

PAS DE DEUX

Written by

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INT. UNIVERSITY CONCERT HALL - NIGHT

A completely packed audience stares up at two female tap dancers in beautiful sequined flapper get-ups performing a high energy duet. Something like "Dreamgirls" or the finale of "Chicago".

The pair strike a final pose and the crowd gives a standing ovation.

A young dark-haired man, WILLARD (20), stands out as he applauds. He wears a suit, smiling brightly at the woman stage left. He looks older for his age, tall with a well-groomed beard and a stoic demeanor.

CUT TO:

INT. CONCERT HALL LOBBY - NIGHT

People mill about, chatting. Willard stands statue-like holding a bouquet of daisies and babies breath and examining his phone. He looks to the hallway door.

EG (20), a vivacious, shorter woman with auburn hair and blue eyes, bursts through the doors, no longer in her flapper get-up but still with her hair pinned up and make up on. She wears yoga pants and tennis shoes and runs to Willard and jumps on him. He softens when she does this.

EG
(bouncing)
Hey!! How'd I do?

WILLARD
You were amazing. Now I know where
all those hours you spent
practicing went, great job!

EG
Thanks! Corinne and I really wanted
to go all out for the closing
number!

WILLARD
These are for you.

He hands her the flowers.

EG
Aww! That's so sweet! Thanks baby!
I love daisies.

WILLARD
(smirking)
I know.

EG
Shut up. I'm serious.
(sincere pause)
Thank you baby.
(beat)
Now I'm starving! Let's get food!

She is probably 10 decibels louder than him.

WILLARD
What would you like?

EG
Ooh! You know what I haven't had in
forever?? Taco Bell! C'mon, let's
go.

She teases him. He's not having it.

WILLARD
The day I eat Taco Bell is the day
it snows in Miami in July. No.

EG
Baby! I know how you feel but-- oh
my god! Oh no.

The joy drains from her face.

WILLARD
What?!

EG
I'm having an allergic reaction.

WILLARD
Wait what? Are you okay? What can I
do?

EG grabs at her throat and rasps for air.

EG
It's -- IT'S TACO BELL WITHDRAWAL!

WILLARD
Jesus Christ. I thought you were
actually dying or something. Don't
scare me like that.

EG giggles.

EG
Okay, so what are you in the mood
for?

CUT TO:

INT. MALL FOOD COURT - NIGHT

The pair are side by side laughing jovially walking with their trays to the trashcans. They throw away their food and leave the food court, sipping on drinks. EG drinks from a Taco Bell cup. Willard drinks from a Five Guys cup.

WILLARD
Would you be interested in heading
back and watching some Game of
Thrones?

EG
Oh yeah! I've been craving some
after the way the last episode
ended. Geez, I hope that bitch
Cersei finally gets what's coming
to her.

WILLARD
Haha, I get the feeling. But I'm
afraid you're going to have to wait
a few more seasons for that.

Willard keeps walking forward towards the exit, but something catches EG's eye and she stops.

WILLARD (CONT'D)
I'm glad you like it so much.
Honestly I was worried it would
upset--Hey babe?

He turns around.

WILLARD (CONT'D)
Where'd you go?

EG
Hey look at this bulletin!

A brightly-colored flyer features a silhouette of a man and woman dancing together ballroom style.

EG (CONT'D)
I haven't swing danced since high
school! Look it's an hour-long
dance class on campus followed by
social dancing!
(MORE)

EG (CONT'D)

We should do it, it'll be so fun!
Partner dancing has always been my
favorite.

EG bounces on the balls of her feet excitedly. She turns to Willard and sees his hesitation. He stares at the flyer frowning.

WILLARD

I don't know, I've never danced
before...

EG

(begging)

C'mon, it'll be so fun. I've always
wanted to dance with you. I want to
do the thing that I love with the
person I love.

He softens at her words and thinks for a moment.

WILLARD

Okay, yeah. If you want to swing
dance, let's swing dance.

EG

Yay!! Thank you thank you thank
you!

She whips out her phone and snaps a picture of the flyer.

EG (CONT'D)

I'll add it to the calendar.

She kisses him and the pair leave hand in hand. Willard steals one last look at the flyer, concern on his face.

CUT TO:

INT. LARGE GYMNASIUM - NIGHT

The pair walk across the floor between other couples to an empty spot. EG is in a long, pale green dress and heeled sandals. Willard sports a collard shirt, blue jeans, and a pair of cowboy boots.

Music begins to play over loudspeakers. Something swingy and sexy like "Pretty Woman" or "Fire" by the Pointer sisters. Two instructors take to the center of the floor and begin demonstrating the basic step.

Couples attempt to replicate, with success rates varying from awkward to elegant.

EG and Willard stand farther apart than normal, facing one another.

WILLARD
(terrified)
Um...

He reaches out but isn't sure where to hold. This is a completely different Willard than we met previously.

EG
Your hands go here.

She gently steps forward into him, placing one of his hands around her waist and clasping his other in the air.

EG (CONT'D)
(smitten)
I love this song. My grandparents
dance to it in the kitchen.

Willard seems to warm a little at this but it's still visibly frightened.

WILLARD
That's really sweet.
(stuttering)
Okay... Now what...

EG
It's okay to be nervous! But it's
easy. Here watch me--

He's getting flustered. This is not the Willard we've previously seen.

WILLARD
Babe. Babe slow down.

EG
Like this. You just triple-step,
triple-step, rock, step--

WILLARD
No, babe. I-- Wait.

The pair freeze.

EG
Hm? What's up?

WILLARD
I-- I don't think I can... do
this...

EG smiles dismissively, not getting it.

EG

What do you mean? Sure you can,
just follow me. Do you want to be
the follower? I think I have the
lead part figured out.

WILLARD

No! No. It's
(frustrated)
It's not that. I don't think I can
dance--like at all.

He pauses. Deep breath. Then suddenly--

WILLARD (CONT'D)

I just feel really uncomfortable
right now!

For the first time he is a lot louder than her. EG's smile
falters.

EG

What?

WILLARD

(pleading)

I don't know what's wrong with me,
my legs aren't moving and my hearts
racing. I'm trying, but I don't
know what's wrong. Can we leave?

Tears well up in EG's eyes.

EG

(whispering)

I'm sorry. I had no idea-- Yeah
let's just go.

WILLARD

No it's fine, let's just step
outside for a second.

CUT TO:

INT. A HALLWAY - NIGHT

The hallway is jarringly quiet compared to the roaring
ballroom. The pair sit on a bench side by side, untouching,
staring at the floor.

Willard looks at EG who stays concentrating on the floor. He grabs her hand.

WILLARD

I don't know what happened in there, I just got so overwhelmed.

EG

(choked up)

Don't be sorry, it's not your fault. I'm sorry I pushed you.

WILLARD

It's not your fault either.

She breaks a little. A tear spills down her cheek. She smiles apologetically, trying to look happy for his sake.

EG

The last thing I want to do ever is make you sad or scared or uncomfortable in anyway. This was supposed to be fun, something we could do together.

WILLARD

I know, I know. I'm sorry baby, it's not like that. That's never happened to me before.

A pause.

EG

Yeah... You didn't look like yourself.

WILLARD

I didn't feel like myself.

EG

I've never seen you not be self-assured.

WILLARD

If I'm being honest, it felt like I was a kid again all of a sudden. I couldn't really breathe.

EG

I think you had a panic attack, Willy.

She holds his hand in her lap and rubs it.

WILLARD

It was scary, and weird. I'm sorry
it scared you.

EG

Hey, don't worry about me, I'm
worried about you.

WILLARD

I'm fine now, but I don't really
feel like dancing if that's okay.

EG

Oh, yeah of course. Do you want to
head home?

WILLARD

Yeah... Let's get out of here. We
can go to my place. I think I need
a beer.

EG

Me too.

They exit the hallway, small.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT BEDROOM - NIGHT

EG is asleep in bed, Willard sits next to her on his
computer.

He researches dance classes and how-to videos: "How to move
with confidence" "How to dance on beat" "How to dance in a
club" "How to wall twerk".

He looks dissatisfied. He picks his phone up and types out a
text to CORINNE.

CUT TO:

INT. BALLET STUDIO - DAY

Sassy and carefree CORINNE (21), a petite but muscular
ballerina stands at the barre doing tendus and plies. She
talks to Willard who looks completely out of his element.

CORINNE

C'mon! It couldn't have been that
bad.

WILLARD

You didn't see how crushed she looked. She always does her best to share my interests and hobbies, I just wanted to do the same for her.

Corinne teases him.

CORINNE

Aww that's precious.

Willard becomes a little exasperated.

WILLARD

No I'm serious! Last month she surprised me with tickets to an exhibit on optic lasers at the science center! She toured the whole thing with me and didn't make fun of how cool I thought it was once!

CORINNE

That's pretty dorky.

His face falls.

CORINNE (CONT'D)

Geez, I'm only teasing ya! Of course I'll help! But I'm pretty busy so you're gonna have to work around my classes and studio time.

WILLARD

Of course, yes! I'll adjust to your schedule.

CORINNE

And it's not gonna be easy.

WILLARD

Thank you so much! I won't let you down!

Willard waves goodbye and quickly strides out of the room.

CORINNE

(calling to him)

Be back here at 0700 hours sharp!

(chuckling darkly to herself)

That boy is a dead man.

CUT TO:

INT. DANCE STUDIO - DAWN

The once happy-go-lucky and calm Corrine has been replaced by a drill sergeant wearing her clothes. Willard sweats profusely and pants bending over.

CORINNE
I'M GONNA BREAK YOU DOWN AND BUILD
YOU BACK UP!

He mutters under his breath between huffs.

WILLARD
I don't doubt that.

CORINNE
WHAT WAS THAT?

WILLARD
NOTHING SIR!

CORINNE
(disgusted)
Drop and give me fifty. Then back
to first position for the releve
work out of your life.

He drops to the floor and begins to count pushups.

WILLARD
(speaking stacatto with
his push-ups)
I don't--really see-- how this will--
-make me--any better--at dancing.

CORINNE
(Suddenly sunny in her
disposition)
Oh it won't! I just thought it
would be funny as hell.

Willard suddenly stops and looks up at her, mouth agape. She begins to cackle wildly.

CORINNE (CONT'D)
HAHAHA! Okay, okay!
(she wipes tears of
laughter from her eyes)
We can like, actually start now.

Willard remains silently and looks up at her incredulously. Corinne stares down, smiling guiltily.

CORINNE (CONT'D)

Well I had to make sure you were serious!

This blends into a montage of Willard's progress. Corinne hits play on a speaker and this diegetic music plays throughout the montage, something like "Let's Hear it for the Boy", an ode to Footloose or "Hypotheticals" by Lake Street Dive.

Montage 1:

- Corinne shows Willard how to do an "across the floor" in time to the music. She sashays, kick-ball-changes, and grapevines.
- Willard attempts to replicate with abysmal results.
- Corinne simply walks across the floor, Willard following closely behind in time with the music.
- They snap together in time with the music.
- The pair stand in front of the mirror, Corinne does a series of side-steps and Willard mimics. He looks very concentrated and a little pained, but he's getting it.
- Willard sits in a jeep in plain clothes and beats the steering wheel in time to the music.
- Alone now, back in the studio, he grapevines across the floor successfully once. He then tries to go the opposite way and trips.
- Willard walks out of a studio classroom to refill his water bottle.
- Willard is refilling his water bottle when he sees EG walking down the hall with a friend wearing leotards and ballet slippers. He panics. He looks around for a place to hide.
- Corinne and Willard both wear cowboy boots and dance outside. They complete a rotation of a fairly basic line dance in sync. Willard looks a little more comfortable.
- Willard stands in the back row of a dance class and follows along with the instructor.
- Corrine holds out a pair of tap shoes to Willard and he looks skeptical. He shakes his head no and walks away.

- Willard hides behind a trashcan as EG and her friend walk by. He holds his breath. EG's friends throw a coffee cup away and unknowingly misses. It hits Willard.
- Corinne and Willard stand in a courtyard in the swing dancing position, reviewing the basic steps.
- Back in cowboy boots Corinne and Willard successfully complete the TikTok "Footshake" dance. The pair are laughing and smiling.
- Willard peers around the trashcan and is relieved to see EG is gone.
- Trying again, Corinne performs a tap combo for Willard. He is unimpressed, shaking his head. Corinne responds with annoyance.
- Willard tries the "across the floor" combo with much more success. He can now do the whole thing by himself.
- Back in the courtyard the two learn spins and add a touch more flair to the swing dancing.
- Willard sits against the wall in the studio hallway, checking his phone.

END MONTAGE

Willard has a missed call from EG and listens to a voicemail she's left.

CUT TO:

INT. EG'S BEDROOM - DAY

EG chats into the phone, sitting at a desk chair, spinning idly.

EG

Hey Willy, I just wanted to call
and say I'm thinking 'bout ya. I
don't know if you got my text, but
I'm going to the library to study
later if you want to join, we can
get coffee beforehand? Or something
else, I just miss you... I feel
like I haven't seen you all week!
You're so busy all of a sudden...

(Pause)

--Which isn't a bad thing! I just
want to know whatchya been up to
and whatnot.

(MORE)

EG (CONT'D)

Like I said I miss you, call me
back when you can. Love you!

INT. DANCE STUDIO HALLWAY - DAY

Willard looks down at his phone at the texts.

WILLARD

(under his breath, sadly)

Aww EG, I'm sorry.

He texts back.

MESSAGE: I'd love to! I miss you too. Can't wait.

He gets up and walks away.

CUT TO:

INT. DANCE STUDIO - DAY

At the barre Corinne and EG do a cool-down , facing one
another, chatting.

EG

It just feels like he's just never
around anymore... It's not like him
to go M.I.A.

CORINNE

(dismissing)

I'm sure he's just got his hands
full with school and stuff.

EG

I don't know... something's up.

CORINNE

(smiling nervously)

Don't you think you're
overreacting?

EG

Maybe? I don't know... Maybe I'm
just hard-wired to think that way.

CORINNE

What do you mean?

EG

Oh, I guess I never told you.

CORINNE

Told me what?

EG

There was this guy. I dated him for pretty much all of high school. Sophomore through senior year. He was basically my first everything. The first time I fell in love, the first time I got dumped, you name it.

CORINNE

Damn.

EG

Yeah he actually left for college before I did but we decided to try long distance, so I planned to visit him to surprise him one weekend, but when I got there, he was having sex with another girl.

CORINNE

(shocked)

WHAT.

EG

(chuckling)

Yeah... That was my response. It was really bad. I left pretty much immediately and drove the three hours back home sobbing.

CORINNE

And then what?!

EG

Well we never had a big confrontational showdown after if that's what your asking. I was supposed to go on vacation with my family the following week so I packed my bags and got on a plane and we didn't talk again. I blocked him on everything so I'm not even sure if he tried to reach out at any point.

CORINNE

Oh my god I would've had his head!

EG

(giggling)

I know you would have! I don't think I was ever really mad, just hurt, though. Anyways, when we were on vacation afterwards we took a tour of this beautiful little historic beach town. There was cobblestone everywhere and these old brick houses on a cliffside...

(She's lost in the memory)

The sun was setting and we passed this wedding taking place. The light was hitting the stones and giving everything a glowy feel. It was probably the most beautiful thing I had seen in a long time. We watched the bride and the groom say their vows.

(Pause. Corinne stares off dreamily.)

And all I kept thinking was how sorry I felt for this girl. Because there was no way he really loved her.

CORINNE

Aww-- Wait what?! Oh my god! That's horrible, are you okay??

EG

Haha, yeah I'm fine now, but it really wrecked me for awhile. I forgave my ex a long time ago for cheating on me, but I don't think I ever forgave him for making me distrustful of people. I still have a hard time with that.

CORINNE

(thoughtful)

I'm so sorry that happened to you.

EG

(waving the thought away)

It's fine, really! Anyways, you're probably right. I can just be a little paranoid I think. I'm sure it's nothing. Thanks for listening, Corinne.

EG walks away and Corinne watches her go with uneasiness.

When Corinne is sure EG has left, she pulls out her phone.

CORINNE
Hey. Yeah she just left. You're
good to come on in.

CUT TO:

INT. DANCE STUDIO - DAY

Corinne and Willard revolve in sweetheart's position marking
the steps to a swing dance. Corinne gives him pointers.

CORINNE
Try to stay level when you move
through your steps. That way you
don't bob up and down.

WILLARD
Like this?

CORINNE
Yeah! Great! And as for the turn,
the faster you want to move the
closer you have to get to your
partner. The two of you revolve
around an axis and a smaller axis
means less travel time.

WILLARD
Oh. Wow that makes a lot of sense.
You're a great teacher Corinne.

CORINNE
Aww thanks, it's really not that
hard.

WILLARD
You're being modest, I would have
never been able to do any of this
if it weren't for you. After I show
all this to EG I'm going to find a
way to thank you I promise.

He stares at her with sincerity and gratitude. She smiles.
As they conclude the dance Willard spins and dips Corrine.
Just as he does this EG walks back in the room looking for
something.

EG
Hey, Corinne? I left my charger,
have you seen--OH MY GOD.

She is mortified at the sight of them dancing together so
affectionately. She runs away sobbing.

WILLARD
EG! NO! Wait, come back!

CORINNE
(stunned)
Oh shit.

He breaks away from Corinne and begins to run after her.

CUT TO:

EXT. DANCE STUDIO PARKING LOT - DAY

Willard runs into the lot looking around frantically. He spots EG running to her car and chases her down before she can drive away.

She opens the door and fumbles with her keys.

WILLARD
EG! Wait!

EG
Go away!

She puts the keys into the ignition, tears streaming down her face.

WILLARD
No. Not until you talk to me.

EG
Fine! You wanna talk?! Let's TALK!
How could you do this to me?

WILLARD
Babe, I know what this looks like.

EG
Yeah you do! It looks like I'm
living my worst nightmare all over
again. How dare you?! And after
knowing what all I've been through
too?!

Willard stares at her heartbroken. EG stops crying, she wipes her tears away. Suddenly she gets quiet. The scary kind of mad.

EG (CONT'D)
No, you know what "Willy"? I'm done
being hurt. I'm done being sad. I'm
ready to get angry.

WILLARD

I'm sorry!

EG's getting ready to yell more but is taken aback by this.

EG

You're sorry? That's all you have to say for yourself?!

WILLARD

I'm sorry I've been busy. I'm sorry I haven't been there for you or giving our relationship enough attention. I'm sorry for keeping this from you, but I wanted it to be a surprise!

EG

A surprise? Yeah it certainly was a surprise! What were you gonna wine and dine me and tell me over dessert that you were cheating on me? What kind of a sick joke is that?!

WILLARD

I'm not cheating on you! I'm sorry I ever gave you reason to think I might be.

EG

Don't lie to me! I know what I just saw!

WILLARD

I'm not cheating on you, you're the only one for me, I swear.

EG is silent, still mad but silent.

WILLARD (CONT'D)

Corinne has been teaching me to dance. For you. It was always for you.

EG

What--What are you talking about?

WILLARD

I wanted to surprise you by taking you back to the next swing dancing night, and show you my new "moves". I already signed us up.

(MORE)

WILLARD (CONT'D)

Corinne was helping to choreograph
a dance for me to lead you through.

EG

(stunned)

Oh my god.

WILLARD

Baby, I'm so sorry I ever made you
doubt me. Surprise or not I
should've been a better
communicator. I never meant to
neglect our relationship.
Protecting that is always my number
one priority.

EG begins to cry again.

EG

No, I'm sorry! I should never have
assumed the worst. You've never
given me a reason to distrust you.
I guess I was just looking for one.
I'm so sorry. I love you.

WILLARD

I love you too.

They embrace tightly for a long moment. EG keeps crying.

WILLARD (CONT'D)

Hey?

She looks up at him through snot and tears.

EG

(kind of congested-
sounding)

Yeah?

He gives a small, relieved smirk.

WILLARD

Can I show you my "new moves"?

EG

(sniffling and laughing)

Yeah. Yeah that'd be good.

He pulls his phone out of his pocket and begins to play the
song from the first social dance, the one EG loves. He takes
her in his arms and they slowly spin around. <3

FADE TO BLACK.