

ONE MOMENT IN TIME

Written by

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5th February 2012

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INT. HOLDING ROOM - DAY

A sparse, clinical room with two benches along opposing walls. Eight male ATHLETES sit in stony silence.

The Caption: 'NATIONAL ATHLETIC CHAMPIONSHIPS, 2004'

Engrossed in a book is DANIEL WILSON, early twenties, lean and mischievous, clean shaven with a bald head.

One Athlete jigs his knee with nervous energy, others listen to iPods. All are focussed, most avoid eye contact.

CRAIG SIMMONS, late twenties, pierced eyebrow, muscular and arrogant, eyes Daniel, weighing him up.

Daniel looks up, holds Simmons glare.

Daniel puckers his lips, blows a kiss then grins at Simmons.

The door opens, an OFFICIAL enters.

The Athletes all know it's time.

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

The Athletes follow the Official down a dim corridor.

Daniel glances around at the focussed expressions. He giggles, breaks into a smile as...

...double doors are pulled open by OTHER OFFICIALS and bright sunshine floods the corridor.

EXT. NATIONAL ATHLETIC CHAMPIONSHIP STADIUM - DAY

The STADIUM CROWD cheer and clap as a LONG JUMPER soars through the air, lands sweetly, kicking up sand.

The Athletes jog onto the track, all bravado and attitude.

Daniel waves to the Crowd, loving the attention.

He breaks into a boxer's warm-up jab and upper cut routine then finishes with a cheerleader high straddle kick.

The Crowd CHEERS, especially Daniel's GROUP OF FRIENDS; PATRICK, MELANIE, SAMANTHA, ROB AND TONY, all early twenties.

Disgusted expressions from the other Athletes.

Daniel moon walks backwards to the start, playing the Crowd.

The other Athletes strip down to race kit behind their blocks, resetting their concentration, finding focus.

Daniel halts by the lane five marker. He hooks his thumbs into his waistband, theatrically yanks his tracksuit off.

The Crowd WHOOPS and CHEERS. Daniel removes his top in the same way and tosses his clothing to the ground. Here I am!

The other Athletes try to block Daniel out, but he's unsettled them and they hate him for it.

Daniel flicks his eyes left, makes eye contact with EVA, a tall and lean long jumper in her early twenties.

Daniel nods at Eva once. His smile dissolves as he turns away; to business.

Daniel rotates and slowly bows his head to each corner of the stadium in turn, then faces his blocks and shuts his eyes.

Daniel takes a deep breath, shakes the tension from his body.

A hush descends around the stadium.

Each Athlete stares directly ahead, 'in the zone'. This is their moment.

The STARTER watches, waiting, arms by his side.

STARTER
(into head mic)
On your marks.

No one moves.

Daniel takes a long deep calming breath.

The other Athletes step forwards, settle into their blocks.

In the stand, Daniel's Group of Friends hold their breath.

In no particular hurry, Daniel walks purposefully to his blocks. Head held high, oozing confidence, in 'the zone'.

Daniel springs up, lands and stretches.

Each spiked shoe is placed firmly against the blocks. Daniel's body is relaxed, yet coiled like a spring.

STARTER (O.S.)(CONT'D)
Set.

The Athletes rise to the 'set' position; some lift slowly, others quickly, eager to get going.

The sound of Daniel's breathing, controlled yet edgy. He rises slowly, holds the 'set' position, muscles ready.

The Crowd stares intently at the Athletes.

On the starting pistol, held over the starter's head; CRACK!

The eight Athletes launch away from the blocks, low and fast, sprinting hard around the staggered bend.

The Crowd ROARS.

CHEERS and encouragement from Daniel's Group of Five Friends.

SAMANTHA

Go Dan!

Hundreds of camera FLASHES as the first hurdle looms.

Eight sets of powerful legs snap over the first hurdle, quickly leaving it behind.

Daniel's tunnel vision; the Athletes ahead on his right are blurred images. Directly ahead, his hurdle is in sharp focus.

Daniel's regular but strained breathing pauses as he clears the hurdle, pulling ahead of the blurred Athlete in lane six.

EVA

(quietly)

Come on Daniel...

At the top of the long jump runway Eva watches Daniel intently as he clears the third hurdle.

EVA (CONT'D)

Stay focussed, relax...

Eva fiddles anxiously with her tracksuit zip. Her eyes flit between Daniel and a LONG JUMP OFFICIAL holding a clipboard.

LONG JUMP OFFICIAL

Miss Wilson. Your third and final jump please.

Eva nods. To her side, the Athletes race around the final bend. It's unclear who is in the lead.

Eva peels off her tracksuit. She's acutely aware of Daniel nearing the home straight behind her.

Eva stands tall and proud at the end of the runway.

Her tunnel vision, blocking out all on the periphery. Only the take-off board and pit beyond are in focus.

Eva rolls back on her heels, stands tall, then with three purposeful strides she sprints fast and low down the runway.

On the home straight, parallel to the long jump pit, Daniel clears hurdle nine, leading Simmons by three metres.

Eva builds her speed, catching Daniel as he fights to hold his form towards the last hurdle.

Eva momentarily draws level with Daniel, then edges past him.

Daniel flings his lead leg out over the last hurdle, pulls his trail leg through.

Eva's last stride to the take-off board. Her toe lands dangerously close to the plasticine 'no jump' marker.

At the same moment, Daniel clips the hurdle with the heel of his trail leg. The hurdle clatters over behind him.

Daniel lands awkwardly, falters, pain sears across his face.

Eva leaps, flings her arms ahead of her, sails through the air, kicking her feet, reaching forwards.

Daniel recovers his stride, but he's in pain and unable to maintain speed. Craig Simmons draws level.

Daniel grits his teeth, pulls back some ground.

Eva tucks in for her landing.

Craig Simmons pulls away as Daniel glances over his shoulder and eases back, starts to stumble.

Daniel dips for the line, in serious pain. The third place Athlete is catching him.

Sand flicks up around Eva's indentation as she lands and springs up. She turns anxiously to the Long Jump Official.

Daniel hobbles over the line in second place, but only just.

SAMANTHA

Whoohoo!

The Group of Friends SHOUT and CHEER and punch the air, jubilant.

Daniel staggers to a halt, doubles up, breathing hard.

He nods at his cheering Friends, then turns away to watch as...

...the Long Jump Official leans over to inspect the plasticine with a SENIOR OFFICIAL, who holds one red and one white flag.

Daniel stands, hops over to shake the other Athletes' hands, but he's preoccupied, fixated on the long jump pit.

Eva turns away from the pit, her shoulders slump.

Behind Eva the Senior Official raises a red flag.

A FIRST AIDER attends to Daniel, but he waves them away. He hobbles onto the grass behind the finish towards Eva.

Behind Daniel, his Friends' celebrations fade as they stare at the red flag fluttering in the breeze.

Daniel sweeps Eva up in a hug, shielding her tears.

INT. FIRST AID ROOM - DAY

The First Aider is bandaging Daniel's ankle.

Beside him Eva is hunched over her knees. She pinches a thumb and finger together.

EVA
This close! Arrhh!

Daniel squeezes her shoulder.

DANIEL
You'll have your time Eva.

She looks up, rubs her teary eyes.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
You will. Trust me.

Eva shakes her head.

EVA
One jump, that's all.
(pause)
One moment when it all comes
together in that arena...

Daniel hugs Eva.

DANIEL
There will be another time.

Eva rolls her eyes.

FIRST AIDER
All done.

Daniel smiles at the First Aider.

DANIEL
What's the damage?

FIRST AIDER
You're lucky. It's just a sprain.

Daniel nods, hobbles to his feet.

DANIEL
Thank you.
(to Eva)
Let's go home.

EXT. STADIUM ENTRANCE - DAY

Eva helps Daniel walk into a small crowd of SUPPORTERS and CHILDREN wielding autograph pads and photographs of Daniel.

Daniel is wearing his silver medal and a friendly smile, despite being in pain.

At the back are Daniel's Group of Friends; Patrick, Melanie, Samantha, Rob and Tony. They cheer and wolf whistle.

Eva smiles at Daniel, happy for him despite her own disappointment. Daniel winks at her, then grins at the crowd.

Eva watches Daniel sign autographs and pose for photographs.

Eva starts to slip into the background, but is surprised when a SMALL GIRL offers her autograph book.

SMALL GIRL
I think you're brilliant, Eva.

Eva grins, kneels down, takes the pen and autograph book.

EVA
I could have done better today.

The Small Girl shakes her head.

SMALL GIRL
My mum said the man with the red
flag diddled you.

Eva laughs, signs the book.

SMALL GIRL (CONT'D)
Thanks.

Eva smiles as the Small Girl shows the signature to her MUM.

EXT. CAR PARK - DAY

Eva, Daniel and his Friends walk across the car park.

Daniel pauses beside a convertible saloon that is sign written with:

'Daniel Wilson and Brandon Hotels, a winning combination'

PATRICK
Got time to celebrate?
(to Eva)
And commiserate...

Daniel studies Patrick, glances at the other encouraging faces, then rests his eyes on Eva, who is subdued.

DANIEL
Thanks guys. Another time.

Daniel and Eva say goodbye to Patrick, Melanie, Rob and Tony.

Samantha waits by the car looking awkward. She is younger than the others, in her late teens.

Daniel clicks the central locking, hobbles round to the drivers door, hesitates.

SAMANTHA
You okay to drive?

Daniel tests his right foot on the ground, winces.

DANIEL
I guess not.

He flicks his eyes between Samantha and Eva.

Daniel walks round the car, tosses the keys to Eva.

EVA
Really?

Daniel shrugs, opens the door for Samantha to get in the back, then climbs into the passenger seat beside Eva.

INT. DANIEL'S CAR - DAY

Eva caresses the leather steering wheel, casts her eye over the array of dials and controls, savouring the moment.

Eva guns the engine, grins as the dashboard lights up. She presses a switch, the roof opens and folds down.

EVA
Oh yeah.

Daniel smiles at Eva, looks over his shoulder at Samantha.

DANIEL
What's it like in the cheap seats?

SAMANTHA
A little lonely.

Daniel turns round fully, makes eye contact with Samantha. He's deciding whether to say anything as Eva pulls away.

Eva beeps the car horn, waves to Daniel's Friends, distracting Daniel.

EXT. CAR PARK - DAY

Daniel's car sweeps away.

Patrick, Melanie, Tony and Rob stop by a people carrier.

MELANIE

Poor Eva. I thought she had it.

TONY

Me too.

PATRICK

She's strong. She'll bounce back.

General agreement within the group.

ROB

No love lost between her and Samantha.

MELANIE

No.

(pause)

It won't last.

Melanie climbs into the people carrier.

ROB

Yeah, you know Daniel.

Rob pulls the door shut.

INT. DANIEL'S CAR - NIGHT

The hood is back up, music is playing. Samantha is sleeping in the back. Eva is deep in thought. Daniel glances at her.

DANIEL

How you holding up?

EVA

I'm happy for you Daniel. Despite your showboating.

Daniel chuckles.

DANIEL

The crowd wants to be entertained.

EVA
(tetchy)
You nearly didn't make it.

Rain patters on the windscreen. Eva searches the controls.

DANIEL
I know.
(pause)
Lost my concentration.

Daniel leans across, flicks the windscreen wiper switch.

EVA
Thanks.

Traffic lights ahead change to red. Eva slows the car.

They sit in silence as the car stops at the lights. They both glance over at the sound of a loud exhaust.

A flashy 'boy racer' car stops beside them at the lights, engine revving.

The passenger window opens. A SPOTTY YOUTH checks out the sign writing on Daniel's car, then leers at Eva.

SPOTTY YOUTH
Hey darling, fancy getting your leg
over my hurdle?

Daniel glances down at his bandaged foot, looks back at Eva.

DANIEL
Ignore them, Eva.

Eva watches the traffic lights, slips into first gear.

SPOTTY YOUTH
Come on, babe, I'll give you a good
jump!

The lights turn green.

DANIEL
It's okay Eva, they're just...

Eva drops the clutch and floors the accelerator.

The car lifts and powers away, wheels screeching. Daniel is pushed back in his seat. Samantha is jolted awake.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

The 'boy racer' car screeches away from the lights, in hot pursuit.

INT. DANIEL'S CAR - NIGHT

Eva is focussed, pushing the car hard through the gears.

SAMANTHA
Hey, slow down!

Daniel anxiously watches the headlights in his side mirror.

DANIEL
Easy Eva, you've had a tough day,
but this won't help...

EVA
(angry)
Do you have any idea how hard I've
worked?!

The car lurches forwards again as Eva changes up.

SAMANTHA
Eva! Please slow down!

The 'boy racer' car appears at the side window. The Spotty Youth gestures at Eva.

DANIEL
I know how hard you've worked!

Eva is still accelerating hard.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
You deserved your place Eva. But
get back training, we'll work
through this and...

Eva tries to correct a high speed wobble, but the car slides on the wet road.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Daniel's car slides. The rear end flicks into a parked car.

CRASH!

Daniel's car ricochets off the parked car, spins around in front of the 'boy racer' which brakes hard.

Daniel's car careers across the road into the path of an oncoming truck.

INT. DANIEL'S CAR - NIGHT

The truck headlights SMASH into Eva's side of the car.

Brakes screech, glass smashes. Metal twists and groans.

The truck, impaled with Daniel's car wreck, brakes hard, skids.

The truck and Daniel's wrecked car creak to a halt in a cloud of smoking tyres and radiator steam.

EXT. ATHLETICS TRACK - DAY

The caption: 'SEVEN YEARS LATER'

A miserable grey afternoon.

Wind whistles through a small tatty shelter, riddled with graffiti. In front of it is an old cinder running track.

Daniel sits under the shelter, staring at the track. He's now in his early thirties, has wild hair, glasses and a beard.

Daniel watches pockets of rain blow down the home straight.

Shadows merge. Semi transparent GHOSTLY ATHLETES in 1920s baggy shorts and singlets drift up to the start line.

The Ghostly Athlete in lane six turns to Daniel, revealing his mirror image older, greyer and bitter self.

The Ghostly Athletes sink down into a crouch on the track.

Daniel shudders at the sound of an old school gunpowder starter's gun.

The Ghostly Athletes sprint away in slow motion.

Daniel's eyes follow his own ghostly image sprinting through puddles along the back straight.

Spiked running shoes claw the track, their cadence eerily sombre.

EXT. NATIONAL ATHLETIC CHAMPIONSHIP STADIUM, 2004 - DAY

A MONTAGE of split second FLASHBACKS;

Faces in the crowd, willing Daniel on.

Daniel's peripheral vision; he overtakes other Athletes.

Daniel's tunnel vision; sprinting towards the last hurdle.

EXT. ATHLETICS TRACK - DAY

Daniel drags a rickety hurdle down the home straight.

He stops by a faded green marker, lines up the hurdle on it.

Daniel stands back, stares at the hurdle. Past the hurdle is the faded finish line.

Daniel kicks the hurdle hard, watches it clatter over.

He replaces the hurdle upright.

Daniel kicks the hurdle down again.

The Ghostly Athletes run past him.

Daniel picks up the hurdle, drags it towards the finish line.

The Ghostly Athletes dip at the finish line.

One Ghostly Athlete tilts his head at Daniel. Eva's distorted face glares at Daniel then dissolves into the rain.

Daniel hurls the hurdle over the fence.

He watches it crash on the concrete outside the track.

Metal twists, wood splinters.

EXT/INT. BICYCLE SHOP - DAY

Daniel opens the shop door, making the door chime.

He wheels his bike inside. His eyes are red, he looks shattered.

MATTHEW (O.S.)
Morning Mr. Wilson.

Daniel turns, holds the door open for MATTHEW, ten years old, pushing a rusty old bicycle.

DANIEL
Morning Matthew. Problems?

MATTHEW
No problems Mr. Wilson.

INT. BICYCLE SHOP - DAY

Daniel flicks the light switch, revealing an Aladdin's cave for the bicycle enthusiast.

MATTHEW
I've got some pocket money.

Shiny new bikes hang in the window, shelves are stacked with gadgets and spare parts.

At the back of the shop are three vintage bikes.

DANIEL

Ah hah. My first customer of the day. Which means it's time...

MATTHEW

Time for tea, Mr. Wilson.

Daniel attempts a smile, breaks through his sadness. He disappears into the back of the shop.

Matthew scans the shelves, his eyes shining.

Daniel reappears.

DANIEL

Kettle's on. What do you have in mind?

MATTHEW

I want to go faster Mr. Wilson.

DANIEL

Faster eh? I think we can help with that.

Matthew tears his eyes away from the shiny new parts and pushes his battered old bicycle to Daniel. The front wheel wobbles.

Daniel lifts the bike, flips it over onto his work bench.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

And what's your budget this week?

Matthew digs deep into his pockets, rattles some loose change on the bench.

Daniel carefully counts the coins.

INT. BICYCLE SHOP - DAY

Daniel stands over the workbench in worn overalls, inspecting the bike.

Matthew sips his tea.

Daniel spins the front wheel. He studies the regular buckled kink.

DANIEL

We can straighten the wheel, blow some rust off the frame.

(pause)

New brake pads. Service the gears and clean the chain. How's that?

Matthew nods, watches Daniel spin the wheel again.

Both are drawn to the juddering rhythm as the buckled rim rotates.

Tick, tick, tick, thrum...

EXT. ATHLETICS TRACK - DAY

A line of worn out hurdles set out very close together.

The patter of spiked shoes on a running track, fast, in time with the sound of the spinning buckled wheel.

Toe, toe, toe, swoosh...

JESSIE, twenty-three years old, lean and muscular, snaps his trail leg over each hurdle, springing off his toes.

Toe, toe, toe, swoosh...

He's competent, but ragged, not as graceful as Daniel was.

The broken hurdle looms. It's been taped back together.

Jessie pulls off to the side, missing out the broken hurdle. He shouts out in frustration.

Jessie walks away, hands clamped on top of his head.

INT. BICYCLE SHOP - DAY

The bell pings as the door opens.

Daniel glances up from some paperwork, nods at STACY, a quirky Canadian in her mid twenties.

STACY

Matthew has a very slick looking bike. He must have had a substantial rise in pocket money.

DANIEL

I'm investing in his future. When he's world champion...

Stacy shakes her head, disappears out back.

STACY (O.S.)

If you're still in business, mister.

She reappears, holding an empty milk carton.

STACY (CONT'D)

How many tea breaks?

Daniel smiles sheepishly. He likes her, despite the nagging.

STACY (CONT'D)
I'm going to get some milk. Try not
to do any more good deeds.

Stacy breezes out, opening the door to Jessie, who wheels in
an immaculate old single speed trademan's bike.

JESSIE
Morning. I hear you're good at
fixing up old workhorses.

Daniel is intrigued. He crouches down to inspect the bike.

DANIEL
She's a beauty.

Jessie nods, glances around the shop. There is a hint of
Matthew's wide-eyed excitement in his eyes.

JESSIE
Helps with my training.

Daniel nods, admiring the engineering. He tests the rod
brakes, lifts each wheel, spins them.

Daniel rotates a pedal, listens to the cog juddering.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
Think it's still under guarantee?

Daniel chuckles, his mood lifting.

DANIEL
They're a pig to get off without
wrecking the wheel. And you'll be
lucky to find a replacement with
the same ratio.

JESSIE
But you can fix her, right?

Daniel wheels the bike to the back of the shop.

DANIEL
Pop back in a few days.

Jessie nods, ambles towards the door.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
(absently)
What sort of training?

Jessie opens the door, pauses.

JESSIE
I'm a hurdler, four hundred metres.
Toughest event on the track.

Jessie winks at Daniel then exits.

Daniel frowns, drops his eyes back to the bike.

INT. BICYCLE SHOP - DAY

The old tradesman's bike wheel is clamped on the workbench.

Daniel exerts as much leverage as he dares to a cog spanner.

STACY (O.S.)

I leave you alone for two minutes
and you're already straying from
the capitalist path.

Stacy places a milk carton on the bench and watches Daniel with interest.

STACY (CONT'D)

There's no profit in these old
bikes, Daniel. You can't employ me
and keep a roof over your head if
you...

Daniel squeezes harder, jolts back as the spanner slips and clatters across the shop. Several spokes have broken.

DANIEL

Damn!

(pause)

Can't you find another employer to
heckle?

STACY

You'd miss me.

Daniel rolls his eyes. He collects the spanner, sighs.

STACY (CONT'D)

You need a cuppa.

Daniel removes his overalls.

DANIEL

Today Stacy, I need a proper drink.

Stacy watches Daniel wheel his own bike out of the shop.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Hold the fort for me.

STACY

You gonna be back late? I've got a
date tonight...

Daniel doesn't answer. The door swings shut behind him.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY

Daniel pushes his bike through the graveyard.

He rests the bike on a tree and removes his bicycle clips.

From a small backpack he removes a bunch of flowers.

Daniel crouches down beside a headstone, lays the flowers on the grave.

DANIEL
Happy birthday, Eva.
(pause)
I'm still running the bike shop.
(cringes)
Still *own* the shop.

Daniel pulls a whisky bottle from the backpack, takes a swig.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
Still struggling.

Daniel sighs. Shakes his head.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
Unlike me to be short of something
to say, Eva. Except the same old
'sorry'.

Daniel takes another glug of whisky.

Daniel glances round, did he hear something?

Nothing there.

He looks down at the headstone.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
See you next year.
(pause)
Don't get cold in there.

He shivers, then catches his breath, clenches his jaw to fight back his tears.

The sound of distant slow clapping, gaining in frequency and volume.

EXT. NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP STADIUM - DAY

FLASHBACK

The CROWD claps, getting louder and faster.

Eva sprints down the long jump runway.

Absolutely flat out, she hits the take-off board perfectly, leaps high over the sand pit.

The crowd CHEERS!

Eva's arms and legs sprint in mid air, propelling her further over the perfectly flat sandpit.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY

Daniel is slumped on the ground beside the grave.

He hugs his knees, shaking as he sobs.

INT. BICYCLE SHOP, BACK STORAGE ROOM - NIGHT

Daniel clatters through old bike wheels suspended from the ceiling.

The room is packed with junk and spare parts.

Daniel scans the room, perplexed.

He settles on a dark corner, makes his way over, unsteady on his feet.

Daniel carefully moves frames and boxes of bits, revealing a lone vintage bicycle wheel buried under a rusty BMX.

DANIEL

Gotcha.

INT. BICYCLE SHOP - NIGHT

Daniel places the wheel on the bench and tops up a cup with whisky. The bottle is two thirds full.

He tears open a jiffy bag, removes a new cog in greaseproof paper, carefully screws it onto the wheel.

He gulps the whisky from the cup, is distracted by a tapping sound.

EXT/INT. BICYCLE SHOP - NIGHT

Stacy is peering in through the glass.

She waves to Daniel, holds up a takeaway bag.

Daniel unlocks the door, opens it.

DANIEL

You're a bit early to start work.

STACY
(winces at Daniel's
breath)
And you're too drunk to be playing
with machinery.
(offers the takeaway bag)
There's too much food in here to
waste on my expanding hips.

INT. BICYCLE SHOP - NIGHT

Daniel and Stacy are sitting at the workbench, finishing the
takeaway.

He tops up her cup with whisky.

STACY
So my date turns out to be this
balding real estate guy. Tells me
he's been online for a year. And
he's into skydiving. But last
month, owing to family *issues*, he
jumps out the plane with absolutely
no intention of pulling the chute.

Stacy takes a sip of whisky.

STACY (CONT'D)
How mad is that?

Daniel squints through his alcohol haze.

DANIEL
Did he change his mind?

STACY
No! He'd forgotten about the
automatic safety thing! And then
without even finishing his seafood
platter, he starts crying.

DANIEL
Tears of joy, at being alive?

STACY
No, relief! If the bloody thing
hadn't deployed, he'd have missed
out on meeting me!

Daniel stares at her. Is she joking?

STACY (CONT'D)
I'm serious! So I made out I needed
to pee, and ran.

Daniel sniggers, lets it develop into a belly laugh.

STACY (CONT'D)
One thousand, two thousand, three
thousand. Check extreme suicide!

Stacy joins Daniel's laughter, but is struck by something.

STACY (CONT'D)
That's the first time I've seen you
relax and let go in weeks.

Stacy taps the whisky bottle.

STACY (CONT'D)
Although hitting the sauce this
hard won't do you any good.

Daniel clears away the takeaway containers.

DANIEL
This time of year... isn't easy.

STACY
Is it a skydive-related story?

Daniel drops his eyes, deposits the containers in the bin.

DANIEL
Another time.
(pause)
Thank you for the food.

Daniel stands awkwardly; it's time for her to go.

Stacy drains her whisky, nods her thanks.

STACY
See you in the morning boss. Enjoy
the hangover.

Stacy glances back at Daniel, concerned. She closes the door.

INT. DANIEL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Daniel is in bed, restless.

He turns over, twitching, fighting something inside.

INT. HOSPITAL WARD - DAY

DREAM SEQUENCE

Daniel is sitting in a wheelchair. He pushes himself along a
line of beds. His right leg is in plaster.

Daniel searches the PATIENTS' FACES in the beds.

He stops at the head of Eva's bed.

Eva turns towards Daniel. Her grainy outline becomes skeletal.

The floor opens up and Eva's bed falls away.

INT. DANIEL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Daniel wakes with a start, sweating, out of breath.

He takes a moment to compose himself, fumbles in the cabinet for a bottle of tablets, downs one with a gulp of water.

He lies there, calming his breathing.

DANIEL

One thousand, two thousand, three thousand. Check canopy.

He stares up at the ceiling.

INT. BICYCLE SHOP, BACK STORAGE ROOM - DAY

Stacy is taking an inventory of the boxes of spares, tidying them into neat rows and labelling them.

Stacy sorts through boxes of saddles.

She blows dust off packets of brake pads.

And places similar pedals in neat piles.

Stacy sips a cup of tea, admiring her work. The storage room is transformed. Only one corner is left untouched.

Stacy drains the last of her tea, checks her watch, chuckles, then delves into the last of the chaos.

She pulls a battered old shoebox out from under a snake pit of rubber inner tubes.

From the main shop, there's the distant sound of the door ping and muffled voices.

She hesitates, tempted to leave the box, but lifts the lid.

Her eyes widen.

INT. BICYCLE SHOP - DAY

Daniel is holding the old tradesman bike off the floor. He looks hungover, yet he is enthusiastic about the bike.

DANIEL

The wheel's been kicking around for years. We were lucky with the cog, it was still in its original packaging.

Jessie crouches down, rotates a pedal, spinning the back wheel.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

It's good for the next generation...

Jessie grins.

STACY (O.S.)

Hey mister, want to tell me about this little lot?

Daniel turns to see Stacy standing holding the shoebox.

INT. BICYCLE SHOP - DAY

Daniel and Stacy sit opposite each other at the workbench.

Between them is the open shoebox.

Jessie stands awkwardly to one side, watching.

DANIEL

There's nothing to tell.

STACY

No?

Stacy reaches into the box, pulls out a silver medal hung on a red, white and blue ribbon.

She places the medal on the bench.

Daniel stares at it, his eyes glaze over.

Stacy pulls out more medals, places them on the bench.

STACY (CONT'D)

These are yours, Daniel?

Barely a flicker from Daniel.

DANIEL

(quietly)

They were.

(pause)

A long time ago.

Stacy removes several newspaper clippings from the bottom of the box.

She unfolds the first article, lays it out on the bench.

The article shows a younger muscular Daniel, without his beard and mass of wavy hair.

The headlines sum up another race win, near record performance; the glory days.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
Before you get all nostalgic,
there's more.

Daniel retrieves more newspaper cuttings from the box.

Headline: 'Wilson Twin Tragic Car Crash'

Stacy reads the article, horrified.

STACY
Oh Daniel, I'm so sorry...

Stacy reaches out, but Daniel withdraws.

He collects the medals and newspaper clippings.

STACY (CONT'D)
Wait. What's this?

She lifts the VHS video cassette from the box.

Daniel's eyes drop.

DANIEL
The final nail in my athletic
coffin.
(pause)
We'll save that gem for another
day.

Daniel gently takes the cassette from her, places it in the box with the medals and clippings.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
(glances at Jessie, over
Stacy's shoulder)
The four hundred metre hurdles *is*
the toughest event on the track.
(pause)
But dealing with the death of
someone you loved... that's ten
times harder.

Daniel picks up the box, walks away.

EXT. ATHLETICS TRACK - DAY

Daniel is leaning against the fence, looking out over the empty track.

The sound of a vintage bike bell.

Daniel glances round. Jessie cycles over, grinning.

JESSIE
The bike's ace!

Daniel nods, turns back to the track as Jessie leans the bike against the fence.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
Do you still run?

Daniel turns to Jessie, eyes him cautiously.

DANIEL
Occasionally. But not here.

JESSIE
But you still know your stuff,
right? Would you take a look at me?

Daniel shakes his head, wrestles with his thoughts.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
To pass the knowledge onto the next
generation, to get me where I need
to go.

Daniel sighs, he looks indifferent.

EXT. ATHLETICS TRACK - DAY

ATHLETES mill around, jogging, stretching, chatting.

These are the beautiful people; young, fit and full of life.

Lined up in a quiet corner on the back straight is the tightly spaced configuration of ten hurdles.

Jessie is stretching on the track. Daniel stands behind the perimeter fence.

Jessie jogs over to face the first hurdle.

Jessie's spiked shoes pitter-patter up to the first hurdle.

He flicks his lead foot, pulls his trail knee over.

Then hurdle two, three; smooth hurdling, four, five; getting ragged.

Hurdle six; Jessie clips it. At seven, he clatters into the hurdle, runs out wide and misses the rest.

Jessie shouts out in frustration. He walks off, his hands on his head.

ATHLETES jog past, look over Jessie and Daniel with interest.

Jessie wanders over to Daniel, in a huff.

DANIEL
(reluctantly)
Faster feet. Stand tall, up on your
toes. Push your hips forward.

Jessie nods, waiting for more.

JESSIE
That's it?

Daniel spots an attractive woman in her late twenties jogging towards them. This is Samantha, seven years on.

DANIEL
It's a start.

Daniel clips his jeans in, reaches for his racing bike.

SAMANTHA
(calling out)
Daniel? Daniel Wilson?

Daniel walks the bike away.

On the track Samantha has her hands on hips, perplexed.

Over Daniel's shoulder Jessie jogs to the first hurdle, his posture taller, leg speed sharper.

Jessie snaps his trail leg over each hurdle, smooth and fast.

He clears all ten, peels off, throws his arms in the air.

JESSIE
Whooooo-hoo, yeahhhh!

Daniel smiles, pedals away.

INT. STACY'S FLAT - NIGHT

Stacy sits on the couch, toying with the VHS cassette.

She pushes the cassette into the player and perches on the couch.

INT. SPORTS PERSONALITY OF THE YEAR STUDIO - NIGHT

Young SPORTSMEN and SPORTSWOMEN are sitting in a semi-circle configuration in a television studio.

In the background is a motif: 'Sports Personality of the Year 2004'

A round of applause. The PRESENTER turns from the screen behind him which displays a perfect golf swing.

Daniel is sitting in a wheelchair. He glances to his right, looks past Samantha at Craig Simmons.

SAMANTHA
(whispers to Daniel)
Just relax baby.

The Presenter turns to the studio camera, starts to open an envelope.

PRESENTER
And the team of the year is...

DANIEL
(murmuring)
I don't deserve to be here. I don't
want to be here.

PRESENTER
The England Rugby team!

The audience claps and cheers.

INT. SPORTS PERSONALITY OF THE YEAR STUDIO - NIGHT

A low buzz of expectation and tension amongst the audience.

PRESENTER
And now for the individual award.
(pause)
In third place is a woman whose
ability to fight through physical
adversity is an inspiration.

On the screen behind the Presenter is the London Marathon finish line.

Wiry and feisty ELIZABETH GANT crosses the line in a wheelchair, euphoric, amidst camera flashes and cheers.

PRESENTER (CONT'D)
She successfully defended her title
this year despite having given
birth to her first child only four
months before.
(MORE)

PRESENTER (CONT'D)

(pause)

She is of course, Elizabeth Gant!

Huge applause from the audience.

The Presenter turns to look up at the screen behind him.
Elizabeth fills the screen.

Craig Simmons leans round Samantha, eyes Daniel's wheelchair.

CRAIG

(low voice)

Going for the sympathy vote mate?

Daniel stares back, ice cold.

On the screen Elizabeth holds a trophy. The audience clap.

INT. SPORTS PERSONALITY OF THE YEAR STUDIO - NIGHT

PRESENTER

In second place is a sportsman
renowned for his refusal to give
up, regardless of the barriers in
his way.

To Craig's right a WOMAN in her early twenties nudges him.

WOMAN

(whispers)

You've got it!

Craig turns away, focussed on the Presenter, but steals a
glance at Daniel.

Samantha squeezes Daniel's hand. He's shaking his head.

PRESENTER

His rivalry with his main opponent
has been compared to the golden
years of Coe and Ovett, neither
giving an inch.

Daniel shifts in his wheelchair, preparing to move.

PRESENTER (CONT'D)

British champion and Olympic four
hundred metres semi-finalist, the
runner up...

(pause)

Craig Simmons!

The audience applaud and cheer, some wolf-whistle.

Daniel looks stunned. Craig is livid.

Craig stands, in a daze.

Daniel reluctantly joins in the clapping.

The Presenter shakes Craig's hand, hands him a trophy.

Craig hesitates, is prompted to face camera.

CRAIG

I don't know what to say, other
than this is... unexpected.

(pause, reluctant)

Thanks.

The audience wait for more, but that's it.

The applause builds. Craig looks awkward holding the small trophy.

The presenter discretely ushers him to step sideways.

PRESENTER

The winner this year is someone who
has consistently performed at the
very top of his sport--

Behind the Presenter on the TV studio screen is a MONTAGE of Daniel Wilson sporting moments:

Daniel sinks into his starting blocks.

PRESENTER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

--winning several European grand
prix races and breaking the British
four hundred metre hurdles record.

Daniel hurdling effortlessly, poetry in motion.

PRESENTER (CONT'D)

Together with Craig, he carried our
Olympic hopes. But just after the
National Championships, tragedy
struck.

A picture of Eva wearing a gold medal and winning smile.
Below Eva's picture, the caption:

'Eva Wilson 1983 - 2004'

The Presenter pauses out of respect.

PRESENTER (CONT'D)

One of the greatest athletes this
country has produced in a long,
long time.

(pause)

Ladies and gentlemen.

(pause)

Daniel Wilson!

The audience explodes into applause.

Daniel leans over to kiss Samantha, then with a heavy heart wheels himself forwards.

The Presenter shakes Daniel's hand, hands him the trophy.

Daniel waits for the applause to die down.

DANIEL
(attempts a brave face)
Congratulations to Craig, the
second best hurdler in the country.

The faintest murmur of a chuckle from the audience.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
This is for Eva.
(pause)
Thank you.

Daniel offers his hand to Craig, who reluctantly accepts it.

As they shake hands, Craig leans in, whispers something.

Daniel's eyes bulge.

A muffled swear word, then Daniel launches himself out of the wheelchair at Craig, catching him with an upper cut.

Craig staggers back, gets his balance, then fists fly.

Daniel and Craig tumble to the floor, fighting like tomcats.

A moment of suspended time, then a FLOOR MANAGER and OTHER SPORTSMEN leap in to pull Daniel and Craig apart.

The television studio is a chaotic mass of bodies - career carnage live on national television.

INT. STACY'S FLAT - NIGHT

The chaotic image is freeze framed on Stacy's television.

Stacy lowers the remote.

She stifles a nervous laugh, bemused.

INT. DANIEL'S FLAT - NIGHT

Daniel opens his front door, revealing Stacy holding the VHS tape in one hand, a bottle of Canadian whisky in the other.

STACY
(offers the whisky)
Underrated North American dutch
courage.
(holds up the VHS tape)
And this evening's discussion
topic.

DANIEL
Another time.

Daniel rolls his eyes as Stacy enters the flat.

STACY (O.S.)
This *is* another time. Where are
your decent glasses?

INT. DANIEL'S FLAT - NIGHT

On the coffee table is the whisky bottle and the VHS tape.
Stacy tops up Daniel's glass.

STACY
What did he say to you?

Daniel shakes his head, sips the whisky.

DANIEL
It's not important.

An awkward silence.

STACY
So you never ran again.
(pause)
Why?

DANIEL
I assaulted a fellow sportsman live
on national television.
(pause)
The press *murdered* me.

STACY
But that was a long time ago.

Daniel nods.

STACY (CONT'D)
And yet you still carry such great
sadness with you.

Daniel closes his eyes, drops his head.

Daniel has tears welling in his eyes.

Stacy waits patiently for Daniel to regain composure.

DANIEL

We were twins. Eva was two minutes older.

(pause)

It's like she still has some sort of hold over me...

Stacy blinks back tears of her own.

She hesitates, then goes to Daniel, holds him tenderly.

INT. DANIEL'S FLAT - NIGHT

Stacy hands Daniel a cup of coffee.

DANIEL

Approaching that last hurdle I had a sick feeling, like I'd *already* lost something far more important than a stupid race.

(pause)

If only I'd been driving that day...

Daniel shakes his head, dazed.

STACY

(quietly)

I've been trying to work you out for ages.

DANIEL

Me too. I struggle every day.

Stacy studies him.

STACY

You didn't kill your sister Daniel. Move on, start living again!

Daniel turns towards her, surprised.

STACY (CONT'D)

You have to confront your fears Daniel. Or they'll consume you.

Stacy drains her coffee, stands and walks to the door.

DANIEL

(quietly)

I can't.

Stacy makes to leave, then stops, turns.

STACY

I saw anger on that television show. And passion.

(pause)

You need to figure out a way to channel it into something positive, before it destroys you.

(quietly)

And those who care about you.

Daniel meets Stacy's gaze.

The door shuts and she's gone.

EXT. ATHLETICS TRACK - NIGHT

Daniel props his bike against the railings.

He sits on a bench under the shelter, rubs his face. He takes a swig from a whisky bottle; a lost soul.

Moonlit shadows float around the track. Flickers of the same Ghostly Athletes; running, jumping, throwing a javelin.

EXT. ATHLETICS TRACK, CIRCA 2004 - DAY

FLASHBACK

The running track is busy with ATHLETES training.

Daniel, in his early twenties, walks towards the track.

Some of the Athletes stare, others ignore him. There are no acknowledgements.

Daniel stops at the edge of the track.

EXT. NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP STADIUM - DAY

MONTAGE of images and sounds:

The starter's pistol.

Daniel sprints out of the blocks.

Thousands of camera flashes.

Athletes staggered around the bend ahead and behind him, sprint towards their first hurdle.

VOICE (V.O.)

Wilson takes an early lead...

A MONTAGE of Newspaper sports headlines spin to the ground as Daniel sprints around the track between hurdles:

Headline: 'Wilson in Car Wreck!'

Daniel runs to the next hurdle.

Headline: 'Daniel Olympic Dream Shattered'

Daniel runs on.

Headline: 'Sports Personality of the Year Assault Drama'

The last hurdle looms.

Headline: 'Wilson Sports Award Withdrawn'

EXT. ATHLETICS TRACK - NIGHT

Daniel sits in the shelter, head in his hands, shaking.

EXT. ATHLETICS TRACK - DAY

Dawn breaks over the running track.

Daniel is propped up at the back of the shelter, asleep.

Beside him, the near empty whisky bottle.

EXT. ATHLETICS TRACK - DAY

Sunlight bathes the track and shelter.

Daniel has changed position, but is still sleeping.

The sound of bicycle wheels turning, a chain rattling.

Jessie leans his bike against the fence, surveys the track.

He crouches down, vaults the fence, clears it easily.

Jessie jogs down the track. Behind him Daniel sleeps on.

EXT. ATHLETICS TRACK - DAY

Jessie is laid out on the track, stretching.

In the shelter, Daniel begins to wake.

Jessie swings his legs over to the opposite side, glances over at Daniel.

JESSIE

Hey hobo. Will drinking that stuff
improve my technique?

Daniel wakes, squints into the sunlight.

Jessie stands, partially obscuring the sun, giving him a shimmering, God-like presence.

Daniel wobbles to his feet, stumbles out of the shelter.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
Ooh, maybe not.

Daniel approaches the fence. He looks terrible.

DANIEL
You warming up?

JESSIE
Nope, winding down. I'm gonna take
a jog to finish up.
(pause)
Wanna join me?

Daniel shrugs, why not. He eyes the fence, grips it with both hands, tenses up.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
You sure you want to try that?

Daniel thinks it through.

He relaxes, swings a leg over, climbs the fence awkwardly.

Daniel hesitates on the grass verge by the track.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
Been a long time, eh brother?

Daniel looks down at the cinder track surface.

Jessie starts jogging.

Daniel stands still, watches Jessie.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
It's like riding a bike. Sometimes
you fall, but you never forget.

Daniel sighs, reluctantly steps onto the track.

Daniel jogs to catch Jessie up. He looks like he's going to throw up.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
I saw loads of your early races.
You were one of my heroes.
(pause)
Second favourite.

DANIEL
Only second best?

JESSIE
Uh huh. Behind the master himself;
Ed Moses.

Daniel nods, then winces, stops by the grass and throws up.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
Course, that was then.

Daniel wretches again.

Jessie eases up a few metres ahead.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
What happened fella?

Daniel spits out vomit, stands, taking deep breaths.

DANIEL
Too many... barriers.
(pause)
What are you doing here?

JESSIE
I want what you have, brother.

DANIEL
Had. And it wasn't worth the pain.

JESSIE
No? Then what are *you* doing here?

Daniel stares at Jessie.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
You got a home right? So why choose
here to get plastered?

DANIEL
I'll think of an answer when I
sober up.

Daniel starts to walk away.

JESSIE
Train me.

DANIEL
Why?

JESSIE
Because you're the only one who can
make a difference.

DANIEL
I very much doubt that.

JESSIE

Take everything you know. Push me
harder than you trained yourself.

Daniel holds eye contact with Jessie.

Jessie offers his hand.

JESSIE (CONT'D)

I'll give it everything I've got.

Daniel and Jessie hold eye contact.

INT. BICYCLE SHOP - DAY

Daniel is hunched over his workbench, sipping a coffee.

Stacy studies him with disapproval.

STACY

You look terrible.

Daniel yawns, slumps further over the bench.

DANIEL

I've found someone.

Stacy looks surprised and hurt, but holds her composure.

STACY

Someone?

Daniel is focussed on the coffee, won't make eye contact.

DANIEL

To help me face up to stuff.

STACY

I see.

She folds her arms, unimpressed.

DANIEL

An athlete.

(pause)

To coach, put something back.

STACY

Oh. That's good, right?

Daniel nods, looks up.

DANIEL

Thank you, for helping. You get the
employee of the month award.

She laughs.

STACY
I'm you're only employee.

DANIEL
Yeah. Don't get complacent and
think it's yours every month.

Daniel finishes his coffee, rises from the bench and starts pulling his overalls on.

The door pings.

Stacy walks over to the CUSTOMER, smiling.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
Your prize is dinner with the boss.
So long as your skydiver boyfriend
doesn't object.

Stacy turns, her eyes light up.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

A simple but cosy Italian restaurant.

Daniel and Stacy wear smart clothes: they've brushed up well.

A WAITER clears the main course, tops up their wine glasses.

STACY
It was a typical holiday romance. I
relocated to keep it going, then
three months ago he bails out to go
travelling.

DANIEL
Didn't you want to go home?

STACY
And admit defeat? The *I told you so*
family would love that.

DANIEL
So this is a fill in job until
something better comes along?

STACY
Yup. Fortunately the boss isn't too
much of a pain in the ass.

Daniel grins.

DANIEL
A bit grumpy though.

Stacy takes a sip of wine, then raises the glass.

STACY

To Daniel Wilson; the Robin Hood of the bicycle world. Soon to be bankrupt if he keeps working pro bono for deserving eco transportation causes.

(pause)

You're not grumpy Daniel, you're intriguing.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Daniel and Stacy walk in silence.

STACY

Tell me about your student.

Stacy slips her arm around his.

DANIEL

Jessie? He's a hurdler, like I was. You remember the lad with the old trademan's bike?

Stacy shakes her head.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

I don't even know if he has potential. But he has ambition.

STACY

The Olympics is only six months away. Imagine seeing him race in London. That would be amazing.

DANIEL

Give me six years, then maybe.

STACY

Hey, anything is possible, right? I might even hang around to see it happen.

They exchange a look, is she testing the water?

DANIEL

Me too.

They walk on, arm in arm.

EXT. STACY'S FLAT - NIGHT

Daniel and Stacy stop outside the entrance door.

STACY

This is me.

Their awkwardness; what's expected at this point?

DANIEL

Thank you for the company.

STACY

Perhaps we can do this again?

DANIEL

There's next month's employee of the month prize. It'll be close, but I have a feeling it might just go your way again...

Daniel smiles, drops his eyes and leaves.

Stacy watches him walk away.

EXT. ATHLETICS TRACK - DAY

Daniel and Jessie are sitting in the shelter.

DANIEL

I want to be clear from the start about my expectations.

JESSIE

I'll do whatever it takes.

DANIEL

You'll trust my methods?

Jessie nods.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

I'll push you harder than you've ever worked before.

(pause)

You're going to hate me.

JESSIE

You're the coach.

Daniel stands, starts walking away.

DANIEL

Okay. Let's get started.

But Jessie stays seated.

JESSIE

(quietly)

You can't walk away either, Daniel. You're in this all the way.

(pause)

Or not at all.

Daniel turns, angry.

DANIEL
You're laying down the law, to me?

Jessie holds eye contact.

JESSIE
You have something to prove too.

DANIEL
I don't have to be here!

JESSIE
You sure about that?

EXT. ATHLETICS TRACK - DAY

Ten hurdles are set up around the track in lane three.

Jessie stands six feet from his mark in spikes, shorts and vest, limbering up.

Daniel stands by the top bend, holding a stopwatch.

DANIEL
(calling out)
On your marks.

Jessie walks forwards, measures his start, sinks to a crouch.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
(calling out)
Set.

Jessie rises, poised.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
(shouts)
Go!

Daniel starts the stopwatch. Jessie stutters off his mark, builds into a sprint.

Daniel watches Jessie sprint around the bend, chopping his stride pattern as he approaches the hurdle. He clears it, sprints on.

Jessie jumps the next hurdle, clips it, runs on.

Daniel checks himself; there's the same Ghostly Athlete matching Jessie stride for stride.

Jessie rounds the last bend. His hurdling is untidy.

Jessie works hard into the home straight, stutters over the last hurdle, fights for breath, staggers across the line.

Daniel stops the watch. He walks over to Jessie, who is crouched on the track, gasping for breath.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
Fifty six point four.

Jessie looks up, breathing hard.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
Reasonable, for a club runner. Just inside the top hundred in the country.
(pause)
That where you want to be?

Jessie stands, hands on hips, controlling his breathing.

JESSIE
No sir.

DANIEL
Attack the hurdles. Rhythm. Efficiency. Stride pattern.
(pause)
Walk once round, then go again.

Jessie rolls his eyes. He picks up a drinks bottle, takes a gulp, tosses it at his bag and starts walking.

EXT. ATHLETICS TRACK - DAY

Jessie is lying on his back, knees up, gasping for air.

DANIEL
Your technique is shocking.
(pause)
One more.

Jessie lays there, shakes his head.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
No?

JESSIE
(gasping)
No.

DANIEL
Okay hotshot, one word. Mediocre. If you ain't hurting, you ain't working!

Jessie screws his face up, rolls onto his side.

He pushes himself up, mopes off, his legs wobbly.

JESSIE
(shouts out)
Hey, I'm hurtin'!

INT. BICYCLE SHOP - DAY

Stacy is watching Daniel adjust the gearing on a racing bike.

STACY
How was it?

DANIEL
Painful.

STACY
Can you help him?

Daniel shrugs.

DANIEL
If he turns up tomorrow, maybe.

STACY
I'm seeing a different side to you
Daniel.

He stops work, looks over at her.

DANIEL
Yeah?

STACY
Your eyes are alive.

EXT. ATHLETICS TRACK - DAY

Daniel pushes his bike, glances at the empty track.

He sits on the bike, starts to pedal away, but spots a figure lying down at the far end of the track.

Daniel rides round towards Jessie.

JESSIE
You're late.

Daniel dismounts the bike, props it against the fence.

DANIEL
You been here all night?

JESSIE
Yup, same position you left me.

DANIEL
Can you walk?

JESSIE
Haven't tried.

Daniel smiles, climbs over the fence, a bit easier this time.

DANIEL
Okay. Now we can really work.

EXT. ATHLETICS TRACK - DAY

Ten hurdles are set in a tightly spaced line.

Daniel stands at the last hurdle, facing Jessie.

DANIEL
The opposite leg.

Jessie silently curses, moves over, then jogs towards the first hurdle, springing off his toes, knees high.

He jerks his right leg to the side, sweeps his left trail leg through, unbalanced.

Jessie wobbles over the first five hurdles, crashes into the sixth.

JESSIE
Ahhrrrr!

Jessie stumbles away, throwing his hands in the air.

DANIEL
You're too tense. Try to relax.

Jessie turns, walks back, psyching himself up..

Jessie lines up on the first hurdle, starts jogging in.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
Hold it. Look at me.

Daniel stands over the first hurdle, adjusts his posture.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
Hips forward, up on your toes.
Imagine there's a hot poker up your
backside.

Jessie sniggers, but watches Daniel closely as he slowly yet gracefully steps over the first three hurdles.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
Okay?

Jessie steps up, tries to mimic Daniel's motion.

Jessie overbalances, swipes his hand, knocks a hurdle down.

Daniel picks the hurdle up and stands ready, shoulder to shoulder with Jessie.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
Stay in time with me.
(pause)
One.

Daniel rises up, pulls his trail leg over, mirrored by Jessie.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
Two.

Over the next hurdle.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
Three.

Daniel stops, glances back. Jessie has stopped.

JESSIE
This is crap.

DANIEL
Follow my lead.

JESSIE
Easy for you, always criticizing.

DANIEL
And I can't hack it anymore, so
what do I know. That it?

Daniel kicks off his trainers and socks, stretches out for a few seconds then sizes up the hurdles.

Daniel rises to his toes, then jogs to the first hurdle.

Daniel flicks his left knee, pulls his trail leg through, snaps it down fast and low.

Daniel's bare feet clear the hurdles again and again...

Jessie watches Daniel gracefully clear the last hurdle.

Daniel walks back to the start, stands on the opposite side.

Daniel repeats the drill on the other leg, effortlessly.

JESSIE
(quietly)
Damn you.

DANIEL
We need to get you flexible. Then
build in rhythm and leg speed. I
have some ideas to help.
(MORE)

DANIEL (CONT'D)

(pause)

But my methods might seem a little... unusual.

JESSIE

Unusual?

Daniel grins.

DANIEL

You're going to have to trust me,
brother.

INT. YOGA CLASS - DAY

Daniel and Jessie are standing barefoot on mats in a Yoga class, surrounded by MIDDLE AGED WOMEN.

DANIEL (V.O.)

Your great strength, is your
perseverance--

Daniel stands on one leg in 'the tree' posture.

Jessie tries to copy him, starts wobbling.

DANIEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)

--but balance--

Jessie falls out of the pose, to the amusement of the women.

DANIEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)

--could be better--

Daniel is in 'the headstand' posture.

Jessie tries, crashes down on his mat in a crumpled heap.

INT. SWIMMING POOL - DAY

Aqua-aerobics for PREGNANT MUMS.

On the edge of the pool a lithe, enthusiastic female INSTRUCTOR demonstrates.

DANIEL (V.O.)

--so in order to merge body and
mind--

Jessie's body movements are jerky, not fluid and relaxed. He's transfixed by the enthusiastic, supple Instructor.

DANIEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)

--we need to train with the best.

INT. DANCE HALL - NIGHT

A classic ballroom dance class for the over 60s. These GRANNIES and GRANDADS move gracefully.

DANIEL (V.O.)
You need grace, as well as pace.
Remember, an elegant athlete--

Daniel watches Jessie being whirled around the floor by DORIS, a sprightly lady in her late sixties.

DANIEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)
--is fast. You need to flow, like
Fred Astaire and Ginger Doris--

Jessie is red-faced, being shown up by Doris. Daniel winks at her.

DANIEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)
--and float like a butterfly, like
Muhammad Ali.

EXT. SCHOOL PLAYGROUND - DAY

Daniel is chatting to a SCHOOLTEACHER as they watch Jessie hot foot between two skipping ropes held by two GIRLS.

Jessie gets his feet caught, but he keeps starting again, refusing to give up.

DANIEL (V.O.)
It's just muscle memory--

Jessie quick steps over the ropes, getting some rhythm.

DANIEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)
--flexibility and timing--

A GROUP OF GIRLS sing and clap in time.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
--how difficult can it be?

Jessie's legs are swept from beneath him and he falls over.

INT. PHYSIOTHERAPIST'S TREATMENT ROOM - DAY

JESSIE
Aaaarrrrr!

Jessie is lying face down on a couch. His face is contorted in agony.

A stick thin PHYSIO jams her elbow into his hamstring.

DANIEL

We need to loosen you up--

Jessie clenches his hands on the couch, grits his teeth.

JESSIE

(shouts)

Jesus Christ!

DANIEL

--so we'll build in some pampering
each week.

The Physio winks at Daniel as she leans harder on Jessie.

JESSIE

Aaarrhh!

INT. BICYCLE SHOP - NIGHT

Daniel flips the 'closed' sign over and drops the door latch.

He walks past Stacy. His joints look stiff.

STACY

Still going okay?

DANIEL

First race next week. Low profile,
but a good test.

Stacy buttons her jacket, slips a bag over her shoulder.

STACY

Have a good weekend.

Daniel smiles.

DANIEL

You too.

Stacy hesitates.

STACY

I was wondering if you're free
later? It's a friend's birthday.

(pause)

But not to worry if you're busy
having your hip replaced.

DANIEL

Cheeky cow! I doubt this old man
will be moving from the couch.

STACY

Might be good to let your hair
down...

Daniel considers this.

STACY (CONT'D)
You've been working hard.

DANIEL
Okay, I'll pick you up later.

STACY
You have a car?

Daniel smiles.

EXT. STACY'S FLAT - NIGHT

Stacy steps out of the doorway, spruced up in party clothes.
She laughs at Daniel, he's holding a 1960s tandem bicycle.

STACY
No way.

DANIEL
I thought you Canadians had a sense
of adventure.

Stacy looks down at her dress and heels.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Daniel steers the tandem. Stacy is pedalling behind him,
concentrating on keeping her skirt from blowing up.

STACY
Left here.

DANIEL
Okay, signal for me and hang on...

Stacy holds out her left hand, shrieks as they lean in.

Daniel grins, pedals faster.

EXT. HOUSE PARTY - NIGHT

Daniel and Stacy coordinate leaning the bike over and each
drop their left foot to the ground.

Stacy climbs off awkwardly, smooths her skirt down.

She's red-faced but exhilarated.

Daniel leans the bike against railings, padlocks it.

INT. PARTY - NIGHT

A house party in full swing. Loud music and conversations amongst ATTRACTIVE PEOPLE.

Stacy and Daniel stand in a corner of the lounge, talking to ROBBY and LIZZY, a couple in their early thirties.

LIZZY

What do you do, Daniel?

DANIEL

I'm in charge of a low energy urban
eco transportation initiative.

Robby and Lizzy look impressed.

Stacy rolls her eyes.

STACY

He's my boss, at the cycle shop.

MAX (O.S.)

(shouting across room)

It's Daniel Wilson!

Daniel turns. Forty year old party drunk MAX staggers over.

MAX (CONT'D)

(to Daniel)

Knew I recognized you man, despite
all the hair.

Max stumbles into Daniel, causing Stacy to step in.

STACY

Hey Max, how's the little one, bet
he's growing up fast...

MAX

Last time I saw you, you were
having a punch-up on TV.

Daniel shifts uncomfortably.

DANIEL

I think you've got me confused with
someone else, buddy.

Daniel avoids eye contact with Stacy, edges away.

MAX

(loud)

How many years they ban you for?

Daniel walks away.

STACY

Well done Max. That was friendly.

Stacy follows Daniel, but Max grabs her arm.

MAX

He's a burnout, same as the last one.

Stacy pushes her nose up close to Max's and reaches down, squeezes his groin.

MAX (CONT'D)

Yeeeeooowww!

STACY

He's more of a man than you'll ever be!

Stacy leaves Max doubled up.

EXT. HOUSE PARTY - NIGHT

Daniel is sitting on the step, nursing his beer.

STACY

Thought you'd have gone.

DANIEL

You have a return ticket.

Stacy sits down. He offers her the beer, she takes a swig.

STACY

I guess it was a big deal, back in the day?

Daniel stares into space.

DANIEL

Yup.

Stacy offers him the beer.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

No, thanks. I shouldn't.

They sit in silence for a moment.

STACY

They banned you?

Daniel nods, turns briefly to her.

DANIEL

For a year. It destroyed what little confidence I had left.

(MORE)

DANIEL (CONT'D)

(pause)

I never raced again.

Stacy watches him hang his head and slouch, deflated.

She reaches out, drapes her arm over his shoulder.

STACY

I'm sorry.

(pause)

Sober, Max is a lovely guy, but...

DANIEL

It's okay.

(pause)

It used to happen a lot. People taunting me with the harsh truth. Or worse, offering their sympathy.

STACY

I don't do sympathy. I'm a gold digger and I want your bike. It's awesome!

Daniel chuckles. Stacy stands, offers her hand.

STACY (CONT'D)

Can I drive us home?

Daniel hesitates, then offers his hands. She pulls him up.

EXT. STACY'S FLAT - NIGHT

Stacy steers the tandem through traffic. It's wobbling and only just under control. Daniel looks terrified.

Stacy slows the tandem to a stop, steps off in time with Daniel.

Daniel crosses himself, raises his eyes skyward and mouths 'thank you'. Stacy sees this, prods him in the ribs.

STACY

You fancy a coffee? Freshly ground.

Daniel drops his eyes.

DANIEL

I think I'd better push off. But maybe another time?

STACY

Sure.

Stacy kisses Daniel on the cheek.

She opens the front door and disappears.

Daniel stands there thinking, watches the door close.
He goes to grab it, but the latch shuts.

EXT. WINDSOR ATHLETICS TRACK - DAY

Daniel and Jessie are walking onto the track.

Jessie is excited by the three hundred SPECTATORS.

Daniel is wary, uncomfortable to be back in a once familiar world.

They walk past several ATHLETES warming up.

Some study Daniel. Where have they seen him before?

Daniel dips his head, keeps a low profile.

EXT. WINDSOR ATHLETICS TRACK - LATER

Jessie settles into his starting blocks.

DANIEL (V.O.)
Remember, today is about grace, not
just pace.

Daniel sits in the stand, eyes fixed on Jessie.

DANIEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Stay loose and relax.

Jessie rises up into the 'set' position.

DANIEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Clear your mind of everything
except those ten hurdles.

The starter's gun sounds. Jessie sprints away from the blocks.

Daniel stands, intensely focussed.

The hazy Ghostly Athlete image of Daniel's own running style beside Jessie.

Jessie pulls ahead of the other ATHLETES on the stagger, but stutters and loses ground at each hurdle.

DANIEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Have you learnt nothing?

Jessie's tunnel vision. He's oblivious to Daniel's hazy Ghostly Athlete image running alongside him, coaching him.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
 (Ghostly Athlete)
 Hips in, up on your toes, keep the
 stride long, don't chop back.
 (pause)
 I said don't chop back!

Daniel leans over the stand railings.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
 (shouting)
 Hold your form! Stay tall!

On the home straight, Jessie clatters over the eighth hurdle, frittering away his lead.

Jessie clears the final two hurdles in last place, sprints for the line, gains three places.

Daniel is gripping the railings, shaking his head.

EXT. ATHLETICS TRACK - DAY

Jessie is lounging on the track. He watches Daniel ride up.

Daniel approaches the fence. He shrugs a large backpack off his shoulders, lowers it over the fence.

Daniel makes to climb over the fence, then grips the top, crouches low and vaults over, unsteady but clear.

DANIEL
 I've figured it out.

JESSIE
 That I'm crap and should take up
 synchronised swimming?

DANIEL
 Nope. You need rhythm.

JESSIE
 Rhythm?

Daniel opens the backpack.

DANIEL
 Alongside other athletes you lock
 into their stride pattern. But once
 you pass them, get to your own
 hurdle, you lose it.

Daniel unpacks a 1980s 'ghetto blaster' with huge speakers.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
 This is going to change everything.

EXT. ATHLETICS TRACK - DAY

Loud upbeat 1980s music. Daniel and Jessie face the two sets of hurdles.

Daniel has bare feet, Jessie wears spikes.

DANIEL

Shadow me. Be aware of my rhythm,
but lock into the music. Okay?

Jessie shrugs.

JESSIE

This could be us one day old man,
lined up against each other.

(pause)

Course, we might start together,
but all you'll see at the finish is
my arse crack.

Jessie steals a start. Daniel reacts, a stride behind.

Halfway down the straight Daniel gains on Jessie,
accelerating past him over the last two hurdles.

They walk back to face the first hurdle in silence, an
awkward, competitive air between them.

DANIEL

Three, two, one... go.

They both react, fast over the hurdles, shoulder to shoulder.

Daniel hurdles smoothly, Jessie is ragged, but he's faster.

They clear the last hurdle together, walk back to their kit.

JESSIE

Why did you never race again?

Daniel turns away, walks on in silence.

JESSIE (CONT'D)

The truth.

Daniel stops, ponders the question.

DANIEL

When you get there yourself--
(pinches thumb and finger)
--and are this close to your one
moment to stand on top of the world
and you balls it up, then you'll
understand.

Daniel walks away.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
Again. Then warm down. I'll see you
tomorrow.

JESSIE
(calls out)
You can't hide away forever, bro.

Daniel keeps walking.

EXT. STACY'S FLAT - DAY

Daniel is standing in 1980s cycling Lycra. Stacy opens the door in her dressing gown and furry slippers.

DANIEL
Fancy a day out?

Stacy stifles a yawn, shrugs her shoulders.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
You'll need to put these on.

Daniel hands Stacy a neat pile of cycling clothes.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
I'm going for supplies, meet you
back here in ten. Okay?

She frowns, watches him jog away.

EXT. TANDEM, SLEEPY COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Daniel and Stacy are wearing matching 1980s Lycra. They pedal leisurely, enjoying the scenery.

STACY
I can't feel my legs.

DANIEL
Nearly there, next right.

They turn off the road into a sizeable driveway.

EXT. DANIEL'S HOUSE - DAY

The drive winds through an overgrown garden, to a large detached house, in need of some repair.

STACY
Interesting place for a picnic.

They dismount the bike.

Daniel rummages in his backpack, finds a set of keys.

He unlocks the door, shows Stacy in.

INT. DANIEL'S HOUSE - DAY

The hallway is large and open with a dusty tiled floor. It's not been touched in years.

Stacy is drawn to the elegant wood staircase.

On the side wall are framed photographs of sporting achievement.

She climbs the stairs, looking at the photographs:

Sir Roger Bannister completing the first sub 4 minute mile.

Muhammad Ali, gloves raised.

Jesse Owens leaps over the long jump at the 1936 Olympics.

Daley Thompson in mid air, clearing the pole vault bar.

Sebastian Coe and Steve Ovett, racing neck and neck.

Carl Lewis on starting blocks.

David Hemery winning the 1968 Olympics by a huge margin.

The iconic raised black gloved fists of Tommie Smith and John Carlos on the 1968 Olympic medal rostrum.

Edwin Moses gliding over a hurdle.

STACY

This is your house?

Stacy looks down at Daniel, who's standing in the hallway below.

Daniel nods. He looks sad and uncomfortable.

EXT. GARAGE - DAY

A large triple fronted garage. The right garage door opens, squeaking and groaning, it's rusty electric motor struggling.

Inside is a car shape beneath a dust cover and nothing else.

Daniel picks up a corner of the cover, yanks it off, revealing a Jaguar E-Type Convertible.

Stacy gasps, steps into the garage to examine the car.

INT. GARAGE - DAY

Daniel watches Stacy's fingertips on the faded paint, tracing the curves.

DANIEL
I bought her with my bonus for
winning the Europeans.

EXT. COUNTRY LANE - DAY

FLASHBACK

The E-Type roars round a bend, paint gleaming.

INT. E-TYPE - DAY

FLASHBACK

Daniel is grinning, driving fast.

Beside him Samantha whoops as Daniel changes down and buries the accelerator. The exhausts roar.

INT. GARAGE - DAY

DANIEL
My sponsors were very happy with
me.

STACY
No shit.
(pause)
What's through there?

Stacy points to a side door. Daniel's smile fades.

DANIEL
I used to call it the dungeon.

INT. THE DUNGEON - DAY

The lights flicker on. A spit and sawdust free weights gym, built for hard work with no mirrored walls or frills.

Stacy steps into the gym, Daniel follows.

STACY
There's no pretentious health club
glamour here.

DANIEL
Nope.

STACY
No pain, no gain?

DANIEL
That's what it takes.

Stacy walks around the room.

STACY
So now it's Jessie's turn?

Daniel shrugs.

DANIEL
Maybe.

EXT. DANIEL'S HOUSE - DAY

Daniel and Stacy cycle away from the house on the tandem.

EXT. COUNTRY LANE - DAY

Stacy steers the tandem, Daniel pedals behind her, enjoying the scenery.

Their feet pedal in unison, the timing perfectly matched.

STACY
What are you going to do with the house?

DANIEL
I have no idea.
(pause)
I let it go a long time ago.

STACY
There's always something to salvage.

DANIEL
Perhaps it's time to move on.

STACY
Um, actually that's something I need to talk to you about.

Stacy glances over her shoulder, but the bike wobbles.

She looks forward again. Neither can see the other's face.

STACY (CONT'D)
The thing is, my visa runs out soon.

DANIEL

Oh. Right.

They cycle on in silence.

INT. THE DUNGEON - NIGHT

Loud eighties chart music. Daniel and Jessie work a medicine ball; Jessie doing sit ups, Daniel stands over him.

JESSIE

(breathless)

How do you listen to this crap?

Daniel increases his tempo. Jessie reacts, working harder.

DANIEL

It's gold medal music.

Jessie is starting to struggle, but Daniel keeps pushing.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Core stability, trunk strength,
six pack. Call it what you like,
it's mostly cosmetic. Confidence
and inner strength comes from
knowing you've put the work in.

(pause)

Down in three, two, one...

Daniel slows the rate, but Jessie falters.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

I said down a notch, not stop!

Jessie winces, grits his teeth.

JESSIE

(gasping)

Easy for you...

Daniel's face hardens. He glances at his watch.

DANIEL

Thirty more seconds. Then we swap.

Jessie digs in, keeps going.

INT. THE DUNGEON - NIGHT

Jessie is lying on a mat, knees raised, breathing hard, sweating.

Daniel is standing over a CD player.

Music starts; late eighties rock. Jessie pulls a face.

JESSIE
You've gotta be kidding.

Daniel increases the volume.

DANIEL
Feel that passion, draw the energy
deep inside. Let it take you to the
next level.
(pause)
Circuit to finish. Let's go.

Daniel stands next to Jessie on the exercise mat.

Jessie groans, stands.

Daniel and Jessie wear different clothes in a MONTAGE:

Press ups, working in unison

Hip raises on a low bench

Lunges - sideways glances, how hard is the other working?

Standing squats

Raised leg sit-ups

Squat thrusts

DANIEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Time.

They both stop, fighting for air.

Daniel stands, turns the music down.

Daniel and Jessie exchange a look of mutual respect.

EXT. ATHLETICS TRACK - DAY

ATHLETES training, running, stretching, gossiping.

Their young toned bodies in minimal training kit.

On the back straight, two lines of hurdles, side by side.

Daniel strips down to shorts and vest.

Jessie points to Daniel's feet.

JESSIE
No spikes again, amigo?

DANIEL
Being on a track again is hard
enough.

Daniel lifts his hand, stopwatch ready.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
Three, two, one... go!

They both sprint towards the hurdles.

Jessie matches Daniel's timing, much smoother now.

Both throw their lead legs over the hurdles, almost a mirror image.

Running side by side, clearing each hurdle in unison.

In the background, Stacy walks up to the fence.

Sprinting off the last hurdle, Jessie is just edging ahead.

Daniel clicks the stopwatch as Jessie crosses the line just ahead of him.

They slow, both breathing hard.

Daniel glances at the watch, shows the screen to Jessie.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
Much better. Warm down and stretch.
You're ready to race.

Jessie grins, jogs off. Daniel makes his way to the fence.

STACY
How's it going?

DANIEL
Good.

Stacy looks past Daniel, scanning the track.

STACY
Where is he?

Daniel turns, tries to pick out Jessie, but instead spots Samantha, who is jogging towards them.

DANIEL
Warming down, somewhere.

Daniel steps to the side, vaults the fence effortlessly.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
Come on, I fancy a coffee.

Daniel starts to lead Stacy away.

In the background Samantha jogs past a single line of hurdles.

SAMANTHA (O.S.)
(calling out)
Daniel. Wait up.

Stacy stops, forcing Daniel to do the same.

STACY
Friend of yours?

DANIEL
(quietly)
Ex-friend.

SAMANTHA
Daniel Wilson. I nearly didn't
recognise you.

Daniel turns.

DANIEL
That's no bad thing.
(to Stacy)
I'll catch you later.

Stacy watches Daniel jog away, something niggling her.

Samantha offers Stacy her hand.

SAMANTHA
Hi. I'm Samantha. Daniel and I used
to date.

They shake hands.

STACY
I'm Stacy. I'm deciding whether to
sleep with Daniel. Is he any good?

It's an ice breaker or a warning, Samantha isn't sure which.

SAMANTHA
Erm, he was, a few years ago.

STACY
Cool. I'll let you know if he's let
standards slip.

Stacy walks away.

INT/EXT. STACY'S FLAT - DAY

Stacy opens her door, Daniel has his hands up apologetically.

DANIEL
I'm sorry.

Stacy steps back, allows him in.

INT. STACY'S FLAT - DAY

Daniel and Stacy stand facing each other.

STACY
What's going on Daniel?

DANIEL
It's... complicated.
(pause)
The training is a sort of therapy,
but...

STACY
What about Samantha?

DANIEL
I don't follow.

STACY
You have history together.

Daniel shrugs. He looks away, sees a backpack by the couch.

Stacy follows Daniel's gaze.

STACY (CONT'D)
I've decided to go home, to see the
folks.

Daniel nods, glazing over.

DANIEL
Are you coming back?

STACY
I haven't decided. You're a lovely
guy, but sometimes a bit...
distant.

Stacy picks up her backpack then kisses Daniel on the cheek.

STACY (CONT'D)
Good luck.

EXT. ALEXANDER STADIUM, BIRMINGHAM - DAY

The caption; 'National Athletic Championships 2012'

Ten thousand SPECTATORS watch the activity on the track.

OFFICIALS mill about, ATHLETES warm up.

Jessie and Daniel stand by the fence, looking at the track.

Daniel glances around at the crowd behind him, wary but
vibrant, enjoying the buzz of being back here.

Samantha approaches with Craig Simmons.

DANIEL
 (under breath)
 Bloody hell.

Daniel turns away, but Samantha spots him, walks over.

SAMANTHA
 I never thought I'd see you back
 here.

DANIEL
 Me neither.

Craig stands ten feet away, eyeballing Daniel.

Samantha turns to follow Daniel's angry stare.

SAMANTHA
 We were young, Daniel. That's life.

DANIEL
 Interesting explanation for being
 unfaithful.

Daniel looks away from Craig, turns his back on Samantha.

She stands there for a moment, then Craig ushers her away.

SAMANTHA
 (calls out)
 Good luck.

Jessie half turns, nods. Daniel is unresponsive.

JESSIE
 Friend or foe?

DANIEL
 A bit of both.
 (intensely)
 When I tell you to do your talking
 on the track, right here is where
 it *really* counts.

Daniel claps Jessie on the back.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
 First or second to be sure of
 qualifying.
 (pause)
 I'll be watching.

EXT. ALEXANDER STADIUM, BIRMINGHAM - DAY

Daniel sits at the back of the grandstand.

On the track Jessie settles into his blocks.

Jessie rises to the set position.

The gun cracks, the ATHLETES sprint away.

The crowd cheers.

Daniel watches Jessie's progress along the back straight.

The stagger unwinds on the last bend; Jessie is fifth.

On the home straight, Jessie is running well.

DANIEL
(shouting)
Come on Jessie!

Jessie stutters into hurdle nine, clears it, sprints on.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
(shouting)
Attack the hurdles!

Jessie is untidy over the last hurdle.

He sprints for the line, gains a place, finishes fourth.

Jessie hangs his head, walks away from the other Athletes.

EXT. ALEXANDER STADIUM, BIRMINGHAM - DAY

Daniel and Jessie are sitting in the stand.

Most of the crowd have dispersed. The track is deserted.

Daniel is upset, Jessie is more upbeat.

DANIEL
Thanks for the ride kiddo.

Daniel stands, squeezes Jessie's shoulder.

JESSIE
The third Olympic place is
discretionary, right?

DANIEL
In theory, but...

JESSIE
So there's still a chance. And the
qualifying time isn't exceptional.

Daniel shakes his head, defeated.

DANIEL
 Today was where it really mattered,
 Jessie.

Daniel walks away.

JESSIE
 (calling out)
 We'll find an open event.

Daniel stops, turns and holds his hands out.

DANIEL
 They'll be no opposition. You need
 competition to push you to a decent
 time.
 (pause)
 Forget it. End of the road.

JESSIE
 (shouting)
 It ain't over till I say so, Bro!

Daniel keeps walking, but a small smile plays on his lips.

INT. DANIEL'S FLAT - DAY

Daniel is sitting at his lounge table studying his laptop.

DANIEL
 Okay Jessie, one last chance.

Daniel scans the search page, clicks on a link.

On the laptop; A website for 'Exeter Athletics Club'

DANIEL (CONT'D)
 Now let's see how much you really
 want it.

INT/EXT. GARAGE - DAY

Darkness.

The whirl of an electric motor. The garage door creaks and groans as it rises, revealing dawn breaking outside.

Daniel stares at the E-Type. He toys with a set of keys.

DANIEL
 Needs must, Eva.

EXT. ATHLETICS TRACK - DAY

Mist drifts along the back straight, shrouding the track.

Jessie stands beside his bike. He checks his watch.

The loud exhaust of a car approaching.

Daniel's E-Type swings into the car park, hood down.

DANIEL
(shouting)
Jump in!

Jessie grins, jogs over with his kit bag, looks over the car.

JESSIE
Very nice!

Jessie climbs in.

Daniel blips the throttle. The engine roars and wheels spin as the car careers out of the car park.

INT/EXT. E-TYPE - DAY

Daniel has a permanent grin, as drives the car hard.

DANIEL
(shouting)
It's a low key event. There won't be much talent there, so it's a straight time trial. You have to run sub-fifty, or it's game over.

The car slows into a bend. Daniel changes down, lines up on the straight and floors it.

The bonnet lifts, engine roars.

JESSIE
Yeeehhhhaahhhhh!

EXT. EXETER ATHLETICS TRACK - DAY

A well kept track with a small modern stand.

The E-Type stops in the car park to several admiring glances from ONLOOKERS.

Daniel and Jessie walk over to the track.

DANIEL
Start warming up, I'll sign you in.

Jessie nods, focussed.

JESSIE
I won't let us down.

Daniel and Jessie exchange eye contact. They walk off separately.

INT. STADIUM BUILDING - DAY

Daniel makes his way to a registration table.

He walks past a door marked: 'Drug Testing Officials'

Daniel waits in the queue for his turn, then smiles at the REGISTRAR.

DANIEL

Four hundred metre hurdles please.
Event of giants.

EXT. EXETER ATHLETICS TRACK - DAY

Jessie is stretching in a corner of the back straight.

Around him ATHLETES warm up, stretch, jog and hurdle.

An electronic whine over the Tannoy.

TANNOY VOICE (V.O.)

Good morning and welcome to Exeter Harriers Stadium. First event of the day is the four hundred metre hurdles, for which I have a special announcement. British record holder Daniel Wilson will be competing for the first time in eight years. We wish him well.

There is a murmur of surprise around the stadium.

Jessie stops stretching, shocked.

Daniel jogs over, he's dressed in ill-fitting shorts and baggy singlet.

JESSIE

You're coming out of retirement?

Daniel looks flustered.

DANIEL

There was only one other competitor and they were going to cancel.

(pause)

I borrowed this kit from a shot putter.

JESSIE

You'd better not beat me dressed like that.

Daniel jogs away.

DANIEL
(over shoulder)
Only one person can decide that...

EXT. EXETER ATHLETICS TRACK - DAY

SPECTATORS stare at the start where Jessie, Daniel and twenty-five year old ROBERT wait by their marks.

An expectant hush descends around the stadium.

Jessie and Robert look the part in lycra kit and spikes.

Daniel looks odd in bare feet and baggy shorts and singlet, faintly resembling the Ghostly Athletes in 1920s race kit.

TANNOY VOICE (V.O.)
Event one. The men's four hundred
metre hurdles.

A background murmur from the Spectators.

STARTER (O.S.)
On your marks.

Daniel takes a deep breath, walks forward.

Daniel, Jessie and Robert settle into their blocks.

STARTER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Set.

All three rise. Silence around the stadium.

The crack of the starter's gun.

Daniel and Jessie sprint off hard, quickly gaining on Robert.

The back straight; Daniel and Jessie match each other stride for stride, hurdling gracefully.

The last bend; Daniel and Jessie clear hurdle seven together.

As the stagger unwinds, Daniel and Jessie are shoulder to shoulder.

They clear the last hurdle together, smooth and fast.

Jessie edges ahead, both men are flat out. They both dip for the line together.

Beside the track a PHOTOGRAPHER snaps a series of stills of Daniel in bare feet as he dips through the finish line.

Applause and cheering from the Spectators.

Daniel crouches down, gasping for air, legs of jelly.

An age later, Robert jogs over the line, exhausted.

EXT. EXETER ATHLETICS TRACK - DAY

Daniel and Jessie are standing sipping coffee by an empty results display board.

An ELDERLY OFFICIAL walk towards them, holding the results.

ELDERLY OFFICIAL
Welcome back, Daniel.

She smiles at Daniel as she pins the results to the board.

TANNOY VOICE (V.O.)
The result of event one, the four
hundred metre hurdles. In first
place--

Jessie pounces on the results, fixated.

JESSIE
(shouting)
Yeeeeesssss!

Jessie's euphoric shout briefly drowns out the Tannoy Voice. All we hear clearly is:

TANNOY VOICE (V.O.)
--in a new track record of forty
nine point eight seconds!

Clapping and cheering around the stadium. The faces of many SHOCKED SPECTATORS.

INT/EXT. BICYCLE SHOP - DAY

Daniel whistles happily as he adjusts the brakes on a bike.

The letterbox rattles.

Daniel looks up, waves to the newspaper DELIVERY BOY.

INT. BICYCLE SHOP - DAY

Daniel is sitting at his workbench reading the newspaper.

He sips a coffee and turns to the back page, startled to see a photograph of himself dipping for the finish line.

The headline reads: 'Wilson Wins After 8 Year Absence - In Bare Feet!'

Daniel is stunned, completely absorbed by the story.

He doesn't hear the door chime.

Samantha enters.

SAMANTHA

I thought this place was an urban
myth.

Daniel looks up, startled.

Samantha glances around the shop.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

No American bodyguard today?

DANIEL

She's Canadian.

SAMANTHA

Whatever. We need to talk.

DANIEL

Business or harassment?

Samantha sits opposite Daniel, places an envelope in front of
him.

She clasps her hands together.

SAMANTHA

Official *athletics* business.

Daniel stares at the envelope, gingerly opens it.

Daniel reads the letter which has the 'UK Athletics' crest.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

You thought a year's ban was tough.

Daniel studies the letter.

Samantha stands.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Cheating is very serious Daniel.

INT. UK ATHLETICS HEAD OFFICE - DAY

An elegant wood clad boardroom.

Daniel is standing in front of a panel of three formally
dressed officials:

BARBARA WOODS, sixty years old.

DAVID HAWKER, late forties.

And Craig Simmons.

Daniel looks over to the door, checks his watch.

BARBARA WOODS

Daniel Wilson. We have a difficult decision to make.

Daniel looks uncomfortable.

DAVID HAWKER

You recently competed in an open event in Exeter, which you won comfortably, in bare feet.

(pause)

How on earth is this possible?

Daniel frowns, in a daze.

DANIEL

I competed, but I didn't win. I've been training a young lad, Jessie Moses. I needed to join the race so his time would register...

Daniel realizes he's getting some strange looks.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

What?

BARBARA WOODS

You've tested positive to a banned substance.

DANIEL

(angry)

No. Never!

CRAIG SIMMONS

Eight years is a long sabbatical. Can't have been easy getting back on a track after your... history.

Daniel shakes his head.

DANIEL

Jessie would never cheat...

Daniel looks over his shoulder, agitated.

DAVID HAWKER

There is no entry for a Jessie Moses at that event. Nor was there for the national championships.

DANIEL
(confused)
Jessie was with me, it was all for
him...

DAVID HAWKER
We've seen athletes flout our drug
doping rules and we've banned them,
simple as that. But this situation
is unprecedented.

BARBARA WOODS
Summarize the last eight years
Daniel, since you were *last*
standing here.

Daniel twitches, nervous. He stumbles over his words.

DANIEL
Eight years... difficult. Eva's
death... devastated. Not allowed to
run. Hounded by the press... very
unhappy.

CRAIG SIMMONS
Are you taking any prescription
medication?

Daniel shoots Craig a look, drops his head, ashamed.

DANIEL
Yes.

BARBARA WOODS
Serotonin noradrenaline?

Daniel shrugs.

DANIEL
Jessie is real, I... I talk to him,
coach him. We train together...

Daniel lifts his head, the penny is dropping.

MONTAGE OF FLASHBACKS

EXT. PARK - DAY

Daniel is jogging.

Something catches his eye.

He slows, steps through undergrowth and finds a rusty old
post bike abandoned in the shrubbery.

EXT. ATHLETICS TRACK - DAY

Daniel is standing with Stacy. Samantha jogs towards them.
Behind Samantha on the track is a single line of hurdles.

INT. THE DUNGEON - NIGHT

A 1980s power ballad is blasting out.

Daniel is training alone, bare-chested, doing dips.
His torso is defined muscle, strong and lean.

INT. DANCE HALL - NIGHT

Daniel is dancing with Doris.
He treads on her toes, cringes.
She smiles at him, they start again.

EXT. ALEXANDER STADIUM, BIRMINGHAM - DAY

Daniel watches Robert jog across the finish line.
Behind Robert, twenty year old LEE staggers across the line,
breathing hard.
Daniel congratulates Lee and Robert. There's no Jessie.

INT. PHYSIOTHERAPIST'S TREATMENT ROOM - DAY

Daniel is lying on the couch.
The Physio winks at Daniel.
She jams her elbow into his hamstring.
Daniel tenses, screws up his face.

DANIEL

Aaarrrr!

INT. UK ATHLETICS HEAD OFFICE - DAY

Daniel paces, hands clasped on his head.

DANIEL

No, no, no.
(pause)
This can't be right.

The Panel waits in uncomfortable silence.

BARBARA WOODS

(softly)

Daniel, is it possible that Jessie
is a figment of your imagination?

Daniel wipes away tears, tries to compose himself.

DANIEL

I ran alone?

CRAIG SIMMONS

Yes.

Silence.

DAVID HAWKER

You have failed a random drugs test
Daniel. But, the banned substance
is not performance enhancing,
particularly in the minute quantity
detected.

CRAIG SIMMONS

And you have a long history of
treatment for depression.

Daniel shoots Craig a murderous look.

BARBARA WOODS

Your Doctor has been gradually
reducing your dose. He suggested
you're scared of facing the world
on your own.

Daniel paces again, anxious.

DAVID HAWKER

We're satisfied that you did not
deliberately seek to enhance your
athletic performance. But we're
still concerned.

(studies Daniel)

Are you strong enough to compete
again, represent your country?

Daniel stands still, stares at David Hawker.

DANIEL

I don't know... it wasn't me out
there, it was...

(pause)

Oh Jesus.

Daniel's shoulders slump.

BARBARA WOODS

I'd like to see you race again
Daniel. But there are two problems.

(pause)

One; this panel has to agree to let
you compete, so you need to prove
you're mentally strong enough.

(pause)

And two; you can't fail another
drugs test. You have to stop taking
the medication.

(pause)

For good.

Daniel blinks, stunned.

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

A wood panelled corridor with several chairs.

Daniel sits with his shoulders slumped over his knees.

He glances up as a door opens.

Craig Simmons stands over him.

CRAIG SIMMONS

You've got ten days to prove you're
clean.

Daniel stares at Craig, a lost soul.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

Daniel is standing on the platform. He looks shell-shocked.

A train draws to a stop.

The train doors open, but Daniel is staring off into space.

JESSIE

You're still the sanest person I
know.

Daniel flinches, Jessie stands beside him.

DANIEL

Bugger off Jessie!

PASSENGERS give Daniel strange looks, give him a wide berth.

Jessie watches Daniel board the train.

JESSIE

(quietly)
Keep on running.

INT/EXT. TRAIN - DAY

The train pulls away from the station.

Daniel stares through the glass at Jessie, who waves goodbye from the platform.

Daniel sinks back into his seat, shuts his eyes.

JESSIE

Of course sanity is relative. I do
know some crazy people.

Daniel opens his eyes. Jessie is draped across the chair opposite him.

Daniel jumps up and rushes down the train carriage.

DANIEL

(shouting over shoulder)
Stay away from me Jessie!

OTHER PASSENGERS shrink back in their seats as Daniel rushes past.

JESSIE

Run rabbit, run rabbit...

Jessie bunny hops down the carriage after him.

JESSIE (CONT'D)

Run, run, run.

Daniel locks himself in the toilet cubicle.

INT. TRAIN TOILET CUBICLE - DAY

Daniel hunches over the sink, throws up.

Daniel splashes water over his face.

Daniel sits on the toilet seat, head in his hands, scrunching his hair, crying.

INT. BICYCLE SHOP - NIGHT

Daniel sits at his workbench. He looks drained.

Laid out in front of him is the shoebox of medals and newspaper clippings.

Next to the shoebox is a bottle of tablets, a bottle of whisky and an empty glass.

Daniel picks through the shoebox, lays out the medals.

He scans the newspaper clippings.

His eyes flick between to the tablets and the whisky bottle.

JESSIE (O.S.)
You had your chance Daniel.

Daniel looks around, but there's no Jessie.

Daniel stares at the medals.

Jessie's grainy distorted image flickers by a row of bikes.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
Now it's my turn.

Daniel stands, faces Jessie.

DANIEL
(shouts)
You're not real!

Daniel lunges at Jessie's shadowy form, snatches thin air.

JESSIE
Are you sure?!

Daniel falls over the bikes, crashes to the floor.

The sound of Jessie's cackling laughter behind Daniel.

DANIEL
Leave me alone! Please.

Daniel picks himself up, walks to the bench, slumps down.

JESSIE
There's only one way to get rid of
me Daniel.

Daniel packs up the medals, puts the shoebox under the bench.

Daniel pours a large whisky.

DANIEL
(vacant)
It wasn't my fault.

He stares at the tablets, reluctantly opens the packet.

Daniel tips a tablet into his palm.

Daniel picks up the glass of whisky in his other hand.

JESSIE
Is this where you want to be,
hotshot?

Daniel stares at his hands, his eyes are moist.

DANIEL
I'm past caring.

Daniel puts a tablet in his mouth. He raises the whisky glass, is about to swallow when he's interrupted by--

INT/EXT. BICYCLE SHOP - NIGHT

--A tapping sound on glass. Daniel glances up, shocked.

Matthew is waving at Daniel through the glass shop front. Beside him is his mother, ANNE.

Daniel palms the tablet and hides it with the medication and whisky under the bench.

Daniel opens the door sheepishly. He glances around, but Jessie's gone.

MATTHEW
Hello Mr. Wilson.

Matthew enters the shop, Anne follows.

ANNE
Sorry to disturb you Daniel.

Matthew holds up a box wrapped in bright paper.

Daniel hesitates, looks at Anne.

ANNE (CONT'D)
It's a thank you, for all your work on his bike.

Daniel kneels down, gently accepts the gift.

He carefully unwraps the present, pulls the lid off the box.

MATTHEW
You can't go to the Olympics in bare feet, Mr. Wilson.

Daniel gasps, lifts out a pair of new running spikes.

ANNE
He had some birthday money Daniel.

Daniel cradles the spikes in his hands, in a daze.

ANNE (CONT'D)
We couldn't persuade him to spend it on himself.

Daniel stares at Matthew, barely able to hold himself together.

Daniel reaches out, hugs Matthew.

Daniel looks up at Anne and with tears streaming, mouths: 'Thank you'

EXT. ATHLETICS TRACK - NIGHT

Daniel stands by the fence, watching sheets of rain drive down across the track.

He wipes fresh tears from his cheeks, then slaps himself around the face.

Daniel takes a deep breath, lowers his bag over the fence. He crouches and vaults the fence, clearing it effortlessly.

Daniel unpacks his bag, puts on the new running spikes.

Daniel stands at the 300m start, limbering up.

He wraps a stopwatch cord around his wrist, palms the watch.

On the opposite side of the track, unseen to Daniel, Stacy ducks under the shelter.

Daniel takes a deep breath, rolls his body back, head low, knees bent, arms angled.

Daniel propels himself away, sprinting hard and fast.

The grainy Ghostly Athlete image of Jessie running alongside Daniel.

Their stride patterns mirror each other, gradually merging into one as they round the bend and sprint down the home straight.

Daniel dips for the finish line, clicks the stopwatch.

He hunches down, exhausted.

EXT. ATHLETICS TRACK - NIGHT

Daniel approaches the shelter, hands on hips, breathing hard.

He strips off his wet kit, unaware Stacy is sitting in the shadows.

STACY

Nice butt.

Daniel jumps, turns. Stacy emerges from the shadows.

STACY (CONT'D)
Told you the passion was still
there.

Daniel hurriedly pulls his tracksuit on.

DANIEL
I thought you'd gone home for good.

STACY
I heard you'd given the selectors a
headache. You're quite the news
story, Daniel. Even in Canada.

Daniel chuckles.

DANIEL
Yeah, guess there's some unfinished
business after all.

STACY
How long have you been on the happy
pills?

Daniel stares at her.

DANIEL
You knew?

STACY
I guessed.
(pause)
But that's only half the problem,
isn't it.

Daniel looks away, distracted.

INT. BICYCLE SHOP - DAY

Stacy reaches under the workbench, retrieves the bottle of
tablets and whisky.

She holds them up.

Daniel nods.

INT. BICYCLE SHOP BATHROOM - DAY

Daniel watches from the open door as Stacy pours the whisky
down the sink.

She tips the tablets into the toilet.

Jessie is sitting upside down on the ceiling.

JESSIE
You won't get rid of me that
easily.

Daniel glances up at Jessie.

Stacy flushes the toilet.

INT. DANIEL'S HOUSE - DAY

Daniel stands on the stairs, hands Stacy the framed sporting
photographs one by one.

Stacy wraps the photos in bubble wrap, puts them in a box.

There's a knock on the front door.

Daniel jogs down the stairs, opens the door to an ESTATE
AGENT and his polyester smile.

ESTATE AGENT
Good afternoon. I'm looking for
Daniel Wilson.

DANIEL
You've found him. Come in.

The Estate Agent eyes Daniel suspiciously, steps in.

EXT. GARAGE - DAY

The Estate Agent finishes making notes and glances back at
the house. Daniel stands next to him with hands in pockets.

ESTATE AGENT
It needs a lot of work.

DANIEL
Which I believe means it has
potential.

ESTATE AGENT
It's available immediately, with
vacant possession?

DANIEL
It is. But I need the dungeon until
after the Olympics.

ESTATE AGENT
(startled)
The dungeon?

Daniel waves his hand at the garage.

STACY

Yeah. The prisoner is up for early parole.

Daniel smirks, watches the Estate Agent retreat to his car.

Stacy joins him, slips her hand over his shoulder.

STACY (CONT'D)

He left in a hurry.

DANIEL

No sense of humour.

STACY

You sure about all this?

Daniel nods, runs his fingers through his hair.

DANIEL

It's time for a few changes.

INT. BICYCLE SHOP - NIGHT

An electric whirring sound. On the workbench is packaging for a set of electric hair clippers.

Stacy stands over Daniel, who is sitting bare-chested on a stool.

She switches off the buzzing clippers in her hand.

STACY

I might not recognise you.

DANIEL

I'm hoping I won't recognize myself. Go for it.

Stacy shrugs, fires up the clippers and starts shaving Daniel's head.

Half of one side of Daniel's head is bald.

Stacy scalps the other side.

She tips his chin up, smiles at their eye contact, then starts trimming his beard.

INT. SHOWER - NIGHT

Daniel shaves his head, runs fingers over his bare scalp.

He rinses the razor under the cascading water, rubs shaving gel into his face.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Daniel towel dries.

He dresses, catches his reflection in the mirror.

Was that a flicker of Jessie hovering in the background?

INT. DANIEL FLAT - NIGHT

Stacy is preparing dinner in the open-plan kitchen.

She turns as Daniel enters the room, gasps at his appearance.

STACY

You look just like the old photos.

DANIEL

This is the improved twenty-twelve version.

STACY

Alright. Welcome back.

DANIEL

Welcome back yourself.

An awkward moment between them.

Stacy withdraws into the kitchen, Daniel sits on the couch.

JESSIE

Boo!

Daniel is startled to see Jessie sitting next to him. He jumps up, spooked.

Jessie giggles like a child.

Daniel approaches the kitchen area.

DANIEL

Can I help?

STACY

Sure.

Stacy hands him a peeler and vegetables.

Daniel peels and chops, keeps a wary eye out for Jessie.

JESSIE (O.S.)

Watch what you're doing with that knife, brother.

Daniel jumps, Stacy watches him, amused and concerned.

INT. DANIEL'S FLAT - NIGHT

Daniel and Stacy are sitting on the couch.

STACY

So, mister man. You're on your way.

Daniel nods, holds eye contact with her. Jessie is standing over them behind the couch.

Stacy starts to lean in. Daniel is drawn to her.

Close now, their lips almost touch--

--Jessie's hands bongo-drum Daniel's shaved head, cackling with laughter.

Daniel jumps up.

DANIEL

Bugger off Jessie!

Jessie whoops, prances around the room like a court jester.

Stacy backs away, spooked.

STACY

He's here, now?

Daniel checks himself, but Jessie starts blowing raspberries.

DANIEL

Yeah, mischievous devil.

Stacy scans the room; sees nothing. She enters the kitchen.

Daniel watches Jessie cavort around the room.

JESSIE

(chanting)

I'm coming with you, I'm coming
with you!

Jessie runs around the wall laughing. He's like a motorcyclist on the wall of death, defying gravity.

Stacy reappears with something in her hand.

STACY

Point to where he is.

Daniel frowns, then points to the side wall.

DANIEL

There.

Stacy throws a fine dust at the wall.

Jessie runs through it, waving his arms, whooping.

Jessie screws his face up, loses momentum as he sneezes and crashes to the floor.

Daniel sneezes at the same time.

STACY
Did I get him?

Daniel's jaw hangs slack.

He stares at Jessie writhing on the carpet, red-faced, sneezing and gasping.

JESSIE
(rasping)
Water!

Jessie staggers to the kitchen, buries his face in the sink, drinks the dishwater.

DANIEL
What the hell is going on?

Stacy holds out a jar of mixed spice.

STACY
Even the spirits sneeze!

Daniel takes the jar, laughs.

DANIEL
Met your match now Jessie! There's
a new jester in town!

Daniel's laughter becomes hysterical.

INT. DANIEL'S FLAT - NIGHT

Daniel and Stacy are sitting on the couch watching TV.

Stacy yawns. Daniel holds the remote, turns the TV off.

STACY
I should go, but...

DANIEL
You don't have your flat anymore.

An awkward moment, both are unsure what happens next.

STACY
No.

DANIEL
Then stay.

They hold eye contact, gauging each other.

Stacy edges towards Daniel, strokes his face tenderly.

They kiss, gently at first, then more passionately.

INT. DANIEL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Daniel and Stacy are cuddled up in bed, sleeping peacefully.

Jessie sits on the floor sulking, rubbing his nose.

INT. BICYCLE SHOP - DAY

Daniel is sitting at the workbench.

The newspaper clippings are laid alongside the shoebox.

DANIEL
My medals are gone.

Stacy appears from the storeroom holding a thin rectangular package wrapped in brown paper.

STACY
Yup. I have a surprise for you.

Stacy presents the package to him.

Daniel tears the paper away, revealing all his medals mounted in a frame.

Beneath each medal is a date.

The last date is '2012', but there is an empty space above it.

STACY (CONT'D)
(points to space in frame)
That's your focus now.

Daniel's eyes glaze over as he lingers on each medal, lost in the past.

DANIEL
Thank you.

STACY
No problem.
(pause)
Ready?

Daniel nods. Stacy hands him a disposable lighter.

Daniel holds out a newspaper clipping, lights it.

DANIEL
There's not much time.

Daniel and Stacy watch as the flimsy paper burns to nothing.

STACY
Nope. You're going to need some
help.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Daniel is standing on the sand, a long strap on his hips
attached to a large car tyre, six feet behind him.

He crouches down, sprints forward, kicking up sand, driving
his legs hard, towing the tyre.

Stacy clicks a stopwatch, shouts encouragement at him.

INT. THE DUNGEON - DAY

A loud uplifting 1980s power ballad from a CD player.

Daniel's working hard at sit-up crunches, sweat glistening.

Jessie is standing over Daniel. Jessie's nose is bright red.

JESSIE
(nasal)
You're a has been Daniel, an old
man in a young man's world...

DANIEL
(gasping)
Louder!

Stacy turns the music up, drowning out Jessie.

Daniel grits his teeth, increases his workout tempo.

EXT/INT. BEACH - DAY

Stacy watches the rain driving across the beach from the
shelter of the E-Type, a flask of coffee steaming up the
window.

On the beach Daniel is hurdling the groyne, running through
the surf.

He's saturated and exhausted, but grits his teeth, ploughs
on.

EXT. COUNTRY LANE, LONG HILL - DAY

Daniel is riding Jessie's vintage bike up a long hill.

He's standing forward on the pedals, using his whole body to push down, power the bike uphill, working incredibly hard.

Jessie is sitting cross-legged in the basket, facing Daniel.

JESSIE
(nasal)
You're gutless, Daniel Wilson.

DANIEL
(through gritted teeth)
Bugger off Jessie!

Other CYCLISTS pass Daniel with ease.

They give him strange looks.

Daniel clears the brow, zooms downhill. Jessie is gone.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
(shouts)
Yeeehhhhaaaaaa!

EXT. ATHLETICS TRACK - DAY

A line of ten hurdles spaced close together.

Daniel bounds effortlessly over each hurdle.

INT. THE DUNGEON - DAY

Daniel is bare-chested, lying on the exercise mat, gasping for breath, soaked in sweat.

STACY
Ten seconds.

Daniel pulls a face, rolls over and jumps up, grips a pull up bar.

STACY (CONT'D)
Time.

Daniel grimaces, pulls his knees up to his chest, eases them down.

Daniel repeats the exercise, his abs flexing with superb definition.

STACY (CONT'D)
Half way. Keep it going...

Daniel slows, but is still working hard.

DANIEL
(shouting, gritting teeth)
Come on!

Daniel grimaces, pushes through the pain.

Jessie is standing on his head, watching.

JESSIE
(taunting)
A girl could do better!

Daniel increases speed, clenches his eyes shut.

DANIEL
Aaaarrrrrrhhhhh!

Stacy watches the stopwatch.

Daniel is really working now, upping the tempo.

STACY
And rest.

Daniel squeezes out three more reps, then hangs there, gasping.

STACY (CONT'D)
Good work.
(pause)
One more set.

Daniel drops down, crouches on the floor, breathing hard.

INT. UK SPORT HEAD OFFICE - DAY

Daniel stands in front of the same UK Athletics Panel.

Barbara Woods clears her throat, rustles some paper.

BARBARA WOODS
Test results taken this morning
show no traces of any banned
substances.

Daniel's eyes light up.

DAVID HAWKER
But if you're to represent your
country, we can't have a repeat of
that incident.

David glances sideways at Craig, who looks down, ashamed.

DANIEL

No sir.

BARBARA WOODS

You've earned the right to compete again. Congratulations Daniel.

Daniel grins.

DANIEL

Thank you.

Daniel approaches the panel, offers his hand.

David and Barbara shake Daniel's hand enthusiastically.

Craig appears reluctant, but accepts Daniel's hand.

Daniel walks away.

CRAIG SIMMONS

Daniel.

Daniel's almost at the door. He turns.

CRAIG SIMMONS (CONT'D)

Don't let the ghosts from the past screw up your future.

Daniel stares at Craig, then pulls the door shut.

INT. DANIEL'S BEDROOM - DAY

Daniel is packing a sports bag.

Stacy is sitting on the bed.

He places his normal training kit in the bag, then holds up an England vest.

DANIEL

You know how long it is since I last wore this? Several design changes.

STACY

Give me experience over youth any day.

Daniel smiles, packs the lycra vest and closes the bag.

STACY (CONT'D)

Is he here?

Daniel nods, tips his head to the side.

Stacy looks at the wardrobe. Jessie sits cross-legged on top, clutching his red nose.

DANIEL
Say something inspiring Jessie.

Jessie flips Daniel the finger.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
He's pleased for me.

Daniel picks up the bag.

STACY
I'm proud of you Daniel. You made it back.

They grin at each other and embrace.

STACY (CONT'D)
I'll be waiting in the crowd.

DANIEL
(whispering)
Thank you. You've been amazing.

STACY
(whispering)
That's because I'm Canadian!

They break into giggles.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY

Daniel is standing by Eva's gravestone. He's holding a bunch of flowers.

Jessie stands behind a tree, ten feet away.

DANIEL
(over shoulder)
No theatrics today, Jessie?

Daniel turns, glances at Jessie, then kneels by the grave.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
Never thought I'd be having *this* conversation with you Eva.
(pause)
I still can't believe I have another chance. It seems--

JESSIE (O.S.)
--Unjustified.

Daniel turns.

DANIEL

I've earned it! You are me Jessie
and I don't need you anymore.

Daniel turns back to the grave, arranges the flowers.

A smile flickers across Jessie's lips as he watches Daniel.

JESSIE

(haunting whisper that
sounds like Eva)

I know, brother. Now run like your
feet are on fire!

Daniel looks round, shocked. But Jessie is gone.

EXT. 2012 OLYMPIC STADIUM - NIGHT

A packed stadium CROWD for the opening ceremony.

The Olympic flame is carried onto the track by a MAN and
WOMAN, both dressed in white with a red and blue insignia.

The flame climbs a vast tower, is cast into a bowl and the
stadium Olympic flame bursts into life.

Fireworks explode overhead.

A hologram is projected above the stadium: 'London 2012'

DANCERS parade on the field in the middle of the track.

JUGGLERS, FIRE EATERS and GYMNASTIC PERFORMERS wow the crowd.

OLYMPIANS parade in formal dress behind their countries'
flags.

The BRITISH TEAM wave to the crowd, enjoying their moment.

RANDOM FACES in the crowd, cheering, euphoric.

Daniel walks with the British Team, savouring the atmosphere,
yet is also almost overcome with emotion.

In the crowd is Jessie, dressed identically to Daniel in
formal 'Team GB' jacket and tie.

Jessie nods an acknowledgement to Daniel.

Fireworks disperse, Jessie fades from view.

Daniel holds eye contact with Jessie.

The fireworks fade.

Something niggles Daniel about Jessie, a vague realization he
can't quite place.

EXT. 2012 OLYMPIC STADIUM - DAY

Daniel and seven other OLYMPIC ATHLETES walk slowly through a dimly lit corridor.

Double doors are pulled open by GAMES OFFICIALS.

Light floods the corridor.

Daniel follows the other seven Olympic Athletes out onto the running track.

Around the oval stadium, 80,000 SPECTATORS cheer.

The Olympic Athletes make their way to the start.

Daniel places his bag in the basket behind his blocks, starts stripping down to his racing kit.

Daniel instinctively glances over at the long jump runway.

Daniel's face falls as he sees Jessie limbering up.

Jessie's form resembles one of the Ghostly Athletes grainy image, flickering in and out of focus.

Jessie's features slowly morph, his posture shrinks into Eva. She's dressed in retro UK athletics kit.

Daniel stares at Eva, stunned.

Eva turns to Daniel. She holds his gaze for a long moment.

Eva smiles enigmatically and mouths: 'thank you, brother'

Daniel's jaw drops. Tears well in his eyes.

Eva surveys the crowd around the vast stadium, enjoying her moment.

She raises her hands above her head, starts slow clapping.

The crowd reacts to Eva, begins slow clapping in time with her.

80,000 people clap in time. The tempo gradually speeds up, getting louder.

Daniel blinks back his tears, allows them to fall freely.

Eva draws back on her heels, pauses for a beat, then rolls forwards onto her toes and launches into four purposeful timing steps.

Eva breaks into a sprint.

Her relaxed running style; poetry in motion.

Eva's body grows back into Jessie, sprinting at full throttle, shown in SLOW MOTION as the take-off board looms.

Jessie's last few strides before the take-off board.

Jessie's face morphs back into Eva.

Eva hits the take-off board perfectly, launches herself into the air over the long jump pit.

Eva's arms and legs claw the air.

Daniel glances at the LONG JUMP OFFICIAL, who raises a white flag; a legal jump.

Eva sails high over the long jump pit, a euphoric smile on her face.

Eva's body slowly disperses over the long jump pit, like a slow motion cloud burst firework.

Daniel stares at Eva disappearing, her smile lingering.

A fine powder glints and drifts over the sand, almost as if Eva's sparkling ashes have been scattered in mid air.

More tears fall from Daniel's cheeks as the last glinting particles disappear over the long jump pit.

STARTER (O.S.)

On your marks.

Daniel blinks back to reality, struggling not to hyperventilate.

Daniel wipes his eyes. He takes some quick deep breaths, tries to find his composure.

He screws his eyes tightly shut, clenches his fists.

Daniel opens his eyes, shakes out the tension from his body, takes a deep breath and walks purposely forward.

Daniel settles into his starting blocks.

STARTER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Set.

Daniel slowly rises, poised.

Daniel lifts his eyes, the first hurdle in sharp focus.

The starter's gun; 'Crack!'

Daniel sprints hard out of the blocks, low and fast.

The crowd ROARS!

Daniel sprints towards the first hurdle, relaxed and fast.

Thousands of camera flashes go off around the stadium.

The camera flashes form a stroboscopic effect, slowing the action into a MONTAGE of stuttering SLOW MOTION images:

Daniel's relaxed flowing running style.

His perfect stride pattern approaching the first hurdle, springing off his toes.

Daniel throws his lead leg over the hurdle, leans forwards...

On Daniel's face:

Complete focus.

Courage.

Contentment.

Daniel starts to pull his trail leg through.

Daniel is frozen in mid air over the hurdle, immortalized in an identical image to the framed photograph of Ed Moses.

End.