

THE CRYING FRAME

**A screenplay written by
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AN ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY BY CHRIS GAYNOR

FADE IN:

INT. PRISON - PRESENT DAY.

A prison cell.

Dimly lit. Dirty. Cold.

We see a chubby man JACK MEACH (40 - 50ish) with a scar sat at a desk writing a letter. THINKING.

PANNING around the cell, we see a blow up sketch of JACK MEACH on the wall.

Scraps of paper lie screwed up. He's trying to get the words out but can't.

This time, he's happy with the result of his labour.

CLOSE IN on the last line of the letter.

It reads...

"I miss you. I need to see you, LIZ. Yours. JACK MEACH."

He finishes and sticks it in an envelope and seals it.

We see him just sitting - gazing at the letter.

JACK MEACH can appear domineering in his build but his poker face gives off an air of quiet leadership.

Only mess with him if you are confident you can win.

INT. A SNOOKER CLUB - PRESENT DAY.

A red-haired attractive woman ELIZABETH JONES (or LIZ) (25-30ish).

LIZ is fidget-prone which can give off that feeling of a lack of confidence.

She is attractive on the eye, but you sense there's been trouble behind those put on smiles.

When she wants to she can take on the best.

We see LIZ at a snooker table COACHING with a young girl, 13 (ish) - going through some shots.

LIZ V.O

I used to be like her...Young.
Innocent. Naive. And eager...I wasn't
as lucky as her though. When I first
started, I didn't have anyone to
watch my back...

And those who did, weren't always
doing it for the right reasons. Will
she keep at it? Who knows? But at
least she knows I've got her back...

LIZ claps as the girl makes a tough shot.

LIZ

Good. Now...Let's take ten...

The girl puts her cue down on the table. They head off to get some lunch.

FREEZE FRAME

LIZ V.O

Chances are she won't. But she's here - trying. I was first introduced to a snooker table when I was in foster care.

UNFREEZE as they continue to walk from the table.

INT. SNOOKER CLUB - PRESENT DAY - LATER.

We see LIZ now BRUSHING A TABLE. SMILING. The young girl is admiring her action.

No matter what life threw at me,
One thing was always constant.

SNOOKER.

It saved me.

But, I also had to make a painful
choice along the way that could have
cost a lot.

This, is my story.

FADE TO WHITE:

INT. A FLAT - PRESENT DAY - NEXT DAY - MORNING.

A warm hallway.

LIZ SCANS the mail that has been posted through the letterbox.

She sees an UNUSUAL one addressed to her with the PRISON STAMP on it.

She OPENS the letter and SCANS it.

CLOSE IN again as LIZ shows us the final lines...

"I miss you. I need to see you again. JACK MEACH."

She's DEEP in thought. Wondering what she should do. She sticks the letter in her pocket and gets on with her day.

LIZ V.O

You never forget your first. For Elizabeth Jones, the first was a painful experience. One that hurt deep down for a while.

She shouts out up a stairs...

LIZ

JADE...Are you ready yet? Come on, we've got to go...

A thin girl, who looks like her mother, (5ish) RACES down the stairs in her uniform for school...

LIZ

Here's your LUNCHBOX sweetheart...

She gives her a kiss and looks at her for a second.

JADE

Are you OK mummy?

LIZ (fiddles with her hair)

Yeah. I'm fine...Right. Have you got everything. (JADE nods)Let's go...

She opens the door as they STRIDE out...

LIZ V.O

I wasn't as lucky as JADE...She's too young to even know what her mum has been through. She's lucky. It all started when I lost my mum at 8 and ended up in foster care...

FLASHBACKS

TITLE: FOSTER CARE

INT. KATE'S HOME - DAY.

A white kitchen. Round table.

We see KATE, LIZ's foster mother, a tallish freckled woman with shortish hair, arguing with her TALL husband DAVE over what Liz should do on her 13th Birthday. Liz is 12.

The table is neatly arranged with three plates. Three glasses. It's big enough to move around in, but small enough to be intimate.

LIZ V.O

Ever since I was taken into foster care at 8, I never felt I fitted in.

Dave is CHOPPING vegetables while Kate is pouring some wine and preparing a nutritious meal. LIZ is just sitting...

DAVE

Why does everything have to be so GOD DAMN PERFECT all the time? Let the girl LIVE.

If she wants to go down and try pool or snooker, I'll take her.

LIZ V.O

Her husband Dave was a nice fella. Actually, Dave used to just keep quiet, just to have a peaceful life. When he did pipe up, he was usually SLAPPED DOWN.

LIZ

Dave's right. Just CHILL. WOMAN.

KATE

Less of the lip, you... (She clips her
around the ear).

Liz starts crying and running into the arms of Dave.

DAVE

You've upset her now...

KATE

Here we go. I'm always made out to be
the bad one. I don't want her going
anywhere near that SOCIAL CLUB at her
age. It's for nobodies.

LIZ V.O

DAVE did the opposite. He made
excuses and after he told a few white
lies here and there, he took us down
to POINTS.

INT. POINTS SOCIAL CLUB - DAY.

We see DAVE and LIZ enjoying themselves one day on the pool
table in the POINTS SOCIAL CLUB. LAUGHING.

LIZ V.O

That was when I first got to play
pool. Eventually, I would get to play
snooker.

EXT. A TOWN - DAY.

A busy bustling town.

LIZ is wandering around in a crop top and denim jacket with a pair of ripped jeans.

She is CAKED in makeup and looks MUCH older than 15.

LIZ V.O

Here I was at 15.

At 13, KATE and DAVE split. It was amicable, and I did still see DAVE.

Men LEER at her as she walks past them.

INT. POINTS SOCIAL CLUB - DAY.

An almost empty, dark and musty room. A small arrangement of tables and chairs can be seen.

A woody bar with a customer ENTRANCED looking into his pint. Drowning his sorrows, by looks of it - he's lost a tenner.

A man, LEE, with dread-locked hair Bob Marley style, is FIDDLING with a deck of cards.

It's hot. A fan WHIRLS in the background.

In the corner of the bar is a pool table. LIZ gets some spare change out and starts playing.

She sinks a long red with a lot of screw on the shot and the white goes right down the other end.

LEE claps.

After a while. The RED door bursts open. A woman comes thundering in and starts shouting:

KATE

Elizabeth Smith...

Why Aren't you at school?

LIZ V.O.

Yeah, why wasn't I at school?
Well, here's partly why...Bullies...

A MEMORY

EXT. A PARK - DAY.

A sunny day.

LIZ is in a secluded spot with a notebook and pencil.
DRAWING. DOODLING. A penny for her thoughts.

A group of nuisance girls from her school APPROACH
pretending to be her friends but really are her TAUNTERS.

One of the girls who is the leader BEGINS the TAUNTING.
She's a large girl. Not slim.

LARGE GIRL

Watcha doing there, FREAK girl?

LIZ doesn't respond.

You're a FREAK...I mean, LOOK at the
clothes she wears. FREAK.

The others laugh.

She PUSHES her while she's on the ground. She HOUNDS more.

She takes the notebook off her to read it.

Oooooooh. She's drawing. Little miss
arty...

She rips it up and screws it on the ground.

Liz is trying to get the notebook but is OUTDONE.

FREAK. FREAK. FREAK. FREAK.

The others join in in a CIRCLE. LOUDER.

The TAUNTING escalates.

LIZ ends up on the ground in a huddle as the group of girls begin to use FORCE with kicks...

They QUICKLY DISPERSE as one of the girls shouts...

QUICK. There's a guy walking his dog.

Run. Run. Run...

LIZ takes a few seconds and is just lying on the grass. EMOTIONLESS. STILL.

The thinnish guy with the dog comes up to her. The dog SNIFFING near to where LIZ is.

THIN GUY WITH DOG

Are you OK ms?

LIZ is STILL. Non responsive.

Do you want me to call ya mum?

LIZ

Me mum's dead. (tries to get up holding her stomach).

THIN GUY WITH DOG.

Foster mum then?

LIZ

Just leave me alone Mr...

She JUMPS up (GROANS) and then SCREAMS and RACES OFF INTO THE DISTANCE...

We see her hiding behind some bushes. CRYING.

LIZ V.O.

I couldn't wait to get out of school.
I was counting down the days.

INT. A CLASSROOM - DAY.

LIZ is sitting at a desk. DREAMING.

The sound of the teacher's voice can be heard but it's
MUFFLED.

A girl sitting at a desk NEXT to her PASSES HER a POST IT
note. She's the same one who was LEADING the taunts in the
park.

It reads...

"See you outside at lunch. FREAK."

LIZ reads it and SIMPLY screws it up and puts it in her
pocket. Trying NOT to let it get to her. Deep down she is
HURTING.

LIZ V.O

She was relentless. I couldn't talk
to KATE. She wouldn't care. My real
mum would've...

END MEMORY

KATE drags Liz off by the arm. Liz is resisting.

KATE

Sorry Lee, but this one's a handful.
You wait till I get 'er 'ome.

LEE is looking at his deck of cards NOT INTERESTED)

(MORE)

LIZ (Being cheeky)

You ain't my real mom. She died years ago.

She clips Liz over the head.

KATE

Less of the lip lady.

She drags her out of the club and bundles her into a blue car parked outside.

LIZ drags her feet and is shouting with a touch of the DRAMATIC.

Help. Help. Help. I'm being kidnapped...

A couple of onlookers are glued to the drama unfolding.

KATE is pushing her. A tussle on the street.

KATE (shouting)

Get in...STOP CAUSING A SCENE...

LIZ eventually relents and straightens herself out and gets in the car.

LIZ V.O

KATE was a good "mother". REALLY.

But she was a suburban chick who didn't really understand the other side.

(MORE)

She wanted perfection.
By this time, DAVE was WELL GONE.

And I was certainly far from PERFECT.
As she found out...

INT. A HATCHBACK CAR - DAY.

KATE is driving. The car interior is black leather.

Her favourite CLASSICAL music is ON MEDIUM VOLUME.

LIZ is ignoring what her foster mother is saying. She's
ENGROSSED in a girly pop mag.

CLOSE IN ON THE MAG with the image of a FAMOUS POP STAR.

KATE

Elizabeth. Did you hear me? Did you.
Did you?

(LIZ still ignores her turning the pages).

Elizabeth Smith. Answer me
(shouting).

LIZ

OK. OK. OK. OK. I PROMISE. I'LL STOP
GOING THERE... alright. (she whispers
to herself - I'm still gonna go).

LIZ V.O

I still did...

NEXT DAY

INT. POINTS SOCIAL CLUB - DAY.

LIZ returns in a knee length skirt and a tee-shirt back at Points and on the pool table.

LEE the bartender is shuffling a deck of cards on the bar pretending he's a magician.

He's got his beady eye on LIZ over by the pool table.

LIZ picks up one of the faded tired old pool cues and boldly MARCHES over to the door where the snooker room is...

LIZ (confident)

I'm going in...

LEE rushes up from bar area and then goes to the door.

INT. THE SNOOKER ROOM - DAY.

LIZ opens the door and RUSHES inside. A thunder of balls pound the table.

LEE is rubbing his head (shouting)...

I'm calling ya Mom, now...Ya Meant to be in school.

LIZ

Fine. Call her. She ain't me real mom. And I'll just say ya strong armed me...

We see LIZ pot a clever shot down the rail. The red rolls in. FIRST TIME.

LEE CLAPS, RELUCTANTLY.

LIZ V.O

And that was when I first played on a big snooker table. Lee was really peed. But he got used to it.

What could he do? I was a handful for him, and he knew there wasn't any thing he could do.

He didn't care now. He was too into his magic tricks.

LEE is showing LIZ a card trick and LIZ laughing as she picks out a card - the Ace of Spades.

He even showed me some. For him, though, working there was just a paycheck. For me, it was an escape.

INT. KATE'S HOME - DAY.

LIZ sidles down from the stairs and IGNORES KATE.

But as she does this, Kate drops a letter on the kitchen table.

CLOSE IN on the letter as KATE reads part of it out (from memory)...

KATE

Owing to Elizabeth's poor attendance record, we would like to have a meeting this Friday to discuss the way forward.

Liz gets up from the table. IGNORING her again.

KATE

Where you going? You're grounded. As of now!

LIZ

Anywhere but here. I'm sick to death of your constant moaning. Do this. Do that. Be this. Be that. My real mom wouldn't have done this...

She throws the Spaghetti Bolognese pasta on the floor IN A RAGE.

I'm off.

KATE

You clean that up!

LIZ

NO. YOU CLEAN IT UP. I'm off.

As Liz STRIDES down the hallway, which has PHOTOS of her and KATE on the white walls. And a table with a PERFECT VASE lined with flowers, something gets posted through the letter box.

A piece of chalk with a note attached.

NOTE:

"Liz. This is for you. You left it behind. Lee."

Liz SMILES.

We see the door BANG SHUT.

Kate is sat at the kitchen table - head in her hands. FRUSTRATED and ON THE EDGE OF COLLAPSE not knowing what to do.

LIZ V.O

And ya know what? As much as I hated Kate. I REALLY loved her. But, we were different people.

I treasured Lee's chalk and kept it with me.

DAY LATER - LIZ'S 16TH BIRTHDAY.

EXT. COACH STATION - DAY.

The coach station. Busy.

Liz anxiously looking at her watch. WALKING up and down hesitantly. She gets out her chalk given to her by LEE AND HOLDS IT TIGHT.

We hear 90s indie music playing in background.

Some pigeons fly off into the sky as she looks at her watch - again. A coach comes into shot.

LIZ

Finally, it's here...

She puts her pack onto the luggage compartment on the coach.

She gazes back into the opposite direction, and then jumps on the coach. While ON it...

A MEMORY

INT. LIZ'S FATHER: JOHN JONE'S FLAT - DAY.

She is 8 years old sitting with her dad on his lap.

He has a photo of his wife (her mother) He is telling LIZ about her.

JOHN JONES:

Lizzie. (looking into young Liz's eyes. You have eyes just like hers. (He starts to cry).

LIZ

Don't cry, daddy...

JOHN JONES

Lizzie. Your mother was a fighter. She never Gave up. Always fought hard. Whatever you do girl, keep fighting. Keep fighting.

He kisses her and holds her tight.

END MEMORY

INT. LAP-DANCING CLUB - NIGHT

We see LIZ showing us where she used to work as a stripper in a strip club.

Men are DROOLING over her as she struts her stuff on the poles as a pole dancer. She's being LEERED at by OLDISH MEN eager to want to touch her.

CLOSE IN on one man DRINKING A COCKTAIL engrossed in the experience.

LIZ V.O

Before I discovered snooker properly, this was my life.

(MORE)

Not exactly glamorous, was it? It
got worse before it got better.

INT. A ROOM - MORNING.

Near darkness in a room. A lamp dimly lit.

A 16-year-old woman wakes up in a bed with the covers over
her.

There is a dirty DUSTY side table next to the bed.

ON THE SIDE TABLE IS SOME MONEY. And empty bottles of beers.

She has BRUISES.

She slowly gets up from the bed and walks to a DIRTY
bathroom. She stops to look at the cash on the side table.

She sighs.

She starts to get dressed in a slim skirt and a denim
jacket. Her very old-looking mobile phone rings.

She picks it up and taps the answer.

THE SCREEN SPLITS AS WE SEE DOUG AND LIZ IN SHOT ON PHONE.

Doug is a BIG CHAP who is inked in tattoos. He has longish
hair and enjoys a FULLER BEARD.

HE SHOWS OFF HIS BIG BICEPS and muscles in a TANK VEST.

He's lying on a bed.

We see a long-haired brunette with him touching his BICEPS
and KISSING HIM EROTICALLY EVERYWHERE.

She's half-naked in a shirt that looks like it's way too big
for her.

DOUG (being moody and puffing on a
CIGAR)

As the woman gets more erotic...

DOUG

(MORE)

Leave off woman. I'm on the phone.
STOP IT. GO AND GET ME A COFFEE WILL
YA?

She moves off the bed and looks round and shakes her fists.

He CLAPS.

CHOP CHOP.

It's clear what DOUG is.

LIZ

Who's this?

DOUG

It's Doug, from the pub last night.

Liz: (thinking) -

She goes into the bathroom

INT. BATHROOM - MORNING - DAY.

LIZ GETS A DRINK OF WATER AND DOWNS A HEADACHE PILL ON THE
SIDE. SHE DOWNS THE WATER.

Doug... Doug...Oh, yeah, Doug,
right...

DOUG

Pop by the pub, and I might have
another job for ya.

She SLAMS the phone down on the side.

LIZ STARES in the bathroom mirror - GAZING AT HER MARKED
FACE.

INT. SHOWER. MORNING.

We see LIZ in the shower TRYING TO WASH OFF the guilt of her new found "career".

LIZ V.O

REALITY set in.

I was now officially someone's whore.

Yeah. I worked the game for a while.

INT. BATHROOM - MORNING.

We see LIZ nursing some recent marks on her face including a DARK EYE. It's clear she's been KNOCKED ABOUT.

The money was OK. But some of the men were ratbags.

Some got violent if you didn't do what they wanted. You 'ad to be tough in this game. SEE THOSE BRUISES?

She gets some cover up make up and starts to SLAP IT on her face.

LIZ V.O

Doug was one of the "better" ones. If you can call 'em that.

He let me hang around the pub he ran and shoot pool.

(MORE)

WHEN He knew I could take a few quid off some of the out of townees and suit types, he made me an offer I couldn't refuse.

I think he liked me. He never tried it on though. Would he?

INT. A HAIR SALON. DAY.

We see Liz in transformation - dyeing her hair red, changing her style.

CLOSE IN as we see her INKED down the left arm with a tattoo sleeve.

LIZ V.O

This was the new me. How did I look?

She shows us a new look as she GAZES in the mirror. SMILES, and NODS in approval.

She's FREE.

INT. THE CONTENTED HEN PUB - DAY.

SAME DAY: THE HUSTLE

Lights shining. A crowd buzzing. Customers drinking pints like water.

And in the middle a 6ft pool table.

On the side rail is LEE'S chalk.

SHE TAKES A SHOT.

SHE'S PLAYING a tall and plain guy called BRETT who looks like he's just come from Wall Street.

Out of place for a place filled with SWEATY truckers.

BRETT looking a bit fed up as Liz is hammering them in.

WE SEE SOME FRIENDS OF BRETT'S IN THE CROWD.

I think we've got a hustler 'ere
Brett. She won't pot this mate.

THE FINAL BLACK IS LEFT ON THE TABLE.

Wolf-whistling.

LIZ rolls up her shirt sleeves to reveal a long tattoo.

she's looking long and hard at the black. She gets LEE'S
chalk and looks at it for a second.

She finally gets down. The black rolls down the rail and
goes in the pocket.

BRETT IS LEFT A BIT RED-FACED. LIZ THROWS HER FISTS UP IN
CELEBRATION.

BRETT SHAKES HER HAND AND GETS SOME MONEY OUT OF HIS POCKET.

BRETT

Here's the score, love...

You, err, fancy scoring a bit (He
takes her to the side and SLIPS her
some white powder...

LIZ V.O

The Contented Hen was known for
drugs. It was a real dive.

BRETT was a dork who thought he was
Mr Wall Street and was really just an
office sprout. He was also selling
dodgy coke.

I did smoke a bit of weed but on this
occasion, ALMOST paid a heavy price.

INT. WOMENS' TOILETS - NIGHT.

We see Liz in the toilets snorting DODGY COKE.

She INSTANTLY passes out. A woman walks in and finds her flat out on the floor.

The woman calls Doug, who rushes to the scene. He's trying to give her CPR. He's shouting and FRANTIC with worry.

DOUG

Get help. Get her some help. Someone call EMERGENCY - NOW! NOW!

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT.

A busy hospital emergency ward on a Friday night.

LIZ is being seen to on a bed by Doctors with emergency equipment.

One DOCTOR is doing CPR and resuscitation.

As LIZ is laid out unconscious...We get...

BEGIN VISUAL:

LIZ sees her foster mother KATE SHOUTING AT HER.

Elizabeth Smith. Get to your room - now. You're grounded for a month.

You're a disgrace.

LIZ V.O

I could see it now. Kate, WAVING her hands around. Her eyes POPPING OUT OF HER HEAD in disgust.

We then see a visual of Deborah's face. SMILING.

She utters these words to LIZ.

DEBORAH

Lizzie. My girl. You are strong. Hold on. Hold on. Fight. Keep holding on...

LIZ V.O

And then, I saw Deborah's face. A ray of sunshine. SMILING. And I woke...

END VISUAL...

INT. HOSPITAL - NEXT MORNING.

LIZ awakes in a hospital bed. A man is at her bedside...It's Doug from the Contented Hen.

She's droopy-eyed, and murmurs...

Mummmmmmmmm...Where? Who... are...

DOUG

It's Doug. (holds her hand) You gave us quite a scare there, girl. You're in hospital.

LIZ is still just murmuring...

LIZ V.O

(MORE)

After that, I didn't dabble in drugs again...Doug had different ideas though, and BRETT was in for it...

EXT. BACK OF PUB - NIGHT.

We see a man lying flat out beaten black and blue on the floor outside the back of the pub. He's groaning. Blood is streaming all over his face.

Standing there are two men, as well as Doug.

DOUG

Two can play this game MR WALL STREET.

Move in on my Lizzie again, and next time you'll be visiting the morgue.

LIZ V.O:

Although Doug was a pimp, he made sure his girls were OK. I soon recovered after and was back hustling pool.

Doug saw that the BRETT'S didn't muscle in on his manor AGAIN.

INT. CONTENTED HEN - ONE FRIDAY NIGHT.

LIZ is SIPPING an ALE at the bar - WATCHING a POOL COMP where ALL the men are playing. She feels left out. Doug is at the bar washing glasses.

DOUG

You OK Liz?

LIZ

I should be playing...

DOUG

You will be. I'm meeting them and told them there's this new talent. You'll blow them away.

LIZ V.O

Doug was an old softie at heart. I knew how to play him. But to be fair, I think he saw me as the DAUGHTER he never had.

INT. A PRIVATE ROOM - NIGHT.

A long (ish) table with FIVE chairs.

Five OVERWEIGHT Oldish men in their 60s all smoking cigars.

They have just met LIZ and are deliberating on whether to let her play in the competition. LORRENZO, a FAT man is the leader of the gang. He's quite menacing but talks softly.

He speaks first.

If we do this, we're gonna have to change the rules for good.

This chick had balls coming in here. She even knew the artist on the wall there...

He GAZES up to a famous painting on the wall.

One of the other men PIPES IN.

She's definitely got GUTS. And look at the bag of money that DOUG has been bringing. She can HUSTLE this CHICK.

They look at a BULGING BAG SAT on the table.

(MORE)

THEY ALL SAY:

I liked her. She had bottle. To come here took guts.

LORRENZO

Yeah (pause). I liked her too (pause). OK. Are we ALL agreed then? SHE PLAYS.

LIZ V.O

When these old-timers make up their mind. That's it. They knew a good thing when they saw one.

INT. LIZ'S DIGS - AFTERNOON.

LIZ is alone and lying on her bed. She has a pencil and paper and is drawing. We can hear banging in another room.

DEEP in thought.

Eventually, she shows us what she's been sketching over a period.

LIZ V.O

There wasn't much time to myself, but I always had a pencil and paper for sketching.

L loved drawing FACES. Just something about the details that I was fascinated with. Art was really the only thing I enjoyed about school.

CLOSE IN on a SKETCH of DOUG'S HARD FACE, the pimp, STARING right back at us. A rather rough but still impressive portrait.

INT. PUB. THE FRIDAY - NIGHT.

TITLE: THE POOL COMPETITION

LIZ is on the table. A buzzing crowd.

It's her first round match and it's the final black ball.
She needs it to win. Noise ERUPTS.

She is wearing a skinny tee and a knee length skirt for the occasion.

She has a long sleeve tattoo on her arms. She sinks the black.

She goes to the bar and a creepy drunk guy in a leather jacket (Mark) is trying to chat her up.

He's slurring his words. EMBARRASSMENT.

MARK

y shooooooooooooot god lady.

(He leans near the bar). How bout we dooooo some shooting of our own later. (he moves nearer...)

LIZ turns her back on him.

LIZ

No. Take a hike.

MARK

Come on lady, ya know ya wanna..

He attempts to grope her and falls off the chair.

DOUG comes over and tries to help him back up.

LIZ holds her own. She knees him (not too hard but just enough that he GROANS).

LIZ

I said, no.

DOUG

I think you've had enough Markey boy.
Sober up or you're out.

MARK

(he rubs his face and gets back in his chair, holding his stomach.)

She made me fall off me chair, Doug.
And then she kneed me.

DOUG

You fell off yourself mate. Behave or
you're barred. He turns to Liz. You
OK babe?

LIZ

I can look after meself, Doug.

Mark interrupts (shouts):

I don't need no coffee, Doug. (He
lifts his glass.)

Pour me another. (As he holds out his
glass.)

DOUG

(ignores him for a second)

You're on again girl. Go get 'em.

INT. PUB - PAST MIDNIGHT.

TITLE: SEMI-FINALS

Hush.

We see LIZ still at the table. At the bar, there is a pint of ale FOR HER. She takes a sip.

She has one red remaining that she needs to pot before the black. The red is just off the cushion.

As she was taking a sip of ale,

MARK is up again making a nuisance of himself. He's totally drunk now and CANNOT stand up right.

He turns to Liz.

MARK

Iiiii sayyyyy, yaaaaa wannna mme ta tock ya up after?" DOUG (sees what's going on)

LIZ'S opponent is getting a bit rattled.

We see a big fella with a full blown beard and has tattoos all over. ZED. He looks menacing but REALLY is a CUDDLY BEAR.

ZED

Come on luv, 'urry up!

He turns to Mark and says, Oi, shut it Sparkey.

She (ignores the comment and ignores MARK,) She looks at the red.

MARK STUMBLES and trips up and falls flat on the floor.

DOUG rushes over and ushers to two others.

(MORE)

DOUG

Give me a hand boys.

They bundle MARK out of the pub. They come back in.

DOUG rubs his hands.

Now...

LIZ is back looking at the pot. Her opponent makes another jibe.

It ain't that tough, Ms...

She ignores him again and goes for it.

WE SEE THE RED GOING DOWN THE RAIL. IT GOES IN.

POV ZED IS LOOKING STUNNED. LIZ IS NOT PERFECT ON THE BLACK EITHER.

Someone from the crowd shouts.

Hey, ZED, ya gonna get spanked by a woman!" (laughing)

ZED BANGS the cue down on the floor.

ZED

Will you shut up balloon head.

The guy in the crowd stumbles over.

Who ya calling balloon head?

ZED rushes over to Balloon head and the pair match up.

He starts pushing Balloon Head. Balloon head takes a step back and falls over. DOUG goes over and helps Balloon Head up.

DOUG (at Balloon Head)

If I hear any more lip, I'm gonna get my pal from over the road to give ya a real roasting.

Liz has been drinking her ale and fiddling with her cue. Doug turns to Zed.

Zed. Just let the girl play, will ya?

Liz gets to look at the shot. She chalks up. Gets down and we see her take the strike. She misses the black as the ball just hits the jaw and stays out.

Her face looks bemused. ZED shakes his fists to the crowd. And gets down. He pots the black. He looks up.

ZED

Too bad luv. Great game. (He shakes her hand). Ya not bad.

LIZ V.O

Even though ZED beat me in that pool comp. I gained respect from some of them at the Contented Hen. It wasn't long before I was causing waves at other events.

I made quite a bit of cash from hustling with Doug.

(MORE)

He even suggested I go over to the other side of town and start hustling at snooker.

DOUG (smoking a CIGAR after pub closes. LIZ is sitting at the bar. Counting her money.

DOUG

Now there's a REAL GAME... Snooker. You'd be a natural.

I know a Jack Meach at Nets. He'll show ya the ropes and we'll soon 'ave ya 'ustling more. They'll never know what's 'it 'em.

EXT. OTHER SIDE OF TOWN - AFTERNOON/EARLY EVENING.

LIZ is walking around another part of town.

A TATTY CAR GARAGE ON THE RIGHT. OPPOSITE, A RANSACKED BUILDING THAT LOOKED LIKE IT HAD BEEN A PUB. BURNT OUT.

ON HER LEFT, AS SHE WANDERED YARDS UP, THERE IS A BURGER JOINT.

The fresh smell of cooked burgers WAFTS OUT as she opens the door.

INT. BRENDA'S BURGER BAR - NIGHT.

IN THE CORNER ARE TWO MEN WHO ARE TRUCKERS. A WOMAN IS SAT IN THE CORNER DOING NOTHING. IT LOOKED LIKE SHE WAS IN A TRANCE.

LIZ picks up a menu. Old wooden tables are empty.

LIZ

(MORE)

Excuse me, do ya know where Nets
Snooker Club is?

BRENDA. A plump black woman (writing in a notebook - peers
over her glasses.)

Nets? Ya don't wanna go there, Duck,
it's full of no goods.

Why ya asking?

LIZ

I'm a pool player and Doug at the
Contented Hen said I should go and
see a Jack Meach at Nets. Do ya know
it?

I'll 'ave one of those burgers there
(she points at).

Burgers are sizzling on an open cooker. SHE FLIPS THEM. ZED
is there.

ZED

Hey, what do ya know. If it ain't the
red-haired pool assassin!

LIZ

Zed.

Dude. (They shake hands.)

Zed:

I 'eard you're off to Nets? I'll drop
ya off there if ya like. It's on my
way.

LIZ

Sure. (She turns to Brenda).

(MORE)

Make that burger to go.

LIZ V.O.

What a stroke of luck. Zed was actually a diamond. Above that hardcore exterior of his, lay a sweetheart.

INT. ZED'S TRUCK - DAY.

We HEAR COUNTRY AND WESTERN MUSIC BLARING. Not the music you would imagine a trucker like ZED would have BLARING.

CLOSE IN of the DASHBOARD as ZED is driving.

We see a MESSY DASHBOARD with take out cartons and soda cans.

ZED AND LIZ ARE LAUGHING.

They are talking about a time at the Contented Hen pub.

ZED (laughs)

What a dork...

LIZ

Ya. (she writes with her finger)
D.O.R.K. hahahahaha.

Liz is playing with her hair as ZED turns the wheel down a long road.

ZED is eating a BIG FAT doughnut WHILE driving.

ZED

Sorry bout the mess.

LIZ

No worries mate. So what's this JACK MEACH like then?

ZED

JACK MEACH? He's, err, well, he's JACK. He was a bit of a boy at one stage. He's calmed down a bit now.

But, boy, was he a SHARK at snooker. Hunted them like prey. Like lambs to the slaughter.

He did a lot for the scene though. BIG HEART but LIKED the good things. We call him the SCARFACE of snooker.

LIZ

Why's that?

ZED

You'll see. We're nearly there.

ZED looks at his watch.

I'd give ya a game, but me got a delivery to go to. Maybe some time soon!

They turn into an old graveled parking lot. It looks more like a cement ground than an actual car park. There are holes in the path.

ZED

(MORE)

Here we are. It's in that building there. (points) Just BUZZ to get in. Then walk up a FLIGHT of stairs and then BUZZ another door. That's NETS.

LIZ looks out. PAUSE.

Good luck red-haired assassin.

Liz JUMPS out.

The truck drives off into the distance.

EXT. OUTSIDE NETS SNOOKER CLUB - DAY.

LIZ STANDS OUTSIDE A BIG TALL BUILDING - shaking. She rings a buzzer and goes in.

She climbs up a flight of stairs to level 1.

She rings another buzzer. She HESITANTLY goes in.

INT. BUILDING - NIGHT.

A dark, tired, dank corridor leads to Nets.

LIZ sees a huge sign NETS in BIG BRIGHT COLOURS.

She rings another buzzer. She's let in.

INT. NETS SNOOKER CLUB - NIGHT.

As she goes into the club...darkness.

15 dimly lit tables surrounded by dark brown walls.

There's pictures of people on the walls holding trophies.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

Her father showing her pictures of him playing snooker. He shows her the club where he played. CLOSE UP of a photo with JOHN JONES playing.

LIZ

Can I come and play, Daddy?"

JOHN JONES (father) who points at her nose.

It's not a place for you Princess.
Maybe one day.

END FLASHBACK

15 SNOOKER TABLES. LIZ LOOKS AROUND IN AWE.

LIZ (whispers)

Wowwwwwwwww!

She slowly walks in front as she gazes around the room. PICTURES hang on the walls with trophies in their hands.

It's dark. She sees the beams of the table lights and it feels like she's on a stage.

She felt like swirling around like a ballerina.

She takes a bow.

She looks around and sees a room at the end of the club, and there's someone there behind a bar, tending to some people who had pints in their hands.

She walks over to a short and gruff looking guy with a scar on his face in his mid forties who is BRUSHING A TABLE.

LIZ V.O

And this was the first time I met Jack Meach. Nets Snooker club owner.

I soon fell for him in a big way even though he was a lot older than me. He was like a father figure.

I guess I just wanted someone to love me and believe in me.

TITLE: JACK MEACH'S STORY - NICKNAME SCARFACE

BEGIN FLASHBACK: THE FAMOUS SCAR

EXT. A DARK ALLEYWAY - NIGHT.

Two young twenty-something men come out of a building. RAIN PELTS DOWN. One carries a beautifully designed RED snooker case with him. Dim lights from street lamps.

A shortish man speaks - RAY.

Great game Jack. We really got 'em there.

YOUNG JACK MEACH:

We really turned 'em over didn't we Ray. (laughing). They thought they could 'ustle us. No chance.

RAY laughs.

He high fives JACK.

RAY

Let's go for a bite. I'm paying. (He flashes the cash they've just won).

They walk down the long alleyway. Two seedy men approach.

One of them looks like he's carrying a weapon - a blade of some description. They are masked. One of them speaks in a gruff voice.

MASKED MAN #1:

Wallets. Now.

JACK turns to RAY.

Do we know these two?

MASKED MAN #1:

Give us your wallets. Now. We're not screwing about. RAY takes out his wallet. - JACK signals to Ray with his arms.

JACK MEACH

No. Ray. Don't give 'em the satisfaction. These goons are all talk.

He turns to one of the thugs

There's a camera up there watching everything.

As the goon looks up...JACK Shouts to RAY:

Run. Ray. Run. Run.

RAY runs as one of the goons chases after him. The other one is standing there. Speechless.

Both JACK and the other goon run after each other as JACK looked at him.

Chasing down the alleyway, JACK chases down the other guy chasing after RAY.

A fight happens as Jack is trying to shake off one of the goons.

He gets slashed in the face with a blade and is left on the path with blood seeping down his face. He ends up closing his eyes for a few seconds.

The two goons run off and we see RAY lying a few yards away barely moving. He drags himself up and hobbles over to where RAY is.

He shouts:

Ray. Ray. Ray...

RAY is barely responding, but he just about manages to get a word and a groan out.

He's bleeding heavily as there is a pool of blood dripping. RAY manages to get a word out.

Jack...You...Tell, Karen, I love her.

JACK (now in tears)

(MORE)

You can tell her that yourself buddy.
You've been stabbed but we're gonna
get you help buddy.

He takes his coat off and ties it out to try and stop the
bleeding.

JACK

Stay tough friend. Stay tough. Hang
in there. Don't die on me.

We see the blood starting to pour out of Ray quicker now.
But he still manages to speak.

RAY

Take... my... cue... friend. See you
win with it. Do me proud.

JACK is holding his friend's hand. Ray's eyes have closed.
He has gone.

He sees the cue case lying on the ground a few metres away.
He goes over to get it and he rushes in a building nearby to
get help.

INT. AN EMPTY OFFICE BLOCK - DAY.

TITLE: THE BIRTH OF NETS SNOOKER CLUB.

JACK MEACH and RUSSELL JOHNS, a tall scrawny fella with
baldish hair (JACK'S friend) are SMARTLY dressed in suits in
an empty downtrodden office block.

On the floor are bare tiles.

They are "dreaming" around the room imagining their new business.

Nets Snooker Club.

JACK MEACH (He points)

Just imagine it Russ. I can see it now. 15 tables. (he points again) There's the bar area. We'll have top class events. And the women...It'll be the best club in town. I wish Ray could have seen it.

RUSSELL JOHNS

It'll be the best entertainment in town. Cocktails. Dancing. And, of course, the snooker. They'll be fighting to get in.

JACK MEACH

So what do ya think, Russ, ya in?

RUSSELL JOHNS (He shakes Jack's hands.

I'm in.

LIZ V.O

And so...Jack's dream for Nets Snooker Club was set in motion. He and his friend Russell Johns, who I was to play later had a dream and made it come true.

But as with all dreams, there are always obstacles and jealousy.

(MORE)

Like the time one of the tables at Nets was slashed. The guy who did that got a pasting. Russell did the dirty work.

We see a man being beaten up outside the back of Nets by another man who is hammering him repeatedly with a fist. He stops the beating. It's RUSSELL JOHNS.

RUSSELL JOHNS

Slash our tables. And we'll slash you... Tell Your boss, if one of his goons even steps one foot inside our place, we'll have their head in a vice. Comprende?" Freeze.

LIZ V.O

But still, Nets did bring in some crowds. Like the time new celebrity snooker player Michael Brown came to town. A star in the making. Jack was quite the host. And it was all for a good cause.

INT. NETS SNOOKER CLUB - NIGHT.

We see a large crowd all in EXPENSIVE ATTIRE.

A podium.

JACK MEACH and RUSSELL JOHNS and a couple of other big shots all sitting down.

ACTING like movie stars.

On the side are tables with lavish drinks on there. COCKTAILS. BOTTLES OF WATER.

There are chairs either side of a big snooker table ready for an exhibition. All polished and glistening in the lights.

JACK introduces MICHAEL BROWN, a twenty-something man, whose face is BEAMING with excitement. He's laughing. He is far from nervous.

JACK WINKS AT RUSSELL.

JACK MEACH

I know it's a bit early to be talking World Champions. (laughing crowd) But this guy (he directs at Michael Brown tapping his fingers on his trouser legs) is set for the top.

He's already won top events this year, but he's going right to the VERY top.

Ladies and gentleman. It's my pleasure to welcome the first professional Michael Brown to Nets Snooker Club. Michael, say a few words. (he claps)

The crowd clap as BROWN gets up to speak.

MICHAEL BROWN

Hi, (he wipes sweat off his brow) and it's a great honour to be here at Nets in front of you all. (takes a sip of water).

Snooker has given me a lot. Not just fame, money, but happiness too since a kid.

(MORE)

I know some of you have come in from further a field to support this great exhibition in aid of children born with severe disabilities.

It's great to be here. This man Russell Johns has got a great future ahead of him, and I hope there will be many more visits to Nets in future.

The crowd applaud and stand as JACK AND RUSSELL go to the table and take off the cover. RUSSELL JOHNS, in his suit gets his cue out of his case. JACK turns to MICHAEL BROWN.

Do your thing Michael

We see Michael break off and the white lands PLUM on the baulk cushion.

LIZ V.O

Sadly, Michael Brown didn't last long in the game.

We see a man sprawled out on a bed in a hotel room. Next to him is a bottle of scotch and a small bottle of pills.

A couple of years later, he was found in a hotel room. I guess the fame got to him. He couldn't handle it.

A shame. Things can get on top of you - if you let them...

5 YEARS LATER

INT. NETS - NIGHT.

Lights. We see a wave of blue as JACK MEACH is overseeing the installation of some nine ball pool tables.

Some of the old snooker tables have gone. There are now only 10 tables in operation.

His glasses droop down. A smile.

INT. NETS - DAY - WEEK LATER.

A growing crowd of teenage kids pack out the club playing on pool tables.

We hear the thundering of balls knocking around.

RUSSELL JOHNS is looking, arms folded.

RUSSELL JOHNS

Even the snooker tables are buzzing
Jack.

JACK MEACH

This ain't enough Russ, but it'll 'av
to do for now.

LIZ V.O

Jack was trying everything to turn
Nets around. Things got packed out.
The kids loved the pool. Until one
day, something happened...

INT. NETS - DAY.

A GINGER-HAIRED SURLY man enters. He's sporting a cap and wearing a leather jacket and carrying a brief case. Jim Case. He's a big fella.

He looks like something out of the A-Team.

JIM CASE

(MORE)

Ya JACK MEACH?

JACK MEACH

YA. Who's calling.

JACK is fiddling around with a coffee machine on the bar.

JIM CASE

Jim Case. Russell Johns said I'd speak to ya. (shaking hands.) I've got a proposal for you.

He puts A PLUSH BROWN looking case on the bar table and opens it. He gets out some plans and Jack GAZES at them with his glasses.

JIM CASE

EASY MONEY for Nets. All we need your end is the storage facility. No-one will ever know.

JACK looks at the plans again.

JACK MEACH (hesitant taking off glasses)

What if we get caught?

JIM CASE

Unless one of ya customers is a nosey little parker. It's airtight.

JACK MEACH

Well, I can't say we don't need the money. Business isn't great.

JIM CASE

He looks around and he sees the tables. He points to one in the very corner. TABLE 10.

How many go on that one over there?

(MORE)

JACK MEACH

It's rarely used. I guess we could use it.

JIM CASE

So it's a deal?

He offers a hand...

JACK MEACH

Fancy a game on table 10?

JIM CASE

Why not...

They start to set the balls up for a game. We can see them laughing.

LIZ V.O

And so table 10 was the star of the show. For different reasons other than just the snooker.

In fact, Table 10 was the table making most of the revenue at Nets. How? Well, you'll find out later.

INT. NETS SNOOKER CLUB - DAY.

TITLE: THE MEETING

JACK MEACH can be seen on one of the tables in the corner BRUSHING.

He looks up as he sees an attractive red-haired NERVOUSLY coming towards him.

LIZ

Are you JACK MEACH the owner?

JACK MEACH (He grunts)

YEP.

He continues to brush the table.

He is engrossed in BRUSHING (not really paying attention to LIZ).

Who's asking?

LIZ

I'm LIZ. Doug sent me up 'ere. Said you might be able to 'elp me?

JACK now looks up.

He looks her up and down - GLARING.

JACK MEACH

I say....When Doug told me he had a TALENTED STUNNER who's good with a stick, I didn't believe it.

LIZ gets fidgety and feels a bit uncomfortable.

JACK MEACH

SO. You're here to ROCK THE SNOOKER WORLD are you?

LIZ

I wouldn't say that...

JACK MEACH

Well...First thing's first girly, you can 'elp me brush ALL THESE.

We see him show her how to do it by brushing UP the table with the brush.

She has a go.

JACK MEACH

Now (he points to the rest)...You can do the rest of these...

A good snooker player LOOKS AFTER their equipment and takes pride in it...

LIZ gets to work BRUSHING.

After, we see JACK SAUNTER over to LIZ with a cue.

He puts the cue down on one of the tables.

Inspects the table with a FINE TOOTH COMB.

JACK MEACH

Good job. Now, show me how you play...

We see her get down NATURALLY and play a shot.

JACK then proceeds to give her some pointers...

LIZ V.O

And that was the first time I REALLY fell in love with the game. From that moment, I was hooked and all I wanted to do was play.

INT. NETS - THE BAR - AFTERNOON.

LIZ and JACK are sitting down having a CHAT.

She has a coffee on the table. JACK has an IRISH COFFEE.

JACK MEACH

So, tell me, what's your story,
girly...?

LIZ

Mine? (she fidgets again...)
Well, where do I start?

JACK MEACH

From the beginning is usually a good
place.

LIZ

OK. Well, it all started from when...

LIZ begins her TALE as we see JACK MEACH nodding EVERY SO
OFTEN.

LIZ V.O

I told him everything. I let it all
out. I didn't hold back. I told him
about the accident. I told him about
the bullies, and the beatings on the
game.

I told him about my depressed father
who I missed a lot. It was the first
time I had been this emotional with
someone. But it was cathartic as well
to let it all out.

He sees LIZ having a TEARFUL moment and we see him JUMP UP
to get some tissues from the bar area.

She blows her nose and carries on.

She then goes into the story again and JACK begins to nod
again.

At the end, he takes her hand and holds it there as she still has a few tears.

JACK MEACH

Let it all out girl. Quite a tale there. Where is your dad now?

LIZ

I don't know. He's probably still in recovery.

JACK MEACH

Well. Let's make him proud. Your training starts FROM NOW.

INT. NETS SNOOKER CLUB. DAY.

LIZ gets down to some training. We see a line of reds lined up and JACK MEACH is watching her. She pots five reds but misses on one.

JACK then asks her why she thought she missed.

LIZ

Because my mind wasn't on the shot?

JACK claps...CORRECT...

LIZ V.O

When I was at a snooker table. I was happy. But it also made me think of happier times. Like this one with my mother, Deborah. I so terribly wanted to make her proud...

LIZ'S MEMORY

INT. JOHN AND DEBORAH JONES'S FLAT - DAY

TITLE: LIZ'S SIXTH BIRTHDAY

A BIG chocolate cake IN SHOT with six candles.

A square woody kitchen table with three seats.

Young ELIZABETH is with her mother, DEBORAH, HAPPY AND SMILING. This could be Christmas. But it's Liz's BIRTHDAY.

DEBORAH sits. An attractive looking woman with long blonde hair and blue eyes. She's stunning. Elegant.

JOHN JONES is filming the scene with his OLD video camera OFF CAMERA.

DEBORAH

Look at the cake Lizzie. Isn't it yummy. Who's a BIG girl then?

JOHN JONES.

Just like her mummy.

Liz is smiling as we hear the noise of party blowers in background. DEBORAH kisses Liz or (LIZZIE) as her mother likes to call her on the face.

The CAKE CANDLES are glowing on the film.

DEBORAH

Go on. Blow out the candles sweetheart. Don't forget to make a wish.

Liz closes her eyes. What does she wish for we wonder? And then blows out the candles.

DEBORAH claps.

Off shot, John Jones quips.

Come on ladies. I'm starving. Let's eat.

DEBORAH (laughs)

Daddy's always hungry, isn't he Lizzie?

Liz nods.

DEBORAH starts to cut the cake with a knife as there are three plates set out.

LIZ

Can I cut the cake mummy?

DEBORAH

OK sweetheart, but mummy will help you...

LIZ and DEBORAH are cutting a piece of the cake and it drops onto the table, RATHER than one of the plates.

LIZ

Oh nooooooooooooo

DEBORAH

No worries sweetheart. (she scoops the cake that's fallen into bits back on the plate). Here we go. That's daddy's piece. (she jokes)

JOHN JONES quips AND THE VIDEO CAMERA PANS IN ON THE CAKE.

As DEBORAH cuts, JOHN JONES keeps joking...

More. More. More.

They both laugh as LIZ and DEBORAH smile at each other.

END MEMORY

INT. NETS SNOOKER CLUB - DAY.

A DAY LATER

WE SEE LIZ IN NETS PRACTICING. JACK MEACH IS WATCHING HER AND IS CLAPPING SOME SHOTS. JACK THEN WALKS OVER.

JACK claps as she's just taken a very difficult long half ball blue and we hear the noise as it CRISPLY hits the pocket leather.

You're a natural. You've got real natural presence around the table.

We need to get you some action. I know just the thing for ya... Let Me show ya something...

LIZ

OK.

He gets a cue and he shows her a trick shot. She claps herself.

JACK

(MORE)

See. Trick shots actually are useful
for knowing angles and the line of
cue ball. Try it.

LIZ gets down and tries the shot. She gets it first time.
JACK claps.

We see LIZ GAZING into his eyes.

JACK

Do ya pull pints as good as ya shoot
balls

LIZ

I'm a quick learner.

INT. NETS SNOOKER CLUB BAR - EVENING.

JACK is showing LIZ how to pull a pint and what to do at the
bar.

SHE pours a PINT and half of the BREW goes everywhere. JACK
is SHOWING PATIENCE with her as she learns how to pull it
properly.

They are laughing.

JACK MEACH

You'll get the hang of it. Say, I'm
going out for a bite later. Join me?

LIZ is thinking...

LIZ

It's kind of late. I ought to be
getting back...Maybe some other time.

(MORE)

JACK MEACH

I'll call a cab then.

EXT. OUTSIDE NETS - NIGHT.

Jack sees LIZ into the cab. Door shuts. It drives off.

INT. LIZ'S DIGS. LATE.

We see LIZ on her bed. Thinking.

A text message BEEPS on her phone.

TEXT ID ZED

Hope you got on well at NETS. Maybe
see you at THE HEN tomorrow night?
ZED.

Liz replies.

TEXT ID LIZ

Got on well dude. See you there! LIZ.

She smiles.

Another text BEEPS from JACK MEACH

TEXT ID JACK MEACH

You did well today LIZ. Come back
tomorrow for more training. JACK.

LIZ replies...

TEXT ID LIZ

Thanks. I'll be back tomorrow.

INT. NETS - DAY.

It's nearly 10:AM.

JACK MEACH is at the bar with a COFFEE. His mate RUSSELL
JOHNS is there too.

We see JOHNS with his snooker cue case on the side. READY TO PLAY.

Liz strolls into the bar. Jack looks at his watch.

JACK MEACH

You're late. (PAUSE) Joking. Meet RUSSELL JOHNS. My mate. He's going to give you a game AND a crash course in WINNING.

RUSSELL JOHNS eyes up LIZ as he shakes her hand.

RUSSELL JOHNS

Talented and pretty. There's a first. I hear you're the pool hustler from THE HEN.

LIZ

You heard right Mr.

RUSSELL JOHNS

Well, first tip. Forget pool. Forget it. It doesn't exist here. We play snooker.

LIZ

OK.

RUSSELL JOHNS

Shall we get into it...

We see LIZ on the table play FRAMES with RUSSELL JOHNS.

LIZ breaks off in the first frame and the white comes past the blue but just stops short of the baulk line. She's left a couple of reds on for JOHNS.

He gets down and pots the first red.

We see him at the table potting. SHOT of LIZ looking on in admiration.

Johns clears up.

He puts the cue down.

RUSSELL JOHNS

Now. Why did I win there?

LIZ looks puzzled...

Err... My break wasn't good enough.

RUSSELL JOHNS

Exactly...

He then sets them up and breaks off. The white goes near perfect on the cushion.

RUSSELL JOHNS

That's where it should land...

We see LIZ in a montage of training with RUSSELL JOHNS for most of the day.

INT. THE CONTENTED HEN - EVENING.

ZED is at the bar. He looks at his watch.

He gets out his mobile phone. He sends a text.

TEXT ID ZED

Are you coming Liz? I'm here at The Hen."

He gets a QUICK response.

TEXT ID IIZ

"Hey Zed. Sorry, can't make it tonight now. I'm getting ready. Had Jack Meach ask me for dinner. Maybe see you soon."

ZED sends another text.

TEXT ID LIZ

OK babe. Enjoy. Be careful.

INT. LIZ'S DIGS. AFTERNOON.

We see LIZ getting ready for her night out with JACK MEACH.

She decides to wear a RED DRESS not too short. But she paints her nails in different colours.

INT. BATHROOM. AFTERNOON.

Liz is staring in the mirror. She is ready. Looking at herself in the mirror.

She splashes her face with water.

She looks up.

In the reflection she suddenly can see a blurred reflection of her REAL mum, Deborah.

She is taken aback by the sight. It's getting stronger.

She's splashing with water thinking it's just a HALLUCINATION but she sees it again.

She places her hand on the mirror.

Mummmmmmmmm....

The IMAGE begins to speak to her...

LIZZIE. You look lovely. Give us a twirl...

LIZ is still a little shocked. But she TWIRLS around.

DEBORAH

You will always be my little girl
LIZZIE...Be careful...Just be
careful.

LIZ

I will...

She places her hand again on the mirror...

LIZ

I miss you...

The image becomes FAINT and disappears...

Liz moves out of the bathroom onto the bed and is just sitting there - MULLING OVER what happened.

Liz is speaking to herself.

What did she mean by be careful?

INT. A RESTAURANT - EARLY EVENING.

TITLE: THE FIRST DATE

Classic Italian music in the background.

A bustling restaurant. Tables aligned with red table cloths. Two glasses in shot. Filled with red wine.

JACK AND LIZ IN SHOT. LIZ is wearing a BRIGHT red dress and we see her shiny fingernails painted all different colours. She's making a statement.

JACK DONS a leather suit jacket and shiny black shoes.

The waiter has brought up their dessert. He is a tallish young guy - quite handsome in looks, and seems to have taken a shine to LIZ.

He flirts with her and comments on the dessert she has ordered of EXOTIC FRUITS.

JACK MEACH has played along REALISING what's going on.

This time, the waiter goes ALL out to try and get LIZ's number. He flirts.

WAITER

Maybe you can paint my nails
sometime? If it's OK with your daddy
here?

JACK wades in before LIZ answers...

JACK MEACH

Are you asking her out on a date in
the middle of dinner? You've got guts
son...

LIZ (realising that JACK is playing, decides to play along,
and FLIRTS back with the WAITER.

LIZ

DADDY, I think I can speak for
myself. I'm old enough.

WAITER

And beautiful enough.

LIZ

Thanks (she blushes). But you should
know I already have a boyfriend. (She
turns to JACK) Don't I daddy?

JACK MEACH

She does son. Sorry to disappoint.
Been seeing each other a while.

Waiter looking a bit taken a back.

WAITER

He's a lucky guy.

LIZ

He is. (she looks at JACK dead pan.)

JACK plays along with the game.

VERY LUCKY.

WAITER

Well, enjoy your dessert.

(He wanders off looking a bit disappointed)

Liz giggles a little bit.

LIZ

Oops. I think I dented his ego.

JACK MEACH

I think he'll live to fight another day. Plenty more fish in the sea.

LIZ V.0

Some might ask why did a young girl of nearly 20 fall for a guy nearly in his 40s?

Jack was different. He just had that way about him that made you go all weak. He wasn't much to look at.

(MORE)

But he knew how to present himself in situations. Like here.

LIZ

I'm just wondering. Are you OK about the age difference?

JACK MEACH

Why, aren't you?

LIZ

Yes. No. I mean, Well, it's just he thought...He thought you were my father!

JACK MEACH

Hey, I'm NOT over the hill yet girly...

LIZ

I know. But...

JACK MEACH

Who cares what people think? You will get this. Bit like the game, have you got the bottle for it?

JACK was served a piece of CHOCOLATE GATEAU and digs in.

Being the GENTLEMAN he offers her a spoon of his cake. She waves her hand in gesture saying NO.

LIZ

I'm watching my figure

JACK (smiling)

Why don't I watch it for ya?

LIZ

Stop teasing me.

JACK

I'm not. Your figure is fine.

LIZ changes the subject.

LIZ

Can I ask a personal question?

JACK

Fire away (looking intrigued)

LIZ

Why haven't you been married?

JACK

I was actually engaged. But it went sour. You see, with snooker, you travel about a bit and you're never in one place. For some, that's too much to handle. You need someone willing to put up with it.

LIZ

And what about now? What are you looking for?

JACK

NOW? I'm not looking for anything other than another glass of wine right now...

LIZ laughs.

Another waiter comes over and pours some wine.

JACK

Seriously. Let's just have some fun.

LIZ's body gets fidgety.

She picks up her glass and accidentally SPILLS all the wine over the table. EMBARRASSMENT.

LIZ

Oh. God. I'm so sorry. I'm so CLUMSY.

Some of the liquid has RUN onto Jack's trousers and she is racing over to the chair with a NAPKIN to wipe it off.

JACK (jokes)

It's fine. REALLY. Accidents happen. Now, you really do owe me another DINNER.

The waiter is ushered over by JACK and he signals for the bill.

The other has gone for a sulk...

TALL WAITER

Certainly sir.

JACK

Listen. How about we go back to Nets
for a nightcap, eh?

LIZ

You mean ya want to have your wicked
way with me on the table. I'm young,
but I'm no pushover. I know your game
Mr.

JACK

Well, who wouldn't? I know you ain't.
Neither am I. But ya might learn
something.

We see LIZ AND JACK GAZING at each other.

LIZ

I think you're hustling me!

LIZ V.O

That was it. We couldn't resist it.
The chemistry was too powerful.

It was reactive. We were soon back at
Nets ripping each other's clothes
off.

We see them getting raunchy in Nets Snooker Club.

I wasn't shy. I had worked guys
before. But Jack was different.

INT. NETS SNOOKER CLUB - NIGHT.

We see JACK AND LIZ getting RAUNCHY in the club after hours. He has just his trousers on and she has just unbuttoned her dress. They are kissing and caressing each other. Liz hears a NOISE.

LIZ (paranoid)

What's that noise?

JACK (still kissing her neck)

It's probably just a mouse moving around. Forget it.

LIZ (holding her head)

My head is spinning. It's been a MAD DAY.

JACK

It has. Listen. Pop by tomorrow and you can start some training...

He picks up his shirt and they begin to get straightened up.

MONTAGE OF SOME OF LIZ'S DAILY TRAINING ROUTINES

INT. NETS - MORNING.

1) We see Liz at the tables with an iron and napper/brush as she is LOOKING AFTER the tables and is TAKING PRIDE in how they LOOK. She's going over the table with the iron.

LIZ V.O.

Jack taught me how to look after the tables. I loved it. It was like looking after a family. Snooker tables need plenty of TLC. I gave it to them.

She is INSPECTING ONE and looking for any signs of chalk marks and rubbing them off. She is DELICATELY RUNNING THE IRON again on the table.

She has a BEAMING SMILE on her face as she does it. Jack is watching her and CLOSE UP as we see him also BEAMING like a YOUNG LAD AGAIN.

2) We see Liz practicing running the white up the brown, blue, pink and black spots and watching the cue ball come back down STRAIGHT.

POV LIZ: Smiling as it comes back down straight.

3) We see a SHOT of Liz using a TRAINING AID where you cue through a hole to see cueing straight.

INT. NETS - NIGHT.

4) JACK and LIZ are together on the table alone in the club as she is having some coaching.

She's being shown how to cue through the ball and PERFECT a nice SMOOTH ACTION.

JACK demonstrates with the cue that there should be a nice pause on the backswing before delivering.

She gets down and strikes a long straight red. It goes in.

JACK claps.

JACK

Ya see. The smoother you strike, the more likely the ball will go where you want. Don't rush the action. Let it glide.

LIZ is smiling and GAZING at JACK with admiration. We can tell she is falling more under his CHARMING spell.

5) INT. A GYM - DAY.

We see LIZ is running on a treadmill EAGER to get herself in shape. She is RUNNING HARD and we see the SWEAT of her labours.

LIZ V.O.

When I was with KATE, I hated the gym. Now, I'm finding I'm going there EVERY WEEK just to get fit and in shape. The days of nibbling a SNICKERS through boredom were gone.

END MONTAGE

INT. JACK'S FLAT - DAY - WEEKS LATER.

TITLE: THE CHAMPION CUE...

LIZ comes home from work and opens the front door with her key.

On a side table is a note that reads...

"Go in the kitchen. There is a present for you waiting on the side. JACK XX."

LYING on the kitchen table is a long ATTRACTIVE red case with patterns.

On top of the case is another post it note.

It reads... "OPEN ME."

LIZ, looking somewhat shell-shocked by it all, looks at the case for a second, and then SLOWLY and CAREFULLY opens the catches.

CLOSE in on a snooker cue with ORNATE PATTERNS.

Liz GAZES at it for a bit...TEARS are starting to appear.

She finally PLUCKS UP the courage to pick up the cue.

LIZ GENTLY runs her hand down the grain of wood.

She INSPECTS the logo...

It reads: "THE CHAMPION CUE."

She BURSTS into tears and we see her holding the cue in her hands - CRYING.

LIZ's phone BEEPS. A TEXT. She reads it.

TEXT ID - JACK

Hope you liked gift. I'll be in late tonight. See you in a bit. JACK.
XX...

TEXT ID LIZ (thinking for a moment)
replies:

Just got back from work. Love it!
Love you. I'll be waiting. Don't be too long. LIZ XX...

INT. NETS - NIGHT.

It's late.

JACK MEACH is at the bar with another woman. TANYA is a tallish woman in her late 20s. She is another staff bartender.

They are laughing and joking.

He appears to be FLIRTING with her and BEING MORE THAN FRIENDLY.

She's enjoying the attention.

He's touching her in SUBTLE ways as they GIGGLE.

She's SIPPING a VODKA TONIC.

INT. NETS SNOOKER CLUB - MORNING.

We see LIZ on the table having a knock with the Champion cue. She's "knocking it in."

She gets down to pot one ball and completely miscues.

She BANGS her fist down on the table.

Jack SAUNTERS UP BEHIND HER AND SLAPS HER BEHIND. JOKILY.

JACK MEACH

Don't fret, new cues always take a
while to get used to. I've got
another surprise for you.

He drops an envelope down on the table.

LIZ

What's in there?

JACK MEACH

Open it and see...

LIZ picks up the envelope and OPENS it. She UNVEILS two tickets with her and Jack's names on it.

We see THE CRUCIBLE THEATRE visit details on the ticket.

She is looking DAZED as she reads it.

LIZ

These are dated for this weekend. But I'm working.

JACK MEACH

Not anymore you're not! And I don't take no for an answer. If you wanna be a snooker player, then you've got to see the best - LIVE.

LIZ

First a cue. And now this. You're pushing pretty hard.

JACK MEACH

You bet I am. I don't think you know how good you really are or how good you think you could become. You've got natural talent with a cue. Not bad for a CHICK (he laughs). JOKE.

JACK picks up the CHAMPION CUE and he starts knocking a shot.

JACK MEACH

Come on. Fancy a game? Let's get you up to speed. We'll have you BASHING them in in no time...

LIZ laughs.

A MONTAGE AT THE HOME OF SNOOKER - WEEKEND.

EXT. OUTSIDE CRUCIBLE, TUDOR SQUARE, SHEFFIELD - DAY.

JACK MEACH and LIZ are standing outside the MECCA of snooker. HOLDING HANDS.

LIZ is gazing around the square, OVERWHELMED by the occasion.

On in the background is a BIG TV showing the match going on inside.

The BIG CRUCIBLE THEATRE LETTERS TOWER above her as she looks up at the famous building.

This is one for the PHOTO ALBUM.

Tears EMERGE from her eyes.

JACK MEACH

This is it, honey. All the greats have played and won here xxxxxx times over. Davis, Hendry, O'Sullivan.

LIZ

Did you play here?

JACK MEACH

Me? Noooooooo. I didn't get to step out there. I got to the last qualifying round yonks ago.

But lost the nerve - it happens. Main thing is this is what all snooker players DREAM. For some it is just that. A DREAM.

Hopefully, for you, this will give you some inspiration for the Nets Tournament. Get your juices RACING.

They STROLL inside.

INT. CRUCIBLE THEATRE - AFTERNOON.

We see LIZ and JACK MEACH in the afternoon engrossed in a frame of snooker watching the best at work.

One of the players is at the table and on for a BIG BREAK...
They are holding hands while watching.

INT. CRUCIBLE FOYER - AFTERNOON.

Liz and JACK MEACH are SNAPPED with a famous snooker player.

JACK MEACH gets the player to sign the Champion Cue Case.

Jack is talking to the famous snooker player and telling him about LIZ and how she's a new female talent.

She blushes.

The famous snooker player wishes her all the best in the NETS tournament and gives her some QUICK advice. We see LIZ nodding in admiration.

EXT. MILLENIUM SQUARE - SHEFFIELD TOWN CENTRE - DAY.

JACK MEACH and LIZ are sitting down on a bench near a fountain EATING A BAG OF CHIPS together.

LIZ takes a NAPKIN and wipes some KETCHUP off his face.

She then kisses him on the OTHER cheek.

JACK MEACH

What was that for?

LIZ

Just a thankyou. It's been a LOVELY WEEKEND.

JACK MEACH

Glad you had fun. But did you learn something as well?

LIZ

Yeah. I learnt...I learnt I can do this now. I CAN DO THIS. I WANT IT. I NEED IT.

JACK MEACH

Want what?

LIZ

To win.

JACK MEACH

Good.

He goes over to a bin to throw away the chip-wrappings. They both then get up and walk hand in hand back towards the Crucible area...

INT. NETS SNOOKER CLUB - DAY.

MONTAGE OF SOME OF LIZ'S ROUNDS TO GET TO FINAL.

1) FIRST ROUND. LAST FRAME. Best of five. 2 - 2.

We see LIZ in the first round of the County Amateur tournament and she's in a spot of bother.

She's snookered on a red behind the black. She MUST swerve the shot to get out of the snooker.

She fidgets with her cue. CHALKS tip. Looks at the black and gets down - puts right hand side on the cue ball. Takes shot.

We see a close up as JACK is looking on in the small audience. He's got his arms folded.

She looks at him. Smiles.

She then gets down and plays the shot. She escapes the snooker and the red runs safe.

We see her opponent TAP the table. He plays the red and the red runs around the table. He makes a hash of the safety shot.

Liz gets to the table and we see her pot the red to middle. She then proceeds to pot the black and lands on the colours.

She leans on the table and holds her head in relief.

Her opponent shakes hands. She goes over to JACK and she gives him the cue.

LIZ V.O

Wow. The first round was a nervy. But I managed to get through the rounds MORE CONFIDENT AFTER THAT. Guess who I played in the semi-finals?

2) LAST FRAME DECIDER. SEMI-FINALS.

ZED, LIZ's friend from The Contented Hen is at the table with the three colours left.

He's got a LONG STRAIGHT BLUE and all the three colours are on their spots. He needs the blue and pink to win.

LIZ just needs the blue to win.

ZED looks UNCOMFORTABLE in his waistcoat suit. We are not used to seeing him look so smart. He has even shaved his beard a little bit.

He stands STARING at the blue. He looks at Liz.

POV:LIZ as she is sipping a coffee and seems to be looking cool.

In the audience is DOUG. He's come to support both of them. Sitting next to him is a thin guy who looks like he is more suited to DOING BUSINESS DEALS than watching snooker.

ZED makes a joke to some of the audience in a bid to try and null the pressure.

ZED (he offers his cue to the thin guy in the suit.)

Want a go, dude?

The thin guy goes all red-faced.

He simply shakes his head.

ZED gets back all serious. He looks at the blue one more time and then CHALKS UP. He gets down.

We see the white roll down to attack the blue and then the blue rolls down and we see it miss to the right of the pocket.

ZED THUMPS his cue down on the ground.

He RAPS his knuckles on the table. He's FUMING with himself.

He goes back to his seat and LOOKS BACK at the table in DISGUST. He fiddles with his cue - TRYING to work out what went wrong with the cueing.

LIZ is up like a shot.

The blue could have rolled anywhere. But it rolls over middle pocket.

This is her chance.

We can see her face getting MORE sweatier as she wipes her brow.

She goes around to look at the middle pocket. DOUG looks at ZED and signals with his hands as if to say, CALM DOWN.

Liz CHALKS her cue with LEE'S CHALK. It's seen so much action since she was given it all those years ago.

She slides down to the shot and gently feathers. The blue sinks crisply into the pocket.

She lifts her head up. She GLANCES at JACK. He nods in approval.

LIZ V.O

That was it. I got to the final. Beat my best friend Zed. He was gracious in defeat. We even sunk a couple of ales after.

We see LIZ and ZED at the bar after laughing and joking.

ZED

You got me there red-haired assassin. You smashed it.

LIZ

This is the end of the road for me
ZED.

ZED

Stop putting yourself down. You'll be fine.

He sinks another ale and looks at his watch.

Well, gotta shoot. Deliveries in the morning.

He acknowledges JACK MEACH and shakes his hand.

This one's a winner JACK. You see to it she doesn't forget it.

He walks off as JACK BEAMS at Liz.

INT. FLAT - DAY.

TITLE: MORNING - DAY OF THE FINAL

A BIG MIRROR in a plain white bathroom.

We see Liz in her snooker attire STARING at herself - IN REHEARSAL.

The CHAMPION CUE is at the side. She splashes water on her face and GAZES again. She then picks up the CUE and looks at it. CLOSE IN ON ITS LOGO.

LIZ (ASKING HERSELF)

A Champion cue for a champion player?
Is that REALLY me?

She then feathers the cue up and down. She gets down on the bathroom side in the address position as if she is playing. She feathers a couple of times and then delivers. She gets up.

LIZ (whispers)

I AM A CHAMPION.

(Louder. Stronger)

I. AM. A CHAMPION.

(Louder. Firmer.)

I. AM. A. CHAMPION.

She gets down again and feathers and repeats the process.

Splashes MORE water over her face. We then see her see an image of her mother in the mirror. DEBORAH. She's staring RIGHT BACK AT HER.

SHOCK.

She then puts her hand on the mirror.

LIZ (puzzled)

MUUUUUUUMMMMMM.

The image is still in focus but blurry. It whispers.

DEBORAH

You are my champion LIZZIE. You
always will be.

Liz has her hand still placed on the mirror. The image
disappears and she lets her hand go.

She looks in the mirror again. No image is there.

Now we see JACK in the background.

JACK

Everything OK babe?

LIZ (splashes water over her face.)

Yeah - I thought I saw..... I dreamt
something unreal. I actually dreamt I
woke up and was a champion.

JACK

You will be honey. You'll be fine.

Liz stares in mirror (shocked at what had just happened) as
JACK looks on.

INT. NETS SNOOKER CLUB - DAY

WE SEE LIZ OPEN CLUB UP AND SET UP FOR THE DAY.
She starts to GENTLY brush down the table that will be used
for the final.

She gets down to practice - we see her practicing safety
routines such as knocking the white down to a red thin and
the cue ball coming back to baulk.

WE THEN SEE LIZ KNOCKING THE CUE BALL UP AND DOWN. She's
playing with Jack's gift, The Champion Cue.

Jack comes over to the table.

JACK

You all set babe?

LIZ

As set as I ever could be.

JACK (puts his arm around her)

Stop worrying. You'll do great.

LIZ gently takes his hands off her.

LIZ

Jack. Why is table 10 never in use?
It's always covered up?

JACK (looking at table 10 - trying to
come up with an answer)

JACK

We're going to be selling it babe.
I'm trying to find a buyer for it.
It's in hand. Don't worry about that.

(MORE)

LIZ

I'm not worried. I just wondered as I thought it was a decent table.

JACK

In this game honey, sometimes, the better ones have to be sacrificed to make way for more...

LIZ

OK. Does it not need brushing?

JACK (hesitant)

No honey. We intend on taking the cloth off when someone buys it. Like I say, just focus on your game with Russell tonight.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

EXT: OUTSIDE NETS SNOOKER CLUB - NIGHT.

TITLE: NIGHT BEFORE THE FINAL.

Dark. Wet.

Two men can be seen outside the building where Nets is.

One man is carrying a bag. The other is talking to him. The darkness conceals their faces.

The man with the bag passes the bag over to the other.

The man who has been handed the bag walks away and goes to his car parked nearby.

A man in a long trench coat has been hiding. WATCHING.

He gets out his phone and dials it. DCI Jones.

DCI JONES

(MORE)

Yeah, Sarg, I got 'em. Bingo. One of 'em is heading off in a car now. OK, I'll follow him.

EXT. A ROAD - NIGHT.

A car is flashed from behind. The man driving is RUSSELL JOHNS.

LIZ V.O

This is Russell Johns. He was the best amateur player in the County. And I was going to be playing him in the final. He was also a friend of Jack's.

Russell was a player. A hustler and had come through the school of hard knocks with Jack. You knew you were in a game if you played Russell. He was a bit hot headed at times. But he knew how to win.

Jack had actually got me to play him a few times in practice. I don't think he anticipated I'd be playing him in the final.

He pulls over.

Another man gets out of another car and walks over. RUSSELL JOHNS winds down the window:

RUSSELL JOHNS

Problem?

DCI JONES

(MORE)

What's that in the back? (He points at a black bag).

RUSSELL JOHNS

That? It's my gym kit.

DCI JONES

Don't play the fool with me. We've been watching that club Nets for a while. We know you were outside the building with another man this evening. Pass me the bag.

RUSSELL JOHNS

(sarcastically) Ya got a warrant?

DCI JONES

I don't need one, I saw you get passed it. Now hand it over.

RUSSELL JOHNS

I know my rights. Ya need a warrant. And I want a lawyer. Am I being arrested?

I've got an important match tomorrow. If you ain't got anything. I'll be off.

DCI JONES

I know you, don't I? You're Russell Johns, that top amateur snooker player. Like I say, we've been watching Nets for a while.

(MORE)

We have reason to believe drugs are being sold there. My boss knows. Step out of the car, please.

DCI Jones searches the TATTY OLD black bag and finds £500 in there.

What's this then?

RUSSELL JOHNS

My holiday money. It ain't a crime to have five hundred quid in a bag, is it?

DCI JONES

No, it ain't. But what were you two doing there?

RUSSELL JOHNS

Look, Detective ...It's simple. really. That guy was Jack Meach the owner of Nets.

He was lending me some cash as things have been a bit strapped at mo. He can vouch for me. It's a loan.

DCI JONES

I don't believe you. It's Detective Jones to you. I'm gonna call this Meach and confirm. Meanwhile, get back in the car, and give me the phone.

And tell Meach, we'll be watching Nets now more than ever.

Johns gets back in and hands DCI Jones his phone with the number.

The phone rings: But it's not Meach. Cut to LIZ as the screen splits.

She answers.

LIZ (into phone)

Yeah, who's this?

DCI JONES (into phone)

Hi, I'm looking for a Jack Meach.
It's DCI Jones here. Is he there? Who
are you?

LIZ (into phone)

It's Liz. Jack's girlfriend. What's
the problem detective?"

DCI JONES (into phone)

It's urgent. I need to speak to him
to confirm something. Liz pauses
for a moment. Scratching her head.

LIZ (into phone)

OK, I'll get Jack to phone you. He's
normally down the snooker club Nets.
But he forgot his phone today.

DCI JONES (into phone)

If you could do that as soon as Ms...?

LIZ (into phone)

It's Jones. Same as yours. Sure. OK.
Will do. Bye.

She puts phone down before DCI Jones has a chance to get a
response.

INT. THE FLAT - NIGHT.

LIZ slams her fists down on the coffee table. She slings on a coat.

LIZ

The liar...

She heads out of the flat to go to Nets to confront JACK and find out what is going on.

INT. NETS CLUB - NIGHT.

LIZ blasts in to Nets and slams Jack's phone on the table. JACK, taken aback.

JACK MEACH

Honey, what's wrong?

LIZ

You forgot your phone. Oh, the cops phoned.

They wanna speak to ya about something. They didn't say what.

She's red-faced.

What the hell are the cops doing phoning you, Jack? What's going on?

JACK thumbles around with a glass.

LIZ

(MORE)

What are you hiding from me?

JACK MEACH

Nothing.

LIZ

Don't lie to me Jack.

JACK pours a drink from the bar.

JACK MEACH

Listen. It's not what you think. You know Russell. He's struggling at moment and I've lent him some cash...

Jack takes a sip.

He came to me for help. That's all.

Liz shakes her head. She's striding up and down.

You realise I'm playing him tomorrow, don't you! Giving him money before a big game.

Do ya know what it looks like?

If you're lying to me...

(MORE)

He places his arm on her shoulder.

JACK MEACH

Look, baby, you'll do great tomorrow.
Don't worry.

He goes around the bar and they embrace. They kiss.

JACK MEACH

There's nothing for you to worry
about.

LIZ V.O

It stunk. But I had fallen in love
with Jack and was a bit naive. I
thought I'd give him the chance. And
thought, I can beat this Russell
Johns. My talent will shine through.

INT. NETS SNOOKER CLUB - PREVIOUS DAY.

A 56-year-old man enters Nets and goes to the bar. He's
wearing shabby looking clothes and has a bit of a limp. He
orders a coke. He's NERVOUSLY looking around the joint.

MAN

Is there an Elizabeth Jones working
here?

(MORE)

The bartender stops washing pots.

BARMAN

Who's asking?

MAN

An old friend.

BARMAN

She doesn't work here any more. I can give her a message though as she still comes in here from time to time to play on the tables.

MAN

I see. No. Don't bother giving her a message. I'll come back another time. When's she in here normally?

BARMAN

It depends. She's got a match tonight here. It's the final of a major amateur event. Pretty important. It could be a stepping stone onto better things if she wins it.

MAN

OH. Right! (He looks shocked) OK. I might come back later, then. Cheers.

He walks out.

INT. THE FLAT - PREVIOUS DAY.

We see LIZ looking around the flat nosily poking in draws and cupboards. She looks inside a draw and finds a key. She looks at it...

We see her throwing the key up and catching it. She smiles.

LIZ

Bingo...

LIZ V.O

This was the moment I realised that Jack had been lying to me.

I wanted to find out what this key was for. I knew it wasn't for anything in the flat. So I went to Nets.

INT. NETS SNOOKER CLUB - DAY.

We see Liz opening a special safe she's found hidden right in a corner underneath some wooden draws with the key.

Inside there's a lot of money and some bags of white powder.

She takes it out to look at it.

V.O

I knew it what it was. Cocaine. Weirdly, I'd never encountered anything like that quantity before.

It was obvious what was going on. Was I going to confront Jack?

She puts the drugs back in the safe and locks the door.

(MORE)

I decided not to say anything (for the moment). I wanted to focus on my match. I put it all back as it was, and I put the key back in the draw when Jack was out.

INT. THE FLAT - DAY.

Liz slings on a coat. As she is about to open door, a man is standing there in a raincoat. DCI Jones. He's TALL - 6ft 2. He towers over Liz.

LIZ (looks at him suspiciously)

Yeah. Who are you?

DCI JONES (he extends his arm as if to shake hands but Liz doesn't respond.

Hi there. You must be Elizabeth Jones?

LIZ

Who's asking?

DCI JONES

I'm Detective Constable Inspector Jones. You won't remember me, but we spoke on the phone, once. Have you got a second?

LIZ (Hurried voice)

I was just about to go out
Detective...

DCI JONES

(MORE)

Oh good. Because we need to ask you a few questions down at the station.

A neighbour walks by with a dog and WAVES a HAND at Liz. Liz waves back.

LIZ

What's it about Detective?

DCI JONES

We'd like to talk to you about your boyfriend Jack Meach.

LIZ: (looking at her watch)

What about him?

DCI JONES

You're his girlfriend. He must talk to you about things...
?

LIZ

He doesn't tell me anything, Detective. Listen (looking at her watch again) is this going to take long? I've got to get to work soon.

DCI Jones (gets out his notebook)

Oh yes, you work (he scans his notes) at Brenda's Burger Bar, and you also work at the club. Mr MEACH told us that.

LIZ

(MORE)

Yeah, I only do shifts there now. I'm there to play snooker Detective. I'll come with you but I hardly know anything. I think...

DCI Jones escorts her to the car.

EXT. OUTSIDE OF FLAT - AFTERNOON.

A DARK BLUE FRONT DOOR.

The Sound of voices can be heard inside shouting. The sound of objects are being thrown. A BLAZING row is in progress. LIZ can be heard shouting.

You lying scumbag. I knew it.

The door opens. Liz walks out. Jack also walks out flustered. He tries to get near her.

JACK

But Liz, I did it for you...

LIZ

Don't even think about it. It's not what you did. You lied to my face. You make me sick.

She walks off down the street.

JACK MEACH

Where you going? What are you gonna do?

LIZ

Nothing. I need time to think...

JACK MEACH

(MORE)

What ya mean, nothing?

LIZ

I mean, nothing. We wouldn't want to destroy your precious Nets now, would we?

She walks off down the street.

A car passes by.

EXT. A STREET - NIGHT.

Liz is walking around thinking. Her phone goes off. She answers it GRUFFLY.

LIZ

Yeah, who's this?

No answer. She keeps repeating down the phone...

Hello...Hello...

The call ends. She goes into a pub. We see a close up of her looking puzzled.

LIZ V.O

I was in a quandry. The man I loved had lied to me. I knew I was being played now. Jack was using me.

But what could I do?

I loved him. And I needed to prove to myself I could do this. With or without him.

She gets a text from JACK.

TEXT ID JACK MEACH

Babe. I'm sorry. Just come back."

She ignores it.

INT. NETS SNOOKER CLUB - NIGHT-TIME.

TITLE: THE FINAL

A small crowd with chairs are set up around the table.

JACK is at the bar washing plates. Ready for the off.

LIZ is in her full waistcoat suit and is near the table, holding her new cue. She's roaming up and down. Nervous.

RUSSELL JOHNS is in his chair with a towel over his head.

Meditating.

We get the final underway as we see LIZ break off in the first frame.

We see her miss her first chance at the table as a red hits the jaws of a pocket.

The crowd gasp. RUSSELL JOHNS dashes out of his seat.

He is in. He takes a long look at a first red and sinks it with ease. We see him potting balls.

THE REFEREE CALLS OUT ON 65.

FRAME. RUSSELL JOHNS. 1 - 0.

For the next two frames we see RUSSELL JOHNSc constantly at the table potting balls. LIZ misses her chances and leaves him in. It's 3 - 0.

Interval.

The referee calls out:

Time for a 15 minute interval.

The crowd head over to the bar. LIZ heads outside for some air.

RUSSELL JOHNS goes to the toilet and is out of sight.

EXT. OUTSIDE NETS - NIGHT.

We see her light up a fag outside. JACK comes out.

Liz...?

LIZ, puffing on the cigarette, is frustrated. We see her kick the wall in anger...

LIZ

I can't do this. I just can't seem to get going. I felt good before. But just can't seem to get it going out there.

JACK MEACH

Listen, (he takes her hand) this happens to the best. I was in this situation loads of times. Relax.

Close your eyes for one minute - now.
(she closes her eyes).

(MORE)

Imagine you are 3 - 0 up and it's the last frame and you need one more ball to win it. (he squeezes her hand.)

Are you imagining? (she's in a deep trance - as he closes his.)

They spend a moment like this. JACK then says to her.

Open your eyes. Better?

LIZ opens them and her hands are shaking.

LIZ

Yeah. I feel weird. But surprisingly relaxed now.

Cut to...

INT.INSIDE NETS - EVENING.

The crowd at the bar are ordering drinks. One of them is talking to another.

Yeah, she won't win now. She's gone

MAN IN CROWD

Wanna bet? I'll say a score she wins.

We see the crowd finish their drinks. LIZ has come back in.

JACK has been serving the rest as the other bar staff have been serving before.

The crowd head off back to their seats.

LIZ quickly whizzes off to the toilet.

INT. WOMEN'S TOILETS - NETS - EVENING.

She splashes some water on her face as she looks in the mirror.

Come on. You're better than this.
Wake up woman.

She weirdly sees an image of her biological mother in the mirror and hears a voice in her head.

She splashes more water on her face. The image is still there. DEBORAH speaks.

DEBORAH

Keep fighting Lizzie. Never give up.
You can do this Lizzie. You are MY
champion. Always have and always
will.

She's taken aback for a second and splashes some more water on her face. She looks in the mirror for a second. The image has gone. SPOOKED AGAIN

...

She then walks back out.

INT. BACK TO THE MAIN TABLE - NETS - EVENING.

Liz is back in her seat. We see RUSSELL JOHNS with his usual routine of a towel over his head. Meditating.

The referee returns. He stands in his place and announces as the crowd hush.

REFEREE

Frame 4. Elizabeth Jones to break.

LIZ BREAKS OFF. THE PACK OPENS AND THERE IS A SHOT OF THE CUE BALL GOING BACK TO BAULK. RUSSELL JOHNS is at the table.

He sees a red on and goes for it.

The crowd go oooohhh as the red hits the jaw and stays out.

LIZ is this time in the balls. There is a straight-forward red to the middle. She stands there, takes a breath for a second or two. She looks at the angle. Wipes the cloth with her hand. Looks at cue ball. Gets down and pots it cleanly.

We see Liz potting more balls. She comes to the end of her break as she leaves the table and sits down.

Referee:

Elizabeth Jones. 52.

RUSSELL JOHNS comes to table. He's tucked up on the baulk cushion. He wipes his brow. He makes a hash of the shot.

LIZ gets back in again and this time clears to win her first frame.

Referee:

Frame. Elizabeth Jones. 3 - 1

WE SEE RUSSELL JOHNS WITH A TOWEL OVER HIS HEAD AGAIN.

The next two go the same. RUSSELL JOHNS messes up failing to take chances. He's nervous. He's down on one shot and he misses.

He goes back to his seat and bangs the cue down on the floor. He even knocks a cup off his side table as it goes everywhere.

RUSSELL JOHNS (whispers):

Damn it.

REFEREE

Frame. Elizabeth Jones. 3 - 3.

Fade in to music faint in background. 2000s pop rock.

REFEREE

The final frame. Russell Johns to break.

Fade in to music again.

Russell Johns breaks off. As the music is playing over the images, his break falls short.

Liz gets a chance at a red.

She pushes her hair back as she chalks. She looks at the red, a medium length pot.

She comes around the other part of the table to look. She looks around. JACK is at the end near the bar area. She looks at him...

She gets down and pots the red cleanly.

A member of the crowd clap. RUSSELL JOHNS is in his seat tapping too. Liz is in the driving seat.

The referee calls.

ELIZABETH JONES. 45.

It's down to the last red. And she needs this to clear the colours.

She stands there. The music is still playing. The crowd are on the edge of their seats. One person in the crowd at totally the wrong time, calls out.

Go on Lizzie...

Liz ignores it as another in the crowd, goes:

Shhhhhhhushh (with their finger).

Liz gets down and strikes the ball as it knocks the red. We follow the red on its journey. The red hits the jaws and stays out.

RUSSELL JOHNS is in. For most of the break he's been with a towel over his head - ignoring the action.

Fade out of music...

Russell Johns gets to the table.

He first wipes his cue down with a towel. Takes a sip of water. The red is not a gimme. He wipes his brow. He gets down.

We see the red going down the table. The Red goes nowhere near as he twitches shot. The crowd all sit up and go

Ahhhhhhhh...

RUSSELL JOHNS is fuming. He bangs his knuckles on the table.

LIZ gets up. She also takes a sip. She looks at the red. It's hanging over the middle pocket. She needs to get on the blue to get up for yellow to clear.

WE SEE HER PLANNING THE RED TO BLUE. SHE WALKS AROUND TO MIDDLE. She's down on shot and pots red and is on the blue the right side.

Fade in music. There's now shots of Liz potting the remaining balls as she wins the frame.

Fade out of music as referee calls out:

Frame and match. Elizabeth Jones.

Liz puts the cue down on the table and lowers her head in relief! Jack rushes over and they hug and kiss passionately.

JACK MEACH

The media are here. This is a scoop for them. You're the first woman to win an amateur event in this town.

RUSSELL JOHNS comes over to Liz and shakes her hands.

RUSSELL JOHNS

Well played Ms Jones. You played a blinder. Really.

LIZ (she shakes his hand)

Great game. I don't know how I got there, but it happened.

RUSSELL JOHNS

Anyway, enjoy it.

(He acknowledges JACK and heads off with his case in hand.)

JACK points at the trophy. We see a small looking jug.

INT. NETS SNOOKER CLUB - NIGHT.

Straight after the final.

LIZ walks to the loos. She meets some bloke who stops her.

FAN:

Ms, you do realise you've just beaten the best amateur in the County?"

LIZ

Yeah, his name's Russell Johns. He's a mate of Jack's.

FAN:

Oh, so you know, then. Put it this way, love, no offence, but Russell Johns wouldn't just miss like that.

(MORE)

LIZ (folding her arms)

What ya saying?

FAN:

I'm just saying...

He can barely finish the sentence as JACK is walking down the corridor to the loos.

She shakes the guy's hand.

Thanks mate.

JACK MEACH

What was that all about?

LIZ

Nothing. He was just saying congratulations.

JACK MEACH

Listen. The local rag are here with a photographer. They want to do a feature.

You're the first woman to win an amateur event in this County.

IT'S BIG NEWS.

LIZ

(MORE)

Great, I'll be back in a mo. Just going to the loo and popping out for a fag.

INT. NETS. TOILETS - NIGHT.

We see Liz again looking in the mirror. She splashes her face. She's just staring. She closes her eyes. Opens them again and splashes her face.

She's expecting her mother to appear. No appearance. She washes her hands with soap and water. She mumbles to herself.

I told you you'd win. You did it.

One last look. Nothing. The mirror just reflects her tired but happy face. She smiles.

EXT. OUTSIDE NETS - NIGHT.

LIZ is outside the back of the building puffing on her fag. She kicks the wall in anger screaming.

Ugggggggggggghhhhhh...

We see her HASTILY TAP the buttons and dial a number.

ZOOM IN ON CALLER ID DCI JONES.

Yep. It's all done, now. You can move in when you want. Give it 20...

LIZ stubs out the fag. Goes back in.

INT. NETS SNOOKER CLUB - NIGHT.

A reporter and a photographer stand opposite the table.

LIZ is in shot with the trophy being SNAPPED.

The reporter shakes hands with LIZ and asks her one final question.

HACK

What next Ms Jones?

LIZ

Gosh. I have no idea. You'll have to speak to my coach here, JACK.

JACK MEACH

This'll be great for Nets and for LIZ. We want more women to come out of the cold and into the warm. Come and try snooker! Come to Nets!

liz

You heard the man. Get your cues out. Come and play, girls...

WE SEE THE TROPHY SITTING ON THE TABLE.

JACK starts to pick up the trophy.

JACK MEACH

Get your gladrags on babe. We're going for a slap-up meal tonight. You deserve it. WE deserve it.

LIZ (she goes to the table) picks up one of the balls on the table and rolls it down.

LIZ

To Be honest, I'm not in the mood. Why don't you go back to the flat? I wouldn't mind some time here to think about what's just happened.

(MORE)

JACK MEACH

He puts the trophy back on the table...

Ya feeling alright, babe?"

LIZ

Ya, fine. Just fancy a bit of me time
'ere. I'll lock up the place and call
ya when I'm on way back.

I'll only be 'alf an hour or so.
Then, (they put their arms around
each other) we can celebrate.

JACK MEACH

OK babe. (He puts on his coat and
leaves.)

Liz picks up the trophy and puts it on a table. She looks at
it just staring.

The screen splits as we see JACK outside...

EXT. OUTSIDE NETS - DAY.

CLOSE UP as JACK MEACH is led away outside Nets by DCI Jones
in handcuffs outside.

LIZ V.O

So. I had won. But had I? Really? I
knew I had been played. From that
moment, I realized, I had done the
right thing.

No matter how much you love someone.
You can't keep letting them hurt you.
So, I did what I needed to do. I
played along.

I became a champion. And I proved I
could win.

As for Jack. I knew he loved me. He
just loved Nets more.

INT. THE FLAT - LATER IN THE MORNING.

LIZ hastily packs a suitcase on the bed. The Champion cue
lying there is out of its case. She picks it up and looks at
it longingly. She then picks up her trophy.

She kisses it.

We see her then chuck it across the room in a raging moment.

LIZ (angrily)

Uhhhhh....Men.....

She reaches for the remote and switches on TV..

BREAKING NEWS: A news presenter...

Nets snooker Club owner JACK MEACH
has been arrested for the suspected
dealing of drugs at the club.

Cops searched and raided the snooker club in the early hours of the morning and seized a significant amount of cocaine that was hidden in a safe and inside a table.

We see a picture of the table taken apart on the TV.

The news comes as the girlfriend of Jack Meach, Elizabeth Jones, won a BIG amateur event in the County and became the first woman to win it. Ms Jones was not available for comment today.

We'll have more when we get it.

Viewers see an image of LIZ holding a trophy.

She switches the TV off. She goes to where she threw the trophy and picks it up. She HASTILY PLONKS it in the case.

She looks around the room. There are photos of her and JACK on the wall with the couple with beaming smiles.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

We see LIZ with JACK as they're kissing and he asks her to move in.

He DANGLES a set of keys in front of her and she takes them.

She kisses him again.

END FLASHBACK...

LIZ V.O

With all the lies. I still loved him.
But I just couldn't stay any longer
knowing the truth.

We see her take one more look as she walks out of the door.

On a side table she has written a note which reads:

"I'm sorry. I still love you. Your cue is on the bed. Thanks
for making me into a champion. Take care. Your LIZ. Always."

ONE MONTH LATER...

EXT. LONDON. OUTSIDE A SNOOKER CLUB - DAY.

Cold. But Dry. A busy street with the sound of cars passing
by.

We see LIZ standing outside a building anxiously looking at
her watch carrying a shiny snooker cue case. She is also
carrying a small trophy. She stubs out a fag.

Coming towards her is a frail man with a limp. He shouts
out.

Lizzie

Liz (hearing the voice):

I know that voice...

She turns round. The man comes towards her and calls out.

MAN

(MORE)

Don't you know who it is?

She is just staring at him: AND remembers...

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

We see a young LIZ rushing into the arms of her dad and a long embrace.

YOUNG LIZ

Daddy...

END FLASHBACK

LIZ V.O

Was it real? Was I dreaming? Was that really my daddy standing in front of me?

Everything up to this point felt like a dream. Was this just another one? I looked at him and remembered the words he had told me all those years before.

I just hugged him.

They embrace and there's a shot of the trophy.

I guess I was a winner, after all...

INT. A COFFEE SHOP - PRESENT DAY.

People are bustling in and out as we see LIZ in the corner ENGROSSED in reading a letter.

The letter is read out loud.

JACK MEACH V.O

Dear LIZ,

I know you will probably throw this letter in the bin. I don't blame you if you did. But, when two people REALLY connect, there's a bond that will always be there. Always.

We see LIZ SLIGHTLY frowning a little.

I know you won't probably come and visit but I would love to see what happened to the shy girl who entered NETS all those years ago.

We had some good times, didn't we?

She nods...

Anyway, no matter what you're doing, I just wanted to write this and say, I loved you. It got mixed up, but that's it.

I miss you. And I need to see you. Just one more time.

Yours.

JACK MEACH...

She finishes reading the letter. PAUSE. She takes a SIP of her coffee.

We can see the tears building...

A blonde woman sitting opposite her speaks, after she noticed Liz gazing at her for a few seconds - (thinking).

BLONDE WOMAN

Penny for your thoughts there sweetie...

(MORE)

LIZ (APOLOGETIC)

Oh...Sorry...You just reminded me of someone, that's all.

BLONDE WOMAN

Who, darling?

LIZ

Oh... someone I used to know...It doesn't matter now...Enjoy your coffee.

BLONDE WOMAN

You too.

LIZ (jokes)

I'm off now. School collection. TAXI SERVICE...

She puts on her coat and sticks the letter in her pocket and leaves the COFFEE shop.

BLONDE WOMAN

It never stops, does it? So long...

LIZ V.o

Even though I wanted to burn the letter, I couldn't. I had made my decision. I'd see him just one more time...

A FEW WEEKS LATER

INT. PRISON - DAY

The prisoner visitor room.

JACK MEACH and LIZ are sitting opposite each other.

There is an uncomfortable silence.

We can hear the echoes and muffles of the other prison inmates CHATTING to their loved ones.

JACK MEACH eventually speaks.

JACK MEACH

You got my letter then? I didn't think you'd come.

Liz has that fidget on her. She twiddles her hair.

LIZ

I...I almost tore the letter up. But, as they say, you never forget your first. (PAUSE) What's so urgent?

JACK MEACH

I hear you won another event. I just wanted to see the woman, once a TIMID young girl with no confidence. See what she's become.

LIZ

Well, here she is...

He gazes at her.

LIZ

Actually, I decided to come because...I...I wanted to ask you...

She leans over to whisper something.

Tell me, JACK, did you REALLY believe I could win that match? I need you to look me in the eyes and tell me the truth.

Jack is surprised by the question.

JACK MEACH

You won, didn't you?

LIZ

(MORE)

I guess I did.

She drops a PICTURE of Jade down on the table.

But have you?

JACK MEACH

Good looking girl. She looks like you. I wanted you to come, because...I wanted you to have the cue...

Keep it, it's yours.

LIZ sits there and just gazes at JACK.

He passes her a note with details of the cue and where it is.

CLOSE IN as she puts her hand out and they end up just holding hands. STILL.

LIZ V.O

That was it. One last time...Then, I was going to go home and get on with life...

INT. A STORAGE GARAGE - AFTER THE VISIT - PRESENT DAY

We see LIZ inside a garage with BRIC-A-BRAC in it. She spots THE CHAMPION CUE lying on an old box of what could be described as OLD JUNK. Some of it is JACK's.

She picks it up and rubs her hands down it.

LIZ

Hello my old friend.

She leaves the garage and locks it.

She goes to her car and we see her put the cue in a NEW case inside the car.

LIZ

You're going to need a clean when you get home.

She closes the door. And then she gets in the front seat and we see her drive off.

INT. A FLAT - DAY.

AFTER THE VISIT...

A Beige sofa. A NEAT coffee table.

LIZ is WADING through a photo album.

As we PAN the room, TWO trophies PROUDLY SIT IN VIEW on a side table.

She stops and looks at a chubby man with a scar on his face SMILING back at her - JACK MEACH.

She is in the picture too - LOOKING HAPPY.

She places her hands on the photo...

She picks the photo out of the album and puts it in her pocket.

A TEAR...

JADE RACES into the room.

She PLONKS herself down next to her mum.

JADE

What's wrong, mummy?

LIZ (she closes the album in haste).

Oh...Nothing... (puts on excited voice) OK...who's ready to bake some cakes?

JADE (SHOUTS)

ME.....When's daddy coming home?

LIZ

Soon poppet...

LIZ kisses her as she gets up and takes her by the hand and leads her into the kitchen.

JADE

Mummy, is Grandpa coming this weekend?

LIZ

Maybe sweetie. We'll have to see what grandpa's doing.

We see her getting some pots and pans out to start baking.

She's laughing with JADE as JADE CLINGS TO HER MOTHER'S APRON.

A text comes through on LIZ'S phone.

TEXT ID JOHN JONES

See you at the weekend LIZZIE for a game. BIG KISSES for Jade xx...

LIZ BEAMS, like a winner...

EXT. A GARDEN - DAY.

LIZ is by herself. She's carrying a WEIGHTY plastic bag of paper rubbish ready to light a fire.

She tosses the photo of her and JACK MEACH onto it FIRST.

She lights a FIRE.

We see the photo burn...

CLOSE IN ON LIZ standing there still WATCHING it burn to ashes - at peace...

INT. A SNOOKER CLUB - DAY.

We see Liz at the table with THE CHAMPION CUE. She takes a long shot...

BOOM.

We hear the clunk of the balls colliding.

We follow the ball as it rolls down the table and into the corner pocket.

LIZ

Get ready...Because the Red-haired assassin is here to stay...

Cut to music...2000 rock.

Image of Jack Meach.

Jack Meach is serving a prison sentence for drug offences.

Image of Russell Johns.

Russell Johns went on to become a professional but fell off the tour after his first two years. He now works in sales.

Image of what used to be Nets Snooker Club

Nets Snooker Club got shut down and now is an office for a logistics company.

FADE OUT

THE END