

**ONE LAST SHOT**

Written by

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BLACK SCREEN

The sound of cheers and enthusiastic applause.

SUPER: LONDON JUNE 1979

DENNY GLOVER (V.O.)

This is what it comes down to. The preparation. The training. The sacrifice. This moment. -- The moment of truth. You don't hear a thing. Only your quickening heartbeat. You try to keep calm. The adrenalin pulses through your veins. You can't run. You can't hide. This is your shot.

FADE IN:

INT. RING - NIGHT

DENNY GLOVER (30) dips his shoulder under the top rope and steps into the ring to rising cheers and applause.

He peels off his gold, hooded robe to reveal a rippling, muscled, body in his gold trunks with black piping.

He shadow boxes then raises his gloved hands to more loud cheers with WALLY DIXON (40s) his wily manager by his side.

Opposite corner is RONNIE DRAKE (28) street-wise and fearsome in black trunks with a red stripe with his TRAINER (40s).

Denny glances to BILLY DRAKE (35) seated ringside. He's a swarthy individual who you'd rather not cross.

DENNY GLOVER (V.O.)

Billy Drake. Ronnie Drake's older brother. Fight game is full of nasty geezers like him. Then there's Tommy.

TOMMY DRAKE (20) blonde, good-looks, sits next to his big brother and eyes Denny with contempt.

DENNY GLOVER (V.O.)

They say Tommy's better. He'll have to wait his turn.

VIC DRAKE (80s) craggy old salt, sits next to Tommy and observes Denny with cold, heartless eyes.

DENNY GLOVER (V.O.)  
 Victor Drake. Old school gangster.  
 Ruthless, brutal. Scary. Got the  
 name the pick. He loved to use a  
 pick axe as his weapon of choice.

ARCHIE ARNOLD (40s) grizzly bear squeezed into a tailored  
 'three-piece' puffs away on a cigar.

DENNY GLOVER (V.O.)  
 Archie Arnold and Frank Mancuso.

FRANK MANCUSO (40s) rotund in a pin stripe suit sits with an  
 air of arrogant agitation.

DENNY GLOVER (V.O.)  
 My employers. I've made them a lot  
 of money the past five years. I've  
 done well too. For me, this fight  
 is one step closer to a shot at the  
 title. For those two, it's just  
 another payday.

REFEREE #1 (50s) in a white shirt, black pants and bow tie  
 motions to both fighters.

They step towards each other and stop a few inches apart.  
 Their eyes lock. Ronnie Drake's shoulders twitch.

DENNY GLOVER (V.O.)  
 He's trying to psych me out. Like I  
 said, you can't hear a thing right  
 now. It's the calm before the  
 storm.

Referee #1 issues instructions. The two fighters slap gloves  
 and return to their corners.

The bell dings for Round One.

Denny steps lively. Ronnie Drake throws a jab, swiftly  
 countered with a left hook by Denny that drops his opponent  
 to the canvas.

Ronnie Drake doesn't move. Denny steps to the neutral corner.

DENNY GLOVER (V.O.)  
 One punch is all it took. Life is  
 fleeting. It can change in an  
 instant. -- Not always the way you  
 hope.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

Denny in a suit is in the dock of a packed courtroom.

DENNY GLOVER (V.O.)  
 From the ring to the Old Bailey.  
 Charged with manslaughter. It's a  
 stitch up. Crooked cops in Billy  
 Drake's pocket.

He casts his eye to the jury of twelve MALES (30s-40s)  
 'working class chaps' who sit expressionless.

Billy, Tommy and Vic sit in the front row. They glare at  
 Denny with combined hatred.

JUROR #3 (40s) casts a sly glance to Billy who responds with  
 the lightest of nods.

DENNY GLOVER (V.O.)  
 I know I'm going down. The fix is  
 in. This isn't normal. You don't  
 get charged with manslaughter in  
 the ring. It's a tragedy. A  
 travesty. But like a lamb to the  
 slaughter, I'm their human  
 sacrifice.

MARY GLOVER (30) Denny's suffering wife, sits in the second  
 row with YOUNG BETH (12) their daughter.

She shakes her head in disgust. For her, though, this is the  
 last straw.

DENNY GLOVER (V.O.)  
 Mary was never a fan of boxing.  
 Now, she's not a fan of me.

Young Beth looks at her father with disbelief and sadness.

DENNY GLOVER (V.O.)  
 It's my daughter I worry about. I  
 hope she'll understand? Going to  
 miss a few birthday parties.

JUDGE (60s) seated at his bench, resplendent in a white wig,  
 silk and ermine cloak addresses the jury.

JUDGE  
 (to jury)  
 Has the jury reached a verdict?

Juror #3 rises to face the Judge.

JUROR #3  
We have your honour.

JUDGE  
To the charge of manslaughter, what  
say you?

JUROR #3  
We find the defendant guilty as  
charged.

Gasps of shock fill the courtroom.

VIC DRAKE  
(to Billy Drake, quietly)  
I want him dead before sunrise.

BILLY DRAKE  
Yes Grandad.

Mary closes her eyes and sighs. Young Beth begins to sob. Her  
mother takes her hand in hers to comfort.

Denny sighs with a mild, disbelieving shake of his head 'how  
could they do this?'

The Judge bangs his gavel.

JUDGE  
Order! Order!

The courtroom quietens.

JUDGE (CONT'D)  
Denham Edward Glover.

Denny faces the Judge.

JUDGE (CONT'D)  
You have been found guilty of  
manslaughter. I hereby sentence you  
to ten years. Take the prisoner  
down.

The Judge bangs his gavel.

INT. PRISON WING - DAY

Denny in prison fatigues, with his blanket, pillow and towel  
is escorted by PRISON GUARD #1 (30s).

Several INMATES mill about or sit at a table and look at him  
with curiosity to contempt.

Prison Guard #1 opens a cell door.

PRISON GUARD #1  
You're new home Glover.

Denny enters the cell.

INT. DRAKE'S KITCHEN - DAY

Seated at a table is Vic, Billy, Archie and Frank in a Hackney-modest-abode.

VIC DRAKE  
(angry)  
Well, he's not dead is he?  
(slams his fist on table)  
Make it happen!

Billy, Frank and Archie dutifully nod 'yes'.

INT. SHOWER BLOCK - PRISON WING - DAY

Denny is naked under a spray of water from a rose head that juts out of a tiled wall.

He notices out the corner of his eye CARPENTER (30s) an inmate with a blade in his right hand.

Denny turns off the tap. Picks up his towel and wraps it tight around his forearm.

DENNY GLOVER  
(turns to Carpenter)  
Gift from Billy Drake?

CARPENTER  
(sneers)  
Yeah, it's Christmas.

He sees INMATE #1 (20s) the 'lookout' as Carpenter advances to lunge with the blade, yet he misses.

Carpenter spins around and Denny drops him to the tiled floor with one punch, out cold.

The blade dislodges from Carpenter's hand with a clang then a moment later Prison Guard WILLIAMS (40s) enters.

WILLIAMS  
Glover! What's going on?  
(to Carpenter)  
Carpenter? Carpenter? You hear me?

Prison Guard #1 and PRISON GUARD #2 (40s) then rush in.

They look at Williams who motions to Carpenter and they carry the unconscious inmate out by his arms and legs.

Williams picks up the blade with a handkerchief and holds it in front of Denny who now wraps his towel around his waist.

WILLIAMS (CONT'D)

Well?

Denny shrugs and says nothing.

INT. PRISON WARDEN'S OFFICE - DAY

PRISON WARDEN (50s) stern features, in a grey suit, sits at his desk.

Denny is before him with Williams by his side.

PRISON WARDEN

(displeased)

I've got an inmate in the infirmary with a wired jaw Glover. What do you have to say for yourself?

DENNY GLOVER

Nothing, Sir.

PRISON WARDEN

Nothing to say?

(Warden to Williams)

He's got nothing to say.

WILLIAMS

Yes Sir.

PRISON WARDEN

Well, seems you're not too popular here at our Shangri-la Glover.

(to Williams)

What happened?

WILLIAMS

Well Sir, it would appear inmate Glover was in an altercation in the shower block with inmate Carpenter and as a consequence, inmate Carpenter sustained injury to his jaw. Sir.

Prison Warden looks hard at Denny then back to Williams.

PRISON WARDEN

And?

WILLIAMS

And Sir, I found a crude blade near Carpenter. So it seems there was intent to cause harm to Glover, Sir.

PRISON WARDEN

(nods, sighs)

Well, for the sake of saving your hide 'n me a mountain of paperwork Glover, I'm going to have place you in protective custody...

DENNY GLOVER

(overlapping)

Begging your pardon Sir, I'd rather you not, Sir.

PRISON WARDEN

Glover, I don't need to remind you that you killed an east end criminal's brother...

DENNY GLOVER

(overlapping)

It was an accident, Sir. I killed no one. I shouldn't even be here, Sir.

PRISON WARDEN

Be that as it may, you are and frankly, I'd say there isn't a nick in the land you'd be safe. So I don't want this on my watch.

DENNY GLOVER

Yes Sir. I understand your concern Sir. But what comes, well, it comes. Let me go back to my slot with whatever punishment I'm due, Sir.

PRISON WARDEN

I can't do that Glover. Too risky.

DENNY GLOVER

Sir, I'll sign whatever I have to absolve you of all responsibility for my well being and safety.



PRISON WARDEN

You know what you're doing Glover?  
 (Denny nods 'yes')  
 If I agree, you know you're as good  
 as dead?

DENNY GLOVER

Sir, I've lost my wife, my  
 daughter, my career. -- I've been  
 stitched up by corrupt cops and a  
 paid off jury 'n I'm stuck in here  
 for the next decade. I can handle  
 myself, Sir.

PRISON WARDEN

(nods)  
 Clearly. -- Carpenter won't be the  
 last. I don't need this Glover. I  
 don't need this.

DENNY GLOVER

I know you don't, Sir. No one needs  
 this, Sir.

PRISON WARDEN

Are you implying something Glover?

DENNY GLOVER

No, Sir. I simply want to sign  
 whatever it is I have to, then go  
 back to my slot with my punishment  
 and do my time, Sir.

Denny looks at the Warden who eases back in his chair to see  
 before him a man resigned to whatever his fate may be?

PRISON WARDEN

(sighs, nods)  
 This goes against my better  
 judgement.

Prison Warden then leans forward to open a draw, pulls out a  
 piece of paper.

He places it on his desk then points to a space on the page.

PRISON WARDEN (CONT'D)

Sign here. Williams, you witness.

Denny steps forward to take a pen and without hesitation he  
 signs his name on the paper then steps back.

DENNY GLOVER

Sir, may I ask you a question, Sir?  
 (Prison Warden nods 'yes')  
 How many professional fighters do  
 you know have been charged with  
 manslaughter in the ring and  
 sentenced to prison?

Williams baulks and looks at the Prison Warden who motions to the piece of paper.

The prison guard steps forward to sign his name then steps back.

Prison Warden signs the paper, he rubber stamps it then he looks at Denny.

DENNY GLOVER (CONT'D)

Thank you, Sir.

PRISON WARDEN

Glover, whether you think you've been framed or whatever, it matters not to me. The courts of her majesty have duly found you guilty and sentenced you accordingly. This is my prison. I run things my way. I hope this is clearly understood?

(Denny nods 'yes')

Good. Then we won't have any problem understanding each other.

(to Williams)

Punishment is four weeks, no phone calls, no visits, one hour exercise a day, when he can shower. All meals in his cell. No interaction with other inmates. Don't need a run on broken jaws.

(Williams nods 'yes')

Dismissed.

Denny and Williams turn and exit the Prison Warden's office.

PRISON WARDEN (CONT'D)

(to himself)

God help you.

INT. DENNY'S PRISON CELL #1 - NIGHT

Denny lays on his back on his bunk. It's a spartan cell with an open top toilet, sink and fading, grey walls.

Affixed on the wall next to his bunk are two images -

B&W photo of HENRY COOPER in his boxer's stance and a cottage on a ridge that overlooks a beach with rock pools.

Denny turns his head to look at the images.

TRANSITION through those rock pools.

EXT. ROCK POOL - BEACH - DAY

SUPER: BRISTOL 1961

EMERGE through those rock pools and the eyes of JOE GLOVER (40s) solid man of country stock with YOUNG DENNY (12) a wisp of a boy.

Each hold a fishing rod and Joe a cane basket.

Waves roll gently over moss-laden rocks into a rock pool as Young Denny's focus is on the small crabs that scurry about.

Joe Glover observes his son swish his bare-foot in the water and two crabs scamper under a ledge.

YOUNG DENNY

Look Dad? They're scared 'n running away!

His father creases a kind smile then places his hand gently on his son's shoulder.

JOE GLOVER

No son. They wouldn't be scared with the likes of us. They're just repositioning.

Young Denny looks up at his father who broadens his smile with affection.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Young Denny sits amongst a dozen BOYS and GIRLS of similar age in a modest classroom.

BEATRICE GLOVER (late 30s) horn-rimmed glasses, blouse 'n pleated skirt, dour expression, scribbles in chalk on the blackboard, 'The boy can run quickly'.

BEATRICE GLOVER

(faces students)

Who can tell me the adverb in this sentence?

Young Denny shoots his hand up. Beatrice ignores. CHERYL (12) a mousy slip of a girl with blonde curls raises her hand.

BEATRICE GLOVER (CONT'D)  
Yes Cheryl.

CHERYL  
Quickly.

BEATRICE GLOVER  
Correct. Well done Cheryl.

Cheryl beams as Young Denny is crestfallen.

EXT. SCHOOL PLAYGROUND - DAY

Young Denny sits alone on a bench with his lunch box nestled in his lap.

Three bigger BOYS, same age, stride towards him. He sighs 'not again' and grips his lunch box tight.

BIGGER BOY #1  
(to Young Denny)  
What you got today you little  
bastard?

He lowers his gaze and grips his lunch box tight.

BIGGER BOY #2  
You deaf or what?

Bigger Boy #1 reefs the lunch box from Young Denny's hands, its lid dislodged then a sandwich and an apple spill out.

He is then knocked to the ground by Bigger Boy #1 and skins his knee on the asphalt then blood seeps and he whimpers.

BIGGER BOY #1  
Cry baby! Cry baby!

They laugh as he scrambles to pick up his lunch. Bigger Boy #2 stomps on his hand to crush it and the sandwich.

Young Denny yelps in pain.

Bigger Boy #3 picks up the apple and takes a bite then hurls it away while Young Denny looks at his cruel tormentors.

YOUNG DENNY  
(cries)  
Why do you keep picking on me?

They howl with laughter then trundle off.

Young Denny sobs and through streams of tears looks despairingly at his crushed sandwich and bloodied knee.

INT. GLOVER'S CAR - DAY

Beatrice drives. Young Denny sits in the front passenger seat of an 1950s Austin Morris as they motor past open green fields.

YOUNG DENNY  
Mom, why didn't you let me answer  
the question?

BEATRICE GLOVER  
Can't be showing you no favours.

YOUNG DENNY  
But I knew the answer.

His mother ignores then notices his skinned, coagulated bloody knee.

BEATRICE GLOVER  
How'd you do that?

YOUNG DENNY  
Do what?

BEATRICE GLOVER  
Your knee?  
(angry)  
Messing about again were you?

Young Denny drops his head.

YOUNG DENNY  
(under his breath)  
I was playing...

BEATRICE GLOVER  
(overlapping)  
What was that?

YOUNG DENNY  
(looks at his mother)  
I was playing football.

BEATRICE GLOVER  
Like I said. Messing about.

Young Denny drops his head once more as they continue on.

INT. GLOVER'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Beatrice stands in front of an old metal stove and stirs a pot of stew with a ladle.

Joe sits at the table in a post World War One sandstone-walled kitchen and reads his evening newspaper.

Young Denny enters. Joe glances up and smiles. Then he notices his son's bloody knee and lowers his newspaper.

JOE GLOVER  
Son, how'd you do that?

YOUNG DENNY  
What Dad?

JOE GLOVER  
Your knee?

BEATRICE GLOVER  
Messing about again.

JOE GLOVER  
(to Beatrice)  
What's that?

Beatrice holds two plates of beef stew and places them in front of Joe and Young Denny as he takes his seat.

BEATRICE GLOVER  
I said he was messing about.

YOUNG DENNY  
(defensive)  
No Mom. Dad, I was playing  
football.

She picks up another plate of stew and places it on the table.

YOUNG DENNY (CONT'D)  
(softly to Joe)  
It was football.

Joe nods 'okay'.

BEATRICE GLOVER  
(to Young Denny)  
Shut up and eat your dinner.

Beatrice sits then reaches for Joe and her chastened son's hand.

They all close their eyes then bow their heads.

BEATRICE GLOVER (CONT'D)  
Dear Lord, for what we are about to  
receive we are truly grateful.  
Amen.

JOE GLOVER  
Amen.

YOUNG DENNY  
Amen.

They begin to eat. Joe takes a mouthful.

JOE GLOVER  
This is a great stew you've made.  
(Beatrice a mild nod)  
Easy on the boy, bit of football  
won't hurt.

Beatrice stops eating to look at her husband.

BEATRICE GLOVER  
Boy messing about won't be getting  
good grades. He'll be good for  
nothing. End up like your brother.

Joe ignores the barb and eats his stew. Young Denny 'picks  
up' on what his mother has just said.

INT. YOUNG DENNY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Young Denny lays in bed, the bed light is on, the covers  
tucked under his chin.

Joe enters and sits on the side of the bed.

JOE GLOVER  
All tucked in?

YOUNG DENNY  
(nods 'yes')  
Dad, why's Mom so angry all the  
time?

JOE GLOVER  
Oh no, she's not angry lad. She  
just says what she feels. But she's  
a good woman, don't you ever forget  
that.

YOUNG DENNY

Yes Dad. -- So what does she mean  
I'll end up like your brother?

JOE GLOVER

(sighs)

Oh...

YOUNG DENNY

(overlapping)

Because I skinned my knee at  
football? Did he do that too?

JOE GLOVER

No, no. Nothing like that.

YOUNG DENNY

Well I don't understand? Why did  
she say it?

(Joe Glover sighs)

You say she's not angry but Dad,  
Mom gets angry with me. Says I'm  
messing about when I'm not.

JOE GLOVER

No, no, she's not angry, don't be  
thinking that.

(Young Denny nods)

With your uncle Ray, it's a bit  
complicated. You see, your mother  
and he, well they don't get on.

(Young Denny nods again)

Anyway, enough of this talk. Time  
for sleep -- 'n I'd watch out if  
you're playing football with the  
bigger boys.

YOUNG DENNY

(nods in agreement)

The bigger boys they...

(catches himself)

They're just -- I wish I was bigger  
too.

JOE GLOVER

Don't fret about that. You'll  
sprout up, soon enough.

(Young Denny nods)

Just remember son, your mother,  
she's a good woman.

YOUNG DENNY

Yes Dad, I'll remember.



JOE GLOVER  
(nods with a smile)  
Good night son.

Joe rises then exits the room and turns off the light.

Young Denny lies there and looks at the ceiling above.

FLASHBACK.

Young Denny in the school playground. He cries... 'Why do you keep picking on me?'

RESUME. INT. YOUNG DENNY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

His emotion overcomes and Young Denny begins to gently sob in the darkness.