

BRING IT ON

CHEER FEVER

by

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A CO-ED HIGH-SCHOOL CHEERLEADING SQUAD performs center-court.

SQUAD

We are the Titans! The Mighty Titans! We're
so Titanic, we must be Titans!

TORRANCE SHIPMAN, a vivacious, blonde 17 year-old with
Pebbles Flintstone hair, commands the floor. **USA** in chenille
stretches across her sweater.

TORRANCE touches her Minnie Mouse bangs and smacks her
lipgloss, adjusting her SPANKY-PANTS. Their bottoms feature:
the OLYMPIC RING INSIGNIA in varsity-style block chenille
lettering. On second glance, every pair of bloomers shares
this touch.

TORRANCE

Achoo!

SQUAD

Bless you!

In the background, A BANNER with OLYMPIC RINGS waves mildly
in the arena air.

GIRL SQUAD MEMBERS

(4/4 time, chanting)

I'm sexy. I'm cute. I'm pop-u-lar to boot.
I'm bitchin. Great hair. The boys all like
to stare. I'm wanted. I'm hot. I'm
everything you're not. I'm pretty. I'm
cool. I dominate the school. Who am I?
Just guess. Guys wanna touch my chest. I'm
rockin. I smile. And many think I'm vile!
I'm flying. I jump. You can look, but
don't you hump! I'm major. I roar. I swear,
I'm not a whore! We cheer and, we lead. We
act like we're on speed! Hate us cause we're
beautiful? Well, we don't like you either,
we're cheerleaders! We are cheerleaders!

EACH FEMALE CHEERLEADER springs into frame via JUMP or STUNT.

TORRANCE

I'm Tu-tu-Torrance!

Like a BAD 1970'S SHOW-OPEN, we FREEZE on Torrance in
mid-air, her face contorted into a shriek, doing' a Herkie.
The word TORRANCE in VARSITY BLOCK LETTERING wipes over her
frozen image. It's 'Trainspotting' and 'The Love Boat' all at
once! At a hyper-fast clip, each cheerleader suffers the
same ignominious treatment.

An Asian beauty with peroxide blonde hair, WHITNEY DOW, 16, is tan, tan, tan.

WHITNEY

I'm Wu-Wu-Whitney!

Icy Breck-Girl blonde, COURTNEY EGBERT, 16, flips between bitchy passivity and bitchy impertinence. Nightmare.

COURTNEY

Cu-Cu-Cu-Courtney!

Jet-black Lulu bob and movie-star attitude, DARCY ESTRADA is a rich, 17-year-old know-it-all. Stacked.

DARCY

Dude, it's Da-Darcy!

Hello, horsey girl. CARVER RIZCHEK is a 16-year-old rep for Thighs-R-Us.

CARVER

I'm big, bad Carver!

15-year-old KASEY is a scrawny mess whose braces are about to blind you --

KASEY

Just call me Kasey!

BIG RED, an over-developed 18 with red ringlets and a black heart, takes center stage.

BIG RED

Call me Big Red!

TORRANCE

And I'm still Torrance!

The MALE SQUAD MEMBERS appear in profile next to the aforementioned gals, a seemingly endless line of cheerleaders.

Finishing the chant, the girls move into pre-toe-touch-jump position. Torrance smiles broadly before lift-off. Pushing off the floor in slo mo - Torrance's face morphs from glee to panic, her mouth becoming a scream. A real SCREAM...of terror.

THE CROWD gasps collectively, some MALE CROWD MEMBERS smiling and high-fiving each other.

A PANEL OF OLYMPIC JUDGES scribble sternly on scoresheets.

TORRANCE'S HANDS try to cover her exposed FANNY. Her spanky pants have disappeared, and there's nothing but butt.

THE JUDGES burn pencil. The sound of A BUZZER melds with Torrance's WIDE-MOUTHED SCREAM as the JUDGES raise their SCORECARDS. The camera zooms into Torrance's UVULA, her SCREAMING mixing with the sound of an ALARM CLOCK bbbrrringing as we

2 INT. DORM ROOM - MORNING

2

Two bunk-beds, FOUR SLEEPING GALS. Torrance bolts upright in bed, clutching her pigtails and still SCREAMING bloody murder.

TORRANCE

Nine point two?!?!!!!!!! Bronze? Bronze my ass! Aaaarrgh!!!

Whitney, Courtney and Big Red jolt awake, irritated.

But Torrance cannot stop, as the camera zooms back into her gaping yap, becoming the screams of HUNDREDS OF TEENS as

3 EXT. INTRAMURAL FIELD - DAY

3

TWO HUNDRED NUBILE GIRLS and about SEVENTY BEEFY GUYS SCREAM in sync.

A BANNER blows in the breeze: *U.S. Cheer Assn. National High School Cheerleading Camp*

The BACK of a moving ORANGE T-SHIRT, listing DOZENS OF STATE and NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP TITLES for the FILIAS DEUS TITANS.

It's Torrance! She's hauling a colossal duffle across the camp, carrying a BEAUTIFULLY-WRAPPED GIFT, which she suddenly stashes in her duffle. She grins, running towards

A BIG GUY wearing the same orange braggart shirt. The guy is BUZZ GILBERT, 19. A line-backer-bodied pinhead with muscles bulging out of his FDS T-shirt, Buzz could walk quite comfortably around Castro Street. Buzz greets Torrance like he's her boyfriend, which he is.

BUZZ

Come to daddy, baby. Chair, scrunch to liberty full out.

Torrance complies with the stunt, flying through the air.

BUZZ

Did you feel that? You felt like air, baby.

TORRANCE

I can't believe you're here! How was power lifting camp?

BUZZ

Stunt and see for yourself. An awesome on three?

TORRANCE

Why is everybody calling it that? It's called a cupie and no, not without a spotter.

BUZZ

Chickens are for eating, life is for living. Pull up to a high V. and --

TORRANCE

(disappointed)

Kiss me! I haven't seen you in weeks -

BUZZ

Not until you nail the awesome with daddy.

TORRANCE

Fine.

BUZZ

One, two, up --

As Torrance flies up into position, Buzz tries to hold her on one hand, but his arm buckles. Torrance leaps off to the safety of dry land before Buzz can recover. Big Red appears and seems a tad jealous. Torrance moves in for a kiss. Buzz keeps her at arms length....literally. This pleases Big Red.

BUZZ

Not while I'm in training. I'll see you guys inside.

Torrance and Big Red keep walking.

BIG RED

Could we rule this camp any harder? You're a lock for captain.

TORRANCE

Don't jinx me!

BIG RED

(seeing someone, waving)

Superstition is for chumps without the goods.

TORRANCE

I can't imagine Nationals without you.
You've handled everything for so long! It's
gonna be so weird.

BIG RED

Don't imagine it, do it. If that doesn't
work, imagine you're a puppet and I'm
controlling you.

Red thwacks Tor on the butt way too hard, and runs off.

A RECRUITER in a U. OF S. CAROLINA T-shirt approaches and
passes Torrance his card. His shirt reads: *USC Gamecocks!*
Our 'cocks are up and coming!

USC RECRUITER

Hey Torrance - I'm head coach at SC this
year. The Gamecocks want you!

Torrance smiles, takes his card and keeps moving as A
MOOREHEAD STATE RECRUITER makes his move. His shirt reads:
Give me Moorehead, or give me death! He palms his card to
Torrance.

MSTATE INSTRUCTOR

What are you looking for, Torrance?

TORRANCE

After I get captain? One last high school
national, four full years of college
nationals, and a partner stunt final or two.
Then, you know, Olympic gold.

MSTATE RECRUITER

(ignoring last comment)

Sure. Well, listen: I can get you a full
ride. Keep our program in mind!

Torrance grins and wades through CAMPERS toward the gymnasium
with an 'It's good to be queen,' swagger.

ON RISERS, THREE CAMP INSTRUCTORS in matching uniforms lead a
drill. As individual CAMPERS miss moves, INSTRUCTORS tap them
on the shoulder. They sit obediently.

TO THE SIDE a GROUP OF HORRIFIED COLLEGE STUDENTS look on the
scene with frozen disgust as we move to

4 INT. LOCKER ROOM

4

The TEN GIRLS from the dream file into the aisles. They
strip and go to work. Tape wound around the stomachs,

beneath bras. Ankle braces go on under socks; flesh-colored knee braces; wrist tape and guards; lower back belts; double sports bras; thongs go on under spankies; short skirt; tight top; matching socks; cheerleading sneakers; matching hair ornaments; a tad of glitter around the eyes.

Exotic Whitney adjusts her spankies and her peroxide wisps.

WHITNEY

'Ssup! I need a xapmat! Emergency xapmat, please -- Torrance, my chiquita, my dude-ita, my cheer-ito!

Torrance enters, fishing a tampon out of her bag, chucking it at Whitney, and proffering Advil simultaneously.

TORRANCE

Ibuprofen chaser?
(shakes bottle)
Shaken, not stirred?

WHITNEY

Did you vote for captain?

TORRANCE

No doubt.

WHITNEY

Courtney thinks she should get captain because her dad pays for everything.

DARCY

Courtney thinks? Her parents must be so relieved.

IN ANOTHER PART OF THE LOCKER ROOM

Courtney, the super-bitchy, super-blonde, walks over to another part of the locker room. Carver dresses, while Kasey micro-manages what used to be "hair". Courtney assesses.

COURTNEY

That is a hair-tastrophe! It is hair-tastrophic.

CARVER

Darcy'll get captain. The guys love clutching her butt. There is a lot to hang onto.

KASEY

What's the plural for butt? On one person, I mean. What about Torrance? I want Torrance to get it.

COURTNEY

I want a Lexus Landrover.

CARVER

I want Torrance to get it, too.

BIG RED holds a list. Everyone immediately snaps to attention.

BIG RED

Yo! Do I have all your votes? Torrance, Courtney, Whitney, Carver, Darcy, Kasey!

COACH SHELTON, their 42-year-old bubble-headed advisor, pops her head in.

COACH SHELTON

Gimme those votes! Exhibition performance in five minutes! Don't forget to make the walls smile!

The girls hand their slips to Coach Shelton, who exits. The squad rolls their eyes collectively.

DARCY

Five whole seconds of coaching! We have a new world record!

TORRANCE

(aside)

Who's presenting the gift to Big Red? Someone should say something.

Courtney and Whitney exchange loaded glances. Torrance doesn't notice.

COURTNEY

Pass.

WHITNEY

Good riddance. I don't believe in assmosis.

TORRANCE

I am not brown-nosing! She's the departing captain. Come on. You both sucked before she whipped you into shape.

COURTNEY

Whipped? Oh, that's what that was.

WHITNEY

No one will miss her, Tor. As far as I'm concerned, Big Red has done nothing but put the itch in bitch.

COURTNEY

The hell in hello.

TORRANCE

Be a boo. It's her last thing with us! How would you feel?

COURTNEY

Big Red has no feelings.

WHITNEY

Just testicles.

(To Tor)

Go on, just be quick about it!

KASEY

(to no one in particular)

Is it true they came out with Diet Evian?

Torrance mounts a locker bench.

TORRANCE

Everyone! This is Big Red's last performance with us as Captain - and I know she's gonna kick butt at Cal State Dominguez Hills, but we will miss her leadership. Big Red, c'mere - we bought you a glamor-icious parting gift. You've been our fearless leader for the last three years --

BIG RED

Eight! Not including Pop Warner --

Torrance hands Big Red a beautifully wrapped box, which Big Red rips open. As Torrance turns her back, Red regards the gift disdainfully...chucking it indelicately into her duffle bag. Torrance misses this.

TORRANCE

I hope we can keep hitting the high toe touches, basket tosses and standards you have set for us. We love you --

COURTNEY & WHITNEY

(to each other)

Because you're finally leaving.

TORRANCE

-- and we'll miss you.

BIG RED

Enough with the sissy-ness. Please go out there and make the kiddies cheer, and the grown-ups cry. On three: one, two, three:

SQUAD

Trust!

5 EXT. FIELD - DAY

5

ECU: PA SPEAKER

HEAD INSTRUCTOR (P.A.)

In five minutes, five-time national high school large coed varsity cheerleading champions, the Filias Deus Titans from Santa Ana, California, will be performing in Memorial Gymnasium --

ON THE FIELD, like a flash flood, CAMPERS stampede off the field

6 INT. GYMNASIUM - CONTINUOUS

6

into the gymnasium and onto the bleachers in no time flat, elbowing and wrangling for a good seat. The CAMPERS conceal videocameras in pompons and teddy bears, poising their instamatics and rocking with anticipation. The PA crackles. The ROAR of the campers drowns out the PA, as slamming ROCK MUSIC BLARES.

Amidst FLASHING CAMERAS and TEEN SCREAMS, our squad runs onto the floor. Each of the girls slides across the floor on their knees, shimmying their torsos for the crowd. Violent jitter-bugging flips and moves transition into a contorted --

-- do-si-do. But instead of 'swing your partner' it's 'wing your partner', tossing one girl and catching another. The final wink: MID-AIR HIGH FIVES between all the pendulating girls.

It's one hundred thirty-five seconds of efflorescing difficulty and - in two words - Extreme Cheerleading. Their efforts are rewarded with an OVATION from the frenzied campers as we cut to

7 INT. LOCKER ROOM

7

a panting and sweating, FDS crew downing waters and Gatorades, toweling off like pro-ball players. High fives

and congratulations fill the locker room. The celebratory
vibe is SILENCED by Big Red, who mounts a bench... looming
over her squad mates.

The inseparable Court/Whit duo whisper amongst themselves.

WHITNEY

Big Dread. Someone'll have to rip the torch
out of her hands.

COURTNEY

Thank god her bloody reign is over.

WHITNEY

No more ten mile runs.

COURTNEY

No more random period checks.

BIG RED

You guys are all great athletes, and I know
your new captain will keep tradition alive -
leading you to the record sixth national
cheerleading championship you know is yours.
By almost unanimous decision, meet your new
leader: Torrance Shipman.

SQUAD

(yelps, whoops and shouts)

TORRANCE

(feigning surprise)

No way!

BIG RED

(whisper to Torrance)

I told you you'd get it. Listen up! As is
FDS tradition, the new captain must submit
to an induction ritual as specified by her
squadmates. Jan, please do the honors.

Jan speaks as he walks in a handstand over to Torrance.
Adorable, rippling with muscles and blatant horniness, he's a
huge flirt, grabbing Torrance and dipping her Tango-style.

JAN

Torrance Shipman, do you swear to do the
haze, the whole haze and nothing but the
haze? So help you god?

TORRANCE

I do.

JAN

By the power vested in me by the Santa Ana Titans of the State of California, I declare thee: hot! I mean, Captain. Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to capture the Spirit Stick --

TORRANCE

I accept!

Big Red holds up her finger, like, wait!

BIG RED

And -- drop it! In front of the entire camp.

Torrance is appalled, looking like she just watched someone eat their own barf.

TORRANCE

I'd rather eat barf! You don't drop the Spirit Stick! You don't drop the Olympic torch! You don't let the American flag touch the ground!

JAN

(unmoved)

So you'll do it?

TORRANCE

The Spirit Stick can't touch the ground! Or it will lose all its spirit! And even if it is a totally bogus concept, it's bad sportsmanship.

BIG RED

Torrance, 'sportsmen' don't need stupid sticks when they've got discipline and dedication. You're an athlete first, and a cheerleader second. I hope you're not forgetting that.

(ice)

Choose: the squad or the stick.

WHITNEY

It's just a broom handle, girlene!

TORRANCE

Pick another captain. I will not toy with cheerleaders or their values. It's vicious. I won't do it.

BIG RED

Torrance, the Spirit Stick is not your friend. In fact, it's what makes people hate cheerleaders. It's girlish and frivolous, and you must rob it of its power. The Spirit Stick is thine enemy.

SCARY MUSIC swells as we reveal

8 INT. MESS HALL - NIGHT

8

ECU: The Spirit Stick. We slowly pull out to reveal it is perched atop an ornate pillow covered with ribbons and spirit pins, the Spirit Stick holds court on its puffy throne. This brightly painted dowel rod is covered with glitter and the letters **SS**. An inscription reads, '**WITH SPIRIT SO DIVINE, IT SHALL NEVER TOUCH THE EARTH.**'

TWO JV CHEERLEADERS carry it to the front of the dining hall, where a HEAD INSTRUCTOR gesticulates. Another CAMP BANNER blows in the A/C.

HEAD INSTRUCTOR

Settle down, people. It's our last night, and - much like the Olympic flame - we must pass on the Spirit Stick. Our instructors have selected a squad who will love, protect, and infuse the stick with the eternal spirit that makes it so special. This year's winners are: the New Pope High School Cavaliers, from New Pope, Mississippi.

Ear-curdling SCREAMS pierce the room, as a group of CRYING CHEERLEADERS, sob and try and get it together enough to accept the stick. Meticulous care is used to lift the stick over their heads - as they do a victory lap back to their table.

ANOTHER PART OF THE MESS HALL - CONTINUOUS

A GAGGLE of advisors sit around a large round table, staring at someone intently, in deferential worship. The VOICE is bubbly, but audibly hoarse.

COACH SHELTON (O.S.)

It makes me proud to know we've reached a level of athleticism that boasts more deaths and injuries than any other high school or college sport. Combined! We've arrived, people.

COACH ANITA SHELTON, 42, very frosted, very PJ Soles, holding a court all her own. Shelton's voice is so SCRATCHY, it's absurd.

MEEK ADVISOR

Do you have a sore throat? Can I get you some tea?

COACH SHELTON

(shaking head, no)

Years in the trenches, darling. I like to think of it as my Purple Heart. A small price for years of cheerleading battle.

The Meek Advisor doesn't get it, but is too meek to ask again. ADVISOR #2, in coral velour and costume jewelry, stares at Shelton with reverential wonder.

COACH SHELTON

I'm glad to see such a great turn-out this year. It's for such a great cause.

ADVISOR #1

What cause?

COACH SHELTON

(Save the Children tone)

Advancing the sport of cheerleading! What cause could be greater? I just hope I live to see the day, when cheerleaders...have cheerleaders.

On the uncertain response of the bevy as we move to

FDS TABLE - CONTINUOUS

JAN and LES eat like there's no tomorrow. When Jan's done, he looks at Les's plate. Les covers his chow protectively.

LESLEY

Go find an eating disorder and sit next to it.

JAN

(spotting someone)

Oh yeah --

OTHER END OF TABLE - CONTINUOUS

Jan pulls up a chair next to Darcy, who pushes her full plate in front of him without missing a beat. An ASSORTMENT OF CAMPERS have gathered around the table, intermingling with the FDS SQUAD.

TORRANCE

(w/squad, urgent)

What new squad from California? Where are they from? WhoWhatWhereWhenWhy?

CAMPER 1

Inglewood. They are apparently in-sane. I mean, their lead flyer got killed last year.

DARCY

Bull-imia.

CAMPER 1

For real. They just invent their own stunts. Triple cupies and shit.

TORRANCE

Triple cupies? In Cali?

In a panic, Torrance lunges toward Big Red at the next table.

NEXT TABLE - CONTINUOUS

TORRANCE

What's up with this new squad?

BIG RED

Let me guess: the squad so great they maim their young? Stunts that rival NASA?

TORRANCE

Triple cupies! Why didn't you tell me? In Inglewood?

BIG RED

What? They don't even have cheerleaders. Haven't we heard crap like this every summer? It's a head game, Shipman. Cheerleading urban legend.

Torrance is not so sure.

BIG RED

Look, there's no mythic squad. We're as epic as it gets, and everyone's jealous and sick of us winning every year and they'll try to freak you out. Ignore them... all the way to the podium.

TORRANCE

Positive? I mean, you'd tell me, right? I'm already so freaked out about living up to your legacy --

BIG RED

Relax. I've handed you the perfect routine and the perfect squad. Everything's in place. There's no way you can screw up.

Satisfied, Torrance returns to the

FDS TABLE - CONTINUOUS

TORRANCE

Big Red says they don't exist, ergo they don't exist!

The THREE VISITING CAMPERS take that as their cue and leave. The FDS SQUAD reconvenes, as the NEW POPE SQUAD celebrates in the background.

NEW POPE SQUAD (B.G.)

J-E-S-U-S, He's the one we love the best, Jesus, yeah, yeah, Jesus!

LESLEY

Now or never.

COURTNEY

She's not gonna do it. But I'd love to!

TORRANCE

It's so mean. But hey: if you can't flush your values down the toilet, what can you flush down the toilet?

Torrance grabs a CAMERA and heads over to the winner's table.

NEW POPE TABLE - CONTINUOUS

The New Pope SQUAD is excited to see her and greet her with southern syrup.

NEW POPE GIRL #1

Y'all were brighter than silver dollars today, my goodness! Y'all are such an inspiration to us, I mean it!

TORRANCE

I just wanted to congratulate you guys, and get a picture of you...with the Spirit Stick.

The squad hits an ornate formation in seconds flat. We hold on Torrance, brimming with trepidation for the crime she is about to commit. Taking a deep breath, she bites her lip, clutching the Spirit Stick.

TORRANCE

Here, you hold it --

Accidentally/on-purpose, Torrance passes the stick too quickly, letting it fall --

IN SLO MO: Four New Pope girls fly through the air - as if the stick is a grenade - to prevent it from touching the ground.

NEW POPE FACES faces distort in genuine horror, silent screams of agony, as the Spirit Stick hits the floor with an echoing CRACK. RIBBONS AND SEQUINS flying everywhere.

IN REAL TIME: The messhall is quiet. As the collective GASPS OF HORROR reverberate through the room.

Torrance, white with guilt and remorse, picks up the stick and attempts to hand it to a New Pope cheerleader. Normal b.g. DIN resumes, as if nothing happened.

NEW POPE CHEERLEADER #1

I don't want it now.

NEW POPE CHEERLEADER #2

It's okay. It's fine. The Spirit Stick doesn't lose anything, the person who drops it, however...goes to Hades. We all are fine.

(to her squad)

We are fine.

NP SQUAD disperses, a New Pope Cheerio hands Torrance her camera.

NEW POPE CHEERLEADER #3

I am a Phillips-head, and you are screwed, sister.

TORRANCE

How Jesus of you.

9 EXT. MINI VAN - CALIFORNIA - DAY - ESTABLISHING 9

The VAN blows down a four-lane, passing a CITY LIMITS SIGN that reads: *WELCOME TO SANTA ANA, CALIFORNIA -- HOME OF THE FILIAS DEUS TITANS, FIVE-TIME NATIONAL CHEERLEADING CHAMPIONS.*

10 INT. MINI VAN - CONTINUOUS 10

Torrance is squeezed into the van with Darcy, Jan and other SQUAD MEMBERS, staring as the sign whizzes by. As Darcy

refines her hair in the mirror, Darcy's mom, MRS. ESTRADA, 48, chuckles rudely.

MRS. ESTRADA

So, captain, huh? Not too much pressure, huh, Torrance? It's never too late if you don't feel up to it, you know?

TORRANCE

I was born to feel up to it.

MRS. ESTRADA

There's no shame in knowing your limitations.

DARCY

Shut up, mom.

The van pulls up to

11 EXT. SHIPMAN HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

11

a big three bedroom on a street with other big three bedrooms. An ESCORT WAGON and a CONTOUR sit in the driveway. Torrance bids adieu to the van, a HORN HONKS.

It's Buzz in his Geo Tracker, pulling curbside. Torrance leans on the car window, suddenly melancholy. Buzz seems rarin' to go.

BUZZ

This is it. College. I am so outta here! Isn't it great?

TORRANCE

I can't believe we won't be together this year. I'm really gonna miss you, and I just wanted to --

BUZZ

(checking watch)

Uh huh. That's great --

TORRANCE

-- tell you that you know, you mean so much to me, and I'll never forget all the stunts you've helped me with and all the great Hello Kitty stuff you gave me --

BUZZ

Me, too. Look, I want to beat traffic, you know --

12 EXT. SHIPMAN HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

12

MR. AND MRS. SHIPMAN - both mid 40's and attractive - are carrying legal files into the Escort.

MR. SHIPMAN

Welcome home, gorgeous! We missed you!

BUZZ

Hey, Mr. and Mrs. S.!

MRS. SHIPMAN

(headachy)

Oh look, it's Buzz.

MR. SHIPMAN

(nausea)

Buzz.

BUZZ

Can I help?

MRS. SHIPMAN

No, I insist. Stay in your vehicle.

MR. SHIPMAN

(muttering)

Come back when you have less time.

BUZZ

(to Torrance, oblivious)

Next year, you, me and Big Red, reunited at D-Hills. Go Toros! Division 3 small co-ed varsity Nationals, look out!

TORRANCE

I'll drive up in a couple weeks --

BUZZ

That's my girl! Putting' the ho' in hot!

Buzz pulls away, leaving Torrance alone on her curb. Mrs. Shipman shivers in horror while getting in the car. Dad gives Tor a quick hug, peck and squeeze before they drive off.

13 INT. SHIPMAN FOYER - CONTINUOUS

13

Torrance trudges in as JUSTIN, 14, appears. He acts like he smells: bad.

TORRANCE

Whoa. It's summer, so showering is optional?
Man, onions!

TORRANCE (cont'd)

(waving the air)

That is just wrong. So are we going out for dinner?

JUSTIN

You'll have to kill your own dinner tonight.

He exits, leaving Torrance alone in the foyer. She drags her duffle bag up the stairs.

TORRANCE

(to herself)

By the way, I got captain.

14 INT. TORRANCE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

14

Weights; an ab-flexor and a stationary bike command a corner. GYMNASTICS TROPHIES and BLUE RIBBONS line her dresser, a small FULL-LEG CAST sawed and covered with tons of SIGNATURES and CARTOONS is mounted on the wall. Stacks of college apps and the new issue of **AMERICAN CHEERLEADER** magazine are swept off her bed and onto the floor.

THE CEILING is covered with posters of Michael Jordan... airborne. She ally-oops to kiss his image, smiling. She WHOOPS and flies into action in a

PRE-SEASON COLLATING FRENZY: ON THE COMPUTER, finishing touches on SCHEDULES/CALENDARS; AT THE PRINTER, calendar pages spit out (early NOVEMBER marked REGIONALS, Early February marked NATIONALS, spaces in between filled with PRACTICE, WEIGHT TRAINING, TUMBLING; or HOME/AWAY GAME).

As her printer HUMS, we zoom in on the entry form Tor's filling out: *American Cheerleader's CHEERLEADER OF THE YEAR* contest.

15 EXT. FDS SOCCER FIELD - DAY

15

WARM-UP MONTAGE: Extreme partner stretching, pushing and nudging each other into amazing pretzel-like shapes. Guys on backs, doing presses with girls standing in their cupped hands, hitting various stunt positions. These guys are Chas Atlas strong, making goofy noises - BURPS, GRUNTS, FARTS - and pretending the girls are too heavy.

Off to one side, Kasey's giving Darcy her full attention.

KASEY

Hit me.

DARCY

Part one, here we go:

(clapping in 4/4 time, raising

DARCY (cont'd)

her hands like Evita on each
SAT word for emphasis)

Turgid - I'm bloated but/ I'm Tensile,
withstanding stress and /Tantamount's
equivalent while /Paramount is dominant/
Quotidian is daily, don't get /Querulous -
complaining, try Qui/escence - that's
stillness be a /Sybarite - a pleasure
seeker, /Recondite - few know it, I'm
Vo/ciferous - loud, vocal but not/ Wizeden -
that's wrinkled/we'll end on tenesmus.

KASEY

What's tenesmus?

DARCY

The unsuccessful straining associated with
the urgent need to number one or number two.

Jan joins. He leans over and grimaces, Darcy smoothing her
hair.

JAN

Like this?
(he strains)
Rrrrrrrr.

KASEY

There's a word for that? Uch! SAT's are
beyond vile.

Torrance waves a clipboard, keyed up and a little too ready
to go. Whitney's checking her tan lines, Kasey's getting
creative with the elastics on her braces.

TORRANCE

Release forms! Liability waivers! No
practice without your signed release forms!

Each cheerleader hands Torrance a slip of paper as they walk
by. Whitney's is clearly covered with orange self-tanner
prints. Torrance hands them SCHEDULES. Kasey is concerned.

KASEY

Where's Coach Shelton?

LAUGHTER from the squad. Courtney does an inhuman stretch.

COURTNEY

Ah, to be a freshman again! Think of Coach
Shelton as a figurehead, who only
materializes when it will make her look
good.

LESLEY

(he does a perfect flip)
Or for those free trips to Nationals.

TORRANCE

Okay, let's do this. This is untested, but
I'd like to try a ground-up Wolf's Wall.

CARVER

Excellent.

The rest of the squad erupts into LAUGHTER. Courtney puts a
palm on T's forehead.

COURTNEY

Torrance has got the fever, people.

KASEY

What's a Wolf's Wall?

LESLEY

(he does another perfect flip)
The hardest pyramid known to cheerleader.

DARCY

The words 'big' and 'britches' come to mind.

TORRANCE

Come on! Where's your drive?

JAN

In my car.

DARCY

Let us graduate in one piece, shall we?

COURTNEY

You guys suck. Let's do this.

WHITNEY

Trust! Let us rock the stunt, por favor!

The squad GRUMBLES agreement.

CARVER

Can I fly?

DARCY

Turgid.

As Jan examines Carver's ass, he crosses his arms
scientifically.

JAN

She's too heavy.

TORRANCE

Yeah, but she's not scared.

They try the "build" once. It crumbles. They go a second time, it falls. A third time, they almost nail it. Fourth time, they stick it.

CARVER'S POV: from the top of the pyramid. Looking down, three body lengths high, we feel the vertigo. It's high.

DOWN BELOW: Jan, Les and the rest of the guys are straining. Veins popping from all the bodies they're holding. THEIR POV: Legs, butts, crotches.

LESLEY

(Schwarzenegger)

Pinch some pennies, someone's slacking.

JAN

(Hulk Hogan)

This weight is gonna push my arm straight up through someone's poop-shoot in one hot second --

TORRANCE

Carver, can you full out?

CARVER

Yup!

From Carver's POV again, the camera spins through the air, falling, falling, falling... then a thud. BLOOD-CURDLING SCREAM.

16 EXT. AMBULANCE

16

EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIANS load Carver - on a stretcher - into the vehicle. In the background,

FOUR PERMED-OUT GIRLS with gargantuan pom pons strut, primp and pose, LAUGHING in disbelief. It's the Filias Deus Dazzlers, the second rate drill-team and pompon combo. The Dazzlers are walking leaflets re: the evils of make-up.

PAM ANNE

How's the yodeling, Heidis?

Jan and Les pull a male tag team on the newcomers.

JAN

Now, now. Don't use words you can't spell. But for the record, 'the' is T-H-E. That should come in handy.

PAM ANNE

Jan, anytime your ready for a real woman, you know who to call.

LESLEY

Pam Anne, real women don't consider sequins a daily fashion food-group.

JAN

Ohmigod, Les, I think Pam Anne's sick? Her neck is a different color than her jawline!

(miming phone)

Hello? Get me Estee Lauder, stat! We have a code blue!

Pam Anne looks at her squadmates with concern, her face is five shades darker than her neck.

PAM ANNE

Like I need make-up.

17 INT. SHIPMAN KITCHEN - NIGHT

17

Torrance strolls into the kitchen, commencing some ornate vitamin-taking ritual.

TORRANCE

I got captain.

Mom picks up an envelope and official-looking paper. Torrance's Class Schedule.

MRS. SHIPMAN

(not listening)

What? Oh? Well, this blistering academic schedule shouldn't get in your way. You must be very happy.

TORRANCE

Why can't you accept the fact that I am not a genius? It just kills you that I'm not an honor student.

MRS. SHIPMAN

No. It kills me that you barely make time to study! If you studied half as much as you cheer, you'd be in great shape. Your priorities are -- never mind.

MRS. SHIPMAN (cont'd)
 (changing tactics)
 College might less of a shock if you take an
 extra lab or language course. What do you
 think?

TORRANCE
 Will advanced chem get you off my back?

MRS. SHIPMAN
 Not completely, but it'll help.

TORRANCE
 Done. You know, mothers have killed to get
 their daughters on squads.

MRS. SHIPMAN
 That mother didn't kill anyone, she hired a
 hit man. It is only cheerleading, and I
 think I keep it in perspective. Try it
 sometime.

TORRANCE
 Since it is my very last, first day of high
 school tomorrow, I wanna thank you for all
 the maternal dotage.

Feelings hurt, Torrance storms off to her room. A door
 SLAMS. Mrs. Shipman sighs and returns to her depositions.

18 EXT./INT. VARIOUS - DAY 18

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL MONTAGE: YELLOW BUSES spewing forth
 STUDENTS. CARS, MOPEDS and SKATEBOARDS pulling up to

19 EXT. FILIAS DEUS SCHOOL FRONT STEPS 19

Kids hanging out in CLIQUES. LES sits alone, in cheer gear.
 TWO FOOTBALL PLAYERS walk by.

FDS TIGHT END
 Whoo! Sexy, Lesley.

FDS QUARTERBACK
 Hey, fag.

Torrance appears.

TORRANCE
 Hey guys! So glad to see the acne on your
 acne is improving!
 (checking)
 Oops, spoke too soon. Just because Les has
 won more trophies for the school than you

TORRANCE (cont'd)
have, you know, is no reason to get all
malignant with him.

The players grin stupidly and leave.

TORRANCE
Les, you better tell me you're in advanced
chem first period.

LESLEY
Advanced chem first period.

TORRANCE
If you have a lab partner already, I'm
screwed.

LESLEY
Torrance, it's the first day of school.
Your academic insecurity bit is completely
tired.

TORRANCE
The straight A honor student said gently to
the queen of the B minus --

LESLEY
So you know, everybody's saying you broke
Carver's leg.

TORRANCE
Yes. I threw her over my knee and broke her
damn leg.

LESLEY
Pam Anne did a massive e-mail last night.
She misspelled 'leg'.

TORRANCE
Shut up.

LESLEY
Two 'g's.

TORRANCE
Does Carver hate me?

A pink GEO TRACKER drives by. The license plate reads:
'PAP'. Pam Anne makes a face like, 'Ha ha I have the coolest
wheels!'

LESLEY
No, but the Smear and her Dazzlers do. It's
a new year, and - whoo! - a new car for
SpamAnne.

LESLEY (cont'd)

(to Pam Anne)

Wow, Pam, a satanic Tonka Truck! I'm fartin' jade jewelry, I'm so jealous! Right on, girlene!

TORRANCE

Hey! Buzz drives one of those.

Torrance is distracted, half-listening and looking through her knapsack.

LESLEY

And you refuse to see the connection. Just cause every idiot worships him doesn't mean you have to stay with him.

TORRANCE

I believe the word you're looking for is loyalty?

LESLEY

Then you put the oy in loyalty.

TORRANCE

(ignoring his point)

Nice splice.

He high fives her as we launch into

20 INT. FDS HALLWAY - LATER

20

The Clash's 'Train in Vain' accompany a pair of VINTAGE CREEPERS walking towards the cafeteria to the beat. Their owner pushes the double doors open as

21 INT. CAFETERIA - CONTINUOUS

21

CLIFF, a hunky, 17 yr.old, glides into the room in a well-preserved CLASH T-shirt. From the reactions of the crowd, he's a new commodity. Dressed differently from the rest of the kids, sitting by himself, he puts on a Walkman headset, cracks a book.

Across the cafeteria, 33 TORRANCE is riveted. She's staring and looking away. Gazing and pretending to read. He gets up - very slowly - walks over. Shit! He pulls up a chair and sits next to Torrance.

CLIFF

Are you going to stare at me all day - or are you going to strike up some small talk and ask me out? Me Cliff.

TORRANCE

(crush trance)

I have a boyfriend.

CLIFF

No way! That's my mom's name! That is such a profound coincidence, I think we're supposed to follow through on that with a date, or coffee, or whatever arcane Orange County courtship ritual it is you follow around here.

TORRANCE

I'm sorry. You're new here? What's your name again?

CLIFF

I am not the kind of girl who tells all on a first date. I'd prefer to keep some mystery until our second date, if that's okay.

TORRANCE

Great.

(remembering, bummed)

I can't. I have a boyfriend.

CLIFF

You don't look at me like you have a boyfriend. Could you be any prettier?

Torrance is completely flummoxed from the chemistry.

TORRANCE

I - uh - he's at school. College. He's my boyfriend.

CLIFF

You said that already. And the answer is 'no,' you could not be any prettier.

TORRANCE

Stop it.

Torrance blushes and smiles. She's loving it.

CLIFF

Come on. Go out with me? Coffee?
Pastrami? Horseshoes?

TORRANCE

You play horseshoes? Very vintage. Like your taste in bands?

CLIFF

Guilty. You'll love it. The game where
(moves in)
coming close counts.

TORRANCE

(patronizing)
I'm sorry. I don't believe in cheating.

CLIFF

I'll still want to take you out when you get
over yourself. Or him. Whichever comes
first.

TORRANCE

You will? I mean, you know, we're probably
not going to break up, so --

CLIFF

Don't mind me if I never learn to live with
that, okay?

Torrance looks genuinely confused by this.

TORRANCE

Is that a diss? Or a compliment?

As an answer, Cliff pushes a strand of hair behind Torr's
head before zapping her with a smile.

CLIFF

You know exactly what it is, 'I-have-a-boyfriend'!

Torrance looks down at her TEXTBOOK, she has doodled in pen
all over the page as we

22 INT. FDS SCHOOL

22

Tor and Les stop in front of a locker, producing candy and a
card from a knapsack. Pam Anne and Three Uniformed Dazzlers
stop in the hall, surrounding Torrance and Lesley.

PAM ANNE

Oh, that should heal her leg.

TORRANCE

Nice car, Pamela. Great vanity plates.

PAM ANNE

(insulted)

Vanity plates? What's that supposed to
mean?

LESLEY

It means personalized plates. It's a synonym.

PAM ANNE

My license plate is a hologram, Les. P-A-P.
Pam Anne Phillips.

Les and Torrance share a confused look. Darcy joins the fray, immediately checking her hair.

PAM ANNE

A hologram is a word that spells the same thing backwards and forwards. Look it up.

LESLEY

Oh -

TORRANCE

-- a hologram! Les!

In over-heated frustration, Pam Anne starts waving a notebook up and down, fanning the right side of her head...right near her ear.

LESLEY

(re. fanning motion)

Oh? Is that how you get the air into your head?

PAM ANNE

You are never gonna find anyone to replace Carver. You are gonna be, like,
(searching for word)
lost without her! How nervous are you?

As Pam Anne trots off, Darcy and Tor share a look that says: very, very nervous.

23 EXT. GYMNASIUM - DAY

23

see THREE WANNABES filling out try-out forms near the gymnasium entrance. Our SQUAD peeks out from door, mortified. We pull out to see a

SERPENTINE LINE of more than ONE HUNDRED GIRLS, filling out forms, stretching, meditating, hyperventilating, practicing moves to themselves.

24 INT. GYMNASIUM

24

The squad huddles before try-outs.

DARCY

Bring on the tyros, the neophytes and dilettanti!

JAN

SAT's are over, Darcy.

DARCY

I can go for 800 verbal if I so desire.
Are we sure Carver's not malingering?

TORRANCE

Carver's cool with this. She'll barely be walking by March. Nationals are February tenth. Regionals are in, like, seven weeks.

JAN

Foul! We better pick a cheerleading savant, or this car is gonna crash.

The squad nods.

COURTNEY

Listen: Whitney's little sister Jamie is really tiny. She's a freshman. Air Jordan kinds of flight.

TORRANCE

If she's the best, Jamie's got it. But we have to see everyone.

MOANS from squad.

WHITNEY

That'll take forever. Besides, me and Jamie tan the exact same shade.

TORRANCE

No cheating. We see everyone.

COURTNEY

You're putting the Tor in torture, Torrance.

WHITNEY

(whisper, to Court)

Nice splice.

Whit and Court do a behind the back high-five. Kasey's changing the color of her orthodontic elastics.

KASEY

I agree with Tor. What if there's someone who's better?

KASEY (cont'd)
 (lightbulb)
 Hey, did you guys do this last year?

WHITNEY
 Duh. Anyone who's better is already on the squad. We do have to seem fair. Jamie's it. I can run routines with her at home.

Kasey is still processing this as the squad disperses.

TORRANCE
 No. Nepotism is un-Olympic. We're seeing everyone.

COURTNEY
 Everyone? You are such an irri-tater-tot!

TORRANCE
 Yes. Now go open the moat, princess.

25 EXT./INT. GYMNASIUM - CONTINUOUS

25

TRYOUT MONTAGE:

Quick cuts of the array of AUDITIONERS: Shaking smiles; too stiff; too quiet; too scared; too over the top; too bizarre.

JAMIE, a ridiculously tiny freshman, breezes through her try-out unspectacularly, WINKING at the squad when she finishes.

A STRAGGLER walks in. Brunette 16 year-old wearing low-slung cholo trousers, and a sleeveless white undershirt with dayglow bra straps hanging out. Baroque black tattoos ring around one bicep. MISSY PANTONE looks more like a roadie for Social Distortion than a cheerleading candidate.

COURTNEY
 Tattoos are strictly verboten. Sorry.

Missy licks her middle finger thoroughly, and just when you think she's going to flip the bird, she runs it over the tattoo, smearing it.

MISSY
 I got bored during fourth period. Can I still try out?

WHITNEY
 You need to fill this out --

MISSY
 (producing form)
 Did it.

Missy drops her chain-key-chain to the floor with a CLUNK.

TORRANCE

(looks at form)

Missy? Before we start, I'm afraid we need to make sure you can do a standing back tuck.

MISSY

Standing full okay?

Missy quickly executes a standing, full-twisting back layout. It's Miller time. Shannon Miller.

WHITNEY

(challenge)

Brandy, back-handspring, whipback, whipback, tuck out.

Missy flies into the tumbling pass before Whitney's done reciting it. Hammers it.

COURTNEY

But can she yell? Where's she from?

MISSY

(screaming, cheer-like)

What? I transferred from Los Angeles.

Various squad members wince from the volume.

TORRANCE

Courtney and Jan'll show you a cheer - and you do it back?

MISSY

Boy cheerleaders? Whacky.

A tense moment. Jan looms over her like a mafia Don.

JAN

(mean)

Know this: if we had decent football, soccer or basketball teams, we'd be on them. Here. Guys. Cheer. You were asleep, and you just got your wake-up call, ah-ight?

COURTNEY

(joining)

Since all our cheers and routines are original, we'll try an oldie: "Awesome ohwowliketotallyfreakmeoutImeanforsure, righton, the Titans sure are number one!"

Missy repeats Courtney's chant, but it fizzles. The squad glares at her.

MISSY

(over it, dismissive)

You busted me! So I've never cheered before, so what? Wouldn't it be weird if I could, like, nail standing fulls, but was, like, genetically incapable of memorizing cute rhymes? How 'bout something that actually requires neurons?

WHITNEY

Okay. Can you stunt, Miss Gymnast?

JAN

(jumps up)

I'll stunt with her!

Missy WHISPERS in Jan's ear. She places both hands on Jan's head, he squats, flips her upside down as she presses up into a handstand. On his head. The squad's OOH's become AAH's -- when Missy removes one hand. Sports fans: Missy Pantone is doing a one-armed handstand on Jan's noggin.

TORRANCE

(to squad)

Missy is bank.

COURTNEY

No she's not. We have all already soooo decided on Jamie!

WHITNEY

Screw Jamie.

LESLEY

And the horse she rode in on.

TORRANCE

Guys?

GUYS

We love her/No brainer/Jamie sucked.

TORRANCE

Courtney, this is not a democracy. It's a cheer-ocracy. I'm sorry, but we're over-ruling you!

COURTNEY

The word is Cheer-tatorship. You're being a cheer-tator, Torrance. We already voted! Besides, Missy looks like an uber-dyke.

This is not lost on Missy.

DARCY

Excellent use of uber. However, I optate her.

A door SLAMS. Missy's gone.

TORRANCE

Courtney, I'm captain. I'm pulling rank, and you can fall in line or not. If we're gonna be the best, we have to have the best, and she's the best! Missy's the poo, so take a big whiff.

COURTNEY

Fine. But I am still the squad bitch!

26 EXT. PANTONE HOUSE - NIGHT

26

Torrance rings a DOORBELL. The door opens, changing Torrance's demeanor noticeably. Hard to tell why until we see

CLIFF from the cafeteria. Foreigner T-shirt, baggy chinos and buzzed hair, his eyes smile. Torrance is smitten. They snatch mutual stares.

CLIFF

Welcome wagon?

TORRANCE

Hi. Does Missy live here?

CLIFF

She moved back to LA. Something about witchy teenage cheerleaders --

TORRANCE

No - she's perfect. We loved her! We have to get her!

CLIFF

Is her drug dependency going to be a problem?

Missy appears at the door.

MISSY

Cliff - shut up.

TORRANCE

We want you! You're the best and they know it. Courtney's just threatened because you rock so damn hard, she'll come around.

MISSY

No way. No thanks.

TORRANCE

Please? Can I say or do or promise anything to get you to reconsider? Seriously!

(manic)

Say yes, say yes, say yes!

MISSY

Easy, cheesy. I'll need full diplomatic immunity.

CLIFF

She'll do it if you go out with her brother.

MISSY

Back off, mack. He's such a mack.

CLIFF

Missola wants it. She's just playing hard to get.

MISSY

I can't deal with those estro-hens, man.

GIRLS VOICES (O.S.)

We want you, Pantone!

GUYS VOICES (O.S.)

Yeah, we want you Michelle.

TWO CARS with various SQUAD MEMBERS hanging out the windows pull up to the Pantone curb.

TORRANCE

(re. Michelle)

Missy! Like pissy!

CLIFF

(re: guys)

Who are they?

TORRANCE

Coed national champions.

CLIFF

Guy cheerleaders?

Torrance looks at Cliff, sneering at him like he's clueless.

TORRANCE

Missy, are you in?

CLIFF

You get to wear humiliating outfits and yell like you care about something!

MISSY

I'm so in, I can't even see myself anymore!

27 INT. GYMNASIUM PEP RALLY - DAY

27

SNARE DRUM. A DRUM ROLL introduces..the FDS DAZZLERS - twelve young women strut onto the floor sporting outfits that would make Reba McIntyre proud.

STUDENT BODY

Where's the rodeo?

Unperturbed, the Dazzlers launch into a cheesy Luvabulls type number. It's crappy. Some 'Ace of Base' song plays, stopping after twenty seconds. The Dazzlers keep going for a beat until they realize there's no music. Crowd LAUGHS. Ever professional, Pam Anne flips the bird to the bleachers, shoos Dazzlers off the floor, irritated at the injustice.

PAM ANNE

It's really hard to come out here and stand in front of you guys, you know? We have spirit, too. We're just as important as --

STUDENT BODY

You have no talent! Get off the floor --

Pam's eclipsed as Torrance and the squad hit the floor, and the crowd ERUPTS. They begin with a step: a complicated combo of STOMPING, KNEE-SLAPPING and CLAPS that form an INTRICATE RHYTHM. The crowd joins...

SQUAD

I said: Brrrrrrrrr. It's cold in here, I guess there must be some Titans in the atmosphere. I say Brrrrrrr, it's cold in here, I said there must be some Titans in the at-mo-sphere. I said: ice, ice, ice! Ohweohweoh! Ice, ice, ice! Ohweohweoh!

Torrance leads the squad into a never-before-seen, slamming :45 second routine.

FROM THE SIDELINES...MISSY, whose cholo/rockabilly style still stands out from the crowd, looks pissed.

As the football players are INTRODUCED, Torrance notices Missy slipping out, quickly following her into the corridor.

28 EXT. GYMNASIUM - CONTINUOUS

28

TORRANCE

How's four o'clock? You've got to come over and start learning the routines - I can also give you some videos. Do you think that'll help?

MISSY

(super-bitch)

I know all the routines already.

TORRANCE

No-rexia!

MISSY

Torrance, I know them because I've seen them for years. Everything's ripped off. I want no slice of this pie.

TORRANCE

This is your brain on drugs. I fought to get you on the squad, if you've changed your mind at least be cool about it, don't make shit up.

MISSY

Look: LA to Orange County? I can deal. Joining cheerleading? Something so uncool it's cool? Fine. But thieving? Not my speed.

TORRANCE

I don't understand.

MONTAGE TO ROCKIN' MUZAK:

29 EXT. 5 FREEWAY; EXT. 91 FREEWAY; EXT. 405 FREEWAY

29

TORRANCE

(lost)

You and hoo, where are we going? Could I get a destination? An ETA?

A CITY LIMITS SIGN

reads: *Welcome to the City of INGLEWOOD*. From the looks of things, we have left the Emerald City for the wrong side of the tracks.

30 INT. CLIFF'S CADILLAC 30

Torrance stares at the sign, concerned.

31 INT. INGLEWOOD HS GYMNASIUM 31

THE MASCOT is an orange leprechaun picking a green four-leaf clover. Ancient, the fourth leaf has cracked and is hanging on by a thread.

The second quarter of a GIRLS B-BALL GAME finishes up. BUZZER sounds. Torrance, Cliff and Missy lean on a bleacher. The SPECTATORS start STOMPING and WHISTLING.

SEVEN GIRLS and SEVEN GUYS - the predominantly African-American Inglewood Clovers Cheerleading squad - stroll onto the court wearing baggy layers of hip hop gear. They're disorganized and pretty lackadaisical. LAUGHING, elbowing each other, having fun.

The CAPTAIN, whose shirt reads 'O MIGHTY ISIS' flings her braids and raises her arms like a conductor. Her squad falls silent.

ISIS

I said Brrrrr, it's cold in here -

TORRANCE looks shocked.

The entire CLOVER SQUAD begins an Byzantine stepping sequence, featuring INTRICATE STOMPING & CLAPPING RHYTHMS. The squad strips down their clothing - revealing hip green and orange uniforms underneath. Gals in lycra hot pants, kneepads, crop tops with chenille 'I's on the bust. Guys in pegleg Adidas pants and baggy jerseys.

TORRANCE covers her mouth in sheer panic.

Fast NRG HOUSE MUSIC begins. The squad LAUGHS and relaxes for a bar, then launches into a one-minute dance sequence. The Clovers explode with a fiercely original routine, even though it's a more complex version of the one FDS just did. Only better. Much, much, better.

MISSY looks at TORRANCE with concern. Tor shakes her head, bites a nail and clutches her stomach at the same time. The CROWD goes wild with APPLAUSE.

TORRANCE

I'm in hell. Get me home.

Torrance runs

32 EXT. INGLEWOOD HIGH SCHOOL PARKING LOT

32

out to the car. They're almost there, when Isis clamps a paw onto Tor's FDS Letter Jacket. Isis has TWO CLOVER COHORTS, LAVA and JENELOPE.

ISIS

Ex-squeeze me, but I have to call you out.

LAVA

We are ready to boot up, y'all.

TORRANCE

Uh wow. Hi. You guys were great.

ISIS

(dripping)

No? Really? You ready to share the trophy? Where's Bozo? The clown with her very own camera --

MISSY

Bozo?

ISIS

(to Missy)

This is an A and B conversation, and you can C your way out of it, thank you.

(to Torrance)

Big, ugly Red-head. Video camera. Been snaking our routines for years. We just love seeing them on ESPN.

TORRANCE

I'm not sure, uh, you know, about that --

ISIS

'Oohsaywadewa', 'Brrr, it's cold in here I said there must be some Titans in the atmosphere'? You think a white girl thought that shit up?

TORRANCE

I didn't think anything, quite honestly.

ISIS

Ouch! There's a new knife in town and she is sha-arp!

Isis is livid, and in Tor's face.

ISIS

Our free routine service is no longer open for business. Hand over the tape or you're gonna long for the days when you looked this good, Mary Frances.

CLIFF

She didn't make any tape, for real.

LAVA

(to Cliff)

Don't play pussy, or you might get --

Lava's interrupted by Isis. Dramatically, Isis unfurls each of her ten nails, one at a time - pure malice in her eyes.

ISIS

Me-ow. You know what that means? 'Me' gonna 'ow' you. Hand over the tape. Cheer-robbin' season is over.

Other SQUAD MEMBERS have gathered behind Isis and ECHO her dismissals. They are pissed. A sense of real threat is in the air.

TORRANCE

I don't have a videocamera or a tape. I'm not hiding anything.

MISSY

She's not.

ISIS

Isis likes to find out for herself, thank you.

Isis lunges for Torrance. Cliff steps in between them, body-searching Torrance, opening and lifting her clothing. Missy voluntarily does the same.

CLIFF

I'll frisk her!

MISSY

We're clean. We didn't mean to --

LAVA

Come on, Isis, you the mack diva. You let em know. They leaving.

ISIS

You snake our moves, and me and my nails are long, sharp and ready to slash. You're young. Life is long. Try to stay pretty.

Tor, Miss, and Cliff jump into the car.

JENELOPE

(testifying)

Let the car door hit you where the good lord split you!

CLOVERS

Buh-bye/See ya!/Go back to Santy Anny

34 INT. FATBURGER

34

Gobbling burgers, Missy and Cliff ARGUE animatedly about the confrontation. Torrance's food is untouched, and she looks like she could cry. Missy and Cliff stop to register this.

TORRANCE

That was deeply frightening. My inner Richter is off the charts.

CLIFF

(softens)

Hey. I wasn't gonna let anything happen. You are still completely cute. And there's good news: it's only cheerleading.

TORRANCE

(freaking)

I am 'only cheerleading'!

CLIFF

And - as far as I'm concerned - it's kinda lame.

TORRANCE

(dripping sarcasm)

Look at you. You're so much better than me because you can diss cheerleading. How original! Ooh - you're so cutting edge.

Missy and Cliff look at the freak a beat. Torrance smirks at her drama, the trio laugh. Cliff and Tor share a flirty look.

CLIFF

You caught me. I like a girl who takes no shit. You can spank me with a pompom and teach me a lesson --

TORRANCE

Pom pon. 'N'.

MISSY

P-O-N? It's much worse than I thought.

CLIFF

Not the pon!

Missy belches. Torrance waves the smell away.

MISSY

(smelling the burp)

Eww. Fritos.

TORRANCE

Diaper.

Torrance laughs. Another BURP becomes the SOUND of

35 INT. SHIPMAN TV ROOM - NIGHT

35

Torrance's nose SNIFFING. She gags. Justin's the Sega-playing culprit. Tor seizes the phone and dials.

JUSTIN

Since Pluto's covered with methane ice, I fart to remind you of your homeland.

TORRANCE

Is Buzz around? Do you know when - ?
(bummed)
Have him call Torrance. It's urgent.

JUSTIN

Maybe you come from Uranus. Also pure methane. It would explain your love of my sweet intestinal gas.

MRS. SHIPMAN (O.S.)

Torrance. Daddy and I need a word.

36 INT. DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

36

Bummed, Torrance zombies into the dining room. Unopened college application packets sit on the table. Mr. and Mrs. Shipman look worried.

MRS. SHIPMAN

What are these?

TORRANCE

College applications.

MRS. SHIPMAN

Memphis State? University of South
Carolina? University of Kentucky? Are you
planning on joining the confederacy?

MR. SHIPMAN

We need to discuss where you're applying,
honey.

TORRANCE

To schools with a strong cheerleading
tradition, obviously.

MR. SHIPMAN

I'm more concerned about academic tradition,
especially with the out-of-state tuitions
we'll be looking at --

TORRANCE

I'm eligible for scholarships at all of
those schools.

MRS. SHIPMAN

For what?

TORRANCE

Cheerleading!

MRS. SHIPMAN

Dear God.

MR. SHIPMAN

We have totally supported you in this
endeavor --

TORRANCE

Endeavor? Bull-imia! It's a sport.

MRS. SHIPMAN

We know you think so. But where's the future
in it? The Laker Girls?

TORRANCE

(livid)

What we do is nothing like the Laker Girls,
and if you'd come to a competition once in a
while you wouldn't make such ignorant
comments. As for the future? How about the
Olympics? When I win a medal I'm sure
you'll say you supported it all along --

MRS. SHIPMAN

(to husband)

She's gone, honey. Completely.

MR. SHIPMAN

I can get your mom to entertain your top choices, but we've got to cut a deal.

TORRANCE

I am not cutting a deal on my college experience! It's my four years, isn't it?

MR. SHIPMAN

A little compromise, please. We will relax if you agree to apply to UCLA, Berkeley, or Pomona.

TORRANCE

Pomona? They don't even have a mascot, let alone a cheerleading squad!

MRS. SHIPMAN

Yes they do. The Sagehens.

TORRANCE

The what? Great. I am not cheering for a Sagehen, I am sorry.

MRS. SHIPMAN

Maybe you won't want to cheer, honey. Maybe you'll outgrow it --

Torrance GROWLS with indignation.

MR. SHIPMAN

(to Mrs.)

Christine, give us a minute.

Mrs. S. leaves. Torrance's dad grabs her hands.

MR. SHIPMAN

This doesn't have to be painful, does it?

JUSTIN (O.S.)

Can she go back to her planet now?

MR. SHIPMAN

This is a cinch. I've seen you do a bracket toss. This is cake compared to that.

He kisses her on the forehead, leaving her starting at the pile of apps.

TORRANCE

Basket toss.

JUSTIN (O.S.)

Nanu nanu.

37 EXT. PRACTICE FIELD - DAY

37 *

Torrance has clearly dropped the bomb. The squad is taking it in, while Missy, Jan and Les form the central chorus.

TORRANCE

I put this to the entire squad: swear you guys didn't know.

The entire squad GRUMBLE and GASP denials.

JAN

I expletive. Red did what? That's F'd up.

LESLEY

I four-letter word.

(beat)

Red screwed us?

TORRANCE

Monster-screwed us. I feel hideous. It's depraved. That Inglewood girl wanted to grill my ass.

JAN

Big Red ran the show, man. We were just the flying ignorami, for sobbing out loud.

LESLEY

He's right. We had zero clue, Tor.

MISSY

Listen, I'm still way over it, but we are talking cheerleading routine here, and I'm starting to realize you weren't all like undercover operatives plotting some conspiracy.

TORRANCE

I don't want to use a stolen routine, but I don't want to screw everyone's hard work, either. The hours of practice were sick --

LESLEY

(sarcastic)

It was only two, three hours a day for two and a half months.

MISSY

(sympathetic)

I hadn't thought of that. We don't know if Inglewood'll even do jack.

COURTNEY

Exactly. I hate to be predictable, but, I don't give a shit! We learned it fair and square. We logged the man hours. Don't punish the squad for Big Red's mistake.

SQUAD

Yeah! / For real!/ Word.

TORRANCE

I don't think we're being fair to Inglewood.

WHITNEY

What do you mean not fair to them? What about us?! To change the routine now wouldn't be fair to us! This is about us.

COURTNEY

Seriously. Let's not put the um in dumb. So, how do we deal with it? We do what anyone in this situation would do --

Courtney looks at Whitney who nods.

COURTNEY & WHITNEY

We ignore it.

JAN

How're Inglewood gonna prove anything? What're they gonna do?

(girlie voice)

They stole! Revoke their license!

TORRANCE

As long as we understand: there is an element of cheating here --

Darcy stands dramatically, commanding everyone's attention.

DARCY

This is not about cheating. This is about winning.

(raising her hand)

Everyone in favor of winning?

The entire squad raises their hands. With the exception of Torrance as we

38 EXT. PANTONE FRONT YARD - LATER

38

Missy and Jan stunt. Les spots. Torrance lies on her belly, watching. They try a Liberty Heel Stretch. GRUNT and fall.

JAN

(to Missy)

Shut up and grip this. You don't know me. Theoretically, it would be impossible for you to trust me yet, but trust me. Not only will I not drop you, you'll hit six feet of me before you hit the ground.

TORRANCE

Pinch a penny on the way up.

MISSY

(pretend foreign accent)

Fungshingsha?

LESLEY

Pretend you got a penny between your butt cheeks and squeeze. Your whole body needs to be that tight. Here's a quarter.

Missy hits it out of Les' hand.

MISSY

That won't be necessary. Let's do it.

They almost hit it. Not perfect, but better. Jan catches her on the way down.

LESLEY

You're getting it - we have to move faster.

JAN

If she can nail toss-hands today, I'll work stunts with her during study hall.

TORRANCE

No 'if's. We don't place high at regionals, we don't get a bid to nationals. We always get a bid to Nationals. Learn the stunts, while I abuse the plumbing.

Torrance moves to the house. The trio stand there goofing off.

TORRANCE

Six weeks! Start!

39 INT. PANTONE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

39

Torrance is confronted with Cliff, papers spread, doing homework. A huge backyard is visible through sliding glass doors.

TORRANCE

You don't seem like the homework type.

CLIFF

Apparently, I'm not. AP exam next week.

Torrance peeks over Cliff's shoulder.

TORRANCE

(reading)

I don't think so. Isn't it:

(semi-cheering)

F equals g times Mm over r squared?

CLIFF

No it...is. She's not really dumb, she just plays dumb on TV?

Torrance is irritated. Compounded by the fact Jan and Les are cavorting on a large swing in the backyard, following orders.

TORRANCE

Actually I was working the deaf angle, but clearly you saw through it. For someone who hates cliches, how you spew them liberally.

CLIFF

Example?

She can't get out of there fast enough.

TORRANCE

I cheer therefore, I'm dumb? Start there, evolve at your own pace, maestro.

Door SLAMS. Tor BERATES Jan and Les in the backyard.

Cliff studies Torrance with lust in his eyes, clearly smitten. Sensing he's not alone, he catches himself and looks around sheepishly. Missy appears, PANTING and MOANING ORGASMICALLY. She climaxes suddenly, sipping her soda casually as punctuation.

CLIFF

(defensively)

What?

Missy just shakes her head and laughs, heading to the fridge, grabbing more beverages. Cliff laughs, caught.

CLIFF

(smiling)

I so do not like her!

Missy hands Cliff a soda, nodding as she goes back outside.

40 INT. SHIPMAN TV ROOM - DUSK

40

PHONE fills frame. FINGER hits speakerphone. Auto-dial. BUSY SIGNAL. Hang up. Speakerphone, auto-dial, BUSY SIGNAL, hang-up.

Torrance mans the phone. A sprawled-out Justin does homework while playing Sega. Stacks of college applications share the coffee table with the phone.

TORRANCE

Go put the chicken in the oven.

JUSTIN

No way, I wanna hear this.

ROOM-MATE (O.S.)

Yo.

TORRANCE

May I please speak to Buzz?

ROOM-MATE (O.S.)

Buzz! It's your high school girlie!

BUZZ (O.S.)

(faintly, but distinctly)

Tell her I'm not home.

ROOM-MATE (O.S.)

He's not home. Buh bye.

Click. Justin cracks up.

JUSTIN

I'll take Famous Losers for two hundred, Alex. Tor-rancid, if a loser is dissing you, what exactly does that make you?

TORRANCE

He's just busy. This may sound crazy --

JUSTIN

You're in love with a big, gay cheerleader who won't take your calls?

TORRANCE

You think Buzz is gay?

JUSTIN

Literally and figuratively.

TORRANCE

He's busy, it's no biggie.

JUSTIN

Yeah, busy scamming on guys.

Justin blows the taco stand. Torrance stares at her pile of college applications, picking up the packets and moving to the kitchen.

JUSTIN (O.S.)

Forget Buzz. I hear there's a new squad that's gonna kick your ass this year.

TORRANCE

(sinking in)

That is so bucked up. How'd you hear about that already?

JUSTIN

Really? I was kidding. You're such an alien.

41 EXT. STREETS OF SANTA ANA - NIGHT

41

KIDS in cars cruise other KIDS in other cars. It's Friday night and something is shakin, bacon.

42 EXT. PANTONE HOUSE - NIGHT

42

Torrance, Les and Jan pull up in uniform, commanding in Lesley's '72 SUBURBAN. HONK. Jan crawls over into the back seat, while Missy barrels out the front door, looking fierce in her uniform. Only problem: her skirt is severely misshapen in the waist area. In every area, actually.

MISSY

Yo, Carver is not my size, man. This skirt is so safety-pinned.

LESLEY

Honey, it's your first Night Game! What better reason to lose your skirt?

Lesley peels out. They pass many TEEN-FILLED VEHICLES that BEEP and wave throughout the drive. Very American Graffiti. Torrance has her head buried in some game plan.

JAN

All the cheerleaders in the world would not help our football team --

LESLEY

It's just wrong. Cheering for them is just plain mean, they're so bad.

JAN

Everybody comes to watch you ladies anyway --

MISSY

And you guys!

LESLEY

You'll be fighting off major ogglers, while we defend our sexuality.

MISSY

(beat)

What is your sexuality?

LESLEY

Jan is straight, while I...am controversial.

Missy laughs.

MISSY

(to Les)

Are you trying to tell me you speak fag?

LESLEY

Fluently. The rest of the guys bat for Jan's team. Supposedly. Although Brooke --

JAN

Brooke is a little too into the fact that Courtney doesn't wear anything under her spankies.

LESLEY

He's always trying to --

Jan and Lesley choke on chuckles.

TORRANCE

Don't! She does not want to know. I don't wanna know.

LESLEY

He can't help it if his digits slip occasionally.

MISSY

Shut up. Slip? Eww. Where?

LESLEY

Where you put the come in comfortable.

JAN

Don't worry, girlene. Courtney is a willing accomplice.

LESLEY

How Miss Courtney loves the wandering thumb.

MISSY

Oh my god.

JAN

My god, too.

43 EXT. FDS PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS 43

They pull up to the bustling parking lot, CLIQUES hustling to the bleachers.

44 EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD 44

Torrance and company cruise the sidelines, waving to people and generally ruling the proceedings.

CENTERFIELD

The COSTA MESA CO-CAPTAINS and the FDS CO-CAPTAINS meet for the coin toss. The REF takes his time.

COSTA MESA L.B.

Repeat after me: "I'm a big, fat football playing joke?"

COSTA MESA Q.B.

Why don't you let the cheerleaders play for you? At least they win shit occasionally.

FDS TIGHT END

That would be like saying: that just because you suck each others' dicks occasionally, that only makes you bi --

FDS Q.B.

When we know for a fact you're gay.

COSTA MESA L.B.

Can you feel the rigor mortis setting in?

COSTA MESA Q.B.

Can you feel the guy cheerleaders getting more ass than you do?

FDS TIGHT END

Touching and getting are not the same thing.

(to FDS QB)

They are getting more ass than we are, aren't they?

FDS Q.B.

Utterly.

45 EXT. SIDELINES - CONTINUOUS

45

Courtney adjusts her spanky pants. Brooke looks at her and smiles to himself. She bends over to tie her cheer-sneaks, knowing he's looking. The GUY CHEERLEADERS are such the studs, getting

46 EXT. BLEACHERS - CONTINUOUS

46

ogled by FROSH & SOPH GIRLIES. POSSES nip Zima in the bleachers. Cliff - in an *ELO* T-shirt - chats with his...DATE! A gorgeous exotic-looking LA girl, they seem happy to be together. In between flirting, Cliff's busy snapping the occasional candid with his Nikon.

ON THE FIELD...The SEVEN VISITING CHEERLEADERS do their 'HELLO CHEER.' The VC's raise their skirts, letters sewn into the lining spell, 'YOU SUCK!'

ON THE SIDELINES, FDS CHEERLEADERS - sans Torrance - explode with a response:

FDS SQUAD

(clapping/cheering)

That's alright, that's okay, you're gonna pump our gas someday!

ON THE FIELD the REFEREE blows the WHISTLE. The GAME begins.

AT THE SIDELINES, FDS regroup. Torrance pretends not to be jealous of Cliff and his Date. Court and Whit hover.

JAN

(re. Date)

Damn, that girl is perfect! Man!

MISSY

(to Tor)

She's an ex not a now.

TORRANCE

(obviously jealous)

I've seen better racks on a bicycle.

(to Court and Whit, re. Cliff)

He gives me fever.

WHITNEY

Buzz is still the man. I can't believe
you're even looking.

COURTNEY

(like a bad smell)

Torrance, he's new.

Jan and Les act cocky. Darcy and Kasey are goofing off.
Sloppy.

TORRANCE gives her squad the evil eye.

MISSY adjusts her skirt. The safety pins frustrating her.

Torrance commences a pyramid cheer. The squad's not ready.

JAN

Throw the ho'. One, two, three --

Pat and Kelly toss Darcy. As she flies through the air and
into a toe-touch, one SHOE flies off her foot and out of
frame. A small THWACK is followed by a HUMAN YELP.

THE SQUAD continues the routine, launching into toe-touches.

CLIFF gets every frame with his high-speed shutter, pleased
with himself.

PAT lifts DARCY into a shoulder sit. She aligns her hair and
FARTS. A nice loud, wet one. Pat makes a face, waving the
back of Darcy's skirt to move the air.

PAT

Bleccch.

DARCY

Enjoy the effluvia.

Pat shoves Darcy off his shoulder.

PAT

(accusatory)

Why is my shoulder damp?

JAN holds onto MISSY by the waist, preparing to do a lift. They prep and dip: Jan lifts, and as they hit the move...we see Jan holding only THE SKIRT over his head.

MISSY, still ground-bound, wears only spankies and her uniform top. She grabs the skirt from Jan.

COURTNEY AND BROOKE do the same lift. As Courtney nails her 'chair', her eyes pop out.

Brooke grins wolfishly, his hand clearly holding her by the butt. Courtney WHOOPS and jumps out of her stunt early.

Brooke smells his thumb and smiles.

OUTSIDE THE FIELD, an OCTET of FEET in the best Nike has to offer, make clouds of dust like bulls about to spear a Matador.

AT THE ENTRANCE, in the glow of the night game lights,

ISIS & THREE INGLEWOOD CLOVER CHEERLEADERS

enter the football field, pumped for confrontation. They glide into a top row of the bleachers, attracting a smattering of attention.

Immediately, Inglewood begins copying FDS' sideline cheers. They imitate moves from the stands, eliciting attention. The quartet move down a few rows.

ON THE SIDELINES

Torrance is immediately ruffled. Missy grabs Tor.

MISSY

Just ignore them.

FRONT ROW BLEACHERS

Isis and company squeeze down into front row and imitate FDS in a bigger way, CACKLING. Inglewood's fierce foursome stand in front of FDS.

CLIFF'S capturing everything on Kodak.

SIDELINE IN PROFILE

INGLEWOOD and FDS are face to face, in show-down mode. A group human mirror, both squads perform the cheers. The Clovers mimic the FDS chant perfectly. The entire FDS squad gets tighter and louder in response. The Clovers rise to the challenge of being outnumbered: they are fierce.

COURTNEY

(re. Clovers)

Nagging itch and embarrassing odor!

WHITNEY

Is anyone else freaking out? How do they know all our shit?

TORRANCE

I'll tell you later. Quick: Let's do "ooh."

Isis' group dominate the cheer in a deliverance-style case of one-upmanship. The Clovers turn and face the audience.

CLOVERS

Ooh ooh zip zoom zow, flash more points on the scoreboard now. Ooh ooh zip zoom zow --

TORRANCE

(yelling over)

Pick-up backs on three! One, two --

Inglewood falls silent. Like a marine drill team: one third of the FDS kids start the drill by nailing standing back tucks (SBT); Immediately, two thirds of the squad launched into a second SBT; For the finale, the entire FDS squad nails a simultaneous back flip.

FDS squad stands at attention, staring defiantly at the Clovers. Isis retaliates, raising her conductor arms.

ISIS

Achoo! Bless you!

CLOVERS

Do our bit/ you'll look like shit/ cuz we the ones who/ down with it/ You better hide/ you should have fear/cuz we will kick your ass this year!

ISIS

(normal)

You know, we never even tried to go for those bull-shit nationals before. But this year, as God is my secret judge, we will be there. We are coming just to wax your ass, Titans! So watch your back.

The Clovers storm off with a flourish. CLIFF snaps away. Our squad looks at each other, totally freaked over the showdown.

COURTNEY

(indignant)

I still say we use the routine we have!

The game BUZZER sounds. FDS has lost: the scoreboard reads 21-0. The squad gives Courtney a collective eye-roll.

COURTNEY

If we have to start over, I quit!

TORRANCE

Whoever is for a new routine, raise your hand.

Everyone - including some BYSTANDERS in the stands - raise their hands. Courtney throws a small hissy.

COURTNEY

This sucks! This sucks turd!

47 EXT. SANTA ANA CITY LIMITS - NIGHT 47

Isis, Lava and company busily spray paint something.

THEIR CAR

idles, headlights providing illumination. They jump back in, BURNING RUBBER as they peel away.

48 INT. SHIPMAN LIVING ROOM - MORNING 48

Torrance has apparently slept on the couch. Matted hair and raccoon eyes, she stares vacantly at the ceiling.

49 INT. CLIFF'S CAR 49

Cliff drives, balancing two LARGE COFFEE DRINKS on the passenger seat. Something catches his eye.

THE CITY LIMITS SIGN

Now reads: *FILIAS DEUS RIP-OFFS FIVE-TIME NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP THIEVES*

50 INT. SHIPMAN HOUSE 50

Torrance frets. The phone RINGS.

TORRANCE

Hello? Buzz?

51 INT. BUZZ DORM

51

Back and forth throughout.

BUZZ

My mom was at the game last night. What the hell happened?

TORRANCE

Inglewood showed up. Gauntlets were thrown.

52 EXT. SHIPMAN HOUSE

52

Cliff rings DOORBELL, coffees in hand.

53 BUZZ & TORRANCE - INTERCUT

53

BUZZ

Huh? We need to talk.

TORRANCE

No shit. Miss Red snaked routines from Inglewood. They know and they want blood. Our squad is mad, and I don't blame them. I don't know what to do here! Inglewood's threatening to report this to the ACA.

BUZZ

Torrance, grow up. Everybody uses everybody else's material. Get over it.

54 EXT. SHIPMAN FRONT DOOR

54

Justin opens the door. Cliff is self-conscious.

CLIFF

Hi, is Torrance home?

JUSTIN

(yelling)

Torr-ture!

(smiling)

I guess she's not up yet.

TORRANCE (O.S.)

(screaming)

I don't need to get over it --

55 INT. SHIPMAN LR - CONTINUOUS

55

TORRANCE
-- I need a solution!

56 EXT. SHIPMAN HOUSE

56

Justin and Cliff hear Torrance SCREAMING

TORRANCE (O.S.)
They painted over our championship sign!
They're gonna report us! We're screwed!

CLIFF
She sounds busy. I'll catch her later.
Could you give her this for me?

JUSTIN
Yes. Only if it's been poisoned.

CLIFF
Tell her Cliff stopped by. I wanted to make
sure she was okay, after last night. Did
Inglewood paint the sign?

JUSTIN
Isn't it genius? I'll make sure she gets
it.

Justin shuts the door. Cliff stares at the house, catches
himself getting wistful and jogs to his car.

57 INT. SHIPMAN FOYER

57

Justin downs the drink as he heads upstairs.

58 INT. BUZZ' DORM

58

BUZZ
You're gonna do what the other
nationally-ranked squads do. Hire a
professional choreographer.

TORRANCE
Totally illegal and you know it.

BUZZ
Not totally. Everybody does it. The ACA
looks the other way.

TORRANCE

What do you mean everybody?

BUZZ

Western Kentucky, U.of Memphis to name a few.

TORRANCE

Western Kentucky? Memphis? No way -

BUZZ

Every which. Everybody does it. Everybody "collaborates". Call this guy. He worked with University of Memphis.

TORRANCE

(dazzled)

U. of Memphis? Really?

59 INT. MISSY'S BEDROOM - MORNING

59

The SOUNDS of MORNING CONSTITUTIONS emanate from an adjacent bathroom. Torrance absorbs Missy's room. CONCERT TICKETS, COMPACT DISCS and stacks of MAGAZINES and BOOKS take up every inch of space. Torrance flips through a SPIN magazine.

MISSY (O.S.)

Call this guy.

TORRANCE

I don't know, it feels wrong.

MISSY (O.S.)

It'll be fun. New blood! What's the worst that can happen? Besides, we're desperate and we have no routine.

Missy enters, toothpaste on the corners of her mouth. She picks up the phone, grabs the number from Torrance and dials.

TORRANCE

He's a valid solution, right?

MISSY

Would you cut the conscience crap? It's ringing.

Missy thrusts the phone at Torrance.

TORRANCE

(w/ awkward pauses)

Hello. May I please speak to Sparky Polastri? How'd you - uh huh. We're from

TORRANCE (cont'd)

Santa Ana, Cali -- Regionals? Yeah, five weeks.

Torrance grabs paper and pen, scribbling: *airfare; car rental; hotel; two thousand fee.* Missy's outraged.

TORRANCE

Per what?

(covering phone)

What's per diem?

MISSY

Like a daily allowance. And the answer is no.

TORRANCE

He wants airfare, car rental, hotel and his fee.

MISSY

How much?

TORRANCE

Three grand. He needs three or four days to teach us the routine.

Missy rips the phone away.

MISSY

(hoarsens voice)

Coach Shelton, here. We'll do a thousand bucks plus airfare and that's final. Deal. Later.

TORRANCE

Where's he gonna stay?

MISSY

Hotel Pantone.

TORRANCE

Will your parents care?

MISSY

The corporate vampires? Please. If they notice - which they won't - it will barely register.

TORRANCE

Then we only have two really big problems: muh and knee.

60 INT. FDS HALLWAY - DAY

60

A GROUP of GUYS gawk and point at something plastered to the wall. CLIQUE of FROSH BOYS weave and clutch something.

FDS TIGHT END

That's gotta be Kasey. I'm seeing something blue.

GUYS POV: a BLOW-UP SHOT of the squad mid-toe-touch, LEGS and CROTCHES only. The caption reads: "NAME THAT POOTY"

TORRANCE and Les rip it down in a fury, dispersing the boys. Pam Anne LAUGHS giddily. Les MIMICS her laugh.

LESLEY

Spam, is it true you got into Barbizon early decision? Or was it John Robert Powers?

PAM ANNE

(insulted)

John Casablancas Modeling and Career Center!

LESLEY

For a great modeling attitude?

61 INT. CAFETERIA

61

Cliff and Jan are deep in discussion.

JAN

Just grab her ass.

CLIFF

Do you cup it? Or do you go for it?

JAN

Go for it! Grab it like it's a basketball, man. They want to feel you.

CLIFF

Where's the best spot, though?

JAN

Right in the middle. You just find the center of her butt. The sweet spot, if you will. Clutch her by the ankle and ram it against your chest. And just look at her.

CLIFF

Wow. I worship you.

JAN

Like candy from a baby. And a million times more addictive.

(beat)

Practice with your sister.

CLIFF

Eww. Buzz kill.

62 INT. FDS HALLWAY - DAY

62

Torrance rips another "**NAME THAT POOTY**" poster off a locker. Ironically, she's wearing a Cliff-homage of sorts: a **Blondie** tee.

TORRANCE

Your brother is dead.

Missy joins the march to another locker, ripping a few more down along the way. They join Darcy, who opens her locker and pulls out a **MANILA ENVELOPE**. **CASH!** Missy and Torrance stare at Darce in amazement.

DARCY

Let's hope my father's love is greater than his ATM cash limit. I only nabbed seven fifty.

MISSY

What if he finds out?

DARCY

Considering his ATM code is D-A-R-C-Y, I don't think he'll remonstrate.

TORRANCE

Well, we only need seven hundred and fifty more by Monday --

A CLASS BELL becomes the sound of BRAKES SCREECHING as

63 EXT. CAR WASH - DAY

63

the sound of a COLLISION follows. The FDS girls are busy sudsing and hosing off cars...in bikinis. Whitney - tanner than everyone with her body of death - poses in a bikini holding a sign that reads: **CAR WASH \$15**. A LINE of FIFTEEN or so CARS waits to get their lap dance, uh, cars washed.

SLO-MO water spraying. Jan, Les, Brooke and Kelly work cutoffs, their tans and abs drawing MIDDLE-AGED FEMALES and GAY MALE car owners.

Tor's mouth drops. IN SLO-MO, Cliff pulls off his shirt, revealing six-pack abs and a hairless chest Charles Nelson Reilly would flip for. Water sparkles around him in angelic, sunlit glory.

CLIFF (V.O.)

Let me guess: Such throngs of guys leave gifts and beverages at your door...you can't keep track?

-- interrupts Torrance's reverie. Daydream. In a *Cheap Trick* tee, Cliff is fully clothed, his camera poised.

TORRANCE

What?

WHITNEY

Ten more cars and we are outta here!

CLIFF

This is classy. Glad to see you're advancing women's rights.

TORRANCE

Spare me, Mr. Crotch Montage.

CLIFF

I didn't do it!

(aiming camera)

Culprit Jamie Garlin is officially off newspaper staff. Sorry about that.

TORRANCE

This is an illegal fund-raiser and an act of desperation. So I am asking you - as a favor - not to run photos, please.

CLIFF

But the story just got so much better.

TORRANCE

As a favor? For me? It hasn't been the greatest month for me, you know? Believe it or not, incarnating humiliation is not my favorite past-time.

Cliff puts his camera back in his bag. He smiles and walks towards his car. Torrance watches him walk away, looking down at her bikini and rolling her eyes. Cliff opens the car door.

CLIFF

Do you realize how hard it is to be sexy and retarded at the same time? I think you've cornered a new market.

TORRANCE

That's so weird, cause you're an ass and a hole at the same time.

Cliff's in his car, leaning out the window and firing the engine, taunting and flirting with Tor.

CLIFF

(slowly pulling away, staring at her)

I'm forced to invent new words for my feelings about you. Right now it's like mortification and attraction. Am I mortracted, or am I attrified?

TORRANCE

(seeing something)

You're stupitating. And a bad driver.

The sound of a FENDER BENDER becomes the sound of PLANES LANDING

64 EXT. ORANGE COUNTY AIRPORT - DAY - ESTABLISHING

64

65 INT. AIRPORT - DAY

65

Torrance and Missy stand at the gate, holding a sign that reads: *Sparky Polastri*. Their eyes widen.

Hey, SPARKY! A peroxide-blonde, 20-something, Sparky is resplendent in bronzer and well-feathered hair. His outfit can only be described as Chess King meets Tom of Finland. As he gets closer, his bronzer is accompanied by both tastefully applied eye-liner and just a touch of mascara.

As he hugs Missy and Torrance, they COUGH and scrunch their noses.

MISSY

Hmm, CK One?

SPARKY

Close! Designer Imposter.

TORRANCE

I could have sworn it was WindSong.

SPARKY

That's for girls! You are hilarious!

(singing)

"I can't seem to forget you - your Windsong stays on my..." Who the hell is Prince Matchibelli, anyway? And why do his fragrances suck?

Sparky doubles over and opens his mouth as if he's laughing, however absolutely no SOUND comes out. Disturbing.

JAN

(to himself, re. Sparky)

On behalf of male cheerleaders everywhere, I want to thank you for upholding the stereotype --

66 INT. PANTONE LIVING ROOM

66

Sparky has changed into some rehearsal attire: Toni Braxton T-shirt and neon-patterned running lycras. He stands at attention in the middle of the room, eyes closed in meditation. Torrance, Missy, Jan and Les steal a concerned look. An AUDIO BITE sounds:

AUDIO BITE (O.S.)

"Get ready to experience the ultimate in domination --"

As what we'll call 'SPARKY'S THEME' begins, Sparky launches into a series of jumps followed by some very Chippendales choreography. The music is way behind the curve, and Sparky is way too into it. Adding unnecessary theatrical touches, Sparky Polastri is 'Lord of the Dance.'

Torrance, Missy, Jan and Les watch Sparky's routine with dismayed wonder.

67 INT. PANTONE KITCHEN

67

Sparky YAMMERS A MARIAH CAREY TUNE as he makes a snack: 2 scoops of cottage cheese, 2 scoops of coleslaw. After mixing in up in a bowl, he pulls three packets of SWEET & LOW out of his pockets, and pours them onto his concoction. The squad stares in amazement. Sparky flirts with the boys, ignoring the ladies.

SPARKY

You kids are Pia Zadorable, I can't get over you!

(knocks on skull)

I'm still working on the finale. It's like I'm..."composing".

MISSY

(to Tor)

Try decomposing.

SPARKY

I'll need three days to teach you the routine, and we'll videotape it just in case. But I can tell already - you guys are real mental studs, aren't you?

LESLEY

No, not that I know of.

JAN

Not really, actually.

SPARKY

Really this. Cause you're gonna have to sweep all that intelligence under the rug for this routine. Otherwise, you'll get scared. And as they say: don't think, be an airhead.

MISSY

Says who? When?

SPARKY

When you're facing death with the kinds of stunts I'm bringing to the picnic table, you can't think about how gosh-darn scary it all is. You have to push it out of your heads and be empty inside. Empty, empty, empty.

70 INT. GYMNASIUM - DAY

70

The Squad is assembled, stretching and marking moves. Coach Shelton shadows and fawns all over Sparky.

COACH SHELTON

You are a fantastic little secret! Where've you been hiding --

MISSY

(to Torrance)

Besides the closet?

COACH SHELTON

(looking for ring)

You cannot be single! You're adorable! Better watch it -- I'm a married woman!

SPARKY

(to Coach)

Jan and Brooke are stars, NiNi - can I call you Nini?

COACH SHELTON

You can do more than that!

SPARKY

These boys are gonna rock the house at nationals. I bet you got six packs under those jerseys.

BROOKE

I don't drink.

JAN

I'm into ab-domination. I got some ripples.

SPARKY

(to Brooke and Jan)

These girls are trifles to you, you're so strong.

(to squad)

I have withheld one valuable piece of information from you. Your secret weapon. I think you guys can nail a Diamond Head.

SQUAD

Call Carver!// Screw that!// Straight-jacket for the Mary!

TORRANCE

He's right. It's perfect! If he thinks we can, we can.

WHITNEY

He also thinks he can pull off mascara.

JAN

Brooke and I've done one before.

COURTNEY

In your dreams, irritator-tot.

BROOKE

Those girls were nine years old, Jan.

WHITNEY

If we can't keep it up, it's not going in.

COURTNEY

That's never stopped you before.

SPARKY

Oh, these guys can keep it up alright.

COACH SHELTON

If Sparky thinks we can do Diamond Head - we should be flattered and honor his assessment of the group. Snap out of it. Where's your eye of the tiger?

Coach Shelton begins SINGING the SURVIVOR TUNE of the same name. Sparky ignores her.

SPARKY

Listen up, people. You can do this. By February you'll be doing Diamond Heads in your sleep! You've got big strong men going to waste around here! Let's put 'em to work!

'DIAMOND HEAD' MONTAGE: After several attempts at this difficult maneuver, Missy slips. Jan barely catches her by the shorts, giving her a major wedgie. Missy SWATS him. Sparky puts a hand on Missy's shoulder.

SPARKY

Most women would prefer a wedgie to a broken ankle, sweetheart. Think about it. You should be thanking him right about now.

ATTEMPT #2: Guys trying to throw Courtney to top of pyramid. She wobbles and falls.

SPARKY

Constipation, please! I don't want to see that poop coming down! Now, I'm coming and watching from behind this time! From the basket toss!

Jan, Brooke and Les prepare to hurl Courtney into a basket toss.

JAN

Pitch the bitch.

They throw Courtney sky-high, she toe-touches before cradling. Sparky looks dissatisfied, pulling Whitney into it.

SPARKY

Whitley, can you try an X-out instead of a toe-touch? Such a pretty geisha girl.

WHITNEY

I wouldn't know, cause I'm one-hundred percent American. God. One 'Screaming Beaver', coming up.

SPARKY

What?

This time, boys toss her and Whitney lays out and opens her legs and arms into an X.

FROM THE GUYS POV: it is all crotch.

SPARKY

Oh my.

When the guys go to catch her, Les misses one of her legs.

SPARKY

(to Les)

Take off your skirt, Sally. Catch her like a man or go home.

LESLEY

(to Jan)

Nothing like a homophobic homosexual.

Sparky hears this and crosses his arms.

SPARKY

(to Les)

I hate to break it to you, Nancy, but I'm engaged. To a woman.

COURTNEY

No-rexia!

COACH SHELTON

(oblivious)

You are? She's a lucky gal.

MISSY

(to Tor)

Or dresses just like one.

SPARKY demonstrates a move, making corny jazz hands.

WHITNEY

Can we lose the sparkle fingers?

SPARKY

Spirit fingers. Spirit fingers, young lady,
are a classic component to cheerleading
choreography.

Missy, Torrance and Darcy clutch their knees off to one side.

MISSY

I gotta parle it.

TORRANCE

Don't parle it.

DARCY

This routine blows chunks.

71 EXT. CAL STATE DOMINGUEZ HILLS - DAY - ESTABLISHING 71

72 INT. CAL STATE DOMINGUEZ HILLS 72

BANNER: ACA WELCOMES CALIFORNIA STATE REGIONALS!

AT THE REGISTRATION AREA Courtney, furious, slams her duffel
bag on the ground, ready to rumble.

COURTNEY

You cutter! I'm gonna kick your ass, you
evil whore!

A six-year old TINY TOT CHEERLEADER stares up at Courtney. In
Junior All-Star garb, the tot smiles mischievously.

TOT CHEERLEADER

Get over it, hag.

An EVENT COORDINATOR with a clipboard directs traffic like
she's helming an aircraft carrier. In combat.

EVENT COORDINATOR

Youth Cheer, Youth All-Star, Youth Pom and
Youth novelty, move to the left! High
School divisions - check the signs if you
don't hear your division - Junior High,
Junior Varsity, Small, Medium and Large
Varsity All-Girl, move right! Small and
Large Varsity Coed, straight back to the
rehearsal tent! All Pom, Jazz, High Kick,
Prop, Crowd Leading and Mascot contestants
need to re-register out front!

MOANS as a large group move to re-register. We see, for the
first time: The Huge CROWD. With THUMPING MUSIC in
background, HUNDREDS of CHEER and DANCE SQUADS mill about.

ON STAGE...a PEEWEE ALL-STAR SQUAD performs.

A HIGH-STRUNG MOM runs up to the JUDGES PANEL, livid, pointing at ONE JUDGE.

HIGH-STRUNG MOM

(to judge)

Hi, you. Yes. Your head was down, your head was down during that move! How are you going to give a proper score if you're not looking, if your head is down, during a move? I'm watching you.

(turns around, cheering)

Go, Gators!

ONSTAGE, the PEEWEE ALL-STAR SQUAD tosses a GIRL, but instead of up, she flies sideways and out of frame. CRASH. The squad stops mid-routine and looks off-stage. SPOTTERS and SQUAD-MATES rush out of frame. Another GIRLIE stomps her foot and stalks off in the other direction.

HIGH STRUNG MOM looks toward Judge...who's head is up. Judge smiles and waves to Mom.

ON-STAGE another PEE-WEE SQUAD performs adult stunts. The BOYS toss a 6 year-old so high she flies out of frame. They prepare to catch her. She doesn't come down. SPOTTERS move center-stage and stare up at the rafters. FEET dangle in the very top of the frame.

SPOTTER #1

It's okay, we'll have you down in a minute. Relax.

(to Spotter #2)

Better get the cherry picker.

RRRRIP. Spotter moves to catch. Tiny Tot falls right on top of him. BAM. She gets up and skips off stage, as the Spotter lays motionless.

BACK-STAGE, FDS enters. OTHER SQUADS wave and back-pat relentlessly. Inglewood's Clovers stretch, pace and loosen up like confident sprinters.

CHEERLEADER X

(to FDS)

You guys are a lock.

EVENT COORDINATOR (O.S.)

Inglewood, you're up!

Inglewood squad runs onto stage. Thumping bass n' booty MUSIC begins. They explode into action.

Some FDS SQUAD watch Inglewood for the first time. Cocky smiles are replaced by stupefied shock. Kasey gets swept away, CHEERING. Darcy kicks her. Jan shakes his head.

JAN

Damn.

TORRANCE spies on them from the crowd. Missy joins. Torrance chews a hangnail, freaking out. Missy tugs Tor away.

MISSY

Come on, don't watch this.

Missy literally yanks Torrance away from the performance as they head to

ANOTHER PART OF CSDH CAMPUS - CONTINUOUS

the restrooms. Missy is mimicking Clover moves, trying to get Tor to laugh. Torrance giggles, then freezes. Shock, then horror, then tears-a-welling.

TORRANCE

(quietly, heart breaking)

Buzz?

BUZZ AND A GIRL leaning against the Tracker in face-sucking passion. RED RINGLETTS blow in the wind. Hey, BIG RED, you big slut! They're flirting, kissing and moving towards the dorm...unaware they are being watched.

MISSY shepherds Torrance away, toward the restroom.

MISSY

Okay, you didn't see that. Ohmigod ohmigod, okay come on, come on --

BACK AT THE COMPETITION

Another SQUAD in BROWN & GOLD carries MINITRAMPOLINES and BANNERS, the equipment looks exactly like the FDS equipment. Kasey looks at Jan, concerned.

JAN

Coinkydink. Always the same props, it's how you use them that counts. It's Rancho Cucamonga. They don't have the stunts, or the tumbling, or... do they even have a school?

IN THE RESTROOM

Missy looks worried. The toilet FLUSHES. Torrance emerges blotchy and flushed, splashes her face, stares in the mirror, puts on a game face.

TORRANCE

You know when you really have no fear?

Missy shakes her head.

TORRANCE

When there's nothing at stake, cause all the stakes are busy piercing your heart!

BACKSTAGE AT COMPETITION

FDS continues to warm-up. DEAFENING APPLAUSE. The crowd goes NUTS. Inglewood runs offstage, high-fiving each other, jubilant. Lava and Isis linger.

LAVA

I guess we'll see you thieves at Nationals.
Kicking booty, Florida style!

COURTNEY

Bull-imia!

WHITNEY

Don't cry when we get more applause than you do.

Lava and Isis share a last attitudinal lick-eyebrowwipe-snap before separating. Court and Whit drop the act.

WHITNEY

We are so paling in their shadow.

COURTNEY

Paling? We're disappearing.

THAT Rancho Cucamonga SQUAD is onstage. Missy and Torrance return, looking shaky. FDS hears SPARKY'S THEME as they wait backstage. Kasey gives Jan another concerned look.

JAN

(dismissive)

At nationals, the theme from Mortal Kombat was practically on a loop.

EVENT COORDINATOR

FDS, you're next.

FDS passes Rancho Cucamonga exiting as they run on stage. SPARKY'S THEME begins...again. We see the routine

THE CROWD is unresponsive.

ISIS and LAVA share an incredulous TITTER.

ONSTAGE Torrance and company yell louder, smile harder.

CROWD MEMBERS exchange concerned looks. FDS finishes. BOOS and POLITE APPLAUSE. As they exit, an ACA OFFICIAL pulls Torrance and Coach Shelton aside.

ACA OFFICIAL

We have a problem. Apparently you're not the only squad with this routine. We suspect

(ominous)

professional choreography. Does the name Sparky Polastri mean anything to you?

COACH SHELTON

He's adorable.

ACA OFFICIAL

Apparently he's been peddling the same routine up and down the California coast. Six squads total. We're holding an emergency session of the discretionary panel.

TORRANCE

About what?

ACA OFFICIAL

We've never had a situation like this before. There's no precedent! You may be disqualified.

TORRANCE

No. Oh God.

Ms. ACA and her clipboard hustle off. Shelton follows. Big Red and Buzz materialize in full Cal State D-Hills (CSDH) gear. Missy registers Big Red for the first time.

BIG RED

Nice going, Torrential. What are you doing?

Torrance is on the verge of tears, speechless.

BUZZ

You're wrecking everything we built!

BIG RED

This season should be gravy. I hand-picked
the squad. Delivered an idiot-proof routine.
(mimes putting something on tray)
Platter. Nationals. Hello?

Torrance is now spilling tears. Missy busts in.

MISSY

You mean the routine you stole? You, both
of you, are cheaters in every possible way!
And Torrance is wrecking everything? You
lied and betrayed someone who did nothing
but trust you, believe in you and support
you? And she's the evil one?

BIG RED

(re. Missy)

Who is she? What are you talking about?

WHITNEY

We know about Inglewood, Big Red. I mean,
Little Shit.

BUZZ

She knows?

BIG RED

I admit nothing.

MISSY

You are what you deny. She, we clocked you
two making out. Torrance has tried to clean
up the mess you guys made. Inglewood says
you practically had a surveillance truck at
their games -

WHITNEY

(in Big's face)

We listened to you and you screwed us. You
have the creativity of a rock.

LESLEY

It's not your squad anymore.

Coach Shelton materializes.

COACH SHELTON

(oblivious)

Red! Buzz! Don't you kids look great!

(misty)

You're growing up so fast!

Big Red and Buzz slink away. Supportive hugs from Missy and Jan. Torrance looks ill. The ACA OFFICIAL returns.

TORRANCE

Please don't punish the squad. I made a really bad decision, not them. Don't penalize everyone for my bad judgment.

ACA OFFICIAL

(holding up hand)

As reigning national champions, technically you are guaranteed a bid to nationals. That routine, however, is banned. Start from scratch. And, Inglewood has filed a formal complaint against you, so consider yourself under scrutiny.

73 INT. TORRANCE'S ROOM - DAY

73

Torrance is under the covers, upset. KNOCK. Mom invades, holding a slim stack of applications.

MRS. SHIPMAN

Tor? Get up and get out of bed.

TORRANCE

Get out of my hair.

Mom drops the stack onto the foot of Tor's bed.

MRS. SHIPMAN

UCLA and Pomona have been collecting dust. These will be completed by this evening or there will be consequences. Enough.

TORRANCE

You know what? I lost my boyfriend, I lost my mentor, I lost regionals, and you and daddy aren't exactly support hose. Wouldn't you stay in bed? You're such a witch!

MRS. SHIPMAN

I've won that title many times. And for the record: I don't hate cheering, I just wish it wasn't the only thing you worked hard at.

Mrs. leaves. Dad begins a shift.

MR. SHIPMAN

Hey, tough guy. Sorry we missed regionals.

TORRANCE

Don't be. Pretty much a disaster.

MR. SHIPMAN

I must say, I'm kind of disappointed in you.

TORRANCE

You weren't even there and you're disappointed. This should be good.

MR. SHIPMAN

You hired a choreographer? Stealing compounded by hired stealing? Do I have that right? I hope you can re-frame this for me.

TORRANCE

What am I? A poster?

MR. SHIPMAN

No, but you usually have an accurate internal compass. You fly through the air, spinning and defying gravity and then you land on your feet every time.

TORRANCE

That's what you see. I fall, I chicken, I fail and screw it up a lot before you see it. It's scary.

MR. SHIPMAN

But you work at it. If it's a big problem, treat it like a new stunt. Don't quit til you get it. Don't cop out. I raised you to be fair.

Tor throws off the covers, ripping open the applications for emphasis.

TORRANCE

I'm not perfect! I want to win! I like winning! Maybe I'm just a cheerleader and not a leader-leader. Could you deal with that?

(sad)

Can't someone just be nice to me?

MR. SHIPMAN

You are both. You couldn't be either of those things without heart. And you've got lots of that.

(kisses forehead)

Winning is great, but not if you haven't earned it. Cheating is for no-talents. If you don't win on a level playing field, it's not a victory. Re-boot, re-start, re-frame!

Torrance mocks her father as he exits, booting up the computer and cracking a composition book, fast and furious.

74 EXT. PANTONE BACK YARD - LATE AFTERNOON

74

Torrance sways on the big swing, reading her composition book. She looks fried. Cliff approaches holding the *Cheerleader of the Year* entry form.

CLIFF

Did you mean to place this on our front lawn? Or have you realized I'm secretly a judge?

(reading)

"The greatest challenge of being a cheerleader is fighting the tyranny of small-minded cynics who think cheerleading is irrelevant. Battling the silent judgements people pass all day long that have nothing to do with me and everything to do with their limited pre-conceived notions of 'what' a cheerleader is. Please note I said 'what,' because a cheerleader is considered a thing and not a person. Thwarting this invisible enemy has been the greatest challenge of being a cheerleader."

(pensive)

You forgot to mention the squalid conditions on the ships when they brought you over from Africa.

(shift)

Awesome essay.

TORRANCE

I'm a fraud and I'm not entering. Get that thing away from me.

Torrance laughs. Cliff distractedly folds THE APPLICATION into his back pocket. He pushes Torrance on the swing.

CLIFF

But if you get *Cheerleader of the Year* -- you score some nice cash.

(beat)

Missy's not home. Are you okay?

TORRANCE

I caught Buzz making out with my mentor. Slight betrayal.

CLIFF

(chuckling)

I heard.

TORRANCE

(tired)

Don't laugh! This is real for me, okay? I don't need the Cliff notes on superiority just now.

CLIFF

(comforting)

I'm sorry. It's just - you invest so much in these people, and they seem lame to me. They're not as cool as you are, you know? They are 'only cheerleaders.'

TORRANCE

(amused)

Freeze! If you hate cheerleaders so much why did you want to go out with me?

CLIFF

I guess I didn't realize you'd convinced yourself that's all you are.

Torrance ponders this, nodding and smiling.

CLIFF

(re. notebook)

So, am I in your journal?

TORRANCE

That's up to you. More college application crap.

Cliff picks it up off the ground, Torrance gives the okay.

CLIFF

(inspecting)

Shit! Are these your SAT scores?

TORRANCE

Thank god. The only thing I didn't screw up.

CLIFF

You can go anywhere with these numbers. Seriously.

TORRANCE

Yeah. If you don't count my grade point average.

CLIFF

And why is that, young lady?

TORRANCE
(searching)
You are what you focus on?

CLIFF
You focused on SAT's --

TORRANCE
Only cause we invented, like, a two hour
cheer. Look: I like what I'm good at. I'm
good at this one thing. That's it.

CLIFF
That is so limp.

Torrance chucks the notebook across the yard, and stands up
on the swing.

TORRANCE
Shut up and get up here.

Cliff joins her, suddenly. They are keeping the swing in
motion with well-timed leg pumping and leaning. Thighs and
arms brushing, it's that charge of first romantic contact.

CLIFF
Can I ask you something? Don't you have
just the teensiest crush on me?

TORRANCE
(glowing)
No. I gotta go to practice.

Cliff jumps off the swing set and stops the swaying.

CLIFF
Stop it. I'm serious.

TORRANCE
Okay.

CLIFF
I want a date. Tomorrow night.

TORRANCE
(smiling)
Tomorrow night. Definitely.

Cliff seems surprised, heading inside, triumphant.

CLIFF
Be at the park at seven. Then dinner.
Like, the whole nine.

This all sits very well with Torrance, who is radiant.

75 EXT. PRACTICE FIELD - DAY

75

Kasey and Darcy head toward the field. Ahead, THE SQUAD just lays on the ground, looking like Civil War battlefield victims. 'Cept Whitney, who's liberally applying self-tanner.

KASEY

If we don't do well at nationals, I'm gonna have to quit cheering. I just bombed on PSAT's.

DARCY

I think it's time we covered math SAT's:
(repeating arms-raising schtick)
Ratio is part to part and/ while Fraction is part to whole/ a Polygon's closed, multi-sided/Polyhedron, closed, multi, 3-d/ Isosceles, two equal angles/Quadrilat, four-sided polygon --

JAN (O.S.)

Darcy, shut up!

The squad is tense, and a big, bad mood hangs thick.

COURTNEY

You are chronically late and chronically full of --

KASEY

Lighten up.

LESLEY

Easy for you to say, girlene. If your head were any lighter it would fly off its axis.

TORRANCE

Hey, hey, hey. We need to regroup and have a solid practice, here. This is a setback, that's all. Tone it down, and get to work.

JAN

Okay, mother f-er.

LESLEY

(to Courtney)

Hey, C-sucker.

COURTNEY

Shut up, D-breath.

WHITNEY

You're such a C, Courtney.

COURTNEY

Well, you're a C-sucking F-head, Whitney.

TORRANCE

(fed up, screaming)

Get to work! For sobbing out loud --

PRACTICE MONTAGE:

Whitney kicks Brooke in the head during a stunt; Courtney heels Kelly in the groin, laughing at his pain; Jan's watch gets caught in Darcy's hair, ripping a huge hunk out.

Jan and Les throw Missy. They almost miss her on the catch, grabbing her shirt. Which RIPS. Everyone's ready to blow.

MISSY

(snapping to 'Concentration'
song)

Agitation, are you ready? If so, let's go!
Category is: why we're sucking!

TORRANCE

(to Missy)

Stop cracking my taco. Don't point out a
problem without offering a solution,
Mischief.

COURTNEY

Knock, knock. I need to open the front door
with you, Torr-ment.

MISSY

(to Courtney, not getting it)

We're outside, hello?

TORRANCE

Open the front door. OTFD. Observe, think,
feel, desire --

WHITNEY

(making knocking gesture)

Me, too.

DARCY

(pushing invisible doorbell)

Ding dong. Avon makes three.

TORRANCE

Fine.

COURTNEY

I observe that you have driven this program into the ground this year.

WHITNEY

I think that your routines and solutions are completely lame.

DARCY

I feel that we need new leadership.

WHITNEY

I desire that you step down as captain.

TORRANCE

I said open the front door, not slam it in my face! Excuse me if I've got a small case of cheerleading block!

MISSY

I have a solution.

COURTNEY

We're not done.

JAN

Missy has a solution. Shhh.

MISSY

Torrance has put an incredible amount of effort into this season. All we've done is show up, practice, perform. That's the problem. This isn't a one-person show, we need to be a squadron.

WHITNEY

Duh.

MISSY

We have to rebuild the routine together. Divide and conquer.

JAN

I'm down.

LESLEY

For certain.

MISSY

We're looking at ten weeks til Nationals. Who wants to work on the routine?

Only six of the fourteen hands go up.

JAN

And the rest of you? You would rather play sheep than work at nationals?

LESLEY

Break out the crutches. You're lame.

COURTNEY

I hate to put the itch in bitch, but it is abundantly clear we're not going to win jack at nationals. Why stress it?

MISSY

Don't even think that let alone say it!
Only an idiot would give up now! Torrance?

TORRANCE

If we're going to start over, everyone has to agree they'll give it their all. I feel like you're giving up.

SILENCE.

LESLEY

Could we lose the Major McGrudge action? You all voted Torrance captain, and you all voted for a new routine. Don't bail now.

(to Whit & Court)

The seniors have earned another shot at nationals. It's worth stressing over.

TORRANCE

I already feel mondo bad, it is humanly impossible to make me feel any worse. If we're gonna do the Wolf's Wall, everyone's gotta give a billion percent.

MOANS, followed by reluctant nods.

COURTNEY

Fine. But for the record, I would like say that this blows. It sucked before and now it blows.

JAN

(to Court)

Obsession with sucking and blowing aside, are you in?

Courtney nods reluctantly. En masse, they begin plotting as we cut to

- 77 INT. VIDEO STORE 77
Jan and Les check out a stack of tapes.
- 78 INT. PANTONE HOUSE - LATER 78
Lesley watches THE BOX ("Music video you control!") on the television, scribbling down order numbers, handing them to Missy...who in turn works the touch-tone keypad. Les pirate-dubs dance sequences from music videos.
- 79 INT. SHIPMAN HOUSE - NIGHT 79
Torrance and Jan watch martial arts movies on the tube, morphing fight moves into cheer choreography.
- 80 EXT. FDS - DAY 80
Cliff sits on the school steps, B-52's tee, staring at something. It's a B&W PHOTO. A close-up of Torrance cheering. It's really good. He meticulously sticks it onto Torrance's
CHEERLEADER OF THE YEAR ENTRY FORM
which he has completely filled out! Cliff checks his work one last time before carefully placing it in an envelope and into a nearby mailbox.
- 82 INT. ARTHUR MURRAY SCHOOL OF DANCE - LATER 82
A SNAPPY DANCE INSTRUCTION COUPLE demonstrate Lindy and Jitterbug throws to Jan, Torrance, Missy and Lesley. Unusual, cool, and they're getting it.
- 83 INT. MARTIAL ARTS STUDIO - LATER 83
A KARATE INSTRUCTOR teaches the squad hard-core kicks, flips and moves.
- 84 INT. VIDEO STORE - LATER 84
A VIDEO CLERK follows Jan and Les around the store.

VIDEO CLERK

You're looking for musicals?

LESLEY

Yeah - good choreography?

VIDEO CLERK

Anything Michael Kidd, everything Gene Kelly and something Busby Berkeley. While you're at it, something purely inspirational.

Jan and Les study the case, look at each other and shrug.

JAN

Thanks. What's 'Mahogany'?

VIDEO CLERK

It's gonna change your life is what it is.

84 INT. MODERN DANCE STUDIO - NIGHT

84

THE SQUAD is rehearsing. A BLUE UNITARD-CLAD INSTRUCTOR gesticulates to the squad, coaching them into an amazing Pilobolus-esque formation. The shit they're doing looks very cool. It's starting to work. Darcy balances sideways in a confounding way.

DARCY

Look, I'm a flying buttress!

MULTIPLE REHEARSAL SHOTS. The squad looks tired, but it's gelling.

85 EXT. PARK - NIGHT

85

Stars twinkle in the sky. We pan down to see Cliff's car, RADIO playing, a romantic scene. The camera searches for Cliff and Torrance, but finds Cliff... sitting alone on the grass, clanging two horseshoes together.

86 INT. GYM WEIGHT ROOM - DAWN

86

Torrance and various squad-mates weight-train. Missy bursts in and does some reps.

MISSY

We are so personifying golden, girl! Our ship is finally in!

TORRANCE

You really think so? The routine is coming together in such an awesome way, I'm so motivated.

MISSY

No, no, no. Inglewood can't muster the moola for nationals. Four hundred per girl is way more than they can raise in time. They're not going.

TORRANCE

(dead serious)

What do you mean they're not going?

MISSY

Don't get parental on me. I'm just spreading the good news.

TORRANCE

They cannot not go! That's not good news!

Torrance screams and pumps iron harder.

TORRANCE

Aaaaaarrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrgh! Un-ac-ceptable.

Torrance starts clanging weights onto the rack.

TORRANCE

Buck that noise, mother-bucker! Bit, buck, bunt, bock. Poopaloopa ding dong!

MISSY

I agree with everything but the last part. I guess my brain was under the influence of your we-gotta-be-the-best brainwashing. Considering our chances are considerably improved, you'll forgive me if I find your response, uh, alarmingly numb-skullish.

TORRANCE

(deluge)

Best. Define best. I define best as competing against the best there is out there, and beating them. Winning against the best possible competitors. Period. Competing against a field that does not include the best out there does not hearten me -- it frustrates me! E-specially in light of all we've been through! What about showing face, saving face? We have to face them!

87 INT. SHIPMAN HOUSE - MORNING

87

Torrance is frantic. Dad, Mom and Justin prepare breakfast.

TORRANCE

-- if they're not there, people will still think we're stealing!

JUSTIN

Look, mom! Her head is spinning off into another dimension!

TORRANCE

(to Justin)

Fry, irritator-tot.

(earnest)

Dad - I know you worked on the Sports Arena after the Northridge quake, right? You have to call those guys! It's so unfair, the first inner-city squad to ever get a bid to Nationals and they can't afford to go!

MR. SHIPMAN

The company gets hit up all the time, hon. I can't.

TORRANCE

It's not that much money, Mr. Level-Playing-field. Tell them the deal, maybe they'll want to help.

MR. SHIPMAN

I'll make the call, but they will probably say no.

TORRANCE

Don't let them. Think how much it will mean to Inglewood, and to me. They deserve to go. Be fair, remember?

Torrance books off to school. Dad's reaction suggests he likes what he's heard.

MRS. SHIPMAN

Did that just happen?

MR. SHIPMAN

Yup.

JUSTIN

(heading to school)

Where's your backbone, people? Don't start gettin soft on me now!

88 INT. INGLEWOOD HS GYMNASIUM - DAY

88

A small, wireless drill finishes piercing a Flo-jo length nail. Once completed, a small gold hoop - complete with Nefertiti charm - is placed through the hole. Jenelope Jones, 18, admires her work.

Five girls and two guys sit around. Isis, 18, sports Busta Rhymes braids, as does her sister, Lava, 16. Jovan and LaFred, both 17, wear Air Jordans, full-out Adidas gear and b-ball-style close-cropped do's. Trea and Arthurine, 15 and

16 year old Latinas, wear dark lips, long, straight hair and regal attitudes. They WHISPER in Spanish throughout.

Suddenly, a JANGLING sound harbingers the entrance of V'GEENA DAVIS, 43. Patti LaBelle's got nothing on V'geena.

V'GEENA

Considering no one else wanted this job, much respect will be expected -- but Miss V'Geena will be your chaperone for this field trip.

ISIS

We're going?

V'GEENA

You're going.

Hugging, shrill SHRIEKING and jumping up and down from the squad. Lava is crying.

JOVAN

We're going to Sea World!

ISIS

Not Seaworld. Nationals are at Disney-MGM studios.

LAVA

Damn.

V'GEENA

Praise Jesus! V'Geena's going to Disneyworld!

ISIS

The real kick in the booty? It's twenty thou in scholarship money if we win.

JOVAN

The only booty gonna get kicked is ours. We not gonna win. No diggety.

JENELOPE

Jovan? Twenty thousand what? For who? For why?

ISIS

The seniors get twenty thousand toward college. We are gonna win.

LAVA

The blacker the college, the sweeter the knowledge.

LAFRED

There's only four of us. Five G's each?
Makin bank!

ARTHURINE

Hella big!

ISIS

This is serious. I think we can do this. For
real.

LAFRED

Saturdays, Sundays. 24-7, I'm there.

TREA

Who's fronting the money?

88 EXT. PAY PHONE - CONTINUOUS

88

ISIS

Hello? My name is Isis Williams, I cheer
for Inglewood. We received a sponsorship
from someone at your company, and we wanted
to know who to thank?

Isis writes something into her notebook. Her elaborate
cursive reads, SOCAL INSURANCE.

ISIS

Thank you so much. We won't let you down.

89 INT. FDS SCHOOL HALL

89

Torrance - in a *Journey* tee - hands out permission slips to
Jan, Les and Courtney. Munching on popcorn, Tor lights up
when she spots Cliff, walking towards the cafeteria.

TORRANCE

Cliff! Yo, wait up!

He keeps walking, without turning around, lost in the music
of his headset.

COURTNEY

True love?

TORRANCE

True something.

JAN

That would explain the Bambi eyes and the
birds flying around your head.

Torrance follows him into the --

90 INT. CAFETERIA - DAY - CONTINUOUS

90

-- sporting her bag of cheddar popcorn, Torrance sidles up to Cliff. In a great, flirty mood, she playfully begins placing individual corns onto the table. Cliff looks at her.

The popcorn reads: SAY YES

CLIFF

To what?

Torrance produces a TICKET. Cliff studies it. He won't look at her. He chuckles.

CLIFF

National High School Cheerleading Championships. If you'd been paying attention, it might have occurred to you that I don't need to go to Florida to be ignored.

Torrance's face registers shock, then comprehension.

TORRANCE

I missed our tomorrow night.

CLIFF

I'm not your personal ego booster, Tor. People aren't whims you can indulge when you feel like it.

Cliff hands the ticket back to her. Torrance is slack-jawed.

CLIFF

The whole thing is shallow. And so are you.

Torrance swipes away the popcorn with her forearm, choking back saline.

TORRANCE

You've clearly got a bone, so pick!

CLIFF

If you reach your goal and win nationals, then what? You peaked in high school? You made no room in your life for anything else?! No, wait -- I almost forgot!

(fake enthusiasm)

The Olympics!

(mean)

CLIFF (cont'd)

It'll never happen, Torrance. I hope you get that. Fully.

Torrance retreats, devastated. A notebook THWACKS Cliff on the back of the head. Really hard.

MISSY

You really know how to put the ick in dick.

Incredulous, Missy chases after Torrance. Cliff winces from cranial pain.

92 INT. VARIOUS HOMES - DUSK

92

GETTING' READY MONTAGE:

The squad members are packing for nationals....

93 INT. SHIPMAN FOYER - MORNING

93

Lesley waits at the bottom of the stairs as Mom and Dad Shipman load film into video and still cameras. Justin studies Les with great intensity.

JUSTIN

You actually touch my sister's butt?
Willingly?

LESLEY

I don't think of it that way, but, yeah.

JUSTIN

Because you don't think of girls that way?

MRS. SHIPMAN

Justin.

MR. SHIPMAN

(looking off camera, upstairs)

Ohh!

Torrance bounds down the stairs in an over-the-top travel outfit. Les and Tor are out the door.

94 EXT./INT SHIPMAN HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

94

He loads Tor's stuff into the Suburban. Mr. & Mrs. yell after them.

MR. SHIPMAN

Call us when you get there, please! We'll see you in a couple days!

MRS. SHIPMAN

No drag races, and stay off the crack!

TORRANCE (O.S.)

Come on! Just a little crack?

MR. SHIPMAN

Okay, honey. Don't smoke the entire rock yourself! We raised you to share your drugs!

(to Mrs.)

She knows I'm kidding, right?

- 95 EXT. VARIOUS - DAY 95
- MONTAGE: to MILITARY MARCH MUSIC
- FOURTEEN: duffle BAGS zipping in rapid-fire succession; CAR DOORS SLAMMING; versions of HUGS, KISSES and 'GOOD LUCK!'
- 96 INT. AIRPORT 96
- VARIOUS SQUADS: ORANGE walks through frame; in GREEN & YELLOW; IN BLUE & WHITE weaving through a SQUAD in RED & BLACK. Kasey sporting bright pink hair...straggles after the FDS squad.
- 96 EXT. AIRPORT 96
- COMPETITION HOSTS & HOSTESSES stand with WELCOME SIGNS leading incoming SQUADS to...SHUTTLE BUSES with LCD's that read: *CHRLDNG NASH CHOMPS.*
- 97 EXT. ALL-STAR SPORTS RESORT 97
- HOTEL MARQUEE reads '*WELCOME CHEERLEADERS, YOU'RE ALL WINNERS!*'
- 98 INT. CHAMPIONSHIP ORIENTATION/WELCOME TENT 98
- SPONSORS TABLE HOSTS pass out GOODIE BAGS. HOSTS & HOSTESSES do orientation SPIELS in quick-cut succession. CHAMPIONSHIP MERCHANDISE selling like hotcakes, a CASH-REGISTER SYMPHONY.
- 99 INT. ALL-STAR SPORTS RESORT (A.S.S.) 99
- FDS soak up the atmosphere en route to their rooms.
- SQUADS unloading and reveling in their accommodations, FOUR to SIX to a room. A girlish GIGGLING and BITCHING SYMPHONY.

100 EXT. A.S.S. - DAY

100

THE FDS GUYS do a lap of the premises. Shirtless in cutoffs and Skecher slides, they're attracting panting GIRL FANS.

VARIOUS SQUADS with COACHES practice on every square inch of grass. BOOM BOXES with DIFFERENT MIXES blast cacophonously.

GUY practicing stunt motions, but without a partner. TWO GIRLS marking routine with small motions, nodding and counting to themselves.

HUGE GIRL partner-stunting a toss-cupie with a FEMALE PARTNER. Huge Girl GRUNTS and shakes as she holds partner overhead with one arm.

GIRLS and GUYS lining the balconies of the hotel...checking out the competition as

FDS arrive at their rooms. Plastic cards in doors. UCCCCH. SOUNDS from various.

WHITNEY

Ewww! What the -- grotesque!

JAN

(sniffs, tastes)

Who put peanut butter on the doorknob?

COURTNEY

(yelling)

Damn it! It's on my new jacket!

(out on balcony)

Jealous bitches! Whoever did this is dead!

LAUGHTER can be heard in the distance. The CLOVERS eat SKIPPY out of the jar, admiring their work from another balcony. Day becomes night as

101 INT. FDS HOTEL ROOM- NIGHT

101

FDS gals put WHITE FOAM all over their arms. It's NAIR.

COURTNEY

Whatever you do, rinse it off well before you go in the pool. Lest we forget what happened last year....

102 EXT. A.S.S. - NIGHT

102

SOUTHERN SQUADS PRACTICING in the dark, trying to be quiet. Failing. Missy appears on her balcony.

MISSY

Shut up! If you don't have it yet, you don't have it! Give it up already!

EXT. SUPERSTAR THEATER - DAY - ESTABLISHING

ENTRYWAY PLACARDS read: PRELIMINARIES

CELEBRATORY CHATTER of PARENTS entering theatre, wearing...

T-SHIRT #1: *CHEERING IS CONTAGIOUS, CATCH IT!* T-SHIRT #2: *WE'RE NOT COCKY, JUST THE BEST!*; T-SHIRT #3: *ANOTHER YEAR, ANOTHER TRIP TO NATIONALS*

104 INT. SUPERSTAR THEATRE - CONTINUOUS

104

PRELIMINARIES MONTAGE:

VARIOUS SQUADS kicking ass!

AT THE STAGE ENTRANCE, the CLOVERS are looking super-scared. Torrance approaches tentatively, pulling Isis aside.

TORRANCE

Watch going out of bounds. They deduct like crazy for that stuff. You don't wanna blow it on something tiny.

ISIS

You're the one who needs to watch her boundaries.

Isis looks at Torrance like she's crazy. Torrance backs off. Isis rallies her troops once Tor is out of earshot.

ISIS

Stay in bounds! No one steps outside that ugly blue carpet or they're dead!

105 EXT. STAGE EXIT, SUPERSTAR THEATRE

105

An OFFICIAL pulls down the PRELIMINARIES PLACARD. VARIOUS SQUADS cry and suffer, clearly not making it to the next round.

In the b.g., the end of the Titan's MUSIC plays as the FDS KIDS run offstage, ecstatic. Jan encounters a SEXY COMPETITOR in red & white. A JOCKY OFFICIAL approaches Torrance.

JOCKY OFFICIAL

Semis are in two hours. Get some rest.

The squad celebrates the news, as we move

106 EXT. THEATRE PARKING LOT

106

OUTSIDE SOMEWHERE...the INGLEWOOD CLOVERS are on each others shoulders, frantically biting large marshmallows in half and doing something hastily...

107 EXT. FDS BUS

107

As the FDS SQUAD heads to their bus post-prelims, they desist.

THE BUS WINDSHIELD

reads: U SUCK

...in large MARSHMALLOW-CREATED LETTERS (you bite one in half, stick the sticky part to window with ease!). Jan runs up to remove, but the sun has started melting the mallows. They're stuck.

ANOTHER SQUAD laughs as they pass by as we

106 EXT. INDIANA JONES THEATRE - DAY - ESTABLISHING

106

ENTRYWAY PLACARDS read: **SEMI-FINALS**

107 INT. REHEARSAL TENT

107

A huge tent with four different mats and sound systems hosts FOUR SQUADS rehearsing and stunting. FORTY GIRL CHEERLEADERS fly up and down through the air simultaneously.

A SOUTHERN COACH screams frantically to her squad.

SOUTHERN COACH

(borderline hysteria)

Scream and beam, ladies! Shout and pout, guys! Let's see some glacial facials, people! Let the chicks stick and the bosses nail those tosses!

HEAD INSTRUCTOR (O.S.)

Your warm-up time is up! Next four squads, please.

SPOTTERS chit chat between rehearsals.

SPOTTER #1

(rapid-fire)

360 to one-arm hi-torch arabesque double down, cradle to smush up, to one arm opposite stretch in left-hand, stretch pop tick tock to right-hand double down cradle out.

SPOTTER #2
(outdoing)

Twister to opposite backwards cradle, grab feet, pop up to backwards right cupie, pop half twist front cupie right hands-bird, front cradle out toss cupie to knee.

SPOTTER #1

Is it pretty there in your dreamy dreamy land?

108 EXT. INDIANA JONES THEATER 108

SEMIFINALS BANNER being hung by officials.

109 INT. INDIANA JONES THEATER 109

Inglewood JIVE-FIVING EACH OTHER, relieved but still nervous.

CLOVER SQUAD

(sing song)

In God we trust! All others pay cash!

FDS DOING COMPLICATED FRATERNITY SHAKE. Jan greets a new SEXY CHEERLEADER in blue & gold with a wet kiss.

LESLEY

(to frat shake)

Butter, where are you, butter?

SQUAD

Right here, and on a roll!

110 EXT. A.S.S. 110

Torrance, Missy, Jan, Les, Court and Whit relax in matching practice attire by the pool, unwinding.

UP ON THE BALCONY

there's some commotion. THE CLOVERS hang a sheet from the balcony ledge. It reads: *FDS: FUNKY DUMB-ASS STEALERS*

Isis leans over the balcony, Torrance looks up from the ground. Romeo and Juliet....

ISIS

(yelling)

The quickest way of ending a war is to lose it! So, until then --

TORRANCE

We need to talk.

ISIS

Well, you're gonna look like a penny waiting for change, girl, cause I got nothing to say to you.

(to Clovers)

And you know that!

TORRANCE

You humiliate us, but you won't talk to us. That's cool, cause I don't do spineless.

ISIS

Spineless? You will be in one flat second. I am too through with you.

Isis uses the sheet to swing off the balcony. In a fury, Isis storms towards Torrance in front of everyone, furling and unfurling her nails.

ISIS

Say 'Ow', puss, cuz 'Me' is coming at ya!

TORRANCE

(furious)

Woof woof. Let me have it, bitch. I'm not scared of you.

ISIS

(challenge)

If you feel froggy, leap!

TORRANCE

You started this, not me. But maybe I do deserve a beating, because I was stupid enough to --

ISIS

You accessorized the larceny! You all were shakin' and bakin' behind our backs all these years, and now we gotta keep it on the hush? Please - you're moldy, snowbunny.

Torrance gets in Isis' face, enraged. Isis steps back as Tor moves forward.

TORRANCE

Hit me. For helping you out. It was criminal of me to stick my nose where it doesn't belong. You don't have a clue about me, and I'd like to keep it that way.

Torrance storms off, leaving Isis' wheels spinning. Isis stares at the back of Torrance's

PRACTICE SHIRT

It reads: SOCAL INSURANCE

ISIS
(epiphany)
SoCal Insurance?

Jan and Missy APPLAUD slowly, sarcastically.

JAN
She only convinced her father to sponsor you. But hey, you guys have been great sports. Good luck.

Isis is stunned by this info, standing alone in front of the pool. The SIGN floats to the ground in front of her.

110 EXT. INDIANA JONES THEATER - NIGHT 110

ENTRYWAY PLACARDS read: **FINALS**

111 INT. INDIANA JONES THEATER 111

TV CAMERAS and VARIOUS CREW ready the venue. GRIPS and SOUND PEOPLE hustle about.

TEN JUDGES ready their scorecards.

BACKSTAGE

Isis - for the first time - looks petrified. Various Clovers stretch, pray and pray some more.

VARIOUS COMPETITORS grab their stomachs and run off to puke.

IN THE BLEACHERS

The CAPACITY CROWD is crammed into the bleacher seating.

ONSTAGE

THE EMCEES take their cue.

EMCEE #1

Tonight's big question: Can the Filias Deus Titans hold onto their crown for a record sixth national championship? The field has been narrowed, and the top squads in the nation are here, ready, and willing to grab the title of Best in the U.S.

EMCEE #2

With no further ado, making their debut at Nationals, please welcome the Inglewood Clovers from Inglewood, California!

112 CENTER STAGE

112

Inglewood RUNS ONSTAGE, immediately lying flat on their backs. SLAMMING MUSIC. They build and dismantle pyramids, stunts and inventive sequences with staggering originality. The earth moves from their creativity, risk, and personality. There's no idling, just pedal-to-medal choreography with dangerous stunts and crowd-pleasing spectacle.

THE CROWD eats it up.

TORRANCE

clenches her jaw. Missy is digging her nails into her arms.

THE JUDGES

burn pencil on paper, racking up points for Inglewood.

CLOVERS

yell their hearts out. One of Isis' NAIL CHARMS gets caught in Trea's hair. Yank. Trea's eyes bug out.

TORRANCE

is still enthralled.

THE CLOVERS

finish with a flourish, ecstatic. They are thrilled with their performance as we see

THE FDS SQUAD BACKSTAGE watching the monitors, white with panic. Torrance is steel.

TORRANCE

There's only one way to win this. We gotta do Wolf's Wall.

COURTNEY

She's got the fever again.

WHITNEY

(hysteria)

We don't need it! Why are you doing this?
You're a self-destruction addict!

JAN

Whit's right, Tornado. We don't have the confidence right this minute.

MISSY

I think our nerves will help us!

TORRANCE

If we're going to win, it has to be because we were the best. Otherwise we may as well hand it to Inglewood. If we nail this, we'll be the best and if we miss, we'll know we tried. Trust me.

COURTNEY

You're a pain in my ass.

TORRANCE

Trust me.

The entire squad hesitates. Looking at one another a beat, they quickly feel Torrance's wisdom, converging with certainty. They thrust their hands into the center of their huddle.

LESLEY

Trust on three! One, two, three -

SQUAD

TRUST!

EMCEE #1 (O.S.)

-- defending National Champs, the Filias Deus Titans, from Santa Ana, California!

ONSTAGE: FDS positions, backs to audience, heads down.
Drama. AN AUDIO BITE BEGINS:

AUDIO BITE

Is that a Spirit Stick in your pocket, or are you just happy to see us?

THE CROWD goes apeshit!

ONSTAGE: All the pieces come together like a live-action video-game, complete with SFX: Karate chops, Forties-style swing and jitterbug moves, some disco parody and Pilobolus builds. Pretty spectacular. It's witty, creative and totally fresh.

THE CLOVERS watch from the stands, impressed, very worried.

ONSTAGE: FDS goes for the ground-up Wolf's Wall.

IN THE AUDIENCE: GASPS of anticipation, acknowledgement of the difficulty ECHO through the venue.

THE SQUAD nails it.

TORRANCE locks the stunt. Elated to be at the top and sticking it!

ISIS' jaw drops. A begrudging shake of the head, she leads the APPLAUSE.

THE CROWD loves it!

THE JUDGES move their pencils.

THE CLOVERS are stunned. Isis is furling and unfurling her nails in nervous rhythm.

TORRANCE

adds a twist to the dismount and jams her ANKLE on the landing. Her face is agony, but she makes it to the end of the routine. Jan carries her offstage.

AT THE TOP OF THE STANDS, A CAMERA CLICKS WILDLY then lowers, revealing...CLIFF! - what the? - who watches in awe. Nearby, TORRANCE'S PARENTS applaud wildly.

OFFSTAGE: FDS yelps, whoops, sobs and hugs with collective relief. Ice packs heaped on Torrance's ankle.

113 IN THE WINNER'S CIRCLE

113

a GARGANTUAN FOAM-CORE check for twenty thousand dollars is hung from the back wall.

ON THE STAGE

A PRODUCTION PERSON coaxes the TEN FINALIST SQUADS into a semi-circle around the TROPHY TABLE. Hyperventilation mixed with WEeping, WHIMPERING, doubled-over panic and misguided attempts to appear calm is the general vibe. Torrance hobbles out on crutches.

IN THE STANDS

hundreds of VIDEO CAMERAS are trained on the stage, as EMCEES move center-frame and center-stage simultaneously.

EMCEE #1

In third place, from New Pope High School in New Pope Mississippi, the New Pope Cavaliers!

A group of NEW POPE CHEERLEADERS, only mildly enthused, collect their twenty inch trophy. The New Pope Captain and - those gals from camp - flash dirty looks at Torrance.

NEW POPE GIRL #1

You suck.

EMCEE #2

In second place, from Santa Ana California, the Filias Deus Titans!

COURTNEY

(to New Pope Girl)

Apparently we suck less than you!

FDS is ecstatic. Missy, Jan and Les collect the thirty inch trophy. Torrance is in shock.

TORRANCE

You guys aren't mad that we didn't get first?

WHITNEY

We did this, girlene! By ourselves, for ourselves!

COURTNEY

We reinvented the wheel! This is awesome!

EMCEE #1

And now, the winners of this year's National High School Cheerleading Championships...The Inglewood Clovers from Inglewood, California!

The Clovers are stupefied. It is a Baptist moment of arm-waving, testifying and freaking out. They jump up and down and scream and shriek with unadulterated joy. Lava and Isis get on LaFred and Jovan's shoulders, and share the job of holding and lifting the four foot high trophy over the teeming masses.

IN THE AIR

Confetti, stuffed animals, Hello Kitty items, carnations and sunflowers fly onto the stage.

THE EMCEES make arm motions, settling everyone down.

EMCEE #2

And now, the award you've all been waiting for...Cheerleader of the Year! The winner receives a two thousand dollar personal

EMCEE #2 (cont'd)

products scholarship for her leadership on and off the field. For her tireless efforts on behalf of cheerleading, this year's winner is: Torrance Shipman.

Jan and Missy help Torrance to the front of the crowd. Lava and Isis give her hugs. The New Pope girls make faces of righteous indignation.

114 TOP OF STANDS 114

Cliff does a groovy touchdown dance in celebration.

115 INT. VENUE 115

Torrance hobbles out to accept her award, and a foam core check for two thousand dollars. She is laughing.

116 INT. DEN SOMEWHERE IN SANTA ANA 116

A SLURPEE splatters all over Torrance's image on ESPN. Pam Anne studies her work. DUFUS sips his Slurpee intently, as the pink goo drips down the front of the set.

PAM ANNE
(re: Slurpee)

Give it.

Dufus hands her his Slurpee. She sips once and throws it at the television.

117 INT. VENUE 117

Torrance is swallowed by her squad. V'Geena runs onstage, grabs Tor's face and covers one side of it with coral-frosted lipstick. CONFETTI and PAPER stick to that side of T's face.

IN THE STANDS

Bruce and Christine Shipman rise to their feet, sharing a moment of disbelief, joy and pride. It's the first time Mrs. Shipman has smiled. Justin sucks on a jurrassic-sized beverage, rising to his feet, revealing a shirt that reads: **CHEERLEADING = DEATH.**

ON STAGE

Missy looks up at Torrance, tears welling through the excitement and her trademark smirk. They bear hug big time.

THE CROWD

seems to grow as kids run up to parents and parents run down the aisles to kids as we move to...

118 EXT. PLANET HOLLYWOOD - ESTABLISHING 118

The Marquis reads: *Welcome Cheerleading Champions.*

119 INT. PLANET HOLLYWOOD 119

The Celebration is building to capacity. Rowdy atmosphere, slamming MUSIC.

Torrance and Les enter laughing. Missy and Jan goof off, practicing partner stunts on the dance floor. Torrance sports a large ankle brace, but seems fine. They're having a blast. Attentions are suddenly pulled to the

ENTRANCE.

Clovers make a scene. ISIS, LAVA, JENELOPE AND TREA, from Inglewood are wearing the coveted CHAMPIONSHIP JACKETS over outrageous gear. The entourage heads straight to Tor and Missy.

LESLEY

(in awe of Clovers)

Rock on, ancient queens!

The Clovers are digging the scene. They move towards Torrance, Darcy, Whit, Court and Missy. A final face/off each FDS gal pairing off with their rival equivalent.

ISIS

No worries. I don't know why you did it, but that was solid, kid.

Isis opens her arms to Tor. The others high-five, back-pat.

ISIS

Come here, girl. That was mad deep. I'm sorry we had words.

The Clovers hit the floor in sync, grooving into a routine. All the FDS kids follow. Clovers break it down for them.

TORRANCE

This is the routine from two years ago?

ISIS

Three years ago!

AT THE ENTRANCE

Cliff walks in, carrying a GIANT HORSESHOE FLORAL FESTOON and scanning the room for Torrance. Walking up to the line dance, he holds the 'bouquet' out for Torrance.

She ignores him. He follows her as she moves, dancing with the floral horseshoe in her face. She stomps.

TORRANCE

I'm over you. Stop peeing on my parade.

CLIFF

We never got to play horseshoes. I'm sorry if maybe I was a bonehead.

TORRANCE

Maybe? Try this: Torrance, I trashed your feelings and it must have hurt. I'm sorry and I understand if you're not interested anymore, because I don't deserve you.

CLIFF

Yo - you stood me up! And what about the contest? The coming here? I'm here aren't I? I've been practically stalking you!

TORRANCE

(confused)

You entered me? I mean, you sent that piece of crap essay in? Oh my god! You rock!

Torrance accepts the bouquet. She buckles from the weight of it. She smiles.

CLIFF

Can I have a dance?

They lay the florals aside. He twirls her into a dip, completely smooth. Torrance chuckles.

TORRANCE

You can dance.

CLIFF

When I feel like it.

The twosome just stare into each other's eyes. Very direct, until they both crack up.

CLIFF

I have a surprise for you.
(yelling)

Jan!

Jan comes over, smiling, turning Torrance around.

JAN

Torrance stand here, chair to cradle.

Torrance faces forward, Cliff steps behind Torrance. Jan counts and Torrance glances back, not believing Cliff is going to try this.

JAN

One, two, up.

Cliff lifts Torrance into a chair and holds it (her butt, actually). Torrance smiles. He catches her in cradle position (carry-over-the-threshold-style). Torrance is a beaming machine.

TORRANCE

You learned that for me?

CLIFF

Maybe.

JAN

Please, the guy was frantic.

Torrance drags him onto the dance floor for a private moment.

TORRANCE

That was the best chair I've ever sat in.

CLIFF

I can't believe I want to kiss you. All your mouth does is yell.

TORRANCE

Do you want to kiss me or diss me?

CLIFF

Everybody wants to kiss you. It's a veritable mob scene. Give me one good reason.

TORRANCE

(smiling)

If I have to give you a reason, you don't deserve the privilege.

CLIFF

That's not a reason.

TORRANCE

Then what's stopping you?

Cliff brings her hands up to his mouth and kisses them, inhales them. He moves in to kiss her, about six inches from her face.

CLIFF

Favor? When you're screaming and flying through the air -- would you think of me?

Torrance moves two inches closer.

TORRANCE

I know you'll find this hard to believe, but it actually does take concentration.

Cliff moves an inch closer (that's three inches apart!). Hot!

CLIFF

Okay, don't think of me.

TORRANCE

I won't.

They kiss. Everybody's watching. Doesn't stop 'em.

120 EXT. UCLA CAMPUS - DAY

120

Cliff is kissing Torrance sweetly. He grabs something out of his book bag. He holds up a LETTER.

CLIFF

Miss Missy got captain. The new gals are giving her grief.

TORRANCE

(ironic)

Thank the lord I got out alive.

CLIFF

Got out of what?

TORRANCE

The high school cheerleading racket.

CLIFF

Lu-lu-liar. You loved it.

TORRANCE

(more irony)

Love is a very strong word.

CLIFF

You miss it.

TORRANCE

Never.

122 EXT. UCLA STADIUM - DAY

122

A huge BRUINS FOOTBALL game is in progress. MARCHING BAND, FANS, BROUHAHAH and --

the UCLA BRUINS CHEERLEADING SQUAD is dominating the sidelines in a blaze of movement. A familiar figure hits her lift and smiles. It's none other than ISIS.

The camera pans, revealing squad-mate Torrance -- smiling, yelling and cheering with a vengeance for those national television cameras.

As we zoom into Torrance's mug, her familiar Orange County inflection bursts through in VOICE-OVER.

TORRANCE (V.O.)

Dear International Olympic Committee, I'm writing hoping you'll consider a new sport for the exhibition spot at the next Olympics...

Torrance winks at the camera as we go to black and roll

CREDITS: Out-takes -- exaggerated Jackie Chan-esque falls, fuck-ups, bleepers, bloopers and blunders of cheerleading fiascoes. FAKE BLOOD, FAKE DISMEMBERED LIMBS and STAGED PRATFALLS are mixed with the real thing. Like...Justin - in cheerleading garb - doing a standing back flip, then lifting his partner, smiling hormonally, glancing up at the butt he is clutching. More blood and guts until you get to the final credit and...

123 A B-BALL COURT

123

Torrance cheers alone on a basketball court.

TORRANCE

You're history, buh-bye, like get-a-life and fly, I mean it's over, it's done and cheer-lead-ing is number - --

CUTS TO BLACK:

TORRANCE (V.O.)

Hey! Yo! Mr.Cinematog-whatever, Mr. Editor, I'm still here! Fine. You're jealous, middle-aged men who can't deal with my power. Be that way. Audience! You viewers! If you wanna see my butt, yell, 'butt'!

After a beat, Torrance flashes back on the screen: butt to camera, skirt up, spankies in full bloom. After a beat, she turns around, surprised, not realizing she was back on.

TORRANCE

Eww. You are so perverted! I love that about you. Come on back now, ya hear? I'm nothing without you, and it's super important that we stay in --

It cuts to black before she can finish.

TORRANCE (V.O.)

Hey!

THE END