

"SPIKED"

By

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FADE IN:

INT. VOLLEYBALL GYM - NIGHT

Garfield High School is playing in the League Finals against their rivals, SCH (San Cutberto High School). Their COACH calls a timeout and the girls go in for a huddle, before their next serve.

TEEKA (co-captain), GOGGLES (sports glasses), POPE (arm-sleeve), LA LECHUZA (co-captain), and JACKIE (libero) gather around their Coach.

COACH

Okay ladies, match point. We need to make a radical change to literally everything we are doing if we are going to win. Luckily, I came up with some new...

Coach opens her binder and realizes it's the wrong binder.

COACH

Oh, no. It's in my other binder. If they try to restart the set, tip the cooler over. That should buy us a few minutes.

Coach slaps the top of an orange five gallon water cooler. Then frantically takes off for the locker room. All of the girls look at each other nervously, Teeka is about to say something when La Lechuza takes charge.

LA LECHUZA

Alright, we're probably gonna lose. Anybody got any ideas so we don't lose?

JACKIE

Isn't that your job, Captain?

Teeka opens her mouth to speak, Pope cuts her off.

POPE

Jackie, if your not going to be helpful-

GOGGLES

We're running out of time.

LA LECHUZA

(to Teeka)

Teeka? Anything to add,  
*Co-Captain?*

TEEKA

I noticed that- Everybody's doing  
a great job... It's just- I think if  
we tried-

The umpire blows a whistle, the timeout is over. Jackie  
scoffs at Teeka.

LA LECHUZA

Well, this is it. If they're gonna  
win, the least we can do is make  
'em bleed for it.

La Lechuza pats the team on their backs and they get back  
in position. Goggles is prepping to serve, she takes time  
to focus then hits the ball just barely over the net.

A girl from the other team immediately spikes it into the  
ground. Jackie dives, but isn't able to reach it. The game  
is over. The Garfield team is dejected as SCH celebrates.

The Coach returns with the correct binder excited, but her  
face drops when she realizes they already lost.

CUT TO:

EXT. GYM PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Teeka, Jackie, Goggles, Pope, and La Lechuza are loading up  
a van with volleyballs and equipment, in silence.

POPE

Are we still going to stop and get  
some Moco's Coco-Locos on the way  
home?

GOGGLES

Can we please drive straight back?  
I am not in the mood for Moco's  
Coco-Locos.

JACKIE

You don't deserve a Moco's  
Coco-Locos. Are we seriously not  
going to address the fact that  
Goggles did terrible?

LA LECHUZA

Hey! Anybody with four dollars  
deserves a Moco's Coco-Locos.  
Look, we put our butts in the fire  
today. And, what happens when your  
butt gets burned?

POPE

You have to use a donut to poop.

LA LECHUZA

Exactly, Pope, and that makes your  
butt stronger. It teaches you  
humility and accuracy. Today we  
might have gotten burned, but next  
year we are going to come back  
even stronger. You are going to  
come back even stronger.

GOGGLES

Thanks, La Lechuza. I'm sorry. I  
know it's your last season and I  
just kept screwing up... I don't  
want you to go!

Goggles hugs La Lechuza, who pats her back awkwardly. Pope  
drops her stuff and starts hugging them both. Teeka and  
Jackie look at the hugging, then turn to each other very  
confused. Jackie continues loading the van.

JACKIE

Why are you hugging? We just lost.  
Again. Goggles needs to be  
chastised by her peers, so she  
doesn't do it... Again!

Pope puts a hand on Jackie's shoulder, and grips a bit too tight. Jackie winces.

POPE

Maybe we should try to focus on the positives? Like, we're gonna beat the traffic because we're leaving early.

LA LECHUZA

They wanted it more than we did. Full stop. We lost that game six months ago, not today. We did, however, make it to the Semi-Finals, and nobody got ejected from the game. You ask me, that's a great last game.

TEEKA

(to herself)

Would have been better if we won... I mean, for me, personally. Woulda' liked to win.

Only Jackie hears Teeka whisper as the two of them finish loading the van.

JACKIE

Whatever. If I can't yell at Goggles then I better get some freaking Moco's Coco-Locos.

Jackie shoves the last bag into the trunk and gets in the van slamming the door. Pope is crying, nobody else is.

POPE

Can I tell you guys something...

Everybody turns to look at her, leans in close, and offers words of encouragement.

POPE

I hate Moco's Coco-Locos.

LA LECHUZA

Pope... We don't drink Moco's Coco-Locos because we like them.

LA LECHUZA (cont.)  
 We do it because that's what we do  
 after League Finals. Win or lose.

Pope and Goggles get in the car. Teeka is trying to shut  
 the van's back door, but it won't close.

LA LECHUZA  
 (sarcastic)  
 Thanks for the back up out there,  
 Co-Captain.

TEEKA  
 Not again. La Lechuza, I am  
 trying-

LA LECHUZA  
 You are not. I know you're only a  
 sophomore, maybe we put too much  
 pressure- Goggles made some  
 mistakes, sure, but you were  
 playing by yourself out there. On  
 purpose. You're our best player,  
 Teeka. But, you can't do it alone.

TEEKA  
 I know- It's just... I can't do what  
 you do.

LA LECHUZA  
 Nobody is expecting you to be me,  
 they need you to be Teeka and I  
 need some gosh darn Moco's  
 Coco-Locos.

La Lechuza gently pushes her aside and closes the back door  
 perfectly on her first try. She walks towards the driver  
 seat, but stops and turns around when Teeka calls out.

TEEKA  
 Lechuza! I knew exactly what  
 Goggles was going to do and that  
 their striker would block it. I  
 was going to have us switch  
 formation, but I didn't say  
 anything- It's my fault.

LA LECHUZA

Why the- You know what, Teeka?  
Keep that to yourself. I don't  
want to hear you telling that to  
anybody else. Okay?

TEEKA

They should know I am the reason  
we lost.

LA LECHUZA

No. You are not the reason we  
lost. We lost because they were  
better than us. And next year,  
you're going to lead this team.  
Sometimes that is going to mean  
lying to them. I lie all the time.  
For the team. You will too.

La Lechuza gets in the driver seat, the girls inside are  
yelling at each other. Teeka takes a moment to think,  
before getting in the passenger side.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARK - EVENING

TITLE: EIGHT MONTHS LATER

At hip-level two girls approach from a distance carrying  
duffel bags and water jugs, they set into focus and  
simultaneously drop their bags.

PAN UP: Teeka (junior) and Goggles (senior) are in  
mismatched, raggedy gear. Teeka is holding a tattered ball.

GOGGLES

Thanks for coming on such short  
notice.

Jackie (sophomore) and Pope (junior) are putting on socks  
and knee pads on the grass by a sand volleyball court.

JACKIE

You know this is literally our  
last Zero Day before the season  
starts?

TEEKA

Yep.

POPE

I assume we, the leaders of the team, have been mustered to sacrifice a freshman to the old gods?

GOGGLES

That's actually scheduled for October, but we do have an announcement.

Teeka's palms are sweating, she wipes them on her shorts.

TEEKA

So, well... Let's start stretching.  
*Behind the back.*

The girls all put their arms behind their backs.

TEEKA

I wanted to get us together before the season starts because... If we-  
If we want to make it to the Sectional Tournament- And, *switch!*

All of the girls stretch to the other side on Teeka's call.

TEEKA

We have a lot of work to do. On and off the court. Last year wasn't... It wasn't our best-

JACKIE

We were 7 and 23. Worst record in Garfield High School's athletic history.

Teeka stumbles for a moment and doesn't know what to say. Goggles steps forward and takes charge.

GOGGLES

Thanks for the reminder, Jackie.  
*Cross-Overs...*



All of the girls stretch one arm across their chest.

GOGGLES

We're gonna get started with some two on two. Then we are going to have a conversation about goal setting and visualization. Right?

TEEKA

Yep. And, *switch*.

JACKIE

So, what's the announcement? I am absolutely *bubbling* with anticipation.

TEEKA

Um... As tradition goes the upperclassmen met with Coach after practice last week- And, *butterflies*...

The team starts doing the butterfly stretch together.

POPE

We voted Goggles as Co-captain! Well, I voted for myself, but it became clear after the first count-

Jackie stops stretching.

JACKIE

Are you serious? After she choked at League Finals! I carried the team last year. As a *freshman*. Teeka made Captain when she was a sophomore!

GOGGLES

And if she hadn't, she wouldn't have complained about it.

TEEKA

I was going to say something else but that- That is also true. *Centerfolds*.

The girls cross one leg over the other and stretch their backs in unison.

JACKIE

Come on, at the very least I deserve- I earned a vote...

There is an awkward lull. Teeka clears her throat.

POPE

La Lechuza texted me yesterday. She wants to know what Teeka is planning to cook for the first Team Dinner.

GOGGLES

Lechuza texted you? *Switch!*

TEEKA

Wait, do you guys really expect me to make something?

JACKIE

Of course! La Lechuza's dinners were literally the only fun thing we did last season. I mean-

GOGGLES

We know what you mean. *Toe touches.*

POPE

I thought we did lots of fun things... There was that day a dog wandered into the gym? No wait... That day was actually very stressful.

JACKIE

Is it just me or does it feel weird without her.

TEEKA

She said she would come visit if we make it to the Sectional Tournament. *Pigeon!*

The girls roll their eyes and get in the Pigeon stretching position and groan while stretching their hips.

JACKIE

Remember when La Lechuza pushed the umpire's chair over?

GOGGLES

Or, when she ate an entire bag of mozzarella sticks!

TEEKA

Still frozen. And, *switch*.

POPE

What about that time she flooded our hotel room, that was- Actually, that was also a very stressful day.

TEEKA

Okay, we're done stretching. Do we need to keep talking? I mean- I enjoy our talk-time while we stretch, but now we scrimmage-time. Pope, you're with me. Um... Jackie, Goggles you're on that side.

Teeka stands and picks up the ball, passing it to Pope. They all get up and start passing around the ball as they take position on the sand court. Goggles tightens her sports glasses and Jackie sticks her tongue out at her.

POPE

Alright. I feel good, you guys feel good? Come on, let's keep the feel good train chugging along. It's not like we're keeping score. Oh, wait. I almost forgot-

Pope runs over to the sideline and turns on her speaker. An alt-pop song starts playing in the background, Teeka looks around at all of them and just barely manages to croak out:

TEEKA

Let's run it.

The beat kicks in as Teeka serves the ball.

CUT TO:

Jackie and Goggles struggle to play together. Teeka and Pope are beating them in the scrimmage. Teeka spikes the ball right between Jackie and Goggles, neither of them calls it, and it hits the sand.

POPE

11-4! You're both trying really hard out there, keep it up! (to Teeka) That's what I am talking about, Chica!

Pope and Teeka high five and do a secret handshake. Goggles and Jackie look at each other begrudgingly.

JACKIE

That was all you!

GOGGLES

It was in your allotment.

JACKIE

My allotment?

Jackie gesticulates and paces while arguing, Goggles stands completely still.

GOGGLES

Your allotment, your responsibility.

JACKIE

It *landed* in the middle!

Goggles turns to Teeka and waves her hand at Jackie.

GOGGLES

What am I supposed to do about this?

TEEKA

Come on, Captain: Co! Let's see some of those leadership skills we were practicing in the van.

Goggles shakes it off and pulls Jackie a little too hard into a huddle. Their heads accidentally bump.

JACKIE

Ow.

GOGGLES

Listen, we can do this. Teeka might be better than both of us... Combined.

JACKIE

But?

GOGGLES

But! We both know Pope's left foot is still scalded from stepping on that S'more. Play to her bad side.

JACKIE

Where has *this* Goggles been all my life? Set me up-

Both girls slap each other's backs and take position. Teeka serves, and Goggles steps in front of Jackie.

GOGGLES

No, set me up.

Jackie refuses to rally back and the ball falls down between them on their own side.

JACKIE

That was in your allotment.

TEEKA

Well, that was just poor execution.

POPE

Maybe you should try that brand new dance that's been sweeping the nation? All the teenagers are doing it. I know your gonna love it. It's called *Working Together!*

Pope does her signature dance mocking them both.

JACKIE  
And, if we don't?

Goggles chest passes Jackie the volleyball, hard.

GOGGLES  
Then we're going to suck this  
year. Again.

TEEKA  
You can lead a horse to water, but  
you gotta get right back on the  
horse...

Teeka stumbles over her words and realizes what she said  
was wrong.

TEEKA  
You get it.

JACKIE  
You know I was attacked by a  
horse, Teeka! I told you that in  
confidence.

Jackie steps up to Goggles and pokes her sports glasses.  
Goggles is trying desperately to stay calm.

JACKIE  
You choose to look that stupid and  
you still can't see the ball?

GOGGLES  
Okay, let's try that again, but  
this time, do it right.

POPE  
Teeka, are you going to do  
something about this?

TEEKA  
Why do you think I scheduled this  
practice?

Jackie and Goggles' argument progressively gets louder.  
Four girls from their rival school, SCH, approach. IZ  
(sophomore, talkative) is shelling pistachios, VANESSA  
(senior, captain) is vaping.

VANESSA

Hey Garfield! How much longer do you plan on yelling at each other? Because this is the only public court in town.

IZ

Which is a larger indictment on the town itself, but that's too complex a maze to enter right now.

VANESSA

Thanks, Iz. So, how long do we have to watch you not play volleyball before we can play volleyball?

GOGGLES

Sorry girls it's first come first serve, and the rules stipulate we have sixty minutes of play time. Since it's only been twenty-

A metal sign hung nearby reading "VOLLEYBALL RULES," with all the rules for the Volleyball Court.

IZ

Boo. That's lame. Signs don't control me.

Iz steps forward serving a ball towards Teeka, forcing her to catch it. The ball is brand new compared to the tattered ball Pope is holding next to her.

IZ

(cowboy accent)

How'se 'bout we play for it, pardner? We got four, y'all got three and a half. 'Bout as fair as it's gonna get.

The Garfield State players walk over to each other on the court and whisper while glancing over at their rivals. All of the SCH players have matching bags, clothes, and gear.

JACKIE

Was that a short joke?

TEEKA

Yep.

Pope gestures to the SCH team.

POPE

They literally won the Sectional  
Tournament last year.

GOGGLES

After beating us to a pulp at  
League Finals. Are you sure we  
wanna do this?

TEEKA

They come here to train the same  
time every week... Why do you think  
I scheduled this practice?

Vanessa blows out a cloud of smoke after ripping her vape.

VANESSA

So? What's it gonna be?

TEEKA

Let's run it?

The SCH players drop their bags.

CUT TO:

After a few rallies Garfield High School and SCH are evenly  
matched. Teeka makes a good save, Iz spikes the ball down,  
and Pope sets up Goggles. Vanessa blocks it and gets the  
point.

IZ

(to Jackie)

Hey, next time, maybe don't play  
volleyball. There's a bunch of  
other sports you might have been  
good at. Like foosball, or darts?  
What about trampolines?

VANESSA

Just play, Iz.



IZ

(to Vanessa)

I am easily distracted when I don't have a challenge, Nessa. Look how feeble her wrists are, there's no way she could foosball at a high school level.

They reset, Iz accidentally fumbles a block and the ball drops on her side. Jackie claps under the net in Iz's face.

JACKIE

Don't forget, you spent all of last year on the bench. You're on a good team, that doesn't make you a good player.

IZ

Remember, it's anybody's game, unless we get this next point. Then it's our game, and you guys have to go home.

GOGGLES

Don't you two ever shut up?

Iz points directly at Jackie.

IZ

No, because mouthy over there made Brenda cry last season, so tonight Brenda gets her revenge.

VANESSA

(to Pope)

That's not even the girl that made Brenda cry.

POPE

Can we get back to the game? We only have fifteen minutes left on the court.

Teeka passes the ball hard to Vanessa.

TEEKA

Your serve.

The athletes reset and Vanessa serves. Jackie goes to spike again, Iz dives for it and misses. Before Iz can get back up, Jackie steps on her hand. Iz screams and tries to pull away. Jackie presses her foot even harder.

TEEKA

What the heck Jackie?!

Jackie walks away like nothing happened, Iz jumps up clutching her hand.

JACKIE

It was an accident.

IZ

Your whole life is an accident!

VANESSA

Is it broken?

IZ

It's fine.

Vanessa tries to grab her hand, Iz pulls away.

IZ

I said, it's fine.

Goggles pulls Jackie back by her shirt.

GOGGLES

Listen up: if we lose, we lose. We do it with class, we don't pull stunts like that.

JACKIE

Lechuza did! At least I am doing something out there. You're basically hiding from the ball!

POPE

Honestly, Goggles, we need you here, right now and you're ten

POPE (cont.)  
miles away writing *Detective  
Catperson* fan-fiction.

Teeka goes under the net and calls out to Vanessa, who passes her the ball very hard. Iz looks like she is in a lot of pain, she keeps rubbing her hand.

TEEKA  
(to Vanessa)  
Look, I'm sorry. Is she okay?

VANESSA  
Let's just finish this.

Vanessa slaps Iz hard on the back and avoids Teeka's gaze. Teeka goes back to her side, really pissed off.

VANESSA  
Game point! Way to take it on the chin, Iz.

JACKIE  
(to Pope)  
From what I've heard, she takes it on the chin a lot.

POPE  
Not cool.

They go back to their positions, but before Goggles can serve, Iz kicks sand into Jackie's eyes. She freaks out and is essentially blinded. Immediately, falling to the floor.

JACKIE  
Ah, it's in my eyes. I can't see!  
It hurts, Teeka! What do I do?  
Someone do something!

Pope grabs a water bottle and holds Jackie as she cries. Goggles rushes under the net then punches a laughing Iz in the face instantly breaking her nose. Teeka stands frozen as she watches everybody react.

Iz falls to the ground groaning. Goggles turns around and grips her hand in pain. She looks over at Jackie, Pope is

pouring water onto her face. Teeka snaps out of it and kneels next to a crying Jackie.

POPE

Don't worry, I know how to handle this, my cousin once got dirt in his eyes. Oh shoot, but he's blind now.

JACKIE

I hate you, Pope!

Vanessa hits her vape then storms over and pushes Goggles from behind knocking her into the sand. Teeka watches for a moment then breaks into a sprint and tackles Vanessa to the ground. They begin to wrestle.

VANESSA

Don't start what you can't finish-

BRENDA runs over to grab Teeka off of Vanessa when Pope chucks the ball at her face and knocks her on her back. Jackie crawls to their bags and pours water bottles over herself as the others commence an all out brawl.

TEEKA

Is it just me or is this a surprisingly good team building exercise?

Vanessa is pulling Teeka's hair as Teeka elbows her in the ribs. Goggles throws a rival girl into the net like a wrestler, then pulls Vanessa off Teeka and throws her.

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