

GALLOP

Pilot

Written by

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EXT. THE CURRAGH - DAY

The sun escapes from behind the fat black clouds of an Irish spring. Sheep idle across the desaturated wasteland. Flat and wet like old muddy boot heel, a military playground and the home of Irish Horse racing - this is The Curragh of Kildare.

Racecourse stands can be seen across the plains, the air heavy with SHOUTS from the crowd - a race reaching a climax.

INT. BATHROOM - JOCKEY'S WEIGHING ROOM - DAY

MAUREEN "MO" BUTLER, 18, sharp featured with a wit to match is hunkered down in the stall. She tries to catch her breath, panic engulfing her.

BUZZ! Her phone beside her. A fearful glance to it.

INT. JOCKEY'S WEIGHING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Mo sits, helmet upturned in her lap, now dressed in red and black jockey's silks (jockey's colored garments).

She holds a ragged newspaper clipping. TADHG BUTLER, 40's, atop a dappled grey horse, holding a trophy aloft - *"Tadhg Butler & Bluebird - victorious!"*

She tucks the clipping into band of her helmet, puts it on.

EXT. RACECOURSE - DAY

The rain falls hard as a string of JOCKEYS make their way towards the parade ring, Mo amongst them.

She looks down to find a LITTLE GIRL holding a race card out to her. THE FATHER smiles apologetically. Mo hunkers down and signs it, offering her a feeble smile. Pained, she watches them disappear into the crowd.

EXT. RACECOURSE - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

Mo walks into the parade ring, glancing to the spectators.

ESOSA BELLO, 40's, leather jacket, if nails are tough then she's tougher, nods to Mo as she passes.

EXT. STARTING STALLS - RACETRACK - DAY

Mo sits on a trembling white horse. A soft pet and it turns it's head to her, taking her in.

Mo looks left to GARY ROCHE, 20, haggard, with hollowed eyes, made darker by the bruises that cover his face. He is a few stalls up on a big bay horse - BALLYPHEHANE. A pained look between them. Mo breaks it, staring ahead.

CRASH! The stalls burst open and the horses break free.

TITLE CARD: GALLOP

EXT. THE GALLOPS - THE CURRAGH - MORNING

CARD: ONE YEAR AGO: THE CURRAGH, IRELAND

Mo is hidden in a gorse bush, clad in a grubby tracksuit over a faded school uniform. A rusty BMX and tattered schoolbag sits alongside.

Through binoculars, she watches a herd of racehorses charging around the bend of the sand training track - "The Gallops."

She twirls a twig through her fingers - her make-shift whip as Ballypnehane passes the leader, the jockey pushing him on.

VINNIE DAY, 60, once slick, now frayed at the edges, watches on from the rails with his Assistant Trainer SALIM, 30's, small, with a mustache forever in it's infancy.

Ballypnehane pulls to a stop in front of them. The jockey removes his goggles - a slightly healthier looking Gary.

Gary's eyes dart to Mo and she ducks out of view.

EXT. THE CURRAGH - MORNING

Mo cycles hard, headphones in, passing a military convoy.

EXT. THE CURRAGH - MOMENTS LATER

Mo is stopped at the entrance of ROSELODGE STABLES. The gateway is cordoned off by Garda (Irish Police) tape, which flutters from the gates.

EXT. ST. LEO'S SECONDARY SCHOOL - MORNING

Mo passes a run-down playground and a series of grubby boarded up shops before skidding into ST. LEO'S - an uninviting cement block that masquerades as a school.

INT. ST. LEO'S - CLASSROOM - MOMENTS LATER

MISS COYLE, 60's, sickly sweet masking iron, hands out copybooks. PUPILS turn as Mo enters.

MISS COYLE
Late for the first race Miss
Butler?

MO
They're not off until two.

CLARA, 17, the epitome of teen-girl glam, waves her hand dramatically in front of her nose, recoiling from Mo.

CLARA
Ugh...did you just crawl out of
your stable?

Mo ruffles Clara's perfectly groomed hair as she passes. She goes to her desk and takes out her things.

CIARAN, 17, pimply, leans over to her.

CIARAN
Any tips Mo?

She goes to answer as Miss Coyle floats towards her and snatches a copy of **The Racing Post** from under Mo's books.

MISS COYLE
Gambling's a terrible vice.

Coyle swoops back to her desk, newspaper in hand. Mo simmers.

INT. ST. LEO'S CLASSROOM - LATER

The STUDENTS file out. Mo is at the door when...

MISS COYLE
A word.

Coyle examines Mo's circled bets in **The Racing Post**. She closes it revealing a picture of ROSELODGE STABLES under the headline...

"Criminal Assets Bureau seize horses from Trainer Danny Scott. Links to Dwyer Cartel Revealed!" by Esosa Bello.

MISS COYLE (CONT'D)
You didn't hand up any homework.

MO
(Nodding at the paper)
I'm doing some extra maths instead.

Miss Coyle's eyes are pure ice, above a pasted smile.

MISS COYLE
Are you planning to spend the rest
of your life in a betting shop with
a bunch of grubby old men?

MO
Nope. I'm gonna be a jockey.

MISS COYLE
(Laughing)
A career like that will gobble you
up and spit you out. It's not
exactly what one would call... a
very feminine profession is it?

MO
I think Rachel Blackmore would
disagree with you...Miss.

The pasted smile now quivers on her cheeks.

MISS COYLE
Surely your grandmother has higher
hopes for you especially after...

Mo looks as though she might punch her.

MO
Keep it. Throw a few quid down if
you like - treat yourself to a new
blouse with the winnings.

Miss Coyle's pursed lips part.

MISS COYLE
I would have you suspended again,
but I think some more detention
will do you good.

With a final glare, Mo is gone. Miss Coyle looks down at her
patterned blouse and readjusts her collar.

INT. SAUNA - GYM - DAY

A credit card scrapes a thick soapy lather from a skeletal arm, before being scraped into a half filled bucket.

Gary's silhouette cuts a jagged shape in the steam, his body half covered in soap. Sweat streams from a menu of scars, covering prominent vertebrae. Another labored scrape...

INT. GARY'S CAR - PARKED - RACECOURSE - DAY

Crumpled red bull cans litter the floor.

Gary snoozes, clad in a plastic sweating suit with the heating turned fully up, sweat covering his face.

INT. JOCKEY'S WEIGHING ROOM - DAY

Gary stands on the weighing scales. He tests the space between his watch strap and wrist, then shoots the scale's reading a filthy look.

EXT. RACETRACK - DAY

Gary jogs up the track wearing his sweating suit.

INT. JOCKEY'S WEIGHING ROOM - DAY

Gary, on the scales again. He tests the space between his watch again. Relief.

INT. JOCKEY'S WEIGHING ROOM - DAY

Jockey's silks being pulled on...the collar fastened with a safety pin...a whip twirled between rheumatic fingers.

INT. BETTING SHOP - DAY

Mo approaches PATSY, 70's, a gruff monolith, slouched over the counter. She slaps down a pile of betting slips.

PATSY

You're gonna put me out of
business, you wee shit.

MO

I love you too Patsy.

Mo rubs her hands together as Patsy counts out the notes.

PATSY

Right, be gone before I'm left
sitting here in my knickers.

MO

I hope you've waxed your bikini
line...

All business, she cuts the stack and points to a TV, where
Gary is being led into the stalls on Ballyphehane.

MO (CONT'D)

Fifty on Ballyphehane to win.

EXT. STARTING STALLS - RACETRACK - DAY

Gary grits his teeth. CRASH! The stalls fly open.

IN & OUT OF BLACK: A horse's widened eye...approaching a bend
along the rails...hooves kicking up sodden turf...the rear of
a horse, too close...then **SNAP TO BLACK.**

INT. BETTING SHOP - DAY

Mo turns from the screen, breath short, pained.

COMMENTATOR (V.O)

And Ballyphehane is down!

EXT. RACETRACK - DAY

Muffled GROANS of a distressed horse as Gary's muddy,
agonized face fills the frame.

EXT. STANDS - RACECOURSE - DAY

The crowd disperses as the race finishes, leaving Vinnie
isolated in the stands, staring at a betting slip, blood
draining quickly from his face.

INT. MEDIC'S OFFICE - DAY

A torch, shone into bleary eyes as the Medic LAURA, 40's,
performs a concussion test on Gary. She taps his arm.

LAURA

How's that shoulder?

GARY
Ah sure, still attached.

LAURA
That's your professional medical
opinion is it?

She softens, now treading carefully.

LAURA (CONT'D)
And how's everything else?
You know if you need to---

GARY
(Sharply)
I'm grand.

EXT. RACECOURSE - DAY

A TWEED-CLAD PUNTER spits on the ground as Gary passes.

INT. BATHROOM - JOCKEY'S WEIGHING ROOM - DAY

Gary takes off his silks and back-protector, revealing a badly bruised shoulder. He attempts to rotate it, gasping.

A bottle of painkillers roll under the door. Gary grabs them and opens the stall door.

CONOR TIMMINS, 20's, cherubic, takes him in - "*Fuck...*" Gary smiles and holds up a pouch of tobacco.

GARY
Lunch?

EXT. RACECOURSE - DAY

Gary and Conor smoke. Wincing, Gary lifts his cigarette to his mouth. Conor eyes him, dismayed.

Vinnie approaches.

VINNIE
Careful there Con. Fuck-ups are
contagious.

Gary's eyes hit the concrete in shame.

EXT. PARADE RING - RACECOURSE - MOMENTS LATER

Vinnie and Gary are leant over the rails of the parade ring.

GARY

Sorry Vin...

Vinnie just stares ahead, impassive. He glances at Gary out of the corner of his eye - a flicker of concern.

VINNIE

Just man up and move on.

(beat)

And stay away from that shite on the internet.

Vinnie leaves. Gary takes a breath, holding the rail tightly.

EXT. ST. CHRISTOPHER'S ESTATE - EVENING

Rubbish and mortar litter the dilapidated estate. There are bad neighborhoods and then there's here.

A group of LADS, all tracksuits and wife-beater vests, loiter with two Piebald ponies beside them.

PADDY, 10, the leader, whistles to Mo as she cycles past.

PADDY

Still on for later?

MO

Yup. Bring your fucking A-Game.

INT. HALLWAY - BUTLER FLAT - EVENING

80's music BLASTS from the living room as Mo props her BMX against the wall and drops her bag.

INT. LIVING ROOM/KITCHEN - EVENING

A small living room with adjoining kitchenette. Damp stained, headache inducing floral wallpaper covers the walls.

SAL BUTLER, 70's, bee-hive and leopard print, smokes and puts on make-up at the table, her hand trembling, a symptom of early Parkinson's disease. She douses herself with perfume.

MO

Jesus Gran. What's that Eaux-de-Cat Piss?

SAL
Cheeky bitch.

Mo grabs a biscuit tin from the sideboard and transfers a fistful of notes from her pocket.

SAL (CONT'D)
That was for your lunch.

MO
I reinvested it.

Sal issues a long, raspy cough. Mo looks to a large mold stain on the ceiling. Sal catches her eye.

SAL
They said they'd send someone out next week.

MO
They said that a month ago too.

Sal attempts to tie a gold crucifix around her neck. Mo goes to her and does up the catch.

MO (CONT'D)
Leopard print and a crucifix.
Really?

SAL
It'll keep him guessing...
(beat)
Here, let me do your nails.

Mo rolls her eyes and sits. One-handed, Sal begins to paint her nails with florescent pink nail polish.

Sal's eyes fall to Mo's muddy trainers.

SAL (CONT'D)
I told you. I don't want you hanging around up there.

MO
I could be earning riding Gran. I could get us out of this fucking dump.

SAL
Keep bloody dreaming.

Ouch. Mo deflates.

SAL (CONT'D)
Christ, you're the bloody spit of him.

Mo looks away, jaw clenched.

MO
Look, do you want me to walk you down to the pub or what?

Sal shakes her head.

MO (CONT'D)
Just be careful. Take some money for a taxi home.

EXT. STABLE YARD - RACECOURSE - EVENING

Vinnie, phone to ear, watches Salim leading Ballyphehane into the horse-box.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S)
You have until Friday...

The line goes dead.

INT. CONOR'S CAR - PARKED - THE CURRAGH - EVENING

The sun sets behind the racecourse stands in the distance.

Untouched chips sit on the dash. Gary holds a bag of ice to his shoulder, scrolling on his phone. Conor goes to tip Vodka into Gary's Red Bull can. Gary stops him.

CONOR
Sorry...I didn't think.

Gary ignores him. Conor turns his attention to his own phone.

CONOR (CONT'D)
This one's good. *"Conor Timmins has Gary Butler on toast yet again!"*

GARY
You shouldn't be eating bread, you tubby little fuck.

Cars begin to arrive. People get out and make their way towards a small gathering at the end of the field.

Conor continues to scroll, then stops, paling. Gary eyes him. A forced smile. Gary sniffs the chips, then crumples the bag.

GARY (CONT'D)
Right, let's mosey.

Conor nods to Gary's shoulder.

CONOR
You're a glutton for punishment.

Gary grins and gets out of the car. Conor watches - pained.

EXT. THE CURRAGH - NIGHT

A ring of shouting men, SOLDIERS and JOCKEYS at odds, cheer as A FLABBY SOLDIER, 30's, lands a heavy blow on Gary. He falls, but jumps up quickly. A couple of body shots as his small fists submerge into the man's blubbery flesh.

The Flabby Soldier lunges for him, tackling him to the ground. He squeezes his knee into Gary's shoulder. His ruddy face blurs out of focus as Gary passes out.

INT. MO'S BEDROOM - BUTLER FLAT - NIGHT

Pony Racing trophies on shelves, images of Nina Carberry, and Rachel Blackmore on the walls. Taking pride of place is a picture of a younger Mo on a pony, Tadhg beside her.

Mo intently watches an old race on her small television.

COMMENTATOR (O.S)
And it's Country Queen from Tadhg
Butler on Bluebird as they round
the home stretch!

Tadhg pushes BLUEBIRD on, making for a gap in the herd. Suddenly, a horse clips Bluebird's heels. She falls and Tadhg is catapulted from her. His body is swallowed by the herd.

Mo pauses the race, then rewinds.

EXT. ST. CHRISTOPHER'S ESTATE - NIGHT

Fire burns in two barrels, marking a finish line.

Mo and Paddy race two Piebald ponies bareback towards them with a crowd of KIDS running behind. Mo raises her twig in victory as she takes the race.

EXT. ST. CHRISTOPHER'S ESTATE - NIGHT

Sal walks down a dark alleyway approaching the estate as TWO HOODED FIGURES approach her from behind.

INT. MO'S BEDROOM - BUTLER FLAT - NIGHT

Mo wakes as keys RATTLE in the front door, followed by a CLATTERING of stilettos. Mo sits up in bed.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Mo finds Sal hunched over, her face a mess of mascara tears.

MO
What's wrong Gran?

SAL
Nothing love. Go back to bed.

Mo goes to her as she tries to hide her face. Mo's eyes dart to Sal's coat.

MO
Where's your bag?

SAL
It was just some little scrotes...

MO
For fuck sake Gran, I told you to
get a taxi!

She sits down next to Sal, putting her arm around her.

MO (CONT'D)
Did you get a look at them?

Sal shakes her head.

MO (CONT'D)
Did the date go well at least?

SAL
No, he smelled like a chippers and
he didn't even have his teeth in.

They laugh. Sal rests her head on Mo's shoulder.

INT. GARY'S CARAVAN - NIGHT

Shirtless, Gary sits on his sofa bed, breath rattling. His shoulder has blackened. He gobbles some pills, then holds his hand out in front of him. The fingers have curled inwards. He plies them open, staring at his trembling hand.

He takes out his phone and scrolls - *"Crooked"... "Useless" ... "I'll break your fucking legs!"* He stops...

"Kill yourself you coked up little cunt!"

INT. BANK - MORNING

Vinnie sits across from the Bank Manager JOHN, 50's, showing him pictures of SARAH, 21, in a graduation gown on his phone.

VINNIE

She's straight onto her Masters
now...

John's eyes shift to a stack of papers on his desk.

JOHN

Look Vin, you know I'd give you the
keys to the vault myself if I
could...

VINNIE

How long have I got?

JOHN

A few months, give or take.

Vinnie stands. John follows suit, eyes narrowing.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I do a little bit of private
consultation work for Bishop's
Betting...I know the Boss-Lady was
looking for a new trainer. I could
have a word?

Vinnie gets visibly uncomfortable. A non-committal nod.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Just...em...one more thing. Any
tips for Dundalk this evening?

Vinnie can't help but smile.

EXT. THE CURRAGH - MORNING

Mo dozes in the bushes. Hooves appear at her head.

GARY (O.S)
Spying again?

Mo wakes with a start. She shields her eyes from the sun, attempting to make out the figure on the horse, the silhouette dancing with the beams.

MO
It's a free country...

Gary comes into focus. A glance to Mo's binoculars.

GARY
Come with me...

MO
Not even gonna try and lure me with
sweets, no?

GARY
Don't flatter yourself.

EXT. THE CURRAGH - LATER

Mo wheels her bike beside Gary and Ballyphehane.

MO
I was a couple of years below you
in school.

GARY
Mmm...Mo Butler. Pony racing
extraordinaire.

MO
(Sharply)
Gary Jackson...drop-out.

An ouch, quickly hidden. He nods to the binoculars.

GARY
Yeah, I can see that your education
is very important to you.

MO
Want me to give you an education on
how to stay in the fucking saddle?

GARY

Wow...

MO

I think you've still got some of
the grass that you swallowed
between your teeth.

GARY

Okay, we've established that you're
a bitch. Can we move on?

EXT. DRIVEWAY - BAUMFIELD STABLES - MORNING

They approach a small ivy covered farmhouse with an adjoining
barn. A rusty caravan rests alongside. Every inch of the yard
announces that it has seen better days.

A string of horses with WORK-RIDERS aboard, walk around
Vinnie and Salim. CHARLES "SPLINTER" CLEARY, 30, craggy,
leads on LIGHTNING SPIRE, Conor behind him.

Splinter looks Mo up and down. He approaches, giving his
mount a hard kick in the stomach, causing it to lurch.

SPLINTER

(To Gary)

Finally caught the turf rat then?

Mo pets Lightning Spire, calming him. Splinter's eyes narrow
at her nail polish.

SPLINTER (CONT'D)

Nice nails. Maybe she'll do your's
Con.

Conor reddens. The horses edge towards the driveway as
Vinnie's gaze rests on Mo, grin spreading across his face.

VINNIE

There's a Butler if ever I saw
one...

EXT. THE GALLOPS - THE CURRAGH - MORNING

The horses gallop as Vinnie and Mo walk along the rail.

VINNIE

You still riding?

MO

Bit hard to keep ponies in a flat.

Vinnie - confused.

MO (CONT'D)
I'm over on my Nan's estate...

Off Vinnie's look. Mo looks away - embarrassed.

MO (CONT'D)
It's not as bad as everyone says.

Vinnie quickly changes tact.

VINNIE
She still breaking balls?

INT. BARN - BAUMFIELD STABLES - MORNING

Stable staff move to and fro, mucking out and sweeping. Mo glances into the empty stables, Vinnie beside her.

MO
You downsizing or something?

Vinnie just shakes his head, avoiding the question.

VINNIE
You were a good little rider from
what I can remember...

Mo stops, staring him down.

MO
Are you going to offer me a job or
just keep flirting?

VINNIE
Talk about getting to the point.

MO
I don't have all day.

Vinnie looks at Mo's school uniform.

VINNIE
I can see that. Well, why should I?

MO
Because I'm better than any other
jockey you've got.

VINNIE
 Cocky little fucker aren't you?
 (beat)
 Why do you want to be a jockey?

MO
 I...em...I love horses.

VINNIE
 Be a Vet then.

MO
 I want to ride.

VINNIE
 Get yourself a donkey.

MO VINNIE (CONT'D)
 I--- C'mon, why?

Fire burns in Mo's eyes.

MO (CONT'D)
 I want to fucking win.

VINNIE
 There you go.

Vinnie looks at her faded tracksuit top.

VINNIE (CONT'D)
 And maybe a new tracksuit too?

Mo gets visibly embarrassed.

VINNIE (CONT'D)
 You've that hungry look your owld
 lad had anyway...

EXT. YARD - MORNING

Mo and Vinnie make their way across the yard. Gary smokes on the steps of the rusty caravan.

VINNIE
 Half six tomorrow morning. Now,
 fuck off before I change my mind.

Mo beams.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - MORNING

Mo cycles fast, headphones in, lost in her own world.

Suddenly, she nearly collides with a Mercedes turning in. The tinted window comes down and a thick cloud of smoke pours out. Steely, mascara encased eyes draw her in, cobra-like.

Mo flips the obscured figure off and continues on her way.

EXT. THE CURRAGH - MORNING

Mo wheels her bike along the edge of the road. Gary's battered Honda slows beside her and the window comes down.

GARY

Fancy some sweets?

INT. GARY'S CAR - TRAVELLING - MOMENTS LATER

Gary drums his fingers on the steering wheel. Mo glances at him out of the corner of her eye.

MO

So what are you, his rent-boy?

GARY

Very funny.

MO

What about the others?

GARY

Mixed bag really. Con rides out a couple of mornings a week. The others are mostly townies, Vin keeps them from hanging around street corners. Salim's Syrian...Vin helped out his folks when they came over...

MO

And the in-bred?

GARY

(Laughing)

Splinter? Stable jockey. But he's getting a bit long in the tooth. I'll be next in line.

MO

We'll see...

GARY
Come back to me when you've ridden
in a proper race.

Gary pulls to a stop in front of Mo's school. Miss Coyle
clocks them from the front steps.

GARY (CONT'D)
Christ that old bitch is still
alive is she?

Miss Coyle's face turns tomato red, glaring at them as Mo
gets out of Gary's car.

GARY (CONT'D)
You're welcome!

Mo takes her bike from the boot. With a BEEP, Gary speeds
away. Mo approaches the school.

MISS COYLE
You'd want to be careful of him...

Mo just strides past her.

INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - LATER

Gary is sat across from CIARA, 40's, exudes warmth.

CIARA
So how are we doing?

GARY
Ah grand...yeah.
(beat)
Em...just a bit flat I suppose.

Ciara's eyes probe further, holding the silence.

GARY (CONT'D)
I'm still pissing sparkling water,
don't worry.

INT. HALLWAY - BUTLER FLAT - EARLY MORNING

Mo tiptoes down the hallway and grabs her bike.

EXT. YARD - BAUMFIELD STABLES - EARLY MORNING

The rain falls in heavy grey sheets. Drenched, Mo cycles up
the drive-way into the yard.

A line of horses, riders atop file out of the barn led by Splinter and Gary. Vinnie notices Mo and beckons her over.

VINNIE
Mornin'...

She submerges a yawn and nods in greeting.

MO
Em...I haven't got any gear.

Splinter sniggers as he passes, leading the string of horses.

VINNIE
One step at a time kiddo...

INT. TACK ROOM - MORNING

Mo polishes saddles and head-collars, cursing to herself.

INT. STABLE - MORNING

Mo grumpily holds Gary's mount as he untacks it.

GARY
Chin up stable jockey.

Mo's jaw sets.

EXT. YARD - MORNING

Mo struggles with Splinter's horse as he hoses it down. It moves around Mo, dragging her to and fro.

SPLINTER
Hold him fucking properly!

Splinter slaps him on the nose, causing the horse to lurch back in fear, pulling Mo with him.

INT. LUNCH ROOM - MORNING

The WORK-RIDERS chatter amongst themselves. Mo unwraps a tin-foil package and tucks into a sandwich. The room goes silent.

Mo looks up to find the entire room staring at her. There's no food in front of any of them - just packets of tobacco.

INT. BARN - DAY

Mo mucks out the white mare's stable, covered in sweat and manure. Panting, she stops and looks at her blistered hands. She takes off her tracksuit top, revealing a string vest.

GARY
Alright darlin'?

Mo whips to Gary, grooming kit in his hand. She scowls.

GARY (CONT'D)
I was talking to her, not you.

Gary comes into the stable and hands Mo a brush from his kit. They begin to brush the mare in silence.

GARY (CONT'D)
You don't recognize her do you?

Mo turns to Gary, confused.

GARY (CONT'D)
It's Bluebird...

Mo cracks, before quickly recovering herself.

MO
She's changed colour.

GARY
Age will do that to you.

Splinter appears, leering at them both.

SPLINTER
We've to do a breeze up...whenever
you're finished your little date.

EXT. THE GALLOPS - CURRAGH - MORNING

Mo watches Ballypnehane and Lightning Spire race with Gary and Splinter aboard. They climb the hill and Splinter begins to edge closer to Gary, bumping him. Gary ignores him and pushes his mount on, but Splinter repeats the action.

In a flash, Gary slaps Splinter hard across the cheek with his whip. Infuriated, Splinter cuts in front of Gary, causing Ballypnehane to stumble and collide with the rail.

Ballypnehane gallops riderless. Mo ducks quickly under the rail, arms raised. The horse slows and stops in front of her.

Mo leads Ballyphehane to Gary who is doubled over holding his shoulder.

INT. BARN - MORNING

Vinnie looks between Splinter and Gary. Mo stands behind him.

SPLINTER
He tripped. I told you that the
gallop needed leveling.

MO
That's not---

GARY
It was my own fault.

Vinnie - unconvinced. Mo fumes, eyes burning into Splinter.

VINNIE
(To Gary)
You're gonna have to get checked.

Gary rolls his eyes.

VINNIE (CONT'D)
Go and see Agata if you don't want
to go to A&E.

INT. VETERINARIAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Dogs and cats watch from their cages as AGATA, 40's, tattooed, examines Gary with a portable X-Ray machine.

An image of his shoulder takes form on her laptop.

AGATA
You've made a right mess here...

Gary just stares at the caged dogs.

AGATA (CONT'D)
I mean it. You should get yourself
checked out properly.

GARY
I can't...Vin needs me.

AGATA
Jesus, that fucking man.

GARY
You won't say anything will you?

Agata's look is steely.

AGATA
We're not talking.

GARY
Ah...sorry.

AGATA
Don't be. I'm not.

Gary stands and pulls on his t-shirt.

AGATA (CONT'D)
That shoulder won't take another
fall dziecko.

Gary nods and makes for the door.

INT. MO'S BEDROOM - BUTLER FLAT - MORNING

Mo watches her alarm clock - **5:00am**. She leaps from her bed.

MONTAGE

THE CURRAGH Mo pedals furiously as the sun rises.

BARN Mo mucks out manure, now in a complete flow.

BLUEBIRD'S STABLE Mo grooms Bluebird. She dances around the mare, headphones in, singing. Gary laughs as he passes.

LUNCH ROOM Mo has nothing but a cup of tea in front of her. She chatters away with Salim, glancing at Gary.

ST. LEO'S Gary drops Mo off at the school gates.

CLASSROOM Mo strides into the classroom, late.

BUTLER FLAT Sal sniffs one of Mo's trainers and recoils.

EXT. PADDOCK - BAUMFIELD STABLES - MORNING

Mo is sat on Bluebird with Vinnie beside them.

VINNIE
Right, show me your position.

MO
This is a load of wank. I know how
to ride.

VINNIE
 Galloping around housing estates
 doesn't constitute riding. G'wan.

Mo takes her position and urges Bluebird into a slow canter.

VINNIE (CONT'D)
 What are you doing, the funky
 chicken? Stop flapping your elbows.

Mo stops. Vinnie comes to her and minutely adjusts her arm.
 Mo looks at Gary as he crosses the yard. Vinnie notices.

VINNIE (CONT'D)
 Eyes ahead. That's rule number one.

Mo nods and canters off in a circle once more.

VINNIE (CONT'D)
 Okay, good. Take her for a spin.

EXT. THE GALLOPS - THE CURRAGH - MORNING

Vinnie watches them disappear into the horizon. He takes in
 the bitter-sweet picture with a sad smile.

Mo gallops lightly, testing Bluebird.

MO
 Right old-timer, let's see what
 you've got.

Bluebird takes off like a jet, getting faster and faster.

EXT. YARD - BAUMFIELD STABLES - MORNING

Mo and Vinnie make their way across the yard.

VINNIE
 You're not doing too shabby kid.
 Listen I was thinking---

Vinnie is cut off by the approach of a Mercedes, followed by
 two large horse-lorries. The convoy pulls to a stop.

CHRISTINA "THE DUCHESS" BISHOP, 50's, classy with a palpable
 steel, steps out.

CHRISTINA
 Ah, I love the smell of horse shit
 in the morning.

VINNIE
Mornin' Duchess.

Christina approaches, eyes set on Mo as she pops a cheroot
cigar between her red lips.

CHRISTINA
Who's the runt?

VINNIE MO
Em...this is--- Mo Butler.

Mo holds her hand out sharply to Christina. She takes it with manicured claws, surprised by the Mo's assured manner.

MO (CONT'D)
And who the fuck are you?

They stare off, hands still clasped together.

CHRISTINA
Butler? Tadhg's young one?

MO
That's me.

CHRISTINA
Well you have your Da's bollocks,
I'll give you that.

MO
I'll take that as a compliment.

CHRISTINA
I wouldn't.
(beat)
But if you're half as good in the
saddle, we'll let it slide.

VINNIE
She's my new apprentice.

Mo's mouth drops open in delighted shock.

INT. OFFICE - VINNIE'S HOUSE - MORNING

Receipts and invoices cover every surface. Winnie flicks on the kettle in the corner, watched by Christina.

CHRISTINA
Got anything stronger?

He nods and retrieves a bottle of Whisky from his desk. He smiles nervously as he pours her a glass.

CHRISTINA (CONT'D)
Not having one yourself?

Vinnie shakes his head. Christina lights another Cheroot.

CHRISTINA (CONT'D)
I'm thinking 60/40...

VINNIE
Sorry?

Christina's eyes drift around the office.

CHRISTINA
Look Vinnie, it's lovely this little refugee camp that you've got here, but it's not sustainable.

VINNIE
Honestly Christina, I'm happy to take on the horses, but---

CHRISTINA
I'll cover whatever little financial indiscretions that you've made as a gesture of good will.

Vinnie deflates into his seat.

CHRISTINA (CONT'D)
Word gets around. I'll sort out whatever dogs are nipping at your heels too. Think about it...

She drops the butt of her cheroot into her glass, stands and takes an envelope from inside her coat.

CHRISTINA (CONT'D)
Just a little token...
(beat)
You're already sitting on the bed.
You may as well come under the covers and get warm...

A lioness, toying with her prey.

INT. GARY'S CAR - TRAVELLING - THE CURRAGH - DAY

Gary slows as a line of sheep cross the road.

MO

What's with all the new horses?

GARY

Have you been following the Danny Scott case?

MO

Roselodge Stables? A bit, yeah.

GARY

Well Vin's taking them on.

MO

And what's the story with her?
Why is it that every bollock in the
yard seems to shrivel when she
opens her mouth?

Gary's darkens.

GARY

She owns Bishop's Bookmakers...and
she's well connected, I'll put it
that way.

EXT. ROADSIDE - THE CURRAGH - DAY

Christina's Mercedes pulls to a stop behind a parked Audi.

She gets out and approaches as the window comes down. A sports bag is passed out. Christina unzips it. It's full to the brim with stacks of fifty euro notes.

INT. MO'S BEDROOM - BUTLER FLAT - NIGHT

Mo scrolls through images of Christina at the races. She pauses, thrown by a picture of Christina and Tadhg, beaming to camera holding a trophy.

An article with an image of DANNY SCOTT, 60's, in the margins catches Mo's eye. She clicks on it.

"Race fixing secrets come to light as Danny Scott set to give evidence." - Esosa Bello.

INT. BETTING SHOP - MORNING

TOMMO, 40's, neanderthal jaw, fills out betting slips. Vinnie approaches and slides Christina's envelope across to him.

Tommo nods, not looking at him.

INT. STABLE - BAUMFIELD STABLES - MORNING

Mo grooms Bluebird with her headphones in. A hand takes a bud from her ear. She whips around to find Splinter.

INT. BARN - MORNING

Sweating, Mo unloads feed sacks from a jeep. Splinter is leant against it, watching her.

SPLINTER

Too heavy?

She throws down another sack, ignoring him.

SPLINTER (CONT'D)

You're getting on well here. Vin's very fond of you...and Gary.

Mo throws down another sack with an angry THUD.

SPLINTER (CONT'D)

I knew your Da back in the day.
Terrible what happened. But I suppose when your nerves are shot---

Mo drops the sack and moves quickly towards him. Splinter raises his hands in defense, laughing.

MO

What's your fucking problem?

SPLINTER

You've a temper on you. You'd want to watch that.

MO

Oh I would, would I?

WHACK! Mo punches him. Splinter grabs her wrists, swings her around and pins her to the jeep. Mo struggles as he moves in.

Gary appears and drags Splinter off, throwing him to the ground. He tries to stand but Gary lands a blow. Splinter returns it just as Vinnie rounds the corner and grabs Gary.

Splinter spits blood, and drags himself up.

VINNIE

Take a walk.

Splinter limps from the barn. Vinnie goes to Mo.

VINNIE (CONT'D)
You alright love?

She pushes past him.

INT. GARY'S CAR - TRAVELLING - THE CURRAGH - DAY

Gary broods on the road ahead. Blood oozes from a gash on his eye. They pull up at the front of the school. Miss Coyle looks on from the front steps.

Mo moves to dab Gary's eye with her sleeve. He flinches, then allows her to wipe the blood away. Hardening, he turns away.

GARY
I better go.

Mo nods and gets out of the car. Gary drives off as she approaches Miss Coyle.

MISS COYLE
You're late again.

MO
Obviously.

MISS COYLE
I don't want him hanging around here.

MO
Piss off.

Miss Coyle grabs her arm. Mo whips around, squaring up to her. For the first time, Miss Coyle's smile fails her.

MO (CONT'D)
Touch me again and you'll be left with a stump.

Miss Coyle considers her, then let's go, shook.

INT/EXT. GARY'S CAR - TRAVELLING - KILDARE TOWN - DAY

Gary pulls his car over quickly. He opens the door and vomits. Heaving, he grasps his shoulder and massages his arm. His fingers have curled inwards again.

INT. LIVING ROOM - BUTLER FLAT - EVENING

Sal smokes at the kitchen table. Mo drops her bag and goes to the fridge, opens it and stares inside.

SAL
I had the school onto me.

MO
That's nice.

Sal slaps the table.

SAL
Don't talk to me like I'm your
fucking teacher! You think I don't
know what you've been at?

MO
Da, would have wanted me to---

SAL
Yeah of course he would have and
look where it got him!

A gut punch. Sal stands

MO
I don't have to listen to this.

Mo makes for the door, simmering. Sal blocks her path.

TAP, TAP - the door.

INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Sal opens the door to reveal Vinnie, cap in hand.

SAL
Oh here we go. The fucking
cavalry's arrived.

Vinnie grimaces. Sal goes back into the living room. Mo shrugs her shoulders apologetically and beckons him in.

INT. LIVING ROOM/KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Sal paces back and forth, puffing angrily on her cigarette.

SAL
So, it's you that's been filling
her head with this shit then?

Sal stops, staring Vinnie down.

VINNIE
Well, she's been helping out around
the yard...riding out a bit too.

SAL
Yeah, of course she has.

VINNIE
I thought you knew.

SAL
Don't bullshit me, I'm immune.

VINNIE
The kid's good Sal.

SAL
Yeah, turn on the charm like you
always do.

VINNIE
I just wanted to help.

SAL
But you don't Vinnie, do you?
You're no better than fucking
Fagin, filling kids heads with lies
and using them until they're...

Sal chokes. Vinnie looks as though he has been stabbed.

VINNIE
I'm sorry Sal.

Sal sits, her entire body trembling. Mo follows Vinnie out.

EXT. ST. CHRISTOPHER'S ESTATE - EVENING

Mo catches up to Vinnie as he walks across the estate.

MO
Sorry about that...

VINNIE
Ah, I probably deserved it.

Silence descends as they walk.

VINNIE (CONT'D)
I came to say sorry about
earlier...he won't be back.

They reach Vinnie's car. It is propped up on a stack of mortar blocks, wheels missing.

INT. PUB - NIGHT

A deserted, grimy pub. Mo and Vinnie sit at the bar. Vinnie drunkenly motions to the BARMAN, 50's.

VINNIE
Another amigo.

BARMAN
(To Mo)
One more round. Then you take your
Da home, okay?

Vinnie shifts uneasily in his seat. The Barman pours and moves off. Vinnie takes Mo in.

VINNIE
Christ, you look like him...

Mo's eyes fall to her glass.

VINNIE (CONT'D)
You and Gary are getting on well...

She wants the room to swallow her.

VINNIE (CONT'D)
I think it's been good for
him...having you around.
(beat)
He's had a rough old time of it.

Mo takes him in curiously, as his eyes drift over her shoulder. Mo follows his gaze.

Danny Scott sits alone, staring into his pint glass. He notices Vinnie, stands and stumbles over.

VINNIE (CONT'D)
How's she cuttin' Dan?

Danny takes him in through bloodshot eyes. Concern etches itself into the well earned crevasses of his face.

DANNY
You mind yourself Vin, ya hear me?

Vinnie nods. Danny offers them both a weak smile and makes for the door. Vinnie looks winded as he watches him go.

INT. GARY'S CAR - TRAVELLING - NIGHT

Gary drives, Mo beside him with Vinnie in the back.

VINNIE
*"Gold. Gold...aaaaaalways believe
 in your soul---"*

GARY
 Jesus Christ...

MO
"You've got the power to knooooow."

GARY	MO/ VINNIE
Don't encourage him---	<i>"You're indestructaaaaable. Alwaaaays believiiiiin'"</i>

GARY (CONT'D)
 Shut the fuck up, the pair of you!

They roar with laughter. Vinnie edges between the two seats.

VINNIE
 We're in trouble now Mo. Who's a
 moody little colt then?

GARY
 You'll see how moody I am when I
 give you a good slap.

MO
 Did you bring your whip?

Vinnie bellows. Gary reddens.

VINNIE
 Look at him, he's gone all red!

INT. LIVING ROOM - VINNIE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Mo and Gary help Vinnie to the couch. He falls face down and goes straight to sleep. Mo watches as Gary delicately unfastens Vinnie's shoes and takes them off.

EXT. PORCH - NIGHT

Mo attempts to roll a cigarette. Gary submerges a smile.

GARY
 Do you want me to do it?

MO
I can fucking do it.

She fails again, relents and passes the ingredients to Gary.

GARY
Jockey's diet...not that you need
to be wasting, ya little weed.

Mo watches him. Gary can't look at her. He pops the cigarette into his mouth, lights it, takes a drag and passes it over.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Gary and Mo approach a door just off the hallway.

Through a crack Vinnie can be seen, surrounded by dusty trophies watching one of Tadhg's old races. Vinnie crumbles, crying into his hands. Gary closes the door.

INT. GARYS'S CARAVAN - NIGHT

Books abound in the small cramped space. Mo sits on the sofa bed, staring at them. Gary follows her gaze.

MO
I never thought of you as a nerd.

GARY
I admire your broadly narrow mind.

He joins her on the bed.

MO
Will he be alright?

GARY
He's struggling. The whole yard's
holding on by a thread.

Mo laughs. Gary is confused.

MO
I'm just thinking about something
my Gran said earlier. She called
him Fagin...
(beat)
...from Oliver Twist.

GARY
I know.

MO
Right, yeah...the books.

GARY
You nerd.

They laugh.

MO
Why does that Coyle bitch have it
in for you?

GARY
Long story for another day...

He avoids her probing stare.

GARY (CONT'D)
You take the bed...

INT. GARY'S CARAVAN - EARLY MORNING

Grey morning light bleeds through the small window. Gary watches Mo from the floor, thrashing about in her sleep.

EXT. BAUMFIELD STABLES - MORNING

Mo practices rolling a cigarette on the steps of Gary's caravan. A haggard Vinnie appears.

MO
How's the head?

VINNIE
Tremendous...

Christina's Mercedes creeps up the drive.

INT. BARN - MORNING

Vinnie and Christina lead followed by Mo, Gary and Salim, carrying saddles behind.

CHRISTINA
Pity about Splinter...

Vinnie is thrown. He takes her in - "How?"

CHRISTINA (CONT'D)
Word gets around...

EXT. THE GALLOPS - THE CURRAGH - MORNING

Vinnie and Christina watch the horses work. Christina's eyes are fixed on Mo. A smile creeps across her lips.

EXT. YARD - BAUMFIELD STABLES - MORNING

Gary washes Ballyphehane watched by Mo, Vinnie and Christina.

CHRISTINA
So we're down a jockey.

VINNIE
I'll make a few calls.

CHRISTINA
What about the runt?

Mo's head shoots to Vinnie.

VINNIE
You're not serious...

CHRISTINA
Why not? She's a good rider. You said it yourself--

VINNIE
I know but---

CHRISTINA (CONT'D)
And Gary's lad is a dead cert anyway. What harm can she do?

MO
I can do it Vin.

Vinnie goes to protest.

CHRISTINA
Good woman. There you are, sorted.

Christina takes Vinnie's stubbled cheeks in her hands.

CHRISTINA (CONT'D)
You just need to have a little faith chicken.

A soft slap and she lets go.

CHRISTINA (CONT'D)
Right, I wouldn't mind a nice cup of tea and a Garibaldi.

She strides towards the house. Vinnie follows.

Beaming, Mo catches Gary's eye. He is stoney-faced.

INT. OFFICE - VINNIE'S HOUSE - DAY

Christina and Vinnie are sat, sipping from their mugs.

CHRISTINA
So about my offer...

Vinnie sits forward, summoning courage.

VINNIE
I appreciate it, I really do, but
what little I have, I've built
myself. And these kids...they trust
me. I can't just...

CHRISTINA
So the answer is no, then?

Her eyes burn into him.

VINNIE
Like I said, I appreciate it and
I'm happy to keep the horses, but
yes...I mean, no. The answer is no.

A cold hard stare. Suddenly it turns to a smile.

CHRISTINA
Ah sure look, it was only an idea.
No pressure at all. I respect that
you want to keep your independence.

She stands. Relieved, Vinnie follows suit, walking with her
to the door. She stops and turns to him.

CHRISTINA (CONT'D)
How's your young one's Masters
going?

Vinnie's falters. The lioness has returned.

INT. STABLE - BAUMFIELD STABLES - DAY

Mo sweeps Bluebird's stable. She turns to see Sal watching
her, holding a small suitcase.

INT. BARN - MOMENTS LATER

Mo and Sal are sat outside Bluebird's stable. Bluebird snoozes over the stable door. Sal looks up at her.

SAL
I've aged better...

Sal opens the case to reveal a pair of jockey's boots, a helmet and a whip. She hands it to Mo and takes her hand.

EXT. THE CURRAGH - EVENING

Mo leads Bluebird, watching the sun set behind the briars.

EXT. ST. CHRISTOPHER'S ESTATE - MORNING

Gary and Mo stand outside a paint-chipped council house. Mo knocks and it opens to reveal Paddy in his boxers.

MO
Wanna help me cause some trouble?

Paddy's face lights up. He looks Gary up and down.

PADDY
Who's the string of piss?

EXT. ST. LEO'S - MORNING

A black and white feathered hoof hits the tarmac...

Clara's mouth falls open as the sea of STUDENTS parts to reveal Mo atop Paddy's pony striding towards the school.

Paddy and Gary are leant against Gary's car watching as Miss Coyle runs down the front steps, her face purple with rage.

INT. DINER - DAY

Paddy's piebald pony waits outside the window. Mo and Paddy vibrate with laughter. Gary sits stoic, unimpressed.

MO
Oh cheer the fuck up. Here treat yourself to a chip...

She throws one at him. It bounces off of his forehead, leaving a spot of ketchup. Paddy bellows.

Mo leans in and wipes it off. Paddy falters at the moment of intimacy between them and stands.

PADDY
Right, I better get herself home.

MO
Oh...okay. Well I'll see you later?

He nods, then throws a look at Gary.

PADDY
Later Skeletor.

He leaves, shoulders hunched.

MO
So what, you're pissed that I've left?

GARY
You were kicked out. There's a difference.

MO
Pots and kettles pal.

GARY
I didn't have a choice.

An awkward beat. Gary watches Paddy leading his pony away.

EXT. KILDARE TOWN - NIGHT

Danny Scott steps out of the pub. He lights a cigarette and sets off into the night, swaying as he goes.

A car engine REVS to life at the end of the street.

INT. LIVING ROOM - BUTLER FLAT - NIGHT

Mo finds Sal watching the news. A NEWS REPORTER speaks to camera, Garda cars parked behind her.

NEWS REPORTER
...Scott, a racehorse trainer, was due to give evidence in connection to alleged race-fixing. The suspected hit and run took place in the early hours of this morning in the Kildare area.

(MORE)

NEWS REPORTER (CONT'D)
Gardaí are urging witnesses to come forward with any information.

SAL
I met him at your Da's funeral...nice fella. God only knows what the eejit got himself involved in.

MONTAGE

VINNIE'S HOUSE Vinnie stares at his phone - "*Christina...*"

ESTATE Mo runs, sweating in her tracksuit, headphones in.

BAUMFIELD Mo expertly rolls a cigarette outside the barn.

MO'S BEDROOM Mo stares intently at the picture of Tadhg.

THE GALLOPS Mo and Gary lead the string of horses.

EXT. ST. CHRISTOPHER'S ESTATE - MORNING

Vinnie gets out of his car clad in a patchy tweed suit. He clocks Paddy and beckons him over, withdrawing a tenner.

VINNIE
Keep an eye on her. Half now, half when I get back.

He rips the tenner in half and hands one half to Paddy.

PADDY
Twenty...
(beat)
Inflation.

Vinnie laughs and re-opens his wallet.

INT/EXT. BUTLER FLAT - MORNING

Vinnie knocks. Sal answers, clad in leopard-print.

SAL
Put your eyes back in your head.

Sal steps aside and Vinnie enters the hallway.

VINNIE
Where's the star filly?

Sal nods to the bathroom. Vomiting is heard from within.

SAL
Nerves. If anything happens to her,
I'll fucking end you.

VINNIE
I'll look after her. I promise.

EXT. RACECOURSE - DAY

PUNTERS, suit clad GENTS and LADIES in hats abound as Mo, Vinnie and Sal make their way through the crowd. Mo wears her tracksuit, gear-bag slung over her shoulder.

Sal stops as a LUCKY HEATHER WOMAN, 80's, approaches. Mo watches in bemusement as she takes Sal's hand, reads her palm, glancing at Mo. Sal passes her a twenty and catches up.

MO
And you give out to me for betting?

SAL
She's an old friend of your Da's.

MO
What did she say?

Sal momentarily darkens, then pastes on a smile.

SAL
That Pierce Brosnan is going to
come and sweep me off my feet.

INT. JOCKEY'S WEIGHING ROOM - DAY

Mo passes various JOCKEYS, some reading *The Racing Post*, others rolling cigarettes. They take her in curiously.

JOCKEY
Nice tracksuit...

They bellow as Mo continues on her way.

INT. BATHROOM STALL - JOCKEY'S WEIGHING ROOM - DAY

URRRGHHH! Gary, is bent over the toilet, making himself sick.

INT. JOCKEY'S WEIGHING ROOM - DAY

Gary undresses beside Conor. Mo clocks Conor looking at Gary's naked body. They lock eyes and both look away in embarrassment.

INT. JOCKEY'S WEIGHING ROOM - DAY

Gary and Mo wait to be weighed out for the race.

Splinter is at the head of the line, dressed in green silks. He looks over his shoulder at them and winks.

EXT. PARADE RING - RACECOURSE - DAY

Gary and Mo make their way towards the parade ring. Mo's hand trembles. Gary notices and gives her a soft pat on the arm.

Vinnie and Christina stand in the middle of the parade ring, watching the horses being led in. Mo and Gary stop beside them. Christina nods to Splinter as he passes.

Esosa watches from the rails. She looks from Christina to Mo, then down to her race-card and circles Mo's name.

DING! The JOCKEYS run to their horses. Mo makes for Lightning Spire, led by Salim. Vinnie boosts her into the saddle.

VINNIE

Just make the pace and stay safe.

They pass a beaming Sal. She crosses her fingers.

EXT. RACETRACK - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

Mo and Lightning Spire canter towards the starting stalls.

EXT. STARTING STALLS - RACETRACK - DAY

Gary re-adjusts his reins. A flicker of worry as his fingers seize around the whip. He plies them free with great effort.

CRASH! The stalls fly open and the horses break free.

EXT. STANDS - RACECOURSE - DAY

Vinnie and Sal are in the stands. Christina paces a little way off, phone to ear. All eyes are fixed on the screen as the horses race towards the bend in the track.

EXT. RACETRACK - DAY

Mo and Lightning Spire race at the head of the herd. Gary and Ballyphehane are just behind with an opponent either side. They round the bend and Gary begins to shorten the gap, coming up alongside Mo and Lightning Spire.

They reach the straight. Gary grins at Mo. He whistles and Ballyphehane accelerates past. Mo pushes Lightning Spire on.

EXT. STANDS - RACECOURSE - DAY

Vinnie watches intently. Sal's back is to the track.

COMMENTATOR

And it's Ballyphehane, followed by
Lightning Spire!

VINNIE

What the hell is she playing at?

Sal's eyes dart sideways to Vinnie, concerned.

EXT. RACETRACK - DAY

Gary is now two lengths in front with the winning post in sight. Mo races behind, two horses on either side her.

Suddenly another horse cuts in front of her, forcing her to bump her neighbor - Splinter, forcing her into the rail. Splinter takes off after Gary, whipping his horse on.

Mo recovers, looks to a gap and goes for it. She just about makes it through, bridging the gap between herself, Gary and Splinter who are now neck and neck for first position.

They push and SPLAP their horses home, bumping one-another as the winning post looms close...

COMMENTATOR

And it's Fairfax under Charles
Cleary across the line!

EXT. STANDS - RACECOURSE - DAY

Vinnie hangs his head. A sly smile from Christina.

EXT. PARADE RING - RACECOURSE - DAY

The sweat soaked horses are led in. Mo glares at Splinter.

Vinnie makes his way towards her.

VINNIE
(Hard)
So much for making the pace.

The intercom CRACKLES.

COMMENTATOR
Steward's Enquiry!

INT. STEWARD'S OFFICE - DAY

Gary, Mo and Splinter stand in front of a panel of STEWARDS as the race plays out on TV screen in front of them.

SPLINTER
Miss Butler clearly wasn't watching
where she was going---

MO
Maybe you should get your eyes
checked you geriatric old fuck---

STEWARD
Miss Butler!

Mo stops herself. A vein throbs in Gary's forehead.

STEWARD (CONT'D)
There is also the matter of your
excessive use of the whip Mr Roche.
Ten day suspension. Twelve for you
Mr Cleary. For careless riding.

The Steward looks at Mo over his spectacles.

STEWARD (CONT'D)
Hopefully this isn't an indication
of your future Miss Butler.

INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Vinnie paces in front of Christina who sits quietly, drumming her fingernails on her phone.

Splinter, Gary and Mo emerge. Splinter smirks at Vinnie.

SPLINTER
What did she have to do for that
ride Vin?

Gary goes after him. Splinter turns, coiled, but Christina gets between them and faces up to him.

CHRISTINA
Walk away...

A flicker of fear from Splinter. He marches off.

INT. VIP BOOTH - NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

Christina, Vinnie, Mo and Gary are sat in a private booth.

CHRISTINA
You did well today chicken.

Mo beams. Gary takes a long slug from his glass of orange. Vinnie eyes him, concerned. Christina notices.

CHRISTINA (CONT'D)
The runt kept her head when things
got spicy. Unlike some...

VINNIE
Ah he gave him a good ride.

Christina eyes glow at his bluntness.

CHRISTINA
Well nobody remembers a second.

Gary storms off towards the bar. He motions to the BARMAN. Mo watches as he pours out a shot for him.

INT. BATHROOM CUBICLE - NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

Gary taps out cocaine onto a key. He pauses...a hungry snort. He holds out his trembling hand, the fingers seized around his keys. He pulls them open, flexing his hand.

EXT. NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

Mo and Christina smoke, coats on.

CHRISTINA
I might be able to get you a few
rides for some other yards.

MO
Really? That'd be great.

CHRISTINA
I'll see about an agent as well.

Christina withdraws a roll of notes and palms them to Mo.

CHRISTINA (CONT'D)
For today...

MO
Jesus, thanks...

CHRISTINA
Get your Nan something nice.

She looks Mo up and down.

CHRISTINA (CONT'D)
And maybe get yourself a new
tracksuit too.

Mo reddens, embarrassed.

INT. NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

Gary dances alone in the crowd, clearly drunk, bumping into other DANCERS. He spots Mo and drags her onto the floor.

Over Gary's shoulder, she sees Conor and Salim making for the exit. Conor clocks her - a moment of understanding.

INT. PIZZA SHOP - NIGHT

Mo and Gary line up for pizza. The BORED VENDER, stares at Gary as he chooses his slices. Gary notices Mo's disapproval.

GARY
I'm on my holibops now amn't I?

The Bored Vender slaps down the slices, thumbing each.

GARY (CONT'D)
Did you just touch my pizza?

BORED VENDER
What are you on about?

GARY
You sticking your dirty fucking
fingers into my pizza.

MO
(Laughing)
You can't be fingering
another man's pizza---

BORED VENDER
Look mate---

GARY
I'm not your fucking mate.

MO
C'mon let's head.

They turn to leave.

BORED VENDER
Yeah, listen to your little
girlfriend.

Gary whirls to him. Mo grabs his arm. Gary looks at her hand, takes a breath and nods. They leave.

EXT. PARK - KILDARE TOWN - NIGHT

Gary and Mo are sat on a bench. Gary hungrily licks the pizza grease from his fingers. Mo laughs at the sauce around his mouth.

GARY
What?

Mo wipes it away with her sleeve.

MO
I always seem to be cleaning up
after you.
(Softening)
You okay?

He nods - uncomfortable, then looks away.

GARY
Be careful of her.

MO
You jealous or something?

GARY
You weren't ready for today.
Somebody made a packet, betting on
me to lose...

Anger flickers on Mo's face.

GARY (CONT'D)
 Don't let yourself be used. I'm
 only saying it because I...
 (beat)
 Just look her up.

MO
 I did.

GARY
 Christina Bishop?

Mo nods.

GARY (CONT'D)
 That's her maiden name. She doesn't
 go by her married name anymore.
 (beat)
 Dwyer...

MO
 As in...?

GARY
 Like I said...she's well connected.
 (beat)
 Alan...the hubby, got sent down for
 laundering money through a load of
 these pop up car dealerships.

INT. CHRISTINA'S MERCEDES - PARKED - THE CURRAGH - NIGHT

Christina puffs on a cheroot, humming to a song on the radio.

GARY (V.O)
 She handles the betting shops and
 keeps a pretty low profile.

A car pulls in behind.

GARY (V.O) (CONT'D)
 There was fuck all evidence linking
 her to anything so...

A figure gets out and approaches her car, opens the passenger
 door and gets inside - Splinter.

Christina tosses an envelope into his lap.

EXT. KILDARE TOWN - NIGHT

Vinnie walks, eating chips. He takes out his phone, taps "Agata" and puts it to his ear. He reaches his car and stops, squinting at something tied around one of the window wipers.

GARY (V.O)
But they're into some nasty shit.
Fraud, drugs, human trafficking...

MO (V.O)
And does Vin...?

GARY (V.O)
Desperate times...

Vinnie pulls a set of red and black jockey's silks off.

GARY (V.O) (CONT'D)
With that amount of money, they'll
be looking at other ways of
cleaning it...

Suddenly he is hit from behind. He falls and two OBSCURED FIGURES begin to kick him.

GARY (V.O) (CONT'D)
...I can't imagine that they're the
type of people who take no for an
answer.

A boot comes down with a hard THUD on his face.

EXT. PARK - KILDARE TOWN - NIGHT

Gary glances at Mo. She is fear and shock combined. He elbows her out of her stupor.

GARY
Why do you really want to do this?

MO
I want to wi---

GARY (CONT'D)
That's what we all say.
What's the real reason?

Mo thinks.

MO (CONT'D)
When I look a horse in the eye, I
know that it's telling the truth...

Mo's bravado leaves her. She struggles, then...

MO (CONT'D)

My Da was spiraling before the fall. Ma had fucked off, so it was just me and him...he was pretty much held together by pills and drink by then. "When a jockey can't ride, he's just another small man...", that's what he'd say...

(beat)

I suppose horses have never disappointed me...only people have.

For the first time Gary holds eye contact, taking Mo in.

EXT. KILDARE TOWN - NIGHT

Vinnie's fingers twitch beside his smashed phone.

AGATA (O.S)

Vinnie? Vinnie?

END OF EPISODE I