



INT. JOE'S WALK-IN - CONTINUOUS

FREEZING cold air pouring out of the vents, Perry shivers as Joe stands on a box, reaches up over the air exchange. He pulls down a METAL BOX, which he unlocks. He retrieves a series of photos, hands them to Perry. A Twenty-five-year-old JOE, in tails.

PERRY

This is you?

JOE

I haven't changed *that* much, kid.

(a beat)

Have I?

PERRY

No, no, I mean...you were a dancer?

JOE

One of the best.

He pulls down another box, opens it. It's full of MEDALS.

PERRY

Holy crap, Joe.

JOE

First runner up, Best All-Around, World Ballroom Competition three years in a row. It was a good run.

PERRY

What happened?

JOE

You know. Life. My partner.

(beat)

My fiancée, left me. Said she couldn't handle being first runner up anymore, so she ran off with the stinky French guy that won that year. And then I quit.

PERRY

But you must have been so great.

JOE

I was. Til I lost my confidence. My fiancée stopped believing in me, so I stopped believing in me too. I gave up. Went into the restaurant business. Now it's a fight every day just to make ends meet.

(MORE)

JOE (CONT'D)

(then)

I'm in trouble, kid. They're 'bout to foreclose on me. That Dance Machine was supposed to breathe new life into the joint. But the kids that come? Half the time they don't even order food. All they want to do is dance.

PERRY

(remembering Tami)

Yeah.

JOE

You gotta go to The Grotto.

PERRY

*The Grotto?* NO! I can't go there! That place is your biggest competition! You always say they're driving you out of business.

JOE

And do you know why? They got three of the newest Dance Machines over there. Which means they have more dancers. Better dancers. You can learn something over there. Maybe you can find a partner.

PERRY

I'd feel like I was betraying you, Joe. You're like...family.

Tough Joe gets a little misty, puts his arm around Perry.

JOE

Sometimes I think, if I'm gonna lose everything anyway, I wish I could go down knowin' I gave it my best shot. I didn't. But you, can.

Perry nods, speechless. Joe takes his stuff back.

JOE (CONT'D)

(packing up)

I'm freezin. Let's get outta here before my cajones turn into snowballs.

CUT TO: