haley adds ice to a tub filled with ice and water. Wincing and exhaling, gingerly lowering herself into the freezing water. She shivers and grits her teeth.

HALEY

Shtinka minka funk funk shtoodle berry!

OUTSIDE THE BATHROOM

HALEY (O.S.)  
Shtid-rotten kukamonga pusspot!

Mina's grabbing something and hears Haley's pseudo-swearing and smiles.

I/E - VARIOUS

RUN/WORKOUT/EAT/ICE/SLEEP/RUN/WORKOUT/EAT/ICE/SLEEP.

INT. OLD GYM

TRAMPOLINE TRAINING SEQUENCE: Haley's feet bouncing. Going higher and higher. Just getting her body positions and landing.

INT. PARENT-VIEWING DECK - SIMULTANEOUS

Mina and WeiWei are peeking from the dark viewing deck.

MINA  
Can you imagine making it all the way to Worlds and walking out? It's totally insane.

WEI WEI  
I think she just, like, chickened out.

MINA  
No. No way. I'm a chicken. She's no chicken. Maybe she was hurt.

WEI WEI  
She was on floor, about to do a new routine with huge skills. I heard she was tanking her double pikes in warm-ups. I think she just freaked out, plain and simple.

Haley throws a triple back.

WEI WEI  
Whoa. She just did a triple.

MINA  
Chickens don't do triples.



INT. OLD GYM - NEXT NIGHT

Haley's still on the tramp. Her bounces more confident.  
Double layout. Double pike. No problem. Vickerman pops in.

VICKERMAN  
Can I help?

HALEY  
Nope.

VICKERMAN  
You almost ready?

HALEY  
Nope.

VICKERMAN  
You gonna be ready?

HALEY  
Yup.

VICKERMAN  
You gonna hurt yourself?

HALEY  
Probably.

VICKERMAN  
Don't get blood on the equipment.

HALEY  
(smiling)  
Too late.

INT. OLD GYM - VARIOUS

VANQUISHING THE BEAM SEQUENCE:

ON FLOOR - Haley really chalks her hands up and does a tumbling pass. Or at least it looks like a tumbling pass, until she runs back with a broom handle. Tumbles one way; broom handle the other; chalk; repeat.

REVEAL OVERHEAD: she's created a fake beam with black gaffer's tape on the floor. Making huge white hand and foot marks where she's landing. A visual map of where she's off. The broom is actually a Swiffer.

ON BEAM, Haley doing a balance move. Decent. Haley doing a leap. Good. Haley doing a backhandspring-layout-layout-step-out combination...and she wipes out, falling out of frame.

HALEY (O.S.)  
Turtle crap.

ON HALEY, dragging foam across the gym and piling it up.

HALEY FALLING SEQUENCE: Haley doing the same combination and falling; Once. Dragging foam. Twice. Dragging foam. Three times. More foam.

WIDER REVEALS: Haley has built up monster piles of foam on each side of the beam as she practices. Six times. Eight times. Getting more and more determined with each fall.

HALEY (O.S.)  
Poodle farts.

INT. DORM - HALEY'S ROOM - NIGHT

The clock reads 2AM. Haley climbs into bed, exhausted. She goes for some Ibuprofen. It's empty. She grabs her Gameboy for comfort, wincing as she plays.

INT. DRUG-STORE - NEXT MORNING

The fluorescent lights are blinding and loud. Haley holds her empty bottle and pushes an empty cart up the empty aisle, looking for her stuff. She pauses, looking at the selection. She reaches for a bottle.

HALEY'S POV:

A PRESCRIPTION BOTTLE. She pulls it down, confused, looking around. She reads, squinting to read the label.

ECU LABEL (EXACT REPLICA OF AN RX): GRAHAM, HALEY - TSUKAHARA; start value: Super E; TAKE 2X'S DAILY WITH FOOD. WARNING STICKER: MAY CAUSE BROKEN NECK.

Haley pulls another bottle off the shelf.

ECU BOTTLE: GRAHAM, HALEY - HINDORF: Full-twisting double back in the pike position. TAKE FIVE TIMES DAILY. WARNING: MAY CAUSE TORN HAMSTRINGS.

ECU BOTTLE: GRAHAM, HALEY - FULL-TWISTING ONO, ENDO FULL into KHORKINA, SV: SUPER E WARNING: DO NOT ATTEMPT THIS MOVE OR YOU WILL DIE AN OUT-OF-SHAPE HAS-BEEN. POISON SYMBOL.

HALEY'S POV: The entire shelf wall of the store is filled  
PRESCRIPTION BOTTLES in her name.

Haley's frantic, pulling bottle after bottle off the shelf,  
putting them in her basket....which is now overflowing. The  
store's ALARM SOUNDS...

INT. HALEY'S ROOM - NIGHT

It's Haley's Gameboy making NOISES. Haley bolts up, panting.  
She flips on the light as Mina rushes to the door.

MINA  
Are you alright?

HALEY  
Yeah, fine. Why?

MINA  
Cause you were screaming?

Wei Wei rushes behind Mina, curious.

HALEY  
(covering)  
I was dreaming I was at a concert.

WEI WEI  
(cause she's never been to  
a concert...)  
What was it like? Was it fun?

HALEY  
Go back to sleep.

Mina and Wei Wei head back to bed, sharing a look.

I/E - OLD GYM - VARIOUS

BAR SEQUENCE. BEAM SEQUENCE. FLOOR SEQUENCE. VAULT. Haley  
is finally satisfied.

INT. DORM - DINNERTIME - EVENING

Girls coming home for dinner. Haley's still out.

INT. ELITE GYM - NEXT MORNING - HALEY'S REAL DEBUT

Haley shows up for practice, which is already well in session. She's in a leotard and ready to show her stuff.

JOANNE

Woohoo, Bailey's back.

Haley walks right past Joanne to the bars, Dorrie and Joanne wander over with her, pretending not to be curious.

DORRIE

Nice set yesterday, Joanne.

JOANNE

(false humility)

Just trying to hit my routines.

HALEY

Don't be so humble. You're not that great.

AROUND THE GYM, everyone pretty much stops what they are doing to watch Haley.

ON HALEY singing to herself as she drags a beat board towards the bars and is putting on her grips, ignoring the focus.

ON VICKERMAN AND MINA watching her chalk up.

MINA

She's practicing a Gurova mount.

VICKERMAN

What's that?

MINA

One of the only Super E mounts there is? Have you even read the Code of Points?

VICKERMAN

Go do a sit up.

ON HALEY, nailing a round-off, backwards one and a half tuck onto the bars and launching into a kick-ass routine.

HUMAN BODY HIP-HOP AUDIO #2: As EVERY SOUND MADE by a gymnast on uneven parallel bars CREATES a TRANCE-LIKE PERCUSSION. THE SQUEAK OF THE BARS mixed with BREATHING, RELEASING, CATCHING SOUNDS. Haley SINGING to herself to TIGHT SHOTS of exciting elements, JUMP CUT to the rhythm. She dismounts.

AROUND THE GYM, as everyone is kind of stunned, mouths open. Joanne stomps her foot.

HALEY

What?

DORRIE (O.S.)

Time for school, people!

The GROUP OF GIRLS who go to school, rush out to leave. Joanne's noticing Haley not leaving. And is annoyed.

JOANNE

(to Lacey)

Why doesn't she have to go to school?

HALEY

Lacey? Please tell Joanne I got my GED when I was fifteen.

Lacey SIGHS at the enormous inconvenience.

LACEY

Joanne. Haley got her GED when --

JOANNE

I heard her! And what does drunk driving have to do with school?

Off Joanne's miffed departure and Haley's sigh we CUT TO

INT. ELITE GYM - FLOOR EXERCISE - LATER

Mina's rehearsing floor, tumbling like a badass to bad "stripper jazz" music. Mina's dance, however, is stiff. Dorrie imitates a dance move like a kindergarten teacher.

DORRIE

(more rote sing-song)

Not like a duck! What the cluck?  
Flow like a river, be a smile-giver!

(giving up)

You're too mechanical during your dance elements.

Mina keeps trying in earnest. It's not that she's not graceful, but she's about power, not the other corny stuff. Dorrie turns Mina's 'wah-wah' trumpet music off.

DORRIE

Just because you're fourteen  
doesn't mean you have to look like  
you're fourteen.

MINA

How am I supposed to look?

DORRIE

Like you're talented.

Haley caught that. And doesn't like it one bit.

DORRIE

Every tenth counts. You're not  
trying hard enough. They want  
pretty! Elegant! Feminine!

MINA

(on the verge of tears)  
I am trying!

DORRIE

Was that a real try or a quitter's  
try?

Haley's chalking up nearby, decides to get into it.

HALEY

Don't squish her kick-ass tumbling  
into your lame-ass style.

Dorrie swallows something unkind.

DORRIE

I'll do my job and you do yours.

HALEY

I'm not paid to be here. And I  
don't think it's your job to make  
cookie cutter routines for gymnasts  
who are completely different. It's  
lazy coaching.

Haley begins mimicking the horrible cliches of Floor Exercise  
choreography as she speaks.

HALEY

That's because it's not  
choreography, it's FLOOREOGRAPHY!  
(faux excitement)  
Pointless bouncing. Flappy, fluffy  
arms.

(MORE)

HALEY (cont'd)

Let's be really sassy and add some vava-voom hips with a wah wah trumpet!

MINA

(to Dorrie, concerned)

You said the judges eat that . trumpet stuff up.

HALEY

(still faux excited)

Why don't we just put a pole in the middle of the floor and score some tips while we're out there?

(to Dorrie, dead calm)

I mean, I understand if you can't be original, but don't be lame.

Dorrie loses it, and is on the verge of crying.

DORRIE

I can not and will not work like this! I know what judges want! It's a rich tradition.

(shaking)

I have never been so insulted in my entire life.

HALEY

Well, then we've got something to look forward to...cause I've been holding back.

DORRIE

Vick!

VICKERMAN

What? I've got two rhythmic girls in the old gym clobbering each other with clubs.

DORRIE

I need to be guaranteed an environment where Haley keeps her observations to herself.

VICKERMAN

Haley, we got a meet next door. Will you say you're sorry?

HALEY

Because she can't handle one opinion? If I'm so wrong why is she so mad?

This sends Dorrie over the edge into hyperventilation land.

VICKERMAN

Dorrie. Relax.

DORRIE

I am trying to choreograph a routine here!

HALEY

That's not choreography. It's homicide.

(sigh)

I was just trying to help.

DORRIE

I don't need your help!

MINA

Yes, you do!

Mina covers her mouth. Dorrie nods and wipes off the tears with the wounded entitlement of someone gravely harmed.

VICKERMAN

Dorrie. There's an Advil bottle in my top drawer. It's not Advil inside. Help yourself. Haley? C'mere.

Haley comes over, looking like she's going to burst out laughing. Vick is sympathetic.

VICKERMAN

Don't do that. The hysterical nursery rhymes she'll leave on voicemail are a hundred times worse, so just steer clear.

HALEY

I know your very busy milking the cash cow next door, but fix Mina's floor routine. She's a badass and Dorrie's sissifying her into a ballet dork.

VICKERMAN

What's wrong with Mina's floor routine?



HALEY

For someone who's so into the Olympics, you don't pay much attention to your thoroughbreds.

She studies him. He's clueless.

HALEY

I don't want to get in the way of your gold medal factory next door, but Dorrie's not a world class coach.

Ivan YELLS in Russian about the rhythmic off-camera.

VICKERMAN

Haley. Worry about your own routines.

Ivan rushes into the elite gym. He is tangled in a ribbon.

IVAN

Zee rhythmic going peanuts--

INT. OLD GYM - MOMENTS LATER

Vick, Haley and Mina rush into the gym and see...

HALEY

This is so leotarded.

RHYTHMIC MAYHEM: The rail-thin RHYTHMIC GYMNASTS are in a full scale battle with their equipment: balls, clubs, rings, ribbons flying everywhere. It's a flurry of sequins and frustration... None of the adults can break it up, so Vickerman stands on a beam and starts shouting.

VICKERMAN

Ladies, drop your balls! Drop your balls this instant! The balls!

The RHYTHMICS stop, looking up at Vickerman. A PEE WEE RHYTHMIC with too much eye-makeup on looks like she wants to keep fighting. Suddenly, a rhythmic club pelts her from nowhere and she fights back with a SCREAM...mayhem starting all over again.

HALEY (V.O.)

Every freak has their freak. And while gymnasts are freaks, rhythmic gymnasts are like our circus freaks. They're insane.

(MORE)

HALEY (V.O.) (cont'd)  
But if you had to jump through  
hoops and twirl ribbons without  
tripping or eating, you'd be  
insane, too.

Mina is studying them with Haley.

MINA  
They're from outer space.

HALEY  
Isn't it genius? You should see  
Sports Acro or Power Tumbling.

MINA  
Huh?

HALEY  
Oh, do I have things to show you.

Haley heads back to the Elite Gym as Mina - desperate for  
more - follows her like a puppy.

MINA  
What's that? Wait! Is that a new  
band? Tell me!

INT. ELITE GYM - LATER

Lacey, Joanne and other gymnasts from school return for  
evening workout.

AT UNEVENS, Haley's working release moves on a set: a  
Comaneci Salto into a Hindorff. Wei Wei studies the  
combination. Haley jumps down to re-chalk and adjust her  
grips.

Wei Wei CLEARS HER THROAT. And again. Haley looks up.

ON WEI WEI, doing the exact same combination Haley just did.

ON HALEY, impressed.

HALEY  
How long have you been doing that?

Wei Wei shrugs.

HALEY  
Show me more.

TIME PLAYS TRICKS - FAST AND SLOW FOR BEAUTY - as Wei Wei  
launches into this flight series on the unevens.

ON HALEY, mouth agape in what might be her very first moment of genuine surprise and wonder as Wei Wei dismounts.

HALEY

You could go to Worlds, you know.

WEI WEI

No way.

HALEY

Way way, Wei Wei.

Wei Wei gets all wide-eyed and puppy dog, nodding eagerly.

WEI WEI

Vick won't even pick me for Friendship Cup. I don't exist to him.

Mina appears, wanting to be a part of it.

MINA

Is she telling you about Power Tumbling? I wanna listen!

HALEY

You know you guys're way better than Joanne or Lacey. Or me.

Wei Wei shakes her head and looks down all shy and blushy.

HALEY

But you gotta want it want it.

WEI WEI

I totally want it want it!

HALEY

Then you're going to the Friendship Cup.

Off Wei Wei and Mina's shocked look, we CUT TO

INT. ELITE GYM - DAYS LATER

Vick standing in front of everyone.

VICKERMAN

Based on results at the Pan Am Classic and progress and consistency in workouts, I've selected the four athletes competing at the Friendship Cup.

HALEY

You already decided? Gee, it's just like Nationals.

Vick smirks indulgently.

VICKERMAN

Don't worry Haley, you're on the list.

Haley's confused. Groans from some other girls.

VICKERMAN

Along with Lacey, Devon, and - of course, Joanne. I need one of you who is not going to loan Haley a club warm-up and leotard.

JOANNE

Unsanitary! The long sleeves are so tired! I have a constitutional right to bare arms.

The other Elites - particularly Mina and Wei Wei - droop. Haley's hand shoots up.

VICKERMAN

Since when have you needed permission to speak?

HALEY

At what point does what we can do now count?

VICKERMAN

It always counts. That's why you're going.

HALEY

Don't you think we should earn our spots? And not have them handed to us?

JOANNE

I've totally earned my spot.  
(trying to be cool)  
I'm practically a Dalmation.

LACEY

Woof.

HALEY

Dalmations are born with spots,  
they don't earn them. Which is my  
point.

LACEY

Dogs are people, too, Haley.

Haley doesn't even know how to respond to this.

HALEY

If I'm going, I want to know I  
earned my spot...not that it's  
being handed to me based on some  
subjective, opinion-based,  
reputation crap.

JOANNE

Haley. Gymnastics is subjective,  
opinion-based, reputation crap!  
Stop being a sore sport and deal  
with it.

HALEY

I'm not a sore sport. It's the  
sport that's sore.  
(to Vickerman, goading)  
Take whoever. Nobody cares what you  
do, Vick. No one cares.

IVAN

They all lazy. Put zee fire under  
zee gluteous. Competition.

The Coach resents it, but takes thef bait.

VICKERMAN

Haley has a good point. Why not do  
an in-house competition? It'll be  
good practice.

JOANNE

Because we no lo needo!

\*

\*

\*

\*

\*

VICKERMAN

Let's do it.

Lacey and Joanne want to kill Haley.

VICKERMAN

No killing Haley in her sleep,  
people.

INT. ELITE GYM - A FEW DAYS LATER

JUDGES arriving for In-House Competition with clipboards,  
chatting casually with Dorrie, Ivan and Vick.

THE EIGHT ELITES warm up as PARENTS gather in special  
bleacher seats. TWO JUDGES prepare and take places.

VICKERMAN

Judges. Ladies. Since this is in-  
house, I've asked the judges to  
score you all regardless of order.

JOANNE

That is so unfair!! Why would you  
do that?

LATER - Haley's adjusting the beat board for bars. Vickerman  
is helping her.

VICKERMAN

I want you to do well. The last  
thing I need is you hurting  
yourself, I don't know, on a triple  
twist you can't stick?

How'd he know?

VICKERMAN

I'm self-involved, I'm not blind.

\*

HALEY

I acknowledge your concerns and  
will take them into consideration.  
As I light the bars on fire.

VICKERMAN

Actually, that reminds me: your toe  
point sucks.

HALEY

My toes drill oil.

VICKERMAN

Okay then Exxon, let's see it.

Oh, it's on. Haley and Vick share a smile.

I/E - ELITE GYM - VARIOUS

IN-HOUSE COMPETITION MONTAGE to HIGH ENERGY MUSIC

ON VAULT: HIGH-SPEED INTERCUT EACH PHASE OF EACH COMPETITORS VAULT, CREATING ONE CONTINUOUS VAULT.

ON BARS: HIGH-SPEED INTERCUT OF BAR ROUTINES TO GREAT MUSIC. IT'S OLD SCHOOL VERSUS NEW SCHOOL: Joanne and company versus Haley, Wei Wei and Mina.

ON BEAM: BORING versus EXCITING in one CONTINUOUS ROUTINE.

ON FLOOREX: CONTINUOUS TUMBLING that hangs in the air.

END OF INHOUSE COMPETITION MONTAGE

INT. BLEACHER AREA - LATER

Dorrie reviews the results. Parents are overly nervous. Vickerman confers with the four judges in the background.

DORRIE

Winner today was Wei Wei. Haley was second, followed by Mina and then...Lacey.

(small)

Joanne will be our alternate.

GASPS from the parents at the results.

JOANNE

What? I'm nationally ranked! I am not an alternate. \*

Vickerman hears this.

VICKERMAN

And if you do well at Nationals, you'll still be ranked. The Friendship Cup will not affect you. Fair's fair. \*

HALEY

Now who's jelly of who?

Mina and Wei Wei are high-fiving and settle down when Joanne looks at them, then notch it up after she's passed by.

EXT. ELITE GYM PARKING LOT - LATER

JUDGES kissing Vick's ass. He's loving it.

JUDGE TURESCHEVA

What are you, actually spending time in the gym, Vick? You're gonna have half the national team this year with those young ones.

VICKERMAN

They don't have the experience yet.

JUDGE POSTMA

Haley looks great. I hear Chris DeFrank expects her back at his gym as soon as she's eighteen.

Vickerman is put-off, even a bit miffed at this news.

VICKERMAN

Hey, Haley! Chris DeFrank thinks you're going to end up back at his gym. Whaddya think?

Haley jogs over, joining them. Vickerman high roads it. \*

VICKERMAN

If Haley wants to go back and train with Chris eventually, that's up to her.

Haley looks at Vic with respect. Gratitude.

HALEY

I think if Chris DeFrank had wanted me to keep training with him, he should've thought about that before he started boning my Mom.

Haley walks away, leaving a stunned group of judges.

EXT. DORM - NIGHT

Haley is at the pay phone, alone. It's dark. She's nervous.



HALEY

(into phone, leaving a message)

Hey, Dad. Sorry to bother you. I just wanted you to know I'm working hard here, and I'm going to try and pay you back for the window and stuff. I'm competing at this thing, and if I win, I'll give you all the money.

(long pause)

Okay. That's it. I just wanted you to know I'm not goofing around. Okay, then. Bye.

Haley looks at the phone, and hangs up. Determined.

INT. ELITE GYM - NEXT DAY

Devon hands Haley a neatly folded warm-up and leo...and then drops it on the floor at her feet before walking away. Haley picks it up as Lacey works beam behind her.

HALEY

Thanks.

Lacey's on beam, throwing a full-twisting back to a straddle-through and "crotches the beam." Hard. Instinctively, Lacey grabs onto the beam, circling around and hangs by her knees before falling flat to the floor.

LACEY (O.S.)

OwOwOwOwOwOwOwOwOw.

Vickerman appears. Assesses the situation. Gets it.

VICKERMAN

(calling out)

Joanne! Pack your stuff.

Joanne does an ecstatic riverdance with no care for Lacey's feelings.

EXT. SAM HOUSTON ARENA ENTRY - DAY

As DORRIE and GIRLS unload the mini-van, a CAR pulls up and starts HONKING. The VGA crew turns to see

A CONVERTIBLE with FOUR COLLEGE HOTTIES crammed inside. TWO CUTE GUYS head out of the Arena, running towards the car and KISSING TWO OF THE GIRLS and hopping in. The car peels out in a fun blare of MUSIC and LAUGHTER.

ON JOANNE, MINA, WEI WEI and HALEY, watching the life they're missing with more than a little angst.

JOANNE

I'd kill for a boyfriend.

The GIRLS look at her, like, whoa --

HALEY

That's a strategy. Boys love violence.

DORRIE

Chins up, walk tall, point your toes and do not fall!

WE HANG BEHIND THE VGA GIRLS, walking in matching gear towards the double doors of a small arena.

ON HALEY, glancing back with a longing look at the car and its' occupants before heading inside.

INT. SAM HOUSTON ARENA - CONTINUOUS

ON SIGNAGE: "Welcome to the FRIENDSHIP CUP," underneath it are two additional signs with OPPOSING ARROWS for "ARTISTIC GYMNASTICS" and "T&T." Vick and crew follow the AG arrow.

MINA

What's T&T?

Haley assesses the timing before pulling Mina the other way.

HALEY

Trampoline and tumbling. Power tumbling. Come on.

INT. T&T DIVISION - MOMENTS LATER

A WOMEN'S SYNCHRO DUO practice on side-by-side TRAMPOLINES as OTHER SYNCHRO TEAMS wait their turn.

TIGHT ON HI-TECH SPRING RODS getting secured into an EIGHTY-FOOT LONG runway.

ON MINA AND HALEY, rushing over to watch this strange world.

ON POWER TUMBLING GIRL sprinting into an EXPLOSION of consecutive TUMBLING SKILLS that WHIZ and THUMP by with awesome speed, power and velocity.

ON MINA, as if she's seeing God and home all at once.

HALEY  
Can she try it?

The PT Girl nods. Mina races like a banshee to the runway.

MINA  
(pulling off sweats)  
What should I do?

PT GIRL  
You can do eight of whatever you want. Whipbacks feel awesome.

Mina wastes no time, launching into a Power Tumbling pass like she was born to do it. She lands, exploding into giddy ecstasy. PT Girl's impressed.

MINA  
It's like NASCAR for girls!

INT. FRIENDSHIP CUP - ARTISTIC GYMNASTICS - VARIOUS

SPECTATORS taking their seats; JUDGES getting oriented behind their tables; GYMNASTS warming up in pairs and trios.

ON JOANNE, signing programs and getting tons of attention. YOUNG FANS are SCREAMING her name from the stands.

TIGHT ON: A ROW of FEET, in peds and barefoot...lining up for what's known as the March-In.

NEW ANGLE as the FEET march onto the diagonal of the Floor-Ex mat for their presentation to the Judges and the crowd. One of these pairs of feet in BLACK CHUCK CONNORS.

VICKERMAN  
(shout-whispering)  
Haley! Take those off!!

ON HALEY, rolling her eyes and KICKING OFF her CC's without missing a step.

ON THE PERFECT LINE OF COMPETITORS, backs straight and in position. Except for Haley, with hands on hips and her hip jutting out, one of these girls is NOT like the others.

INT. WARM-UP AREA

ON MINA, now totally pumped. AND WEI WEI, looking completely overwhelmed. Haley joins them. Focused.

HALEY

Don't be nervous.

Wei Wei looks at her like she wants to vomit.

WEI WEI

Carly Janiga and Tia Orlando. Here.

HALEY

Trust me: they're not thinking about you. Concentrate on the judges. Make them look. Don't ask them to look at you in a sweet tone of voice as if they are doing you a favor. Make them look. And if you eat mat? Eat mat hard. But make them look.

Wei Wei seems to pump up.

HALEY

This is your chance to make a noise. So show em what you can do.

POOT (O.S.)

Yo, Graham Cracker!

ON POOT AND FRANK in the stands, waving furiously.

ON THE GIRLS, doe-eyed. Haley knows boys!!!

INT. VAULT PODIUM AND WAITING AREA - LATER

Haley is warming up her tough stuff on vault. Incredulous, Vick watches her a beat, and moves in for a chat.

VICKERMAN

Hi, crazy. How's crazy-land?  
What are you doing? Money or  
funny?

HALEY

I'm doing what I practiced.

VICKERMAN

If you want the money? I'd back off a hair.

HALEY

I want the money and I want to throw what I can throw.

VICKERMAN

You are landing your doubles fifty percent at best. If that. So why not just do a one and a half?

HALEY

It's not about hitting, it's about expressing something. And I haven't been practicing my one and a half. I don't think I even remember how to do it.

VICKERMAN

Haley. I want you to get what you came for. The purse.

HALEY

You just don't want to look bad.

VICKERMAN

Of course I don't want the club to look bad. But you're not here to impress the judges. You're here to place top three, win some money and get out. So stick it, alright?

Haley's not sure, but she shakes her head anyway. Remembering. She doesn't want to be a gymnast, right?

HALEY

You stick it, you gross old man.

Haley smiles. Vick smiles. He's gotten through to her.

VICKERMAN

Accuracy counts, Haley. I'm a gross, middle-aged man.

Vick leaves the girls by the vault. Wei Wei's nervous.

ON JUDGES, giving Wei Wei the GREEN LIGHT.

ON WEI WEI, saluting and singing with ferocity as she races down the runway and nails it but for a tiny step back.

ON MINA AND HALEY AND JOANNE AND VICK, stunned. Wei Wei jumps into Vick's arms. THE CROWD goes crazy.

MINA

I'm in for the one and a half and the double.

Vickerman is busy congratulating WW. Haley sees this and walks Mina to the Vault podium. They adjust her beat board at the vault before heading to the head of the runway.

HALEY

(whispering)

Double it. You can do the one and a half as your second if you screw up, right? Vault's the one place you get do-overs. NASCAR it up.

Mina nods confidently. Haley changes her vault number and heads back down to the waiting area as Mina chalks up.

VICKERMAN

She alright?

HALEY

Fuel-injected.

ON JUDGES, giving the green light.

ON MINA, saluting and staring down the runway with intensity. Her run is thunderous. Her face contorted. She throws a double-twisting Yurchenko. Her power and distance from the horse are palpable. And she sticks it. The crowd ROARS.

ON HALEY AND VICKERMAN, blown away.

VICKERMAN

That girl can vault. Who changed her number?

Haley sheepishly raises her hand, Vickerman would kill her but picks up the elated Mina. Haley's up. Vick goes to set Haley's number for the judges.

AT VAULT RUNWAY, Haley looks really nervous all of a sudden. The CROWD starts BOOING.

ON SCORE: 9.375

ON MINA, disappointed. Haley's furious. Joanne is shocked.

JOANNE

Even I think that's low.

ON HALEY, chalking up and looking super annoyed. Vickerman adjusts the beat board. Haley waves him back over.

HALEY

You know what? Put me down for a one and a half. It's pointless. I'm not chancing getting screwed by them again. I want the money.

Vickerman is stunned, shocked and relieved.

VICKERMAN

Really? No double? Seriously?

Haley shakes her head, no. Vick changes her vault number quickly. Haley preps her body. She gets the GREEN LIGHT. Haley salutes. Breathes. Mumbling to herself.

ON HALEY, running and vaulting a watered-down, one and a half Yurchenko. Stuck cold.

ON MINA AND WEI WEI, sharing a 'huh?' look. APPLAUSE.

As Haley exits the vault podium, Vick pats her on the back. Haley walks past Mina and WW, who are totally confused.

MINA

That was weird.

WEI WEI

Where's the double? Did something happen?

HALEY

I chickened at the last minute.

That doesn't ring completely true to Mina or Wei Wei. Or Haley. Haley shrugs. Vickerman's happy.

VICKERMAN

You did the right thing, Haley. Way to go.

Mina and WW trade looks; what does that mean?

ON JOANNE'S VAULT: clean, with a much bigger step than WW.

HALEY

If your feet move, it's not a stick. We'll see how the judges score that.

ON SCOREBOARD: 9.415

WEI WEI

(to Mina)

That sucks. Her step was so bigger  
than mine.

Mina and WW can't believe it. Joanne gloats as they gather  
their stuff for the bar rotation.

JOANNE

Bigger reputation plus bigger step  
equals higher score. Get it?

HALEY

Stop being nasty, Joanne.

JOANNE

It's not called gym-nicestics.

Suddenly, A COMPETITOR wipes out on her vault right in front  
of them. Joanne gives her a look, like, "See?"

HALEY (V.O.)

And like a sneeze, one really bad  
wipeout can give an entire meet the  
flu.

INT. VARIOUS APPARATUS

As GYMNAST after GYMNAST wipes out: a fall off the beam; a  
butt-landing on floor; stepping out of bounds on vault; and  
three consecutive missed release moves on bars. Girls are  
tanking.

HALEY (V.O.)

And all you can do is hope like  
hell you don't catch it.

INT. UNEVEN PARALLEL BARS WAITING AREA/PODIUM - LATER

Vickerman and crew and cheering Mina on from the sidelines.

WEI WEI

Come on, Mina! Hit the release,  
you can do it! Eat mat hard!

MID-ROUTINE, ON MINA, missing the bar on a release move --

ON VICK, spotting and missing her.

ON MINA, eating mat. It is a spread-eagle stomach slam.  
Chalk dust blowing everywhere.



ON POOT, FRANK AND SOME SPECTATORS, wincing and GROANING.  
ON WEI WEI, covering her mouth as if she caused it.  
ON JUDGES, scribbling their heiroglyphics on her score card.  
ON HALEY AND WEI WEI, cheering her on as she remounts and hits the rest of her routine.

HALEY  
S'alright, Mina! Shake it off!

ON MINA, dismounting and disappointed and SNEEZES. Twice.  
ON HALEY, clocking the sneeze with a worried look.

INT. UNEVEN PARALLEL BAR PODIUM - LATER

ON WEI WEI saluting, shaken from Mina's fall. She mounts the bar with a difficult series of Stalders and hits her release moves, including two hop fulls and a Kovacs.

Wei Wei dismounts but PUTS HER HANDS DOWN on the landing. The CROWD GROANS. Haley cheers her on, but Wei Wei's upset as she descends the stairs to the waiting area.

HALEY  
No worries, Wei Wei! Good job.

ON WEI WEI'S SCORE: 9.2

ON JOANNE, getting ready and walking by WW, smug.

JOANNE  
Nice stick.

JOANNE'S ROUTINE is steady and boring. Joanne dismounts.

ON JOANNE'S SCORE: 9.512

ON HALEY consoling WEI WEI, who's distraught.

VICKERMAN  
Exxon, you're up. You good?

HALEY  
I have no idea.

As Haley ascends the podium, Mina gives her a fist pump.

MINA  
NASCAR it up, Haley!

ON HALEY ON BARS, executing a very standard routine.

ON WEI WEI and MINA, confused. Joanne sidles up.

JOANNE

That routine is so old it farts dust. It's from Junior Nationals. Like three years ago.

MINA

Where are her release moves? What she's doing? That's so easy!

Joanne is smug, taunting.

JOANNE

I hope you guys get that Haley is a total phony. The only reason she's encouraging you guys to go for the harder tricks is so you'll mess up and she wins the prize money.

(goadng)

You didn't really buy all that 'go for it' crap, did you? You want a team sport? Try soccer.

Haley does an easy dismount and sticks it. She looks humiliated and embarrassed as she descends the podium.

VICKERMAN

You got nothing to be ashamed of.

HALEY

Easy for you to say. You have no shame.

ON HALEY'S SCORE: 9.612

ON WEI WEI AND MINA, totally grossed out by her result.

Haley watches COACH DUANE MARVIN talking to a very upset competitor, LESLIE RUSSO. Leslie is looking straight ahead, crying as her coach talks at her, rubbing her elbow.

COACH MARVIN

Suck it up. Just go out there and do your routine.

LESLIE

The doctor said to stop if it hurts. Can't Julie go?

COACH MARVIN  
(irritated)  
Julie doesn't have your start  
value.  
(back pat)  
You want more tape?

Leslie shakes her head no, clearly knowing her pain is falling on deaf ears.

ON HALEY, watching Leslie with some mild concern.

ON LESLIE, closing her eyes and breathing, terrified.

TEAM-MATES (O.S.)  
C'mon, Leslie!

WIDER ON LESLIE looking impossibly tiny in the arena.

ON THE JUDGES, giving Leslie the green light.

ON LESLIE, stepping up to the bars, touching the low bar, saluting and stepping off. And walking off the podium.

ON THE JUDGES, looking at her to be sure she knows what she's doing, then marking her as a scratch.

Coach Marvin's yelling as she marches off the podium.

COACH MARVIN  
You don't scratch unless I tell you  
to scratch! I can't even look at  
you.

ON LESLIE'S SCORE: flashing a 0.00

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)  
The score for Leslie Russo is a  
zero point o.

ON LESLIE, sitting down as Haley approaches her. Leslie puts her head on her knees. Haley exhales sympathetically, following her club-mates to the beam.

INT. BACKSTAGE DRESSING AREA - MOMENTS LATER

The girls are reapplying make-up. Chilly environment.

HALEY  
Mina Hoyt. First gymnast to stick a  
layout-layout full on balance beam.  
You're about to go down in history.

Mina and Wei Wei say nothing, and go about their business.

HALEY

What's wrong? Don't bum on the falls. It sucks you fell, but you made them look.

MINA

Oh, I see how it is. You tell us to take a risk, but then you play it safe and get a huge score? How convenient.

Haley's silent. They're right.

WEI WEI

You want to win the purse. We get it. Drop the act.

HALEY

Wait - it's not that simple, you guys - let me explain!

They are being corralled back out to beam before Haley has a chance to explain. Haley looks guilt-ridden and can't argue: she is selling out and she knows it.

ALICE (O.S.)

Haley! Haley, honey! Over here!

IN THE CORRIDOR, Haley's mother Alice is waving furiously. Haley makes her way over as Alice over-eagerly hugs her.

ALICE

Oh, sweetheart! I miss you, sweetie.

HALEY

Hi, Mom. How are you?

ALICE

You're doing a great job. Nice sets so far.

(motioning up to stands)

I'm here with Chris. We want to talk to you.

Haley's old coach, CHRIS DEFRANK, waves from a distance.

HALEY

About what?

ALICE

About you coming back and training with him. It doesn't look good to have you training with someone else. We need you back with us.

Haley looks at her mother, stunned.

HALEY

And until I'm eighteen you aren't allowed to see me without a court-appointed guardian present.

ALICE

And after that, you will come back to Chris's gym. Especially since you are performing so well -- we need a united front again.

(pissed)

And I really don't appreciate you mouthing off to judges when it comes to family business. It was all over the message boards.

HALEY

United front? I'm done fronting for you. Or anyone.

ALICE

You should be thanking your lucky stars that judge gave you the shot to be this good again. You should be grateful you're being given a second chance after throwing your career away like a crazy person. All the years I slaved, chauffering you back and forth for your training.

Who's the crazy person?

HALEY

It's safe to say you were getting a little more out of it than a long drive.

ALICE

(disgusted)

We were this close to the Olympics. This close.

HALEY

We? What event were you competing on? Boxsprings?

Alice takes a deep breath. There's that stage mother thing.

HALEY (CONT'D)

Mom. Six girls go to the Olympics. I was not going to be one of them.

ALICE

No respect for your talent. For Chris. Me. For anything.

HALEY

I don't respect people who don't respect me.

ALICE

Oh, and I suppose you think Burt Vickerman respects you.

HALEY

In his way. Yeah, I do, actually.

ALICE

The only thing Burt Vickerman respects is money. He cares about cash and cashing in. And if your father hadn't paid him off you'd be sitting at Texas Military Academy right now.

What? Haley's hit hard. This does not compute.

HALEY

Paid him off? What do you mean paid him off? Everyone there pays.

ALICE

Not as much as you! Your daddy's paying four times what every other girl there is paying.

Haley blinks, grabs a railing. Grips it. Her eyes wide, taking it in. She's stunned. She tries to swallow but can't. It hurts too much.

\*  
\*  
\*

ALICE

Did you think he was on your side? He's a coach, Haley. He only has one side: his.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

In the B.G., Vickerman yells from the balance beam podium, irritated. \*

VICKERMAN

Haley, come warm up! C'mon! \*

Haley's floored, all of her faith in Vick and his kindness gone. Vick waves more urgently, pointing to his wrist. \*

VICKERMAN

Haley! Let's warm up beam. Let's go, go, go! \*

Haley is furious. Stung with betrayal. Fighting tears.

ALICE

(clueless)

You're doin' good hon, keep it up!

Horrified, Haley swallows it and runs out and up onto the --

INT. BALANCE BEAM PODIUM - CONTINUOUS

-- beam podium to do her warm-up with the rest of her club. Immediately, Haley's throwing her hardest tricks. Vickerman clocks the reckless intensity immediately.

VICKERMAN

What's wrong?

HALEY

Everything.

INT. BALANCE BEAM ROTATION WAITING AREA - MOMENTS LATER

ECU: A finger hits a switch; A GREEN LIGHT illuminates.

TIGHT ON HALEY, fiercer than we've ever seen her, saluting.

THE HEAD BEAM JUDGE saluting back.

ALL SOUND vanishes, and only Haley's BREATHING, HEARTBEAT and SOUNDS of her BODY on THE EQUIPMENT remain.

WIDER reveals the intensity of her approach to the beam, this is the athlete who made the World Team. Nothing will distract her. She is going to show everything she's got.

ON HALEY, charging into her mount with a rock-solid landing. A DULL CROWD CHEER can be heard through HALEY'S SFX.

Haley presses into a handstand. Then raises one arm into a perfect one-armed handstand. She looks like a star. The BLOOD RUSHING into her ears, INCREASING her HEARTBEAT.

HALEY'S POV: ON THE NAUGAHYDE, her hands gripping the beam as she raises one hand. In SLO-MO, A SINGLE TEARDROP hits the top of the beam. Then another.

REVERSE POV: Haley is crying in a handstand.

Haley presses down into a straddle-V strength balance. She holds it despite the tears, before her transition into a leap series. She bobbles badly. Mascara streaking down her placid face. ALL SOUNDS in the ARENA returning, getting louder.

ON THE JUDGES, not registering any emotion. PENCILS forming the petroglyphs from the opening; the Code of Points.

BACK WITH HALEY, any remaining composure gone. She punch-fronts with BOTH FEET, SLO-MO into the air, falling badly.

ON VICK, waving telling her to calm down. Mina and Wei Wei watch, shocked, from the sidelines. Even Joanne is stunned.

ON HALEY, wiping her eyes with her sleeve, getting back up on beam, cartwheels into a simple back tuck. And takes a million steps back on the landing. The crowd GROANS.

ON HALEY, sitting on the mat. In an altered state.

Haley gets back up, tears streaming down her face. She salutes THE JUDGES, who tally her rampant deductions.

INT. BEAM ROTATION WAITING AREA

Calmly, Haley descends the podium and grabs her bag. She scans the stands, finding Poot and Frank. Giving a metal salute and pointing to the exit. They see she needs them.

VICKERMAN corralling Dorrie, who goes to the team. He follows Haley out of the arena.

INT. ARENA EXIT TUNNEL

Tears of humiliation and betrayal streaming down Haley's cheeks. Vick is chasing after her.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

And the score for Haley Graham is  
an eight point three two.



VICKERMAN

Haley, don't do this!

HALEY

Let me guess: Is this you fighting for me to be here?

VICKERMAN

Let's go back in there and finish this meet.

HALEY

Blah blah blah. Don't I sound like I really care, Haley? Don't I? Cause I care, I really care, he lied.

VICKERMAN

Stop it. Don't bail again, Haley. Finish this meet. Finish it for yourself.

HALEY

For me? Yeah, you said something about the fact this was about me. About my freedom. Helping me. You forgot to tell me the part where you were cashing in on it. Was that what you were fighting for? How much you'd get paid?

Vickerman knows exactly what she's talking about.

HALEY

Oooh - brilliant coach reforms troubled teen and saves his ailing reputation.

It is a long tunnel. The light is back in the arena. This exit is dark.

VICKERMAN

I meant everything I said to you, Haley, everything. I never lied to you.

HALEY

Everything you said to me was an insurance policy to get those fat checks from my father. Your word was bought and paid for.

VICKERMAN

I didn't have to say that stuff,  
Haley. I said it because it made  
sense.

HALEY

Dollars and cents.

VICKERMAN

You are not going to leave like  
this. You are going to finish the  
meet and we will deal with this  
afterwards. Like adults.

HALEY

I am not an adult! I'm a kid!  
When do I get to be the kid? When  
do I get to screw up and have  
somebody say, "It's okay, you're a  
kid, you screwed up, it happens."  
Why do the adults get to screw up  
all the time but we have to be  
perfect?

VICKERMAN

We don't get to pick when we grow  
up, Haley. That's life.  
(sympathetic)  
You got dealt a lame hand. And  
anyone who tells you otherwise is  
lying. But come back inside and  
play your hand. Don't run away.

HALEY

You know what? You didn't owe it  
to me to be a decent coach. You  
owed it to me to be a decent human  
being.

Haley runs towards the exit. Vickerman watches her, turns and  
heads back towards the fake, bright lights.

I/E. FRANK'S TRUCK - MOMENTS LATER

FRANK

You tanked like a rock star! That  
was insane.

Haley climbs in sitting in between Poot and Frank. She is  
crying pretty hard and they don't know what to do.

POOT

Can you tell me something? And I'm being serious, here.

Haley nods. They try to cheer her up.

POOT

Why on earth do the girls wear so much glippety gloppety goop in their hair?

Haley and Frank laugh. Haley wipes snot on her sleeve.

FRANK

And how do those leotards not ride up their butts?

HALEY

Tuff Skin.

FRANK

They have ass callouses?

HALEY

No, it's sticky stuff you spray on your butt so the leotard won't move.

POOT

Can I get that job? I want to be Tuff Skin.

Haley laughs. And starts crying really hard again.

FRANK

People are stupid, Haley. People are just stupid.

Haley nods, crying more. Poot is comforting, but serious.

POOT

Those people seemed really fake, Haley. And you're not fake.

FRANK

They're like glitter-dipped, smiley robots! Those girls terrify me.

POOT

(conspiratorial)

They poop glitter, don't they? You can tell me.

Haley curls up and puts her head on Poot's shoulder and closes her eyes.

HALEY

Yes, they poop glitter and their farts shimmer.

POOT

Sparkly farts? I take it all back. I love robots.

FRANK

If you huffed on Tuff Skin do you think it would stick your nostrils together?

POOT

No. But if I shoved it up your butt it would.

FRANK

Why would my nostrils stick together from putting something up my butt?

POOT

Because your head is already there.

HALEY

Don't worry, Frank. My head's up my butt, too. Far.

They all face forward in silence. Knowing it's kinda true.

EXT. POOT'S HOUSE - PLANO

A cop car sits outside. Haley and Poot jump out of Frank's truck, pulling her bike out of the trunk.

FRANK

You gonna be okay, Hale?

Haley laughs.

HALEY

Of course not.

FRANK

That's my girl.

INT. POOT'S HOUSE

Haley and Poot enter. Officer Ferguson is sitting on the couch. Waiting for her.

OFFICER FERGUSON  
Hello, Haley.

HALEY  
Hi.

They stand there a beat, waiting to see what happens. And then...

POOT  
Hey, Mom, what's up?

Officer Ferguson beckons Haley and gives her a hug. Haley doesn't want to let go.

OFFICER FERGUSON  
It's going to be alright.

POOT  
Don't be lame, Mom.

OFFICER FERGUSON  
Shut it, Poot.

Haley melts.

OFFICER FERGUSON  
If you need a place, we'll talk to the judge about you staying here, okay?

Haley looks at her like the she's life raft she didn't think she had.

OFFICER FERGUSON  
You got a place to stay. Now go to sleep.

INT. JUDGE WESTREICH'S CHAMBERS - DAY

Haley is being led to a chair, and standing in front of the judge's desk.

JUDGE WESTREICH (O.S.)  
Have a seat.

Haley sits down. She is sad but serene.

JUDGE WESTREICH

I want you to read this. Out loud,  
please. Second paragraph.

The Judge pulls a piece of paper off a file, adjusting his  
glasses. Hands it to Haley.

HALEY

(reading)

'Haley Graham is not only one of  
the most talented gymnasts I've  
ever worked with, she is one of the  
most inspiring. While the  
situations surrounding Haley's  
arrival at my facility were not  
ideal, she has earned my respect  
and admiration. She is welcome to  
return, but Haley is quite capable  
of deciding what is best for her,  
and I'd encourage the court to  
include her perspective in its  
decision. Sincerely, Burt  
Vickerman.'

(to Judge)

But I'm just a kid.

JUDGE WESTREICH

And a good one, apparently. Despite  
your best attempts to prove  
otherwise.

The Judge winks. Haley is stunned and moved. Somebody,  
finally, gets her.

JUDGE WESTREICH

Officer Ferguson called and let me  
know they would love to have you.  
And Mr. Vickerman wouldn't mind  
seeing you again if that's what you  
want.

HALEY

I'm not sure what I want.

JUDGE WESTREICH

There are quite a few colleges that  
would be willing to help you find  
out, free of charge. In exchange  
for a flip or two.

Haley nods, then stares at the judge.

JUDGE WESTREICH  
That's it. You're free.

HALEY  
But I'm not eighteen yet --

JUDGE WESTREICH  
I say go to college. Get a  
scholarship. Be good. It sounds  
like you might be built for it.

Haley walks out of the Judge's Chambers, relieved. She's  
staring at the fax when the Judge opens the door again.

JUDGE WESTREICH  
Some of the greatest people I know  
had jerks for parents.  
(winking)  
We've got to stick together.

Off Haley's look of gratitude and smile, we CUT TO

INT. FRONT DOOR - LATER

A front door opens. Haley is standing behind it. She takes a  
deep breath.

HALEY  
I wanted you to know, that you are  
allowed to be mad at me for all the  
stuff I did - crashing through the  
window, stunts I pulled or the  
times we fought, or whatever - you  
can hate me for that.

REVERSE REVEALS Haley's father, standing there, stunned.

HALEY  
And if you do hate me for all that,  
I am apologizing and saying I'm  
sorry for that stuff. I am so  
sorry. But you can't be mad at me  
for something I didn't do. It's  
not fair. I didn't know what Mom  
was doing. Okay?

Brice nods slightly. Grateful.

HALEY  
I just wanted you to know that.

And with that, Haley walks away. No hug, no tears...leaving her father standing there in the doorway, watching her leave. He gives a look that says in his own shut-down way, he appreciates it.

BRICE

Haley? I'm sorry you didn't come with a manual.

(he smiles sadly)

Don't be a stranger, okay?

He watches her before shutting the door.

INT. FRANK'S TRUCK - MOMENTS LATER

Haley opens the door and climbs into the truck, Poot and Frank looking sheepish. Haley smells something and stops.

HALEY

Ohmigod, that's inhuman.

They burst out laughing. She gets in the truck and rolls down the window, sticking her head out like a dog.

POOT

What did he say?

HALEY

Not much.

POOT

Not much? Your dad's a jerk.

HALEY

Nah. He just hurts.

POOT

Yeah, what's your Mom's excuse?

HALEY

Her, too, I guess.

FRANK

(very sad)

What about me? I hurt.

And with that an SBDF sends Poot and Haley's heads out the windows like dogs for air. Frank is pleased with himself.

HALEY/POOT

Nasty!/Rude, dude!



And the truck takes off out of the suburban development, Haley's hair flying in the wind.

INT. VGA DORM - TV ROOM

ECU TV SCREEN: ESPN PRESENTS: 2005 FRIENDSHIP CUP

An ANNOUNCER does V.O. To BABY FOOTAGE of Haley competing.

ESPN ANNOUNCER

Haley Graham's last appearance at Worlds was two years ago, where a very private melt-down precipitated a notorious downfall that wasn't just personal. It was national.

FOOTAGE OF HALEY screaming at COACH CHRIS DEFRANK and OFFICIALS. Her screaming becomes crying. It is ugly.

ESPN ANNOUNCER

After a technical committee banned her floor exercise music, Haley Graham scratched, leaving TEAM USA in the lurch and without the gold they were one rotation away from claiming as their own. No one will forget the image of veteran Tricia Skilken; crying as her dreams of gold...disappeared.

FOOTAGE OF a DISTRAUGHT TRICIA SKILKEN throwing her grips and crying at Worlds, being comforted by her STUNNED TEAMMATES.

ESPN ANNOUNCER

At 22, Tricia will attempt to make one last World Team and win the international medal that has eluded her.

FOOTAGE OF HALEY walking out of the Friendship Cup, sobbing.

ESPN ANNOUNCER

Will the former junior national champion and gymnastics wild child call it quits for good? Or will these rivals settle the score once and for all?

FOOTAGE OF HALEY'S BEAM ROUTINE, complete with crying.

REVERSE POV: Mina, Wei Wei, Lacey and Joanne all glued to the set. REVEAL Haley behind them, listening, and tiptoeing off before they see her.

INT. ELITE GYM

Haley walks in. Vickerman is working with Devon, really working with her on tramp.

VICKERMAN

- tighter on the second twist, Dev,  
you're opening up too soon. That's  
it, snap and glue your arms. Nice.

Devon keeps bouncing and throwing beautiful two and a halves as Haley approaches.

Vick looks up from the trampoline, resists the urge to sigh or show relief. A long beat of unspoken understanding.

HALEY

You got through an entire letter  
without using the word 'gold.'

They share a long look of understanding. Forgiveness.

VICKERMAN

It was tough. I'm really sorry you  
found out about our deal the way  
you did. I figured if you were  
going to be a loose cannon, the  
cash would cover the repairs.

HALEY

I'm almost eighteen, and I can't be  
here if you're taking his money.

VICKERMAN

We'll figure it out. Your spot is  
more than covered if you still want  
to train here.

HALEY

What's the catch?

VICKERMAN

No catch. Maybe work some summer  
camps. And I wouldn't hate it if  
you came to Nationals with us.

HALEY

What? So you can go to Worlds?

VICKERMAN

We all know you'll bail before  
Worlds.

(smiles)

Besides, no one thinks you can make  
the world team. No one but me.

HALEY

You're high on chalk.

VICKERMAN

I'm serious.

The other ELITES enter the gym for workouts in the b.g., they  
rush up to Haley to hug her.

MINA/WEI WEI

Haley!/Haley I'm sorry!

HALEY

I'll stay on one condition.

VICKERMAN

Oh, goody! I can't wait to hear  
this. Does it involve you  
and...self-imposed silence?

\*  
\*  
\*

HALEY

You have to get back on the tramp.

That's not gonna happen.

HALEY

Don't you guys wanna see Vick do a  
layout?

They look at Haley like she's crazy. So does Vick.

\*

MINA

He's way too, like, old.

WEI WEI

He'll, like, break a hip.

HALEY

I'll stay for Nationals if you get  
up there and do a layout. It's  
your call.

Vickerman is considering it. Haley waves the girls over.

HALEY/GIRLS

(chanting)

Vick, Vick, Vick, Vick, Vick, Vick,  
Vick, Vick!

Vickerman climbs on the tramp, getting his bearings. After a beat, he starts jumping up and down, gaining confidence.

ON THE GIRLS, cheering him on and laughing.

HALEY/GIRLS

Layout! Layout! Layout! Layout!

Cue CHARIOTS OF FIRE-ESQUE MUSIC as TIME SLOWS DOWN with Vick joyfully moving through the air, higher and higher, liberated and remembering why he loved this sport.

ON THE GIRLS, giddy with this uncharacteristic act.

ON VICK, setting himself up for his layout and flying beautifully, gracefully into the air...and completely out of frame, accompanied by a DISTURBING CRUNCH.

ON THE GIRLS, covering their mouths in horror (and secret delight!).

ON VICK, popping his head up from an adjacent foam pit.

VICKERMAN

Call 911.

ON MINA running towards a phone as the rest of the girls run to Vick and we cut to --

EXT. ELITE GYM

Ambulance lights dot the horizon. The girls regroup.

MINA

Haley, I'm so sorry I yelled at you! We didn't know your life sucked so hard!

HALEY

No worries. I want you to meet the anti-suck.

Poot and Frank stroll in.

POOT

Ladies. This is Frank and I'm Poot, and we'll be your hosts for the evening.

The GIRLS all perk up and get excitedly self-conscious by the intrusion of Poot and Frank. They're amazed and slack-jawed.

FRANK

Scrape up your pennies and pull up your panties, we're going out!

They race out, leaving Lacey and Devon standing there.

FRANK

Come on.

They stare at him, wide-eyed. Shaking their heads, no way.

FRANK

Can you speak?

They shake their heads, no.

FRANK

Can you do anything besides gymnastics?

Lacey and Devon share a long look with each other. They turn back to Frank and shake their heads, emphatically...no.

INT. MALL - FOOD COURT - LATER

Haley, Joanne, Mina and Wei Wei are pigging out on bad food: ice cream, fast food, junk food. They are in heaven.

INT. MALL - ARCADE

ON DANCE DANCE REVOLUTION Poot and Frank spaz it out. Joanne kind of moons nearby, delicately nibbling on a French Fry. Poot playfully shoves them in her face. She liked it. Haley trades places with Frank and jumps on the game.

POOT

Loser gets a make-over.

HALEY

Deal.

They start wailing on DDR as we cut to

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - MAKE-UP COUNTER

Poot is sitting on a chair.

HALEY

Loser gets a make-over.

Haley whispers to the MAKE-UP LADY.

TIME-LAPSE as the CHAIR SPINS AROUND: Poot has a ton of hair clips in his hair, and is covered in glitter eye makeup. Poot checks his look and turns seriously to the MAKE-UP LADY.

POOT

Two of everything, please.

Poot rises, and gets serious.

POOT

I'm just kidding. Four of everything.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - PROM DRESS SECTION

Joanne grabs a prom dress and goes to the dressing room. Haley, Mina and Wei Wei also grab dresses.

MOMENTS LATER Joanne is modeling her dress. Out of nowhere, Haley, Mina and Wei Wei start flip flopping through frame - tumbling in their big poofy dresses.

MINUTES LATER, Poot and Frank, now in dresses, cartwheel badly through frame. Joanne's buying her dress, apologizing to the apathetic SALES ASSOCIATE.

JOANNE

Sorry about them.

SALES ASSOCIATE

(monotone)

Why? It's hilarious.

Poot jumps up and sits on the counter in his dress.

POOT

Why are you buying a dress?

JOANNE

(smiling)

Cause you're taking me to your prom.

POOT

Eww.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Frank's truck blows through frame, an ARM thrusts JOANNE'S NEW PROM DRESS out the window. A REAL SCREAM from Joanne before it's quickly pulled back inside. Kids. For once.

INT. DORM - NIGHT

Haley sleeps. Poot and Frank on the floor, snoring.

INT. ELITE GYM - NEXT DAY

Workout. Elites doing their training rituals, Vickerman focused on Devon and Lacey, while fidgeting with his sling. The other girls seem goofy. They're not focusing, and should be prepping for Nationals. Vick is displeased.

VICKERMAN

I shouldn't have to remind you that only the top three earn automatic berths for Worlds.

(beat)

Read. My. Mind. Ladies.

The girls try and look serious. Joanne is in lala land.

VICKERMAN

Joanne. Get over here.

Joanne lazes over, giggling at something. Poot is making faces and doing comedy behind Vick, hidden in a foam pit. Then he takes off. Joanne's eyes following him.

VICKERMAN

Don't get cocky on me, Joanne. You are not guaranteed a spot.

JOANNE

I know. I'll be ready for prom, don't worry.

VICKERMAN

What are you talking about?

JOANNE

I'll be ready.

Joanne runs past a stunned Vick and up to the viewing deck.

INT. VIEWING DECK

Some parents sit upstairs. Poot and Frank waving goodbye to the girls...from the deck.

EXT. GYM PARKING LOT

Joanne rushes Haley escorting Poot and Frank to the truck.

JOANNE

Poot! We have a lot to review!

POOT

We do?

HALEY

(rolling her eyes)

Bye, guys. I'm out.

Haley bails leaving Poot's flummoxed, a little embarrassed about what's going on.

JOANNE

When are you picking me up? And you better get me a corsage.

FRANK

(to Poot)

Are you kidding me? She's a bitch.

Joanne is stunned. This is shocking news.

JOANNE

What?

FRANK

You heard me. I don't like how you act around Haley is all.

POOT

What Frank is saying is, it would be my honor.

JOANNE

You think I'm a bitch?

POOT

Yeah, but I don't have the problem with it that Frank does.

(MORE)



POOT (cont'd)  
(to Frank)  
What's a corsage?

INT. VIEWING DECK - MOMENTS LATER

Joanne waltzes in, happier than we've seen her. Haley's grabbing some water. Vick is signing for a delivery.

JOANNE  
I'm going to pro-om, I'm going to  
pro-om.

Joanne's mother is smiling with the glee of a sadist.

MRS. CHARIS  
Honey, we didn't move from Wichita  
so you could go to prom. We moved  
so you could go to the Olympics.

Haley makes a face of repulsion.

VICKERMAN  
Mrs. Charis --

MRS. CHARIS  
(wait finger in his face)  
Not yet.

MRS. CHARIS  
(to Joanne)  
You are a twenty-four-hour gymnast.  
Not part-time. Full-time. And we  
have an agreement that you've  
agreed to honor. You are not going  
to prom. End of discussion.

Joanne is visibly upset.

VICKERMAN  
Joanne's a lovely gymnast, but  
she's never going to make the  
Olympic team.

MRS. CHARIS  
The only reason we are here is  
because we agreed she'd be going to  
the Olympics.

ON HALEY, curious to see Vick's reaction. ON VICK, looking at  
Haley. ON JOANNE, looking at Vick. ON OTHER MOMS in the  
B.G., waiting to see what Vick will say. ON MRS. CHARIS,  
annoyed. Vick takes a deep breath. It's time to come clean.

VICKERMAN

I lied.

Vickerman surveys the room. From the LOOKS on PARENTS FACES, he's going to lose some business.

VICKERMAN

And lying to you so they can keep doing what they love has just been part of the deal. You want to hear that your kids are special. And they are. And maybe they will go to the Olympics. Maybe they will. But not telling you "maybe" is killing me. And I guess I got so sick of the chalk and so sick of the white lies that I forgot I was a human being and not a human chalk outline.

VICKERMAN

So, I'm done. I won't appeal to your vanity so you can tan in their reflected glory.

(to Mrs. Charis)

If you want Joanne to make the Olympic Team? Move to Finland.

Mrs. Charis officially explodes. A ten point 0.

MRS. CHARIS

We'll take her somewhere else.

VICKERMAN

Fine.

JOANNE

Nationals are a minute away! Where we gonna go?

MRS. CHARIS

I'll train you.

HALEY

I thought you wanted her to win.

Joanne looks horrified. Mrs. Charis calmly collects her bag and looks at Joanne as if to say, "we're leaving."

VICKERMAN

(to Joanne)

Joanne. You are more than welcome to stay.

Joanne holds her ground refusing to move. Mrs. Charis leaves, furious.

INT. ELITE GYM - VAULT RUNWAY

Mina and Wei Wei are working tumbling passes side by side on the vault runway. Joanne returns, pissed.

JOANNE

Why are you doing that?

MINA

Because it's fun? Let's do round-off, whipback, handspring into a double-pi.

ON JOANNE watching the duo tumble in sync.

JOANNE

Your toes weren't pointed. You look like Power Tumbling freaks.

MINA

Don't hate on my fuel-injection.

JOANNE

You can't go to the Olympics for Power Tumbling, Mina.

MINA

You can't go to the Olympics for rude and that's not stopping you.

JOANNE

Apparently, I can't go to the Olympics. Period.

HALEY

If you're bummed at Vick, fine. But don't take it out on them.

JOANNE

This isn't about what Vick said! He's right.

(still reeling)

Your friend Frank called me a bitch.

HALEY

Joanne. If you don't want people to think you're a bitch, don't be a bitch. It's kinda straightforward.

JOANNE  
(freaking out)  
I just want to go to prom! They  
don't give out tiaras at nationals!

HALEY  
Joanne. If you act normal around  
Poot, he'll take you out.

JOANNE  
What's that supposed to mean?

HALEY  
Life is not a routine you have to  
do perfectly for an audience.

Joanne rolls her eyes at Haley, aghast and serious.

JOANNE  
Yes. It. Is.

Dorrie enters with a big box.

DORRIE  
New leos and sweats are here.  
(interrupting)  
Haley, what floor music are you  
using? Something pretty, I hope.

HALEY  
I'm considering performing to  
silence. It'll be super pretty.

Joanne is freaking out looking in the box.

JOANNE  
These don't match!

VICKERMAN  
That's the point.

JOANNE  
What? What is happening?  
(sitting down)  
I need to sit down.

DORRIE  
Music, Haley. Need to know.

HALEY  
I know. Don't worry about it.

Haley looks at Vickerman, who isn't listening, but is watching Devon and Lacey, who are rocking their tricks.

VICKERMAN  
(really pleased)  
Yeah, Dorrie, we're good. Don't worry. We're really, really good.

Haley smiles at Vick. PUSH IN ON VICK, smiling and nodding. He is content. The BACKGROUND SPEEDS UP and we MORPH INTO...

INT. NATIONALS - ANAHEIM CONVENTION CENTER

HIGH-SPEED CAM: The PODIUMS assembled in the arena, EQUIPMENT loaded into place. The SIGNAGE lowering from the scaffolding, announcing THE U.S. NATIONAL GYMNASTICS CHAMPIONSHIPS.

HIGH-SPEED CONTINUING into PODIUM WORKOUTS as all the COMPETITORS get their shot to warm-up in the space without an audience.

TIME SLOWS DOWN, as THE JUDGES, THE AUDIENCE and THE MEDIA file in, taking their places.

AT THE ARENA FLOOR ENTRANCE, we file past DOZENS of GYMNASTS in their CLUB SWEATSUITS waiting to march into competition. We land on Haley.

HALEY'S POV: The BRIGHTLY LIT ARENA.

HALEY (V.O.)  
I always thought it would be way better if competitors wore their feelings on their jackets instead of the names of their club.

ANGLE ON GYMNASTS, filing in. CLOSE ON BACK OF JACKETS.

HALEY (V.O.)  
HUNGRY. SUCK ON BARS. HATE MY COACH. MISS MY FAMILY. That's what I want to see. Who cares what club you train at, but what are you about? That's useful.

Haley's now walking towards us, the camera hinges on her revealing the back of her jacket, reading: CONFLICTED

HALEY (V.O.)  
I know my jacket would have a lot to say.

And then the words change: REBELLIOUS; NERVOUS; HOMESICK; SKEPTICAL; IRRITATED; EXCITED.

Haley turns around, smiling to herself about being there. When her smile SLO-MO'S into an 'oh-shit-not-this' look.

REVERSE POV: The legendary TRICIA SKILKEN (22) walking towards Haley, slicing past her like a razor.

ON TRICIA'S JACKET as she blows by Haley. THE WORDS FLASH INTO A SENTENCE: HALEY GRAHAM SCREWED ME OVER AT WORLDS AND ALL I GOT WAS THIS CRAPPY JACKET.

BACK WITH HALEY as TIME and JACKETS return to normal.

ON VICKERMAN, who clocked the exchange. He checks her forehead for fever before giving her a reassuring nod as we CUT TO

INT. PRESS DESKS - ARENA

BART CONNOR makes the call for ESPN.

BART CONNOR

The favorite has got to be four-time national and world team member, Tricia Skilken. Tricia has yet to medal on international soil, and is hoping to make her fifth World Team at these Championships.

PAN TO TIM DAGGETT and ELFIE SCHLAGEL.

TIM DAGGETT

A two year hiatus is an fantasy in the short career of a gymnast. But Haley Graham is looking to turn that fantasy into reality at these Championships, Elfie.

ELFIE SCHLAGEL

We have some exciting newcomers debuting some unprecedented difficulty here tonight, Tim.

INT. VAULT WAITING AREA

Tricia is intentionally psyching Haley out. Haley takes a deep breath. Tricia crosses her arms.

HALEY

Look, Tricia. I didn't mean to wreck your Worlds.

(really trying)

My family was...disintegrating... and I want you to know I'm really sorry it affected you. I sent you a note. Apologizing.

(knowing it sounds lame)

I don't know if you got it or not.

Tricia stares at her with hatred and walks away. Haley's flustered, returning to her bag and plopping on the floor in the athlete's area, nervously taping her ankles, looking at something between her feet.

HALEY'S POV: Her GAMEBOY is between her taped feet, her big toes pressing the buttons. We ZOOM into the SCREEN, which MORPHS INTO an image of Haley saluting for her bar routine.

HALEY (V.O.)

When I get nervous, I have a ritual. I just look at the judges. (beat) And I picture them, in those ugly blazers, trying to do what I can do.

A MIDDLE-AGED FEMALE JUDGE SALUTES on the floor exercise and begins a routine. She's going for it when her pants rip. She stops, horrified, and tiptoes off, covering her rear end.

ON BARS, ANOTHER JUDGE slaps on some chalk, covering her blue blazer in white dust. AN OLDER JUDGE helps her prep the bars, spraying bars with the water sprayer.

THE JUDGE SALUTES, running to do a springboard mount onto the UNEVENS. She catches her shoe-clad feet on the bottom bar, doing a colossal face plant into the mat.

REVERSE ON GYMNASTS, calculating and writing down her score.

TIGHT ON A MALE JUDGE crying. THE CAMERA SPINS, revealing the terrified judge hanging under the balance beam, legs and arms clutching for dear life. Letting go, he falls out of frame with a THUD and an OW.

ON VAULT, A REALLY OLD JUDGE runs down the vault runway, doing a nice round-off entry. JUMP CUT and the Judge's body is now a dummy, which flies violently off the vault, OVER THE LANDING FOAM, and into the BLEACHERS.

HALEY (V.O.)  
Whatever you do don't picture them  
naked. It's really gross.

INT. VAULT ROTATION JUDGES PANEL

An irate VICKERMAN is protesting Mina's score.

VICKERMAN  
Where's this deduction coming from?

HEAD VAULT JUDGE  
Her bra strap popped out. It's an  
automatic deduction if an  
undergarment is showing.

VICKERMAN  
She is twisting through the air at  
high speeds - of course her bra  
popped out! That rule is ancient!

HEAD VAULT JUDGE  
Just like her bra.

Haley overhears this as she's prepping for Vault.

VICKERMAN  
(to gymnast)  
Your bra was sticking out.  
(disbelieving, to anyone)  
One tenth off because her bra was  
sticking out!

MINA  
(looking down)  
But I don't even have boobs!

All the competitors frantically checking bra straps. Haley  
shakes her head, enraged. Vickerman adjusts her beat-board.

HALEY  
I've never even heard of that!

ON HALEY, going up to the vault runway. Furious. GREEN LIGHT.  
She salutes, before pulling her bra strap out so it shows.

ON VICKERMAN, enjoying her spunk with a big nod of approval.

ON HALEY, pausing before pulling the other strap out.

ON THE JUDGES, looking at her and marking it down.



HALEY  
(re: straps)  
It's part of my routine.

ON HALEY'S SCORECARDS, the stenography for the deduction getting marked on EACH of the FOUR CARDS.

ON HALEY, who does her vault. Perfectly. Stuck landing. As she raises her arms, she does something unusual.

ON YOUNG AUDIENCE MEMBERS, registering shock and then delight.

ON HALEY'S HANDS, doing the HEAVY METAL SALUTE as she salutes. WIDER as Haley smiles, Vick meets her as she exits.

VICKERMAN  
Nice stick. Next time you should  
stick out your tongue, too.

HALEY  
Good idea. You should consider  
coaching.

THE NEXT COMPETITOR heads up to vault. She thumbs out her bra strap at Haley in solidarity before tucking it back in.

INT. UNEVEN PARALLEL BARS PODIUM/WAITING AREA

MONTAGE of GRIP BAGS: the innards of each competitors grip ritual broken down to it's various, peculiar parts.

MONTAGE OF ROUTINES: the symphony of chalk and air.

EMOTIONAL MONTAGE: the FACES of COMPETITORS reacting to their scores - happy, crying, hurt, ecstatic...and as we land on WEI WEI...shocked. Haley throws her grips.

ON WEI WEI'S SCORE: 9.375

BOOS can be heard throughout the arena. Vick is livid.

HALEY  
Vick! Don't let them do this.  
Stand up.

VICKERMAN  
Smack down is more like it.

Vick stomps over to the HEAD UNEVENS JUDGE at the table.

VICKERMAN

What are you doing? Her routine had a ten point 0 start value! Where'd you find those deductions? On the floor?

HEAD UNEVENS JUDGE

We've decided the release is a D value, not an E. Her start value was nine point eight. Not a ten.

VICKERMAN

But it already is an E. It already is an E in your Code of Points!

HEAD UNEVENS JUDGE

In the Men's Code of Points.

VICKERMAN

The strength required for that move from a young woman should increase its' difficulty, not decrease it.

HEAD UNEVENS JUDGE

This is women's gymnastics.

VICKERMAN

This is totally scrunched up.

HEAD UNEVENS JUDGE

Maybe you shouldn't have assumed anything. Perhaps you should have cleared this with an official before the competition.

Dorrie pulls Vickerman away before he's banned.

TIM DAGGETT (O.S.)

(indignant)

Due to a controversial devaluing, Wei Wei Yong - one of America's brightest newcomers - may not see international competition for another year.

ON HALEY AND WEI WEI, as Haley's doing some consoling.

HALEY

I'm sorry, Wei Wei. If you don't go to Worlds this year, you will next year.

WEI WEI  
I love you, Haley.

Wei Wei hugs Haley so hard she is caught off guard.

WEI WEI  
At least I qualified for event  
finals. Maybe I can medal on bars  
tomorrow.

ON HALEY, nodding, thinking of something.

HALEY  
Did Mina make event finals?

WEI WEI  
Yeah, on vault and floor. Joanne  
on bars and vault.

HALEY  
Tricia Skilken?

WEI WEI  
She qualified as an alternate, I  
think. Devon and Lacey placed top  
five all-around.

ON DEVON and LACEY, getting hugs from their families.

HALEY  
What about me?

WEI WEI  
You don't know?

HALEY  
What?

WEI WEI  
Yeah, you qualified for event  
finals.  
(unreal)  
On everything.

As the girls MARCH OUT, we HANG ON TIM DAGGETT interviewing  
VICKERMAN. A LINE of MEDIA wanting quotes and interviews.

INT. BANQUET HALL - NIGHT

National Championship Elite Banquet. The All-Around decided, the tough stuff is over and the banquet features OFFICIALS, COACHES and PARENTS getting drunk. The girls are bored, and still have to compete tomorrow.

Haley is fuming. Vickerman is getting lots of props from fellow coaches and parents, but Haley can't get past it. Staring down the judges and officials.

VICKERMAN

Hey, Grindy, how's that axe?

Haley's distracted. Ivan and Dorrie dance drunkenly.

HALEY

It's like today never happened.  
It's like gross and vomit got  
married. I can't take it!

ON HALEY finding and tapping Wei Wei on the shoulder. JUMP CUTS of CERTAIN GYMNASTS getting shoulder-tapped.

INT. HOTEL RESTROOM - MOMENTS LATER

FIFTEEN GYMNASTS - Joanne, Wei Wei and Mina amongst them - are crammed into a hotel Ladies Room with two stalls. Haley pulls a chair in front of the door.

FUN WITH SIZE CONTRASTS: THEIR SIZE VERSUS THE PAPER TOWELS; EVERYTHING LOOKS BIGGER; THEIR VOICES are SQUEAKY and HIGH.

HALEY

Are all the girls from tomorrow's  
event finals here? Block the door  
and sit on it.

Tiny Mina squats on the chair like a Fu Dog.

HALEY

Is anybody else completely over the  
scoring today?

The girls MOAN slightly.

HALEY

Is anyone else over people who  
can't do forward rolls telling us  
how to do tricks they will NEVER be  
able to do?

This gets some reaction.

HALEY

Tomorrow doesn't matter. Event finals will not affect the World Team selection at all. And I just think we should use it.

JOANNE

Haley. Some of us need to rest. What's your point?

HALEY

I think it's time to make a point. It's time for us to control the results.

RITA

How?

HALEY

We choose the winner on each event.

RITA

That's like fixing.

JOANNE

It's like breaking! It's not broken! Why are we breaking it?

HALEY

It is broken. It's totally broken! We could decide who is the best and most innovative on each apparatus.

JOANNE

We're never going to be able to agree on that!

HALEY

Who here saw Wei Wei on bars today? Or Gloria Javier?

Hands up.

HALEY

Can anybody here say they weren't the two best? By far?

JOANNE

Hey, I'm supposed to compete on bars, Haley! My parents are expecting me to medal.

GLORIA

Big deal. So are mine.

HALEY

And Beth Holtan is the best on beam and we've never seen her on broadcast cause she gets deducted for doing original stuff and never places top three. She had to water down her routine just to make event finals, right?

BETH

True.

HALEY

Who's best on floor?

GROUP

You/Mina/Mina/You.

Mina smiles.

JOANNE

I don't know about you guys, but I don't want to tee anyone off. And this will tee everyone off.

The GIRLS aren't so sure.

HALEY

Good! Who on vault?

GIRLS

Rita.

HALEY

Am I bananas or does anyone else agree with me?

Mina and Wei Wei and Gloria raise their hands. The other girls look scared. Joanne takes this as a good sign.

RITA

I've gotta ask my coach. I can't -- I don't know what would happen.

MINA

You can't ask your coach! You can't tell anyone we're doing this, it has to be a surprise.

The girls seem very unsure. POUNDING ON DOOR.

JOANNE

Guys? No one has to do this.

HALEY

If you're in, follow my lead at  
March-In tomorrow.

WEI WEI

What're you gonna do?

Haley gives this some thought and bites her lip.

HALEY

I don't know yet.

INT. ARENA - NATIONAL EVENT FINALS - VARIOUS

MUSIC UP: "Lights, Camera, Action" by Mr. Cheeks.

The stage is being set: JUDGES take their places, FANS take their seats, and MEDIA get into position with their cameras.

ON TIM DAGGETT and ELFIE SCHLAGEL, getting miked and running through their opening.

OFF-STAGE, an OFFICIAL calls out each FINALIST'S NAME as they get into a single file line for March-In. Each gymnast stoically takes her place in line, barely hiding nerves.

ON HALEY, nervously fidgeting with her sweatsuit zipper.

ARENA ANNOUNCER

Ladies and gentleman, please  
welcome this year's National  
Championship Event Finalists.

EACH GIRL WALKS OUT, SALUTES THE AUDIENCE AFTER HER INTRO, AND WAITS IN LINE, WAVING TO THE CROWD. Uncertain looks flashing over their faces.

COACHES surveying the proceedings, and PARENTS applauding.

PAN DOWN LINE OF GYMNASTS, ON MINA, biting her lip, ON WEI WEI, blinking nervously, and ON JOANNE, struggling.

JOANNE

This will permanently mark us,  
don't you think?

HALEY

It doesn't matter what I think,  
Joanne. You gotta do what you  
think is right.

As they turn to head towards the Floorex mat, Haley stops.  
She takes off her warm up jacket, throwing it onto the floor.

IN THE AUDIENCE, quizzical looks.

IN THE JUDGE PANELS, this is weird.

BETWEEN TIM AND ELFIE, a shrug.

ONE BY ONE, EACH FINALIST throws down her jacket until it  
gets to Joanne.

ON JOANNE, pausing, seeing her mother in the stands. Joanne  
throws hers in as well.

INT. VAULT ROTATION WAITING AREA/PODIUM - MOMENTS LATER

Amy chalks up. Prepping for her vault, her COACH talking to  
her.

TIM DAGGETT

Amy is last year's National  
Champion and current world bronze  
medalist on this event.

Amy walks onto the podium, salutes the judges and runs.

ON HALEY AND WEI WEI with a look: Why is she vaulting?

ON THE JUDGES assessing the run, pencils poised.

ON AMY, assaulting the beatboard. TIME PLAYS TRICKS as her  
feet spring and her hands move towards the vault tongue.

CLOSE ON HER HANDS as they lightly touch the vault, and she  
does a simple squat vault.

ON AMY'S COACH and PARENTS, confused then ballistic.

ON AMY, trying not to smile too hard. She descends the  
stairs, the other event finalists cheering wildly.

ON SCOREBOARD: 0.0

Amy moves to Haley, whispering.



AMY VAULTER

If we're getting zeroes, we might  
as well give em a show?

VAULT ROTATION MONTAGE:

- ANNIE, doing a straddle vault and laughing hysterically.
- MINA doing a super intense run, then stopping short of the vault, touching the vault lightly and kicking up her foot.

VICKERMAN

What was that?

MINA

That was that.

- HALEY prepping her vault. Really laying it on. A round-off handspring back tuck that lands ON the beat board. She shrugs with a "What have I done?" look, touches the vault and exits.
- ON A MEET DIRECTOR, rushing Vickerman.

MEET DIRECTOR

Are you behind this?

VICKERMAN

I'm not this smart.

- JOANNE, looks at HER MOM, who is pissed. Smiling, Joanne does a modeling catwalk strut down the runway.

TIM DAGGETT (O.S.)

She's not chalking up, either. She  
is walking down the runway. There  
is something very weird going on  
here today, Elfie.

ELFIE (O.S.)

You can say that again.

TIM DAGGETT (O.S.)

There is something very weird going  
on here today, Elfie.

ON PRESS, acting chaotic, trying to figure out what's going on. PAN TO TIM DAGGETT, realizing the gymnasts are implementing the riskiest skill yet -- making a statement.

JOANNE'S SCORE: 0.0

ELFIE

Five zeroes. This has never happened before.

The CROWD IS BUZZING with COACHES and PARENTS freaking!

ON RITA, chalking up. Spits in her hands with the nervous smile of someone who cannot believe what she's about to do. RITA'S COACH appears flummoxed. All the EVENT FINALISTS are lined up, CHEERING Rita on.

The coach steps away, dismayed. Rita salutes with deep calm and a genuine expression of pleasure. It's the first time we've seen anything like it on a competitors face.

GIRLS

Come on, Rita! Stick it, Rita!

THE AUDIENCE is looking down. On the edges of their seats, not sure what is happening. OFFICIALS scrambling and YELLING.

TIM DAGGETT

She is vaulting a Tsukahara with a double pike. It has a 10.0 start value.

ELFIE

And she could do a simple handspring and win. Interesting rotation.

ON HALEY & CO - biting their lips, so nervous for her.

ON JUDGES, signaling.

ANATOMY OF A VAULT:

Time and perspective shift; inside, outside and around this impossible skill.

IN THE FLOOR, RITA'S FEET pounding over us.

LOW ANGLE FLOOR, running with her.

INSIDE THE BEATBOARD, her feet slamming onto the springs.

OVERHEAD ON THE VAULT TONGUE as her body springs off.

ECU ON HER HANDS hitting the vault and WIDER PROFILE as HANDS IMPACT and WIDER as she's SPINNING THROUGH AIR. Pure poetry.

LOW ANGLE as her feet near the floor, and HIGH FRAME RATE as her feet stick to the mat. Like glue.

ON RITA her face registering the unbelievable surprise and relief that comes with sticking an insanely dangerous vault.

ON THE GYMNASTS, going bananas.

ON RITA, pausing that last second to show the judges she got it, then raising her arms and holding her stick for a glorious moment. She turns and salutes, waves to the crowd and shrieks as she bops off the podium.

TIM DAGGETT

If she does not get a ten on this,  
there is no justice.

ON THE JUDGES, not looking at each other. They feel the pressure, and are not quite sure of what just happened.

ON THEIR PADS, FOUR GLYPHS for a perfect Tsuk Piked.

ON THE VAULTING FINALISTS, nervously awaiting Rita's score.

ON THE SCORE: 10.0

ON THE FINALISTS, hugging Rita ecstatically!

THE CROWD and ANNOUNCERS going NUTS!

INT. UNEVEN PARALLEL BARS WAITING AREA/PODIUM - LATER

ON JOANNE saluting. She touches the lower bar, salutes again and walks away, thumbing her bra out in solidarity.

THREE MORE SCRATCHES from GLORIA, REBECCA and HALEY.

ON THE MEET DIRECTOR, conferring nervously with a GROUP. REBECCA and HER COACH are talking to them.

ON HALEY and WEI WEI, concerned.

ANOTHER SCRATCH: from LESLIE.

ON WEI WEI, at the chalk bowl. Vickerman is smirking.

VICKERMAN

Hey, Wei Wei.

WEI WEI

Hey, Vick.

VICKERMAN

Looks like you're going to actually do a routine. Imagine that!

(MORE)

VICKERMAN (cont'd)

We're at National Championships in the Event Finals and someone is actually going to compete! It's crazy!

WEI WEI

Since when have you cared what I was up to?

VICKERMAN

Since you made me look.

Wei Wei chalks up. MRS. CHARIS SCREAMING at JOANNE in b.g. Vick is intercepted by the angry MEET DIRECTOR.

MEET DIRECTOR

You wanna explain what's going on? Are you planning on getting control of your athletes?

VICKERMAN

With what, a remote? If you are operating under the impression that we have any control over them, they might be dedicating this song to you, Tiger.

MEET DIRECTOR

I have corporate sponsors down my throat and a network to answer to. And Congratulations. You're about to have the new National Bar Champ.

ON JUDGES, giving Wei Wei the green light.

ON WEI WEI, saluting as a KICK ASS TRACK kicks in.

ANATOMY OF A BAR ROUTINE:

An editorial philharmonic: atomic chalk dust; trick time; APPARATUS CAM; POV'S and ECU'S of every which Wei Wei. A festival of facial expressions, hands, legs, speed, grace, amplitude and effort on this bitch of an apparatus. The routine is full of high-flying, full-twisting release moves.

Before her dismount she stops, standing on the high bar, pumping her fist twice, then giant-swinging into a double twisting double back dismount. Stuck cold.

ON THE JUMBOTRON, Wei Wei showing tons of emotion.

ON TIM AND ELFIE, speechless.

TIM DAGGETT  
I'm speechless, Elfie.

ELFIE  
We'll re-record something later,  
Tim.

Off their stunned and impressed expressions we CUT TO

THE WAITING AREA as Wei Wei rushes down to hugs and goodwill from her competitors.

ON THE SCOREBOARD: 9.4

ON VICKERMAN, outraged. BOOS are heard from the AUDIENCE. Vick goads the HEAD BAR JUDGE just for the hell of it.

VICKERMAN  
Tell me something: how can you  
judge originality when you don't  
even know what it looks like?

Off the Head Bar Judge's tight smile we CUT TO

INT. BALANCE BEAM ROTATION WAITING AREA

The Meet Director's blocking the stairwell to the podium. The SIX BALANCE BEAM FINALISTS stand there.

MEET DIRECTOR  
Are you going to tell me who is  
going to compete and who isn't?

ONE by ONE, we PAN ACROSS each of the SIX GIRLS, as they cross their arms in defiance, refusing to speak.

MEET DIRECTOR  
You're not going to tell me, are  
you?

EACH GIRL gives an emphatic 'no' with her head.

MEET DIRECTOR  
Because there are alternates who  
would like to compete.

REVERSE REVEALS TRICIA SKILKEN and TWO OTHER GYMNASTS, arms crossed, staring down the girls.

ON THE GIRLS, looking uneasy. Especially Rebecca Blank.

HALEY

There's nothing they can do. He's covering his butt.

The Meet Director looks like he might cry, but thinks better of it. Rebecca bites her lip.

INT. BEAM PODIUM - DURING WARM-UP - SWITCH.

ON MINA: GREEN LIGHT/SALUTE/TOUCHES BEAM/SALUTES/0.0

ON HALEY: GREEN LIGHT/SALUTE/TOUCHES BEAM/SALUTES/0.0

INT. BEAM PODIUM WAITING AREA - MOMENTS LATER

As Haley descends the podium, Mina frantically points to...

REBECCA who is dropping out, and switching places with TRICIA SKILKEN.

HALEY

Monkey buggers.

BETH

What's up?

Tricia shoots Haley an evil smile and warms up.

HALEY

Tricia's gonna compete.

INT. BEAM PODIUM

GREEN LIGHT goes on.

ON TRICIA, saluting. Smiling beautifully.

TIME PLAYS TRICKS through a classic, solid beam routine. There are no mistakes. No bobbles. No excitement.

ON BETH and HALEY, conferring on this change of plan.

BETH

I don't have to go. I can scratch and we can still make our point.

If I do the full-on routine her scores will beat mine, for sure.

HALEY

It's your call. I wanna see your routine.

ON TRICIA'S DISMOUNT, there's APPLAUSE. She salutes like she's got it in the bag.

ON THE JUDGES, scribbling.

ON TRICIA, blowing by the girls before stopping, turning, and smirking at Beth and Haley.

BETH

(off smirk)

Oh, I'm so going.

ON TRICIA'S SCORE: 9.312

INT. BEAM PODIUM

FINALISTS are CHEERING in the B.G., as a pumped Beth ascends.

ANATOMY OF A BEAM ROUTINE:

ON BETH, saluting at the GREEN LIGHT. And like a Missy Elliott video, she launches the most amazing hybrid of all time: a pop and lock, hip-hop beam routine. Her BREATHING, HEARTBEAT and BODY SOUNDS creating her own personal SOUNDTRACK.

Using the circumference of the four-inch beam and going in directions that are unusual for this apparatus, Beth throws a dismount that's more Crouching Tiger than Carly Patterson.

ON THE JUDGES, looking uneasy. They are not sure how to evaluate this, but they are not allowed to confer. A TECHNICAL JUDGE raises her hand, signaling the HEAD BEAM JUDGE, who comes over. They confer very animatedly.

ON BETH, waving to a NUTSO CROWD who are SCREAMING their heads off.

ON TIM AND ELFIE, still flummoxed.

ELFIE

We can re-

TIM DAGGETT

- re-record it later, I know.

ON HALEY and FINALISTS, waiting for the score.

ON THE SCOREBOARD: 8.8

ON THE CROWD going ape shit, BOOING and HISSING.

ECU: JUMP CUTS OF TWO CONSECUTIVE HANDS TOUCHING THE BEAM.

INT. FLOOR EXERCISE PODIUM - WARM UP

Mina, Haley and the other floor finalists warming up tumbling passes on floor. Having fun. High-fiving all the way. Haley does a head-count. There are only five gymnasts.

MINA

Someone scratched so Tricia could go. Again.

Here comes Tricia Skilken, entering the floorex like a villain, stepping onto a corner of the mat for warm-up.

ON THE GIRLS, outraged. F-You, Tricia!

Tricia does a warm-up pass. So does Haley. Vickerman moves some landing mats onto the floor for Haley's warm-up.

VICKERMAN

I don't suppose this was your idea.

HALEY

It was more like a group effort.

VICKERMAN

Well, congratulations. Your revolution will be televised.

(re: Tricia)

I hope you're locked and loaded, cause it is show-down at the Floor-Ex corral.

INT. FLOOR EXERCISE PODIUM

BROOKE salutes. Steps on the floor. And off. Her MUSIC starts anyway. She re-salutes and marches off with fierce determination within milliseconds. Scratch.

JUMP CUTS OF TWO MORE GIRLS repeating the drill.

THREE CONSECUTIVE SCORES of 0.0



INT. FLOOR EXERCISE WAITING AREA - PODIUM STAIRS

Haley shakes her head to Mina.

HALEY

Don't worry, you can totally beat whatever score Tricia gets.

Mina stops Haley as she is about to go on. THE OTHER THREE FINALISTS stand behind her.

MINA

No, I can't. Don't scratch.

HALEY

What do you mean?

MINA

We all want you to go.

HALEY

But you're going.

MINA

We wanna see the routine. I gave them the Metallica song. It's cued up. We all voted. We want you. Please?

ON MINA and COMPANY, nodding at her.

ON HALEY, nodding back...touched.

HALEY

If you say so.

MINA

We say so, we say so!

Haley blows it out and shakes it off, and goes up the podium. As she's heading up, Vickerman storms up to her.

HALEY

Hey. Are you mad at me?

Vickerman shakes his head as they turn and look to...

TRICIA, arms folded, hating on Haley big time. And VICK STARES TRICIA DOWN before turning to Haley.

VICKERMAN

She makes me mad. You?

TIGHT ON VICK, so proud of her, he's choking up. Can't speak.  
TIGHT ON HALEY, who feels how much he cares...fighting tears.

HALEY

Don't!

Vickerman nods, barely containing the emotion.

VICKERMAN

Remember that time I said you were  
great once?

Haley nods.

VICKERMAN

You really, really are.  
(pulling it together)  
Now, go kick her ass.

Vick gives her a thumbs up as she walks onto the podium with  
a last glance AT TRICIA. AND BEHIND TRICIA, HALEY'S MOTHER,  
in the stands, standing, jumping up and down and waving  
frantically with both arms.

ALICE

Stick it, honey! Stick it!

ON HALEY, who has to shake her head and grin as she steps  
onto the podium and waits for her green light. And with it,  
she steps onto a corner of the Floor Exercise Mat.

WIDE ON THE ARENA, everyone on the edge of their seats. Haley  
but a dot on the big, blue surface.

ON JUDGES, pencils poised.

ON HALEY, smiling as the unmistakable notes of Metallica's  
'ENTER SANDMAN' begin.

CLOSE ON HALEY'S MOM, ALICE, and CHRIS DEFRANK in the stands.

CHRIS DEFRANK

Ucchh, not this music again. What  
is the deal with this song?

ALICE

I thought you knew.

Chris shakes his head.

ALICE

It's her father's favorite song.

INT. FLOOR EXERCISE PODIUM - CONTINUOUS

ANATOMY OF A FLOOR EXERCISE ROUTINE:

BACK WITH HALEY, setting up for her first tumbling pass: a round-off, whipback, whipback, double-layout into a punch - front layout. Insane. The CROWD GOING CRAZY.

TIGHT ON HALEY, doing a series of FLARES across the diameter.

IN THE WAITING AREA, the other gymnasts are standing on the chairs to watch. Vickerman looks on proudly.

Haley's hitting everything one hundred percent. It is hard-core tumbling and innovation without the girly crap. She sets up for her fourth and final tumbling pass: a round-off, X-out, X-out, double-twisting-double-back. And sticks it.

The music STOPS. HALEY'S BREATHING and HEARTBEAT are THUMPING so loud it's all we can hear. Is the crowd silent?

HALEY'S POV: THE CROWD isn't responding. And then...on its feet ERUPTING into APPLAUSE.

Haley waves to the crowd in amazement and delight.

INT. FLOOR EXERCISE WAITING AREA - MOMENTS LATER

Haley rushes off the podium and into the congratulations and arms of her fellow athletes. Mina and Wei Wei are giddy.

MINA

Hang on, I have to go scratch!

Mina rushes up onto the podium as the FINALISTS congratulate Haley, waiting for her score.

ON HALEY'S SCORE: 9.1

BOOS from the arena. Smiles from Haley. High fives from Mina, Wei Wei and the other Event Finalists.

ON TRICIA, walking up to the podium.

ON THE JUDGES, giving the green light.

ON TRICIA, saluting and stepping onto the mat and getting into position.

ON THE OTHERS, sighing from disappointment.

MINA

Maybe she'll eat mat.

ON THE CROWD, waiting for Tricia's music.

ON TRICIA, as the MUSIC STARTS. She smiles. Salutes. And steps OFF THE MAT.

ON THE GIRLS, shocked!!! She's playing along!! MUSIC stops.

ON THE JUDGES, scribbling.

ON TRICIA, exiting the podium, passing the girls with a smile before thumbing her bra strap out in solidarity.

ON TRICIA'S SCORE: 0.0

ON TIM AND ELFIE, stunned.

INT. WINNERS PODIUM MONTAGE - VARIOUS - LATER

ON RITA, alone on the podium, receiving gold.

ON WEI WEI, receiving her gold medal and waving.

ON BETH, receiving her silver medal and watching TRICIA as she receives her gold medal. After a beat, Tricia removes her medal, puts it on Beth and walks off the podium with a thumbs up. On Beth, delighted with her double necklace, waving animatedly to the crowd.

ON HALEY, receiving her gold with her trouble-maker grin, loving every moment of it, looking at her medal in disbelief.

HALEY (V.O.)

As I got my totally fake first-place medal, I realized that gymnastics wasn't there to judge me or diss me. Only I could do that. It wasn't even about the judges or the parents or the coaches at all. It was about us. And for us. And that felt totally first-place real to me.

As Haley waves, A GROUP of GIRLS wave back at her. One of those girls is Tricia.

INT. PRESS AREA - LATER

As the ATHLETES finish giving comments, HALEY'S PHONE comes to life. She answers and looks at it, finding Joanne. \*

HALEY  
It's for you. \*

ON HALEY'S PHONE: A PHOTO of POOT holding a CORSAGE for JOANNE. Joanne grabs the phone, excited. \*

JOANNE  
Poot. I wanted a pink corsage.  
(off Haley's look)  
But white will work! \*

Joanne gives Haley a smile and a thumbs-up while going to talk to Poot in private. Vick pulls Haley away from MEDIA. \*

VICKERMAN  
Haley. I got some really bad news.

HALEY  
What?

VICKERMAN  
How much do you hate college gymnastics?

Vickerman is holding a stack of cards from all the top NCAA schools in the country -- UCLA, Georgia, Stanford, Alabama.

HALEY  
I've decided not to hate things I haven't tried.  
(beat)  
Or I could just tell them to stick it.

VICKERMAN  
Like you know how to stick it.

HALEY  
My feet were glued!

VICKERMAN  
To a high-speed bus --

On Haley and Vickerman walking towards a throng of YOUNG FANS WITH PROGRAMS waiting for their new hero's autograph. \*

THE END