

THE RUCK

BY KEVIN FEGAN

From the Golden Mile to the Gold Coast: A new play inspired by the real life story of the first UK girls rugby league team to tour Australia.

All the way from Yorkshire UK, the original "County of Origin" of Rugby League, comes a new force to be reckoned with in the sport: the mighty Batley Girls Under 16 team.

This group of girls from a small Yorkshire town have grown up together and are ready for tough challenges on and off the pitch; but are they prepared for what's in store on the other side of the world?

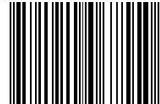
Follow the story of these inspirational young women as they overcome boy (and girl) problems, friendship dramas, racial discrimination and deep-hidden family secrets, all set against the backdrop of a changing community in a diverse industrial town.

"Kevin's script it's fantastic. The Ruck is a truly original piece of theatre. It's great to know there are such wonderful plays like this out there celebrating women in sport. Beautifully written with characters who's antics are as colourful off the pitch as on. It's real, honest and funny. These are the kind of women I'd want to spend a night at the theatre with." Maxine Peake



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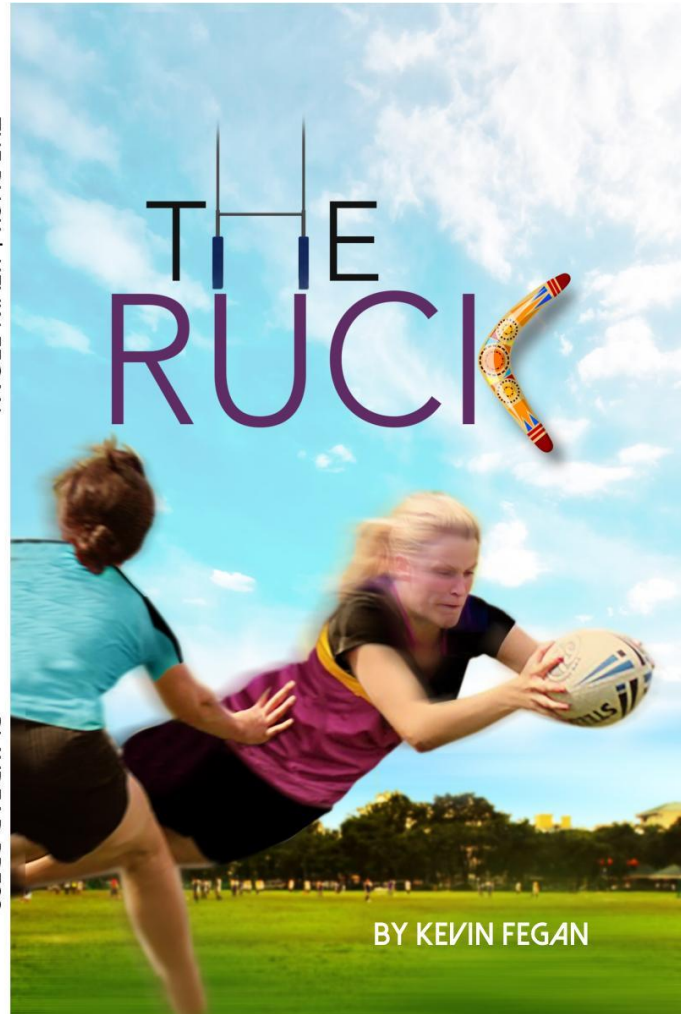
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THE RUCK | KEVIN FEGAN

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"THE RUCK" BY KEVIN FEGAN

**First performed at Lawrence Batley Theatre Huddersfield on 15th Sept 2017
Directed by Joyce Branagh
Commissioned by Creative Scene**

"THE RUCK" BY KEVIN FEGAN

CHARACTERS

SHELLEY - team player for Batley Girls' Rugby League Club.

EMLEY - team player for Batley Girls.

HEATON - team player for Batley Girls.

IFFY - Muslim Asian Girl and latest recruit to Batley Girls.

SPEN - Team Coach for Batley Girls and Shelley's Dad

NAN - Heaton's Grandma

KIWI PETE - Emley's Dad

CALDER - Emley's Boyfriend and friend of Iffy.

UNCLE LOGAN - Heaton's Australian "uncle".

HAZEL - Australian Team Coach for Smiley High State School

(CHORUS AND ALL OTHER PARTS ARE PLAYED BY THE CAST)

CAST OF 8

5 Female and 3 Male

SUGGESTIONS FOR DOUBLING

NAN/HAZEL

KIWI PETE/UNCLE LOGAN

RAPS & SONGS

Life is a Ruck

Jihadi Rap

Heritage Road

Kick It Into Touch

Parents & Teenagers

Second Family

"THE RUCK" BY KEVIN FEGAN

PROLOGUE: "COUNTY OF ORIGIN"

A TRAINING SESSION WITH BATLEY GIRLS RUGBY LEAGUE FOOTBALL CLUB.
THE GIRLS (SHELLEY, EMLEY AND HEATON) ARE WARMING UP WITH
COACH, SPEN, BEFORE THE SESSION STARTS. THE OTHER MEMBERS OF
THE CAST ARE WATCHING THE GIRLS TRAINING.

CHORUS

From the boundary of Mount Pleasant,
looking out across the valley,
lies a classic sweep of northern industrial archaeology.
This settlement, called Batley,
is carved from brutal rock.
The blackened brick
of Victorian viaducts and rolling mills
defines the shape of our society.
There was a time these valleys
were the playground of kings
who claimed their sport was ordained by God,
until their power was tackled by noblemen
in battle after bloody battle.
In time, the birthright of the aristocracy
was snatched from them by the industrialists
who easily out-paced them with their power of money
and went on to score a lasting victory.
But then the working man created a ruck
and with his labour forced the bourgeoisie

to share their wealth and settle for democracy.
Finally, in these epic Heartlands,
Woman wrestled free from the rib-cage of Man
to take her place in the arena and stake
her claim in the game we call society.
There are those who would turn back the clock,
but the genie is out of the box,
the sport can never be the same again.
There have been too many game-changers;
but, wait, here comes the latest stranger
to take the stage, determined to play the Northern Game.

SCENE ONE

"IFFY", A 16 YEAR OLD ASIAN GIRL, AND THE TEAM'S LATEST RECRUIT, STEPS FORWARD TO JOIN THE GIRLS.

EMLEY Wedding reception's upstairs.

IFFY I'm not here for a wedding.

SHELLEY Cricket pitch is over there.

IFFY Very funny.

SPEN This is our new girl, Ifra. Apparently it means "to fix and improve something".

EMLEY She can't play rugby.

IFFY Why not?

EMLEY Because Asians don't play rugby.

SPEN This one does.

IFFY Frightened we'll take over the rugby - like we did the cricket?

EMLEY That's not going to happen on my watch.

IFFY I mean, we've moved into drugs and organised crime, why not rugby?

EMLEY She can't play rugby in a headscarf.

IFFY It's an hijab.

SPEN Right, you know the drill. "Touch and Pass" around the field until you find out five things about the new girl.

GIRLS (CHANTING WHILE THEY RUN WITH THE BALL)

Touch and pass, kick some ass,
whatever it takes, they will not pass.

Making contact keeps us strong
touch our hearts and pass it on.

EMLEY Where you from?

IFFY Heritage Road.

EMLEY No, I mean "originally"?

IFFY Duh, Batley - born and bred.

IFFY I know what you meant. Grandad came here from
Pakistan without a penny in his pocket to work
in textiles. My dad went on to own the mill. He turned it
into a furniture warehouse when textiles went down the
toilet.

GIRLS Touch and pass, kick some ass,
whatever it takes, they will not pass.
Making contact keeps us strong
touch our hearts and pass it on.

SHELLEY So this is you trying to make a name for yourself, is it?
Playing rugby?

IFFY Why not?

SHELLEY What position?

IFFY Scrum half - I like to boss it.

GIRLS Touch and pass, kick some ass,
whatever it takes, they will not pass.
Making contact keeps us strong
touch our hearts and pass it on.

IFFY (TO EMLEY) Why do you play? You strike me as a

bit of a "girly girl".

EMLEY I am not.

IFFY You're wearing make-up for training.

EMLEY Foundation is not make-up.

SHELLEY Slapper.

IFFY I suppose you never know who's watching, do you?

SHELLEY Yeah, we get loads of modelling scouts at the rugby.

EMLEY Shurrrup lesbo!

SHELLEY Tart!

SPEN (CALLING) Hey! You never heard your father using language like that!

IFFY Is Coach Spen your dad?

SHELLEY Yeah.

IFFY Bet he started this team for you, didn't he?

SHELLEY No.

GIRLS Touch and pass, kick some ass,
whatever it takes, they will not pass.
Making contact keeps us strong
touch our hearts and pass it on.

IFFY Who's the quiet one?

SHELLEY Heaton - we call her "Hanging Heaton" -

EMLEY 'Cos she's morbid.

SHELLEY She's a good Prop Forward.

IFFY (TO HEATON) Why do you play?

EMLEY She enjoys the bruises.

HEATON So what if I do? They're badges of honour.

IFFY Bet you let your anger out on the pitch, don't you?

EMLEY Like when you head-butted that Wigan Full Back.

HEATON She fell onto me.

EMLEY Yeah, right.

SHELLEY She was defending me.

GIRLS Touch and pass, kick some ass,
 whatever it takes, they will not pass.
 Making contact keeps us strong
 touch our hearts and pass it on.

EMLEY (CALLING) Ready, Coach!

SHELLEY We've only found out four things about the new girl.

SPEN It'll have to do.

THE GIRLS RETURN TO SPEN.

"THE RUCK".

SPEN Life is a ruck
 But you make your own luck in this world.
 Enjoy the battle,
 Go in hard on the tackle,
 Turn defence into attack.
 So what if life sucks?
 Who gives a flying...Prop Forward?
 Be a play-maker,
 Not an undertaker.
 Make like a Hooker

Cashing in on a scrum,
On a dummy run;
Where there's muck, there's money,
Make a fast buck,
Look for those opportunities,
You gotta be duckin' and divin'
Or you'll come unstuck.
Not everyone's a crook,
So don't play the victim,
Don't swallow the rhetoric,
Hook, line and sinker.
Have no truck with defeat,
Pluck up the courage,
If you're in at the deep end,
Down on your luck,
Last line of defence,
Take aim,
Right pass at the right time,
Swing it out to a safe pair of hands,
Running with the ball, down the wing
Towards the goal line
And try! Try again!

IFFY STEPS UP AND PLACES THE BALL FOR A KICK AT GOAL. EMLEY STEPS UP TO TAKE IT AS USUAL BUT COACH SPEN INDICATES HE WOULD LIKE

IFFY TO HAVE A GO. EMLEY IS NOT BEST PLEASED. IFFY KICKS A GOAL.
THEY ALL CONGRATULATE HER, EXCEPT EMLEY.

SPEN I think we've found ourselves a new kicker!

EMLEY (TO IFFY) What you really doing here?

IFFY LAUNCHES INTO HER "JIHADI RAP"

IFFY What's a matter, girl,
Am I upsetting your view of the world?
Worried I'm some kind of infiltrator?
A spy in the camp? A people-hater?
Well, let me tell you this:
We're not all "Jihadi brides", me and my sisters,
on a one-way ticket to Syria, off to join I.S.I.S.
Yeah, I'm on a mission,
But look - no bombs,
We're in this together,
Who gives a shit where you're from?
Batley's not Jihad,
More like rehab,
Like a broken Fox's biscuit,
It's up to us to fix it,
There'll be no game left to play
If you and me can't mix it.

EMLEY Muslim!

IFFY Kafir!

EMLEY What's that?

IFFY Non-believer.

SHELLEY Is that bad?

IFFY Depends.

SHELLEY Are there any good Kafirs?

IFFY Some. Are there any good Muslims?

SHELLEY There could be you?

I'm Shelley.

HEATON Heaton.

EMLEY (BEGRUDGINGLY) Emley.

SHELLEY Do you want to hang out with us, after, at Tesco's?

IFFY There's something else about me you should know: you might be the present, but I'm the future. So that's five things you know about me now.

SPEN Right ladies, listen up, I've got some big news for you. I know we're U.K. Champions - no one can take that away from us; but, truth is, only one or two clubs have ever been a match for us. You girls are good, don't get me wrong, but we're not used to playing teams who are more than a match for us. That is, until we faced those Ozzie girls at the end of the season. They taught us our biggest lesson of last year: that we can be beaten. I know we could've beat them, but the fact is we didn't.

HEATON They were tough: they went swimming in the sea at Whitby in Winter.

SPEN Beating teams who are better than us, that's our real

challenge. The standard of competition in Australia is obviously higher; which is why I've been talking to your parents about going to Queensland on a pre-season tour.

EMLEY Queensland? Where's that?

HEATON Australia, stupid.

EMLEY What? Us? Going to Australia? We can't do that?

SPEN If those Ozzie girls can tour the U.K., why can't we tour Australia?

HEATON My nan won't be able to afford it.

SPEN For a while now we've been busy fund-raising up at Soothill Working Mens' Club. We didn't want to say until we were confident we could afford to take the whole team. Those who can afford to pay are paying, those who can't will be subsidised; so I don't want girls worrying about the money. We're still ten grand short, but with your help, I think we can do it.

I've been in touch with their Coach, Hazel, and she's happy to host us for a pre-season tour. We'll be staying on the Gold Coast, in a hotel, and travelling around Queensland, playing some of their top teams.

Any questions?

EMLEY Is there a beach?

SPEN It's called the "Gold Coast" - what do you think?

EMLEY I think I need a new bikini.

SHELLEY Can we train on the beach?

SPEN Every morning. The hotel's walking distance to the beach.

HEATON When are we going?

SPEN End of October - for three weeks. It's the start of their Summer so it'll be hot - which is another advantage they'll have over us, if we're not super fit.

SHELLEY What about school?

SPEN We're going over half-term, but you will miss a week of school.

EMLEY Yes!

SPEN Hey, you lot, listen up: I've had to fight hard for this. I've promised your teachers you'll catch up on your work. I expect you all to do as well in your exams as in your rugby. Treat your brain like a muscle and exercise it.

SHELLEY She'll have to find hers first.

EMLEY Look who's talking.

SPEN Pack up your kit and get some rest. Training three times a week from now on, until Oz.

IFFY Spen, am I going?

SPEN You're in the team, aren't you?

GIRLS COLLECT THEIR BAGS TO LEAVE. SPEN CALLS BACK HEATON FOR A WORD.

SPEN I don't want you worrying about the money, okay?

HEATON Thanks, Coach.

SPEN Let me see your arms.

SHE SHOWS HIM.

HEATON

They're healing.

SPEN

Good girl. I told you the rugby would help. Off you go.

SCENE TWO

SPEN IS OUTSIDE BATLEY BULLDOGS' STADIUM ON HERITAGE ROAD,
LOOKING DOWN AT THE SURROUNDING AREA OF MOUNT PLEASANT.

SPEN

It were wool 'round here, cotton in Lancashire. The "shoddy trade", they called it: woollen rags and clothes recycled into blankets, carpets and military uniforms.

There were some very wealthy "shoddy barons" made their money on the sweat of others. They still call the League 'round here, the "Heavy Woollen".

Mount Pleasant was a temperance area because of the Methodist influence. I suppose the Muslim community are continuing that tradition. But Batley has always been a heavy-drinking town. Still is, especially at weekends along the "golden mile". It were Batley Variety Club what put the town on the map, with international superstars like Louis Armstrong, Eartha Kitt, Cliff Richards, The Bee Gees, Roy Orbison...the list goes on.

I have a theory that all the sweat from the mills gave rise to Rugby League. You see, hard labour, well, it builds a man up, physically, like a warrior. Mix that with a sense of social injustice and you've got one very aggressive and righteous individual. And all that aggression has to go somewhere. Best not twat your boss; better to find yourself an arena and charge like a bull at another bloke built like a brick shithouse. In times of war, throw a

weapon into the equation and you've got yourself a soldier. In peace-time, throw a ball in there and you've got a rugby league player. That's why it was created here, in Kirklees, down the road at the George Hotel in 1895. This is the "County of Origin". The following year, Batley were the very first winners of the Northern Union Challenge Cup - "Champions of the North" they called us. Those were the days, when the town's brass band would turn out for the team and the railways would sound a salute.

I remember my dad bringing me here, standing me under his crombie to keep warm. His dad used to take him when there were anti-aircraft guns on the hills opposite.

Me dad says,

"You knew where you were in those days. Rugby Union for the toffs and Rugby League for the roughs. "

Of course, now you've working-class kids like me been to university and playing Rugby Union as well as League.

Dad says,

"They had the money, but we were faster, more physical and they used to come to us for the best coaches.

Players would work a twelve-hour shift, then come straight to a match to play. You could tell a player by how they ran or threw a ball. You never knew what might emerge from a scrum. They used to score tries from 80 yards out.

Wingers would play wide like Wingers. Nowadays it's

driven by possession and the six-tackle rule. They just seem to get down for a rest in a scrum."

It's a different game since Super League. Much harder for us little clubs to compete against the big money-teams.

It's not a level playing field. Mind you, it never was at The Mount, with our infamous slope down to the "Nine 'Ole".

Training is fierce for these full-time professionals. I reckon the players are getting bigger and fitter, but the body contact takes its toll and leads to more injuries.

This area, where the Club is, on Mount Pleasant around Heritage Road, used to be a white working-class area.

Players used to live local and play local. The community used to turn out for the home games. We used to belong here. Now one ghetto's been swapped for another: we're surrounded by mosques and madrasses. I've nothing against the Muslim community, but they're not interested in rugby, are they? Apart from Iffy, of course. I don't know what's going on there.

On match days the ground still comes to life, but the rest of the time the Club looks like the museum on the hill. And "The Taverners", next to the ground, where we all used to meet for a few pints, well, supporters stopped going 'cause they don't live 'round here no more. It was taken over by Asian businessmen and, well, it's burned down now. What can we do? We can't turn the clocks back. We

can't move the stadium. I don't know what the future has
in store.

SONG: "HERITAGE ROAD"

SPEN & CHORUS

The future grows, the past erodes,
History uploads on Heritage Road.
The people sweat and the people play,
In the rolling valleys of green and grey,
Migrant workers come and go,
communities change but the landscape don't.
The time has come, mills and mines all gone,
We must adapt our lives and try to move on.

Changes to work, changes to play,
In the rolling valleys of green and grey.
As the future grows and the past erodes,
History uploads on Heritage Road.
Looking back at all we've done,
Goods produced and tournaments won,
We face the challenge of a brand new day
In the rolling valleys of green and grey.
The future grows and the past erodes,
History uploads on Heritage Road.

SCENE THREE

THE GIRLS ARE GATHERING OUTSIDE TESCOS IN BATLEY..

SHELLEY Coach says we have to think up a name for the team.

EMLEY We've got a name - Batley Girls.

SHELLEY No, stupid, a nickname. Like the men are "Bulldogs".

IFFY What? Like "Batley Poodles"?

EMLEY Can we be "Batley Labradoodles"?

SHELLEY This is serious. We have to sex it up -

HEATON (TO EMLEY) That's your department -

SHELLEY Like Kerry Packer did when he got the clubs to choose
animal names.

HEATON Does it have to be an animal?

SHELLEY No, there's "Huddersfield Giants" and -

HEATON We could be insects -

EMLEY "Batley Bumble Bees".

HEATON Or vegetables -

EMLEY "Batley Brussels".

IFFY Birds?

EMLEY "Batley Blackbirds".

IFFY Cheap gag.

HEATON "Batley Dinosaurs".

SHELLEY Go on, take the piss; see how you feel when the new kit
arrives.

EMLEY You never said we were getting a new strip?

SHELLEY Well, we are. When we choose a name. We've got

ourselves a sponsor for Oz.

HEATON Who?

SHELLEY Morley Waste.

EMLEY Oh, great, we're gonna be "Batley Dustbins".

SHELLEY They've said we can suggest something. Otherwise, it will be their choice.

CALDER ARRIVES WITH A COUPLE OF MATES (PLAYED BY KIWI PETE, SPEN AND NAN). THERE IS A STAND-OFF BETWEEN THE GIRL AND THE BOYS.

IFFY I know that boy.

EMLEY You do?

IFFY Yeah, Calder, he used to live on our street before all the white boys left.

EMLEY He's my boyfriend.

IFFY Oh, sorry, I didn't mean to -

EMLEY That's all right, it's nothing serious; he's just some boy.

GIRLS CHORUS Things girls like about boys:

they're funny

they're not so bothered about their appearance

not as bitchy as girls

make you feel protected

nice bums

show their feelings when they're on their own

have ideas and thoughts about things

a shoulder to cry on.

BOYS CHORUS Things boys like about girls:

hair and eyes
they have the babies
do things boys don't want to do - like cleaning
they're more caring
put a lot of effort into their appearance
make us feel happy and horny
they smile
you can talk to them about personal shit.

CALDER Someone got shot here.

EMLEY Yeah, we heard.

CALDER You shouldn't be hanging 'round Tesco's.

IFFY It wasn't here, it was down near the garage.

CALDER And you would know.

EMLEY What's that supposed to mean?

CALDER This is not a place for girls.

SHELLEY This is not a place for boys.

GIRLS CHORUS Things girls don't like about boys:
can get obsessed with you
show off in front of their mates
send you dirty pictures on Instagram
ignore you and insensitive
immature and big-headed
don't listen and selfish attitudes
jealous and they have affairs
too loud and sexist.

BOYS CHORUS Things boys don't like about girls:
gossiping and constant nagging
too much perfume and too pink
go to the toilet in pairs
drag us into town shopping
take too long getting ready
they don't answer your texts
can't understand them and too emotional
expect us to be mind readers.

GIRLS MIMMICK THE BOYS' POSTURES AND ATTITUDES.

BOYS MIMMICK THE GIRLS' POSTURES AND ATTITUDES.

GIRLS CHORUS "Get your tits out for the lads!"

BOYS CHORUS "Does my bum look big in this?"

GIRLS CHORUS "If you really loved me, you'd let me."

BOYS CHORUS "Haven't you had enough to drink yet?"

GIRLS CHORUS "Yeah, I've done it loads of times."

BOYS CHORUS "I want you to want to."

GIRLS CHORUS "Can we go out with each other and still see other
people?"

BOYS CHORUS "Were you staring at her?"

GIRLS CHORUS "You decide for us."

BOYS CHORUS "Sorry isn't good enough."

GIRLS CHORUS "Bitch, ho, bird, chick, the wife!"

BOYS CHORUS "Huh, men!"

SHELLEY AND EMLEY STICK TOGETHER. IFFY GOES OVER TO CALDER.

out.

SHELLEY

(TO IFFY) So what about this name?

SCENE FOUR

HEATON'S HOUSE.

HEATON Did you know about this tour, Nan?

NAN I've told Spen we can't afford it.

HEATON We don't have to, he's raising the money.

NAN We're not a charity case.

HEATON Dunt stop you using the Food Bank.

NAN That's different. You don't want to be going to Australia.

HEATON Can you let me decide what I want?

NAN No good'll come of it.

HEATON Just cos it didn't work out for you and grandad. I'm not migrating, you know; I am coming back.

NAN We came back so you could have a decent life here.

HEATON What? In Batley? With an alcoholic mother.

NAN We didn't know how things would turn out.

HEATON I'm going and you can't stop me.

HEATON GOES TO HER ROOM AND WAITS BY HER LAPTOP FOR A FACE-TIME CALL. ON SCREEN WE SEE A VIDEO CALL COME THROUGH, WHICH SHE ANSWERS AND LOGAN APPEARS ON SCREEN.

LOGAN Is that you, Heaton?

HEATON Uncle Logan?

LOGAN Too right it is. Good to see you, girl, finally.

HEATON Good to see you too.

LOGAN So you're the rugby player?

HEATON Yeah.

LOGAN Cool. I'll have to come and see you play.

HEATON Really?

LOGAN If you're coming all the way to Queensland, we'll have to meet up.

HEATON I'd love that.

LOGAN No dramas. We love our rugby league over here.

HEATON My friends'll be dead jealous.

LOGAN We can work on that if you want. I'll show you a few places to make your friends turn green.

HEATON I can't wait to meet you.

LOGAN You really look like your mother when you say that.

HEATON Do I?

LOGAN How is she?

HEATON In a bad way. Don't you know?

LOGAN You're the first one in the family to get in touch.

HEATON We don't see much of her, she's too busy drinking herself to death.

LOGAN Sorry to hear that. I was always very fond of your mother.

HEATON I've never heard anyone say that before.

LOGAN You said you live with your Gran?

HEATON Since mum lost the plot.

LOGAN What about your grandad - he's my uncle?

HEATON He left Nan, not long after they all came back from Oz; but I was just a baby so I'm not sure.

LOGAN Sounds like you guys have had it pretty tough.

HEATON Do you remember them?

LOGAN Sure do.

HEATON HEARS HER NAN APPROACHING.

HEATON Shit! Nan's coming. Sorry, I've got to go, I'll be in touch soon.

HEATON ENDS THE CALL. NAN ENTERS.

NAN Look, we should talk about this.

HEATON Do we have any relatives in Queensland?

NAN We don't have anything to do with your grandad's side of the family.

HEATON Why not?

NAN They're a bad lot; you keep away.

HEATON What about "Uncle" Logan?

NAN Who told you about - ?

HEATON I found him myself, online.

NAN What have I told you about talking to strangers on the internet?

HEATON He's not really my uncle; he's mum's cousin.

NAN I know who he is.

HEATON What's your problem? Do you think he's "grooming" me?

NAN Don't joke about things you know nothing about.

HEATON Yeah, cos no one tells me fuck-all.

NAN Language!

HEATON STORMS OUT.

SONG: "KICK IT INTO TOUCH"

HEATON

I don't want to be the next big thing,
I don't want to end up like my mum,
I don't want to meet no pervy celebrities,
I don't want a Staffie called Tyson.
I don't want millions of followers and friends
or drink myself stupid, living for the weekends.
I don't really care what's #trending
or the latest hits YouTube are recommending.
Constantly broke,
And I've no phone credit,
life is one big joke
and I just don't get it.
I need to kick it into touch!

CHORUS

Constantly broke,
up to our necks in credit,
life is one big joke
and we just don't get it.
Kick it into touch!

HEATON

I don't want to have no superpowers
or be a vampire zombie head,
I don't want to star in a brat movie,
And I don't want to talk to the dead.

Constantly broke,
and no phone credit,
life is one big joke
and I just don't get it.
I need to kick it into touch!

CHORUS

Constantly broke,
up to our necks in credit,
life is one big joke
and we just don't get it.
Kick it into touch!

HEATON

I don't want to wish my life away
on x-box games and virtual play.
I don't want to wake up some guy's "ho"
and end up screaming on the Jeremy Kyle show.
Constantly broke,
and no phone credit,
life is one big joke
and I just don't get it.
I need to kick it into touch!

CHORUS

Constantly broke,
up to our necks in credit,
life is one big joke

and we just don't get it.

We need to Kick it into touch!

SCENE FIVE

SOOTHILL WORKING MENS' CLUB.

PARENTS' MEETING.

SPEN Thanks to parents and family members for coming along. Welcome to Soothill Surfers' Club. We've tried to bring a little taste of the Gold Coast tonight to the "rhubarb triangle".

KIWI PETE "Batley by the Sea" - now that's asking a lot of climate change.

SPEN Thank you, Kiwi Pete. We have to wrap up business in time for the bingo at 9.30pm so I'll crack on. Big thanks to everyone who took part in the parents' "touch rugby competition" - even though we finished last.

KIWI PETE Someone put whiskey in our water bottles.

SPEN And the "pig racing" was a big success.

KIWI PETE I heard it was won by a pig this year.

SPEN Thanks to all those who have made and sold over a thousand designer doggy-poo bags. We are so near, yet so far from our fund-raising target. If we can't find another five grand by the end of the Summer holidays, we won't be going anywhere. We need one last push, people. The girls are down Tesco's every weekend on the tills, packing bags in exchange for donations. We've some fabulous prizes tonight, donated by local businesses: you can win a day out at the assault

course at Rothwell, afternoon tea at the local garden centre or a piercing of your own choice at Kick Lane Tattoos.

KIWI PETE There y'are, Nan, you'll be able to get the other nipple done.

NAN I'll swing for you, Kiwi Pete.

SPEN I've had a new tattoo done for the occasion - and it's itching like hell.

KIWI PETE Try pile cream. Worked for me.

SPEN (SHOWING A RHUBARB TATTOO ON HIS LEG) The girls have decided on their tour name for the new strip: the "Batley Rhubarbs".

KIWI PETE The girls want to know when they're getting the new kit?

SPEN When I get it. I'm sure you'll miss them while they're away and, I'm speaking as a parent now, some of them will be feeling more lonely than others. Obviously pastoral care is down to me. I'm responsible for safety and welfare - it's my coaching badge on the line; but I need your support. I need you to let me know if there's anything I'm not aware of.

KIWI PETE What's the time difference?

SPEN They're ahead of us in Oz by nine hours.

KIWI PETE Three years ahead in the rugby.

SPEN I appreciate they'll be 10,000 miles away, but what I don't want is parents 'phoning up any time they like.

NAN I've already told her.

SPEN We need her in the team.

NAN I never thought you'd raise the money. I came tonight because I wanted to tell you in person.

SPEN She's your grand-daughter, I can't force you; but you're making a big mistake. I'll look after her in Oz; I'll make sure she doesn't get into bother.

NAN I'm sorry, I can't allow it. I've got to go.

SCENE SIX

THE GIRLS ARE GATHERING FOR TRAINING. CALDER CATCHES UP WITH IFFY ON HER WAY TO TRAINING.

CALDER Do you miss me?

IFFY No.

CALDER I don't believe you.

Do you remember our first kiss?

IFFY No.

CALDER At the swimming baths.

IFFY It tasted of chlorine.

CALDER I miss "swimming" with you.

IFFY You dumped me.

CALDER You didn't tell me 'bout your dad.

IFFY He's still my dad.

CALDER I've changed.

IFFY I haven't.

CALDER Come on, I'm cool with it now.

IFFY That's big of you.

CALDER I want you.

IFFY You're loss, not mine.

CALDER Don't be like that. Forgive and forget.

IFFY You're with Em.

CALDER TAKES HER MOBILE PHONE AND TYPES IN HIS NUMBER.

IFFY Give that back.

I didn't ask for your number.

whatever it takes, they will not pass;

making contact keeps us strong,

touch our hearts and pass it on.

IFFY We going down Tesco's again after?

EMLEY Maybe.

IFFY I could take you to the Asian supermarket, if you like?

SHELLEY We daren't go in there.

IFFY You'll be all right with me, they're really friendly.

EMLEY We thought you might take us on Greenway?

IFFY Who's been talking about me?

EMLEY Calder says you got suspended from school.

IFFY Did he? What else did he say?

EMLEY He says a group of Asian girls organised a trip to the seaside with a group of older lads.

IFFY If you must know, I typed a letter on school paper and forged the Head's signature. We posted it to our parents, asking them for their permission to go on a school trip and £20 towards costs.

HEATON Hey, what a great scam.

IFFY We'd have got away with it too, if one of the parents hadn't phoned the school for more information.

HEATON I told you this girl was cool.

IFFY (TO EMLEY) Did Calder tell you he was one of the older lads?

SCENE SEVEN

EMLEY'S BEDROOM.

SHELLEY Why do they call your dad "Kiwi Pete"?

EMLEY Pete Black - the "All-Blacks". It's Dewsbury logic.

SHELLEY Oh, I get it. Funny you being called Emley "Black".

EMLEY Why?

SHELLEY You know? The way you've been with Iffy.

EMLEY That's not about race; it's about Calder.

SHELLEY Whatever you say.

EMLEY He's coming 'round in a bit.

SHELLEY You didn't say.

EMLEY He's got something to tell me.

SHELLEY I'll go when he comes.

EMLEY You don't have to.

SHELLEY I think I do.

EMLEY How come dad lets you stay, why not Calder?

SHELLEY It's right, we could be up to no good.

EMLEY That would shut him up.

SHELLEY Would you go with a girl?

EMLEY No way.

SHELLEY Why not?

EMLEY 'Cause my whole world revolves around boys - and shopping.

SHELLEY And the team.

EMLEY Well, yeah, and the team.

SHELLEY Who are girls, right?

EMLEY Yes, of course they're girls; it's a girls' team.

 Oh my god, would you go with a girl?

SHELLEY I might.

EMLEY You dark horse.

SHELLEY It's not such a big deal nowadays.

EMLEY Isn't it?

 Have you been with a girl?

SHELLEY Might have.

EMLEY Have you been with a boy?

SHELLEY Might have. I don't see why we have to choose.

EMLEY Woo, get you. Bloody hell. How long have I known you? I

 had no idea.

SHELLEY I don't feel the need to broadcast it.

EMLEY I won't tell a soul, I swear.

 What was it like?

SHELLEY I thought you and Calder - ?

EMLEY Yeah, 'course. I meant, you know, with a girl?

SHELLEY Different. You should try it.

EMLEY Do you fancy me?

SHELLEY No.

EMLEY Why? What's the matter with me?

CALDER ARRIVES. SHELLEY LEAVES.

CALDER Can we go somewhere?

EMLEY See a movie?

CALDER Can't afford it.

EMLEY We could go to yours?

CALDER No.

EMLEY What's a matter with here?

CALDER Your dad doesn't like me.

EMLEY Dad lets me have whatever I want. I'm going to ask him if you can start stopping over

CALDER Really?

EMLEY I think it's time he accepted we're a couple.

CALDER (LEAVING) Call me when you've spoken to him.

EMLEY What was it you wanted to say?

CALDER It'll keep.

CALDER LEAVES.

SCENE EIGHT

HEATON IS AT NAN'S HOUSE, EMLEY IS AT KIWI PETE'S AND SHELLEY IS AT SPEN'S.

HEATON'S HOUSE.

HEATON You told Spen I'm not going?

NAN It's for the best. I don't expect you to understand.

HEATON I don't need your permission. I've got it off mum.

NAN When have you seen your mum?

HEATON She comes onto the estate to buy her weed.

NAN You're in my care, Heaton; she has no rights.

HEATON She says she wants to go back to Australia, but she can't because of her criminal record.

NAN We took her away for her own good.

HEATON I've got a copy of me Birth Certificate for me passport.
I know mum was pregnant with me when you dragged her back to Britain.

NAN She was only a girl herself, she didn't know her own mind.

HEATON Like me, you mean? Well I'm not letting you ruin my life, like you ruined hers.

NAN How dare you? You wouldn't have a life if it wasn't for me.

HEATON What's that supposed to mean?

NAN You think your mum wanted you?

HEATON That is so cruel.

NAN She hasn't been able to look after you, has she?

HEATON You're the reason she's an alcoholic.

NAN

Your bloody father's the reason, not me.

HEATON

What d'you mean? Who was he? It says "Father
Unknown". I have a right to know.

NAN

Why don't you ask her?

SCENE NINE

SPEN'S HOUSE.

SHELLEY Em's dad spoils her rotten.

SPEN He can afford to.

SHELLEY I'm glad you don't spoil me.

SPEN I can't believe you just said that.

SHELLEY It's true.

SPEN Shell, what do you know bout Iffy?

SHELLEY What do you want to know?

SPEN Well, who does she live with?

SHELLEY Her aunty in Savile Town.

SPEN She told me her mum signed her Consent Form.

SHELLEY She calls her aunty, "mum".

SPEN Why, is her mum dead?

SHELLEY No, her aunty brought her up. Her mum and dad had lots of kids and her aunty didn't have any, so they gave Iffy to her to look after.

SPEN Keeps it in the family, I suppose.

SHELLEY Better than Care, like we do.

SPEN Is her dad in jail?

SHELLEY She's never said. Why?

SPEN He's sent us a £10,000 donation for the tour.

SHELLEY Great, you should be happy.

SPEN Yeah, I s'pose. I think it's been in the wash.

SHELLEY What? The money?

SPEN Laundered.

SHELLEY Oh, right, dirty money.

SPEN Yeah.

SHELLEY That's been in the wash? Sorry.

SPEN I never know where I am with her.

SHELLEY She's all right.

SPEN I want to accept it. God knows it's the difference between going and not. But I can't go public with it.

SHELLEY It could be anonymous, a donation?

SPEN Do you know, you're a very sensible young girl, Shell?

SHELLEY Am I?

SPEN Must get it off your mum. I was saying to her last night, you never bring us any bother. We're really proud of you.

SHELLEY Do you want me to? I can if you like?

SPEN You're such an innocent. I still think of you as a little girl holding balloons on a string.

SHELLEY I asked you how many balloons it would take to lift me off my feet.

SPEN Did you?

SHELLEY You never gave me an answer.

SCENE TEN

EMLEY'S HOUSE

KIWI PETE You all right, Princess?

EMLEY Dad?

KIWI PETE What're you after?

EMLEY Nothing.

KIWI PETE Do you want some money?

EMLEY It's not money.

KIWI PETE Do you want a horse?

EMLEY I never said.

KIWI PETE Guitar lessons?

EMLEY No.

KIWI PETE Playstation?

EMLEY You bought me one.

KIWI PETE Motorbike?

EMLEY No.

KIWI PETE New carpet for your room?

EMLEY No.

KIWI PETE Holiday?

EMLEY Not yet.

KIWI PETE New trainers?

EMLEY No.

KIWI PETE What then?

EMLEY Can Calder stay over?

KIWI PETE No!

EMLEY Why not? He's 18, I'm 16 now.

KIWI PETE I'm not discussing it.

EMLEY Your girlfriend stays over.

KIWI PETE Er, who's the parent here? Whose house is it?

EMLEY It's my house as well.

KIWI PETE No, you live here.

EMLEY Thanks very much. I have rights.

KIWI PETE When you pay some rent, then you can have some rights.

EMLEY I thought you wanted me to stay on at school?

NO RESPONSE.

I'm not trying to be funny, dad, but you're so old.

KIWI PETE Not that old.

EMLEY You were born last century. You don't know how kids today think.

KIWI PETE I was sixteen once.

EMLEY Things have changed.

KIWI PETE Growing up doesn't change.

EMLEY Yes, it does.

Dad, I think Calder's going to finish with me.

KIWI PETE And you think letting him stop over will make him decide to stay with you?

EMLEY I want you to treat me more grown-up.

KIWI PETE You want to sleep with him, you mean.

EMLEY It's not like it would be the first time.

KIWI PETE What? I can't believe I'm even discussing this with you.

Lying around like wasters,
Hanging out in all the wrong places,
Racing around in car chases,
Battling with neighbours and legal cases,
No manners, no respect, no social graces.

PARENT 1 While you live under my roof, it's my rules.

TEENAGER 1 That's soooo unfair.

PARENT 2 You must think money grows on trees.

TEENAGER 2 I'm telling mum.

PARENT 3 Act your age and not your shoe size.

TEENAGER 3 It wasn't me.

PARENT 4 You're not going out dressed like that.

TEENAGER 4 Whatever.

PARENT 5 Watch your lip.

TEENAGER 5 In a minute.

PARENT 6 Get off that computer.

TEENAGER 6 I'm bored.

PARENT 7 In my day.

TEENAGER 7 Am I bothered?

PARENT 8 And what time do you call this?

TEENAGER 8 And your point is?

PARENT 9 Where do you think you're going?

TEENAGER 9 Do it yourself.

PARENT 10 You treat this house like a bloody hotel.

TEENAGER 10 It was already like that.

PARENT 11 Watch your language.

TEENAGER 11 You never let me do anything.

PARENT 12 Your room is like a bomb-site.

TEENAGER 12 It's not that bad.

PARENT 13 Don't use that tone of voice with me.

TEENAGER 13 She started it.

PARENT 14 Less of your back-chat.

TEENAGER 14 It's the fashion.

PARENT 15 What did your last slave die of?

TEENAGER 15 LOL (Laugh Out Loud).

PARENT 16 When did you last have a bath?

TEENAGER 16 ROFL (Rolling On the Floor Laughing).

PARENT 17 I am not a bloody taxi.

TEENAGER 17 OMG (Oh My God).

PARENT 18 Get off that phone.

TEENAGER 18 Why is it always my fault?

PARENT 19 If I had a pound for every time.

TEENAGER 19 Get out of my room.

PARENT 20 Do I look like a bank manager?

TEENAGER 20 I hate you.

PARENT 21 If you're not happy with it, phone child-line.

TEENAGER 21 I'm on the phone.

PARENTS/TEENAGERS Parents and teenagers
are like perfect strangers

SCENE ELEVEN

AT THE TRAINING GROUND

SPEN Girls, I've got an important announcement. I'm thrilled to say we've had an anonymous donation from a very generous supporter of this club of £5,000.

IFFY (TO SHELLEY) Anonymous?

SHELLEY Didn't think your dad would appreciate going public.

SPEN We are living in divisive times. There are some out there who want us to fail - as a team and as a community. There are some who would divide this team, divide this community. But there are some who choose to pull together. I have faith in this community. I have faith in you girls. No girls' team has done it before. They said it couldn't be done. But I know you girls can do it.

GIRLS' CHORUS They said we couldn't do their work,
They said we shouldn't ride their bikes,
They said we couldn't wear their trousers,
They said we shouldn't be impolite,
They said we couldn't have the vote,
They said we shouldn't fight,
They said we couldn't have equal pay,
They said we shouldn't have equal rights,
They said we couldn't be educated,
They said we shouldn't be taught,
They said we couldn't make their laws,

They said we shouldn't play their sports.

SHELLEY

Well, this girl can.

HEATON

And this girl can.

EMLEY

And this girl can.

IFFY

And this girl can.

SPEN

Pack your bags, ladies; we're off to see the wizard; we're
going to Oz!

INTERVAL.

PART TWO

QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA.

SCENE 1

THE GOLD COAST. ON THE BEACH. THE GIRLS ARE TRAINING IN TOPS OVER THEIR SWIMWEAR. HAZEL ARRIVES.

GIRLS Touch and pass, kick some ass,
 Whatever it takes, they will not pass.
 Making contact keeps us strong,
 Touch our hearts and pass it on.

HAZEL Figured I'd find you guys on the beach.

SPEN The girls can't believe we're actually training by the sea.

HAZEL Bit of a culture shock, I suppose.

SPEN I don't know how you coped so well coming to England in
 Winter, playing on frozen pitches?

HAZEL We loved it when it snowed. It was an honour to play in
 the County of Origin, where it all started.

SPEN Yeah, but just because you start a thing, doesn't give you
 the right to stay ahead of the game: Batley might have
 won the first ever Cup, but look at us now: can't even
 make the Super League.

HAZEL And you started the women's game in the UK.

SPEN Now we're playing catch-up with you.

 Good to see you again, Hazel.

THEY SHAKE HANDS.

HAZEL Same goes, Spen.

The girls are looking healthy.

THE GIRLS HOLD HANDS AND RUN INTO THE SEA WITH A "1,2,3, CHARGE!"

SPEN They're a credit to their sex. Look at them, all shapes and sizes - that's "girl power" for you; bollocks to the media images of what girls should be like.

HAZEL All body-types welcome in rugby.

SPEN When you see them like that, you can't imagine them smashing into each other, can you?

HAZEL Our girls are looking forward to the re-match.

SPEN We've a few games to go, first; see if we can get into our stride by the time we play you again.

HAZEL Ipswich first up, is it?

SPEN Any tips?

HAZEL Watch out for the heat in that part of Queensland.

SPEN We're expecting to have to defend more than we're used to, while we're here.

HAZEL They're big, Polynesian girls. And fast. They'll try to stretch you wide, then smash straight through the middle.

GIRLS RETURN FROM THE SEA.

SHELLEY It's amazin' here!

SPEN Girls, you remember Coach Hazel from Smiley High School?

HEATON Aye up, cock.

HAZEL LOOKS TO SPEN FOR A TRANSLATION.

SPEN Figure of speech.

HAZEL Enjoying the sunshine, girls?

SHELLEY Like we've died and gone to heaven.

HAZEL We have two types of weather on the Gold Coast:
sunny and glorious.

EMLEY Perfect.

HAZEL As long as you stay between the red flags.

HEATON We're not little children.

HAZEL Seriously, if the sharks don't get you, the riptide will.

IFFY Sharks?

HAZEL (LEAVING) See you up at the school in the morning. The
girls want to say hello. And the boys want to get a good
look at you.

EMLEY Why haven't we tanned?

HEATON We've only been here a day, stupid.

EMLEY I think I've got stretch marks on my legs.

SPEN What? From when you gave birth?

EMLEY That's not funny.

IFFY It's "chub-rub" that - you wanna lose some weight off them
thighs.

HEATON You're joking, she's no further through than a crisp.

EMLEY It's not my fault the shops are full of goodies.

IFFY It's not the shop's fault you eat too much.

SPEN Listen up, ladies. Remember, we're making history here.
We are the first girls team ever to tour Oz. It's up to us
to set the standard for all those who come after us - both

on and off the pitch.

EMLEY IS SHOWING SHELLEY A MESSAGE ON HER PHONE, BUT DIRECTING HER COMMENTS AT IFFY.

EMLEY Look, Calder's text "I love you" - that's "I-o-v-e y-o-u" not "I-u-v u"; he's actually spelt it out proper, like it means something. He sent me this great photo.

SHE SHOVES HER MOBY INTO IFFY'S FACE.

Don't you think we make a great couple?

IFFY Get out of my face.

EMLEY All the girls fancy him. But he's mine.

IFFY You can keep him.

SPEN I can't wait for that first whistle. Let's get on with what we do best.

SHELLEY I love it here. I think I've used up a year's worth of smiles in one day.

SCENE TWO

SMILEY HIGH STATE SCHOOL.

HAZEL

A big, warm welcome to our friends from the UK - the "Batley Rhubarbs". We hope you'll enjoy your stay on the Gold Coast and your tour of Queensland. You made us all welcome when we toured the UK last year and it's an honour to return the compliment. I know you're looking forward to the return leg with Smiley High at the end of your tour. The Batley Rhubarbs are UK Rugby League Champions. Smiley High are State School Champions. It promises to be a big match. I understand the ambition of many of you Rhubarbs is to one day play for your women's national team, the "Lionesses". Well, I have to tell you that one of our girls won a Gold Medal at the last Olympic Games with our national womens' team, the "Jillaroos".

We pride ourselves on our sport, here at Smiley High, because we pride ourselves on our "can do" attitude. "Negative people have a problem for every solution." That's why we're positive people. We don't believe in "under-achievers" at Smiley High. Everyone achieves at something here: "See it and believe it, you can achieve it." Or, as our Head of Positive Behaviour is fond of saying: "Life's a game - it matters that much".

SHELLEY

They greet us like long-lost cousins. Everyone's so

friendly. They have names like Axel, Asia and Savannah.

Their first lesson of the day is swimming - in the outdoor pool. Every kid looks like an athlete. The canteen serves sushi and salad - not a baked bean in sight.

Second lesson's rugby. The changing rooms are called "dressing sheds". They have square practise shields.

Third lesson's outdoor gym. When do they do maths? The boys wear weird clothes and have longer hair than me.

They're a bit loud, but tons nicer than lads back home.

And the girls have perfect skin. It's unreal. I wonder if they all turn into zombies at night?

JUXSTAPOSED IS A SCENE BETWEEN EMLEY ON THE PHONE TO CALDER AND CALDER ON THE PHONE TO IFFY.

EMLEY	Do you miss me?
CALDER	'Course I do.
EMLEY	Why don't you phone me then?
CALDER	You're in Australia.
EMLEY	You worried about the cost?
CALDER	No.
EMLEY	Am I not worth it?
CALDER	I didn't say that.
EMLEY	You could text me.
CALDER	I have text you.
EMLEY	You should text me everyday.
CALDER	I never know what time it is there.

EMLEY No excuse.

IFFY ANSWERS THE PHONE FROM CALDER.

IFFY What're you ringing me for?

CALDER I miss you.

IFFY I don't miss you.

CALDER Don't be so cruel.

 It's the middle of the night. I can't sleep, thinking about
 you.

IFFY I'm busy.

CALDER Come on, I know it's morning there. Where are you?

IFFY At a school.

EMLEY ON THE PHONE TO CALDER (CONTINUED).

CALDER Are you on your own?

EMLEY Why?

CALDER No reason.

 Just wondering if the rest of the girls are with you?

EMLEY What're you asking about "her" for?

CALDER Who?

EMLEY You know "who".

CALDER I'm not.

EMLEY Do you know what, I'm sick of the sound of your voice.

CALDER ON THE PHONE TO IFFY (CONTINUED).

CALDER Has Em said owt about us?

IFFY What's to say?

 Look, you need to tell her.

CALDER I don't want to hurt her feelings.

IFFY Don't be such a coward.

CALDER I think she thinks it's over.

IFFY Stop trying to be emotionally intelligent, it doesn't suit you
- you're male.

CALDER I can't live without you.

IFFY You'll survive.

CALDER I've always loved you.

IFFY Stop it now.

CALDER Your voice is like treacle pudding.

IFFY And I suppose you're the custard?

EMLEY AND IFFY BOTH HANG UP.

SHELLEY No one stops me wandering off the school field. I go for a walk around the grounds. There's lilac blossom on the trees and bats the size of crows sleeping upside down in the cool of the palms. They don't have pigeons, they have these big Ibis birds with, like, scythes for beaks. I find a complete snakeskin at the side of the road. The snake must have crawled into the hedge and shedded its entire skin. I'm amazed it can just leave its old self behind and start again with a new one, like it's re-inventing itself with a brand new identity. I meet someone called Charlie, with a red car - a convertible. It's our secret.

I'd better get back; they'll be missing me.

SHELLEY RETURNS TO THE GROUP. EMLEY AND IFFY TURN AWAY FROM EACH OTHER.

IFFY Where you been?

SHELLEY Nowhere.

What's going on with you and Em?

IFFY She thinks I'm trying to steal her boyfriend.

SHELLEY Are you?

IFFY It's not my fault he keeps texting me.

SHELLEY You don't have to reply.

IFFY He's my mate. I've known him longer than her.

SHELLEY She's jealous, you can't blame her.

IFFY One minute she's not bothered about him, the next she's all possessive. She blames me for encouraging him.

SHELLEY He's playing you both, can't you see?

IFFY TURNS AWAY AND EMLEY TURNS BACK TO SHELLEY.

SHELLEY You should dump him.

EMLEY Why should I? He's not dumped me.

SHELLEY He's no good for you.

EMLEY We are the perfect couple.

SHELLEY In looks, maybe; but that's all.

EMLEY Are you saying I'm stupid?

SHELLEY You're both stupid.

EMLEY I don't want her to win.

SHELLEY It's not a competition.

EMLEY Yes it is.

SCENE THREE

THE TEAM ARRIVE AT THE IPSWICH GROUND.

SHELLEY Wow, it's a proper stadium.

SPEN Respect.

EMLEY Is this where we're playing, coach, on a pro' pitch?

SPEN They're obviously treating us like the champions we are,
ladies. Off you go and find the changing rooms.

SONG: "LET'S PLAY!"

CHORUS Welcome to the Ipswich sports pavillion,
the Brothers and Sisters Stadium,
where one dollar could win you a million,
at life's casino, come on,
Let's play!

Pokies, keno,
bookies, lotto,
sports and gambling
at life's casino.

This is the lucky country,
where you can double your money
in a land of opportunity.

No dramas, no problems,
place your bets here;
we're feeding the pokies

\$12 billion a year.
Life's a gift so gamble away,
pokies people play everyday.
at life's casino, come on,
Let's play!

THE GIRLS PREPARE FOR THE MATCH.

HEATON Em, have you got a mirror app on your i-pad?

EMLEY PASSES IT TO HEATON SO SHE CAN CHECK HER APPEARANCE.

IFFY Has anyone got a spare bobble I can use?

EMLEY TURNS AWAY FROM IFFY.

IFFY Fine. Be like that. Shell?

SHELLEY LENDS HER A BOBBLE FOR HER HAIR.

SPEN (CALLING) Are you decent?

EMLEY No, but you can come in.

ENTER SPEN, TIMIDLY.

SPEN Em, what're you doin'?

EMLEY Painting me nails, coach.

SPEN It's rugby league, Em, not Strictly Come Dancing.

EMLEY There might be cameras.

SPEN There's no such thing as an attractive action shot
when your head is half-way up another girl's ass

CHORUS Feeling hot-shot?
Fancy a long-shot?
Step inside,
drop your coins in the slot.

Play the field,
these odds it's a steal,
deal or no deal?
Everybody knows that winners have sex appeal.

Live your life to the full,
you could be hit by a train;
it's an adrenalin rush
and you'll never be the same.

Pokies, keno,
bookies, lotto;
sports and gambling
at life's casino.

This is the lucky country,
where you can double your money.

At life's casino, come on

Let's play!

.SPEN Come on, you're not kids now, some of you could be
playing for your country in a couple of years.

HEATON Coach, can you help me strap me tits up?

SPEN No, I bloody can't; I'm not your mother -

HAZEL (ARRIVING) Sounds like you could use a feminine
touch?

SPEN Hazel, you're an angel.

HAZEL TAKES OVER HELPING HEATON WHILE SPEN TURNS AWAY.

this thing called gambling.

Fancy a flutter,

first game of the tour?

Have yourself a guess at the final score?

How many games will they win out of four?

At life's casino, come on

Let's play!

ON THE PITCH THE GIRLS ARE SUSSING THE OPPOSITION.

SHELLEY Is that them warming up?

EMLEY No way, they're boys.

IFFY Men, more like; they're fucking massive.

EMLEY Who asked you?

HEATON Not on the pitch, you two.

SPEN AND HAZEL ARRIVE. SPEN CLOCKS THE OPPOSITION.

SPEN Shit! You need to wear your skull-caps, ladies. And your gum-shields. That's everyone.

SPEN LOOKS AT HAZEL.

HAZEL What can I say? It's an industrial area.

SPEN So is Batley, but we can't grow rhubarb that big.

HAZEL Did I mention the Sisters of Ipswich are State Club Champions?

SPEN Now you tell us.

GIRLS TAKE UP THEIR POSITIONS FOR THE OFF. THE REST OF THE CAST TAKE UP FULL-SIZE PRACTICE-SHIELDS TO REPRESENT THE IPSWICH TEAM AND FACE THE GIRLS LIKE A ROMAN ARMY.

IFFY A team full of black girls - awesome.

HEATON Look 'em straight in the eye, girls.

SHELLEY I don't know, it might be rude in their culture.

IN TURN, THE GIRLS SMASH INTO THE SHIELDS AND ARE KNOCKED TO THE GROUND AS THE SHIELDS ADVANCE. THEY KEEP GETTING UP AND TRYING AGAIN.

CHORUS Smash! 4-0.

Come on you Sisters!

Come on you Rhubarbs!

You're showing them too much respect.

They're scared of you.

They're in front, ref!

Smash! 8-0.

Through the middle.

Hands-off.

Over the top.

Out wide.

Up 'n' under.

Smash! 12-0.

Get stuck in.

Keep at it.

Play it.

Kick it.

Catch it.

Run with it.

Smash! 16-0.

Feed the ball.

Break them down.

Breakout.

Smash! 20-0.

Move up, move out,

drop in , drop out,

in, in, in,

out, out, out.

Smash! 24-0.

HEATON

They keep chopping us in half, Coach.

SPEN

You're a Prop Forward, Heaton, it's your job to keep hammering away. Draw players in, create a space for the others to run into.

CHORUS

Smash! 28-0.

SHELLEY

We're used to goin' forward, not defendin'.

CHORUS

Smash! 32-0.

SPEN

What have I told you, ladies? Quick passes and move up.

WHISTLE BLOWS FOR A PENALTY.

IFFY

Why is it a penalty when we tackle above chest-height?

HAZEL

It's the Safe Conduct Code.

SPEN

Thanks. I'll recommend it to the RLF when we get home.

WHISTLE BLOWS AGAIN.

EMLEY

Ref says we can't pull their shirts, Coach?

CHORUS

Smash! 36-0.

LOGAN Come on you Rhubarbs!

SPEN Good man, we could do with the support.

LOGAN No bother, mate.

SPEN Are you local?

LOGAN Beenleigh. Ex-Pat family, Yorkshire originally.

SPEN One of us.

LOGAN (SHAKING HANDS) Logan.

SPEN Spen. Pleased to meet you. We're playing Beenleigh,
game after next.

LOGAN I know.

SHELLEY They're tacklin' in pairs, Coach.

SPEN Do the same!

 (TO HAZEL) What's the matter with them? We've done all
this in training.

CHORUS Smash! 40-0.

LOGAN Bit like watching Batley play Leeds Rhinos, eh?

SPEN They're so strong.

HAZEL That's the Polynesians for you.

SPEN What's their secret?

HAZEL They say it's a love of root vegetables - taro for the
Maoris, cassava for the Fijians; the Tongans and
Samoans are just strong, whatever they eat.

LOGAN You think these girls are big; you should try playing
against their fathers.

CHORUS Smash! 44-0.

HEATON They battered us.

SPEN I can't teach you what you've learned here today.

HAZEL "Experience is what you get when you don't get what you want."

SHELLEY Has she got a saying for everything?

LOGAN COMES TO SEE THE TEAM. HEATON THINKS SHE RECOGNISES HIM.

LOGAN No shame, girls. They're a warrior people. Rugby is a way of life - for males and females. From an early age, siblings are taught to battle with each other to toughen them up.

EMLEY Can we just go shopping tomorrow, Coach?

LOGAN Is that our young Heaton?

HEATON Uncle Logan!

SPEN Oh shit, he's "that" Logan.

HEATON You came.

LOGAN Wouldn't miss it for the world.

HEATON Everybody, this is my Uncle Logan.

SHELLEY Seriously? I thought she made him up.

HEATON Logan's me mam's, er -

LOGAN Cousin.

SHELLEY You don't sound very Yorkshire?

LOGAN Second generation.

IFFY Did you watch the game?

LOGAN It was a close call.

IFFY 48 - Nil?

LOGAN I've seen teams do a lot worse against those girls.

SCENE FOUR

SHOPPING CENTRE. EMLEY CATCHES UP WITH SHELLEY. SHE IS LOADED UP WITH BAGS. SHELLEY IS ON HER MOBILE PHONE.

EMLEY I can't tell you how great it is to be shopping again; and in a totally different country; I found the NRL shop, I've bought some amazing tops; and Pandora's, half-price; here, look, I got this little koala; what you got?

Who you talkin' to?

SHELLEY Someone.

EMLEY Who?

SHELLEY Just someone I met.

EMLEY Where? Let me have a look?

SHELLEY No.

EMLEY You're on a dating site?

SHELLEY And?

EMLEY It'll be full of creeps.

SHELLEY Charlie's not like that.

EMLEY Really? Boys from Oz are different, are they?

SHELLEY I wouldn't know.

EMLEY Come on. They're all "fuck-boys" like back home; that's all they're interested in.

Tell me you've not agreed to meet?

SHELLEY None of your business.

EMLEY Yes, my business, I'm your mate.

SHELLEY Then you should be on my side.

EMLEY What's your dad gonna say?

SHELLEY Nobody's gonna find out - unless you tell them?
I'm sure I can find you a mate, if you wanna come?

EMLEY With a complete stranger, Shell? Really? It's dangerous.

SHELLEY I'm not stupid. We met at Smiley High.

EMLEY I never saw you! How old?

SHELLEY Twenty-five.

EMLEY Twenty-five! What're you playin' at?

SHELLEY It's just a holiday romance.

EMLEY You can't meet up again.

SHELLEY You're not my dad. You're just jealous.

EMLEY Well, if that's what you think...

EMLEY STORMS OFF IN DISGUST.

SCENE FIVE

SPEN Right, you lot, "Kangaroo Court".

SHELLEY Awe, do we have to?

SPEN Yes, we have to. You know the drill.

THEY SET UP A "DOCK" FOR THE ACCUSED AND A SEAT FOR THE JUDGE.

HEATON Who's on trial?

SPEN Em -

EMLEY Me? What've I done?

SPEN And Iffy.

IFFY What for?

SPEN Get in the dock, the pair of you.

Shelley, you're the Judge today.

THEY TAKE UP THEIR POSITIONS.

HEATON What about me?

SPEN Star Witness.

HEATON Cool.

SPEN (PASSING A NOTE TO SHELLEY) These are the charges, Judge, if you can read them out.

SHELLEY (READING) Emley and Iffy, you stand accused of allowing "boyfriend trouble" off-the-pitch to affect your game on-the-pitch against the Sisters of Ipswich. How do you plead?

EMLEY (TO SHELLEY) What you been saying?

SHELLEY I haven't said anything. I swear.

SPEN Answer the charges, ladies.

IFFY Not Guilty.

SHELLEY Not Guilty, "Your Honour".

IFFY & EMLEY Not Guilty, Your Honour.

SPEN Call the Star Witness.

HEATON TAKES UP HER POSITION. SPEN WHISPERS INSTRUCTIONS INTO SHELLEY'S EAR.

SHELLEY Star Witness, can you tell the Court if, in the changing rooms before the match, Emley lent you her i-pad mirror so you could see to brush your hair?

HEATON Yes, Your Honour. We all like to look our best before a big game because we come off looking like shit.

SHELLEY And did you hear Iffy ask Emley for a bobble for her hair?

HEATON Yes, Your Honour.

IFFY I asked everyone.

SHELLEY And what was Emley's response to the request?

HEATON She blanked her.

SHELLEY Why do you think she blanked her?

HEATON Dunno, they've been arguing about Calder for ages; it's getting on everyone's nerves.

EMLEY Hey, that's not fair!

SHELLEY In your opinion, did this affect our performance against the Sisters of Ipswich?

EMLEY Watch it, Shell, I could easy ditch the dirt on you, remember?

SHELLEY Silence in Court! I'll have you for Contempt.

HEATON Well, now you mention it.

IFFY Heaton! We were all pussies against the Sisters.

SPEN Verdicts, Judge?

SPEN WHISPERS AGAIN INTO SHELLEY'S EAR.

SHELLEY Guilty, as charged. Both of you.

SPEN Sentences, Judge?

HEATON I've got an idea.

HEATON, SHELLEY AND SPEN CONFER.

SHELLEY Are you sure?

HEATON NODS.

Right, you've got to jump in the pool, fully-clothed.

IFFY No sweat.

SHELLEY And your mobies are confiscated until after the next game.

EMLEY No way!

SPEN Yes, way. The Court's decided. There's no Appeal. Hand them over.

EMLEY AND IFFY HAND SPEN THEIR PHONES.

SPEN (TO SHELLEY) Tell you what, I admire your ability to find a girl's weak point - both on and off the pitch.

EMLEY (TO SHELLEY) Remember, you, what goes around, comes around, like that riptide.

SCENE SIX

AT THE HOTEL. EMLEY IS FACE-TIMING HER DAD ON HER I-PAD.

EMLEY Dad?

KIWI PETE Where's your phone?

EMLEY It's been confiscated.

KIWI PETE What? Who by?

EMLEY It's a long story.

KIWI PETE I'll get onto Spen.

EMLEY No, don't cause trouble.

KIWI PETE Well, buy another phone; I can transfer you the money.

EMLEY I've got me i-pad. I'll get it back after the next match.

KIWI PETE I'm not happy.

EMLEY Neither am I.

KIWI PETE What's up, peach?

EMLEY I wanna come home.

KIWI PETE Has something happened?

EMLEY No. I'm homesick.

KIWI PETE Is this about that bloody boyfriend of yours?

EMLEY It's a mess; I don't know what to do.

KIWI PETE I told Spen to watch out for him bothering you.

EMLEY You shouldn't do that; you'll get me thrown off the team.

KIWI PETE I'm not having you upset; not when you're so far away
from us.

EMLEY SHEDS A TEAR.

That's it; I'll buy a ticket for you online. Pack your bags,

you're coming home.

EMLEY

No, you're over-reacting again. I can't desert the team, it'll be all right.

KIWI PETE

Are you sure?

EMLEY

I just needed a little cry. I miss having you there for a moan.

KIWI PETE

I know, peach. I miss you moaning at me.

EMLEY

We're going to Australia Zoo.

KIWI PETE

Send me photos.

SCENE SEVEN

AT AUSTRALIA ZOO, THE GIRLS ARE HAVING THEIR PHOTOS TAKEN WITH THE ANIMALS.

EMLEY This is me with a koala.

SHELLEY This is me with an Emu.

IFFY This is me with a crocodile.

HEATON This is me with Uncle Logan. And a kangaroo.

LOGAN There's no tastier meat than 'roo meat.

HEATON Urgh!

LOGAN It's true.

HEATON But they're so cute and cuddly, how can they do that?

LOGAN 'Roos are considered pests in the Bush. You're allowed to cull them if they threaten your crops.

HEATON How can a kangaroo threaten anybody?

LOGAN You wouldn't say that if you were faced with a mob of roos. They live in groups of ten or more.

HEATON That's not a "mob", that's a family.

LOGAN Not sure what that means, Heaton. Long time since we were a family.

HEATON What happened to us?

LOGAN How much don't you know?

HEATON Are you my dad?

LOGAN Hell, no. Who's told you that?

HEATON There's no name on my Birth Certificate; Nan said to keep away from you; I thought - sorry; shit, I'm embarrassed.

SCENE EIGHT

BACK AT THE HOTEL.

SPEN Well done, ladies; that was a county team you played today - a bit like us playing Yorkshire - and it was a close call. Main thing is we got on the score sheet. I'm proud of yous.

EMLEY Thanks, Coach. Can we have our mobies back now?

SPEN I've left them in your rooms. I suggest you all go for a post-match swim, keep those muscles toned.

EMLEY AND IFFY GO TO THEIR RESPECTIVE ROOMS TO FIND THEIR MOBILES.

EMLEY Hang on a minute, this isn't mine.

IFFY Shit, this is Em's moby.

EMLEY (CHECKING IFFY'S MESSAGES) I know I shouldn't, but -

IFFY (CHECKING EMLEY'S MESSAGES) I wonder what Calder's been saying to her?

ON SCREEN APPEARS A TEXT FROM CALDER TO IFFY.

EMLEY (READING) "I want us to be "mates" like on the Discovery Channel.

ON SCREEN APPEARS A TEXT FROM CALDER TO EMLEY.

IFFY (READING) "You're the only one for me."

IFFY&EMLEY The two-faced little shit.

ELSEWHERE IN THE HOTEL.

SPEN Shell's missing.

HAZEL Are you sure?

SPEN She's only just turned sixteen and she's gone awol with a twenty-five year old pervert. We're 10,000 miles away from home and her mum'll be ringing me at any minute.
(TO EMLEY) Look, this is serious; what else do you know about him?

EMLEY He drives a red car. It's a convertible, that's all I know.

SPEN She could be anywhere by now. Anything could have happened.

HAZEL (RETURNING WITH THE OTHER GIRLS) They're on their way.

SPEN We have to look for her. You stay here for the police. I'll go to the shopping centre. Girls, go to the beach - take your phones.

SHELLEY RETURNS, UNAWARE OF THE CHAOS. SPEN RUNS TO HUG HER.

SPEN Come here! Has he hurt you? I'll kill him!

SHELLEY I'm all right, dad. What's the panic?

SPEN Where the fuck have you been?

SHELLEY For a walk on the beach.

SPEN Don't lie to me! We know you were meeting him. The police are out looking for you.

SHELLEY What? I decided not to go.

SPEN Are you telling me the truth?

SHELLEY Yes, I swear down.

SPEN FALLS TO HIS KNEES. HAZEL CONSOLES HIM.

SHELLEY I'm sorry, dad; I didn't mean -

SCENE NINE

ON THE COACH TO BEENLEIGH.

SPEN What're we up against today, Hazel?

HAZEL Bit of a mixed bunch, really. Lots of migrant families:
Brazilian Africans, Philipinos and, of course, Polynesians.
And the "Murri Sisters" - aboriginal girls.

SPEN This is one hell of a country.

HAZEL A lot of the girls come from the government housing
estate on the edge of town -

SPEN Like our council estates?

HAZEL Some of them take up rugby to avoid the drugs and
teenage pregnancy.

SPEN Not so different then to Batley.

HAZEL The school has its own farm. They rear "droughtmaster"
cattle and sell their produce to the local abattoir, where
many of the local kids end up working.

SPEN Sounds like I'd better go and psyche 'em up for the match.

SPEN TURNS TO THE GIRLS.

IFFY AND EMLEY ARE LAUGHING AND JOKING TOGETHER.

SHELLEY You two seem very matey today?

EMLEY What do you mean? Me and Iffy are best mates, aren't
we?

IFFY Got loads in common, we have.

SHELLEY Like Calder, you mean?

EMLEY Like girly revenge on that douche-bag.

SHELLEY What have you two done?

IFFY Nothing. Just shared our feelings with the world.

EMLEY We posted all his texts to both of us on Facebook.

IFFY So everybody can see what a two-faced little player he is.

SHELLEY Yeay, girl power; I'm loving it.

HEATON HAS HER HEAD DOWN, LISTENING TO MUSIC.

SPEN What's up, Heaton?

HEATON Nothing. I'm listening to "angry" music to get me in the mood for the match.

SHELLEY Show us your angry face, Heaton?

HEATON OBLIGES AND THEY FALL ABOUT LAUGHING.

SPEN Come on, ladies, let's lift those spirits: Team Song, everyone. Heaton, why don't you lead the charge?

CALL AND RESPONSE CHANT.

HEATON Everywhere we go-o,

CHORUS Everywhere we go-o,

HEATON People want to know-o,

CHORUS People want to know-o,

HEATON Who we are?

CHORUS Who we are?

HEATON Where we come from?

CHORUS Where we come from?

HEATON Shall we tell them?

CHORUS Shall we tell them?

HEATON We're the Batley,

CHORUS	We're the Batley,
HEATON	The Batley Batley Rhubarbs,
CHORUS	Batley Batley Rhubarbs...
HEATON&CHORUS	B-A-T-L-E-Y, B-A-T-L-E-Y
	BATLEY!
AT THE MATCH.	
CHORUS	Batley versus Beenleigh: two teams, evenly matched, two towns, both with changing identities.
BEENLEIGH CHORUS	Beenleigh: on the Logan and Albert Rivers; Brisbane overspill into agricultural lands - traditionally sugar cane and rum distilleries; taken over by new industries.
BATLEY CHORUS	Batley: Danish settlement, near the River Calder, mentioned in the Domesday Book; up on its history, down on its luck; coal mines and mills given over to retail. First try goes to Batley: 4-Nil.
BEENLEIGH	Early German and Anglo-Saxon settlers are joined by the latest migrant labour; in good Lutheran tradition, we're all foreigners here. Second try to Beenleigh: score 4-4.
BATLEY	60% of under 18's in Batley

are now of South Asian origin,
so what do we mean any more by "foreign"?

BEENLEIGH Something you Brits don't have
is an indigenous black population;
but slowly we are "Closing The Gap",
respecting the rights of the native peoples -
the "Custodians of the Land".

That's another try for the home side
and the score stands at 8-4 to Beenleigh.

BATLEY It's true that Life Expectancy is lower in Batley;
there's binge-drinking, drugs and obesity,
unemployment and anxiety,
depression and poverty,
increasing levels of crime -

BEENLEIGH And problems with dentistry -
What? That's why we smile more in Oz -

BATLEY Yes, of course, because of the climate, we know,
and yet, still we try -
8-8.

BEENLEIGH We have our own problems with racism, same as you
guys.

BATLEY And try again -
12-8.

BEENLEIGH And home-grown terrorism.

BATLEY Until, finally, against all the odds,

14-8,

we achieve our first, historic victory.

HEATON COMES OFF THE PITCH, CARRYING THE BALL. LOGAN

CONGRATULATES HER WITH A HUG.

LOGAN Top banana! You were amazing.

HEATON Thanks; I'm really glad you came.

LOGAN Great game.

HEATON We need to talk.

LOGAN Not now.

HEATON Yes now.

LOGAN Not here.

HEATON Yes here.

THE OTHERS LEAVE THEM ALONE.

LOGAN It's not exactly my place to tell you.

HEATON Well, no other bastard seems willing to.

LOGAN It's like this: your Nan and Grandad came over to live in Queensland to be near your Grandad's brother and his wife - my mum and dad.

HEATON Mum was a teenager, wasn't she?

LOGAN Yeah. Me and your mum, we were cousins. We got on fine, she was a good kid.

HEATON So what happened?

LOGAN Your Nan hated it here, your Grandad loved it; your mum copped for a whole lot of bickering so she used to spend a lot of time at my folks'.

Lied to by my folks,
I was born to regret it,
my family's one big joke
and I just don't get it.
Kick it into touch!

SHE PUTS DOWN THE BALL AND LEAVES.

SCENE TEN

AT THE HOTEL. SPEN AND SHELLEY ARE IN ONE ROOM, HEATON AND UNCLE LOGAN IN ANOTHER.

SPEN You said, "I don't know anything about you"; so I'm here to find out.

SHELLEY That doesn't exactly sound like someone who's willing to listen.

SPEN I can't do right for doing wrong.

SHELLEY I know your heart's in the right place, dad.

SPEN Am I paying too much attention to the other girls, is that it?

SHELLEY I do get a bit jealous, that's true.

SPEN I have to be seen to treat you all the same.

SHELLEY I know. And you do. That's not it.

SPEN I started this team for you.

SHELLEY You started it for yourself.

SPEN That's harsh.

SHELLEY I need to feel special. Not on the pitch. Off the pitch.

SPEN Is that why you scared the shit out of me?

SHELLEY Maybe. I'm trying to tell you something.

IN HEATON'S ROOM.

LOGAN Coach tells me you don't want to play?

HEATON How can you accept what they've done to us?

LOGAN What choice do we have? We need to move on.

HEATON No wonder mum's so fucked up.

LOGAN They had an affair. What he did was very wrong. She was

only sixteen.

HEATON She knew what she was doing. It's your mum I feel sorry for.

LOGAN I'm sorry for your trouble.

HEATON You realise, this means we're...

LOGAN Yeah, I know, I'm your bro'. Scary thought, isn't it?

HEATON I can hardly think it, let alone say it.

LOGAN I must admit, I prefer "uncle", given the age gap and all.

BACK IN SHELLEY'S ROOM.

SHELLEY I don't know if you've noticed, but I'm an incurable romantic?

SPEN Like me.

SHELLEY You're a sentimental old cynic.

SPEN Less of the old.

SHELLEY I love playing rugby, but I also love stuff like poetry.

SPEN You can do both.

SHELLEY I do.

SPEN I'd like to read some of your poetry, if you don't mind?

SHELLEY Really?

SPEN I'm not a complete philistine. Look, you might be romantic but men will exploit that for sex.

SHELLEY Charlie's not a man.

SPEN What're you telling me? Em said it was a "he".

SHELLEY I never said that; she must've assumed.

SPEN So you're gay now, all of a sudden? Listen to yourself.

SHELLEY No, you listen to yourself. It's the stereotype, I know; but if 10% of women are gay, some of them will be rugby players. That goes for the men too.

SPEN 10%?

SHELLEY We're on the "up" - so to speak.

SPEN Does your mother know?

SHELLEY Yeah. Well, she suspects, anyway.

SPEN Am I always the last to be told?
So you did meet up with this "Charlie" woman?

SHELLEY Yes. I'm not sorry, it was fun.

SPEN You lied to me.

SHELLEY I am sorry for that.
I'm still holding those balloons, dad. But this time I feel like I'm being lifted up into the air and floating across the sky.

SPEN (LEAVING) You're absolutely right: I have no idea who you are.

SHELLEY I can't believe I've just "come out" to me dad.

BACK IN HEATON'S ROOM.

HEATON I don't know what to do now?

LOGAN You could come and live in Oz? Seriously, I could get you into one of the rugby schools.

HEATON I've given up on rugby.

LOGAN You musn't, you're a top player; I've seen you in action.

HEATON I'm not good enough to play here.

LOGAN You soon would be. You'd flourish at Smiley High.

HEATON How could I live here?

LOGAN I'd look after you.

HEATON You'd do that for me?

LOGAN Damn right I would, after everything that's happened.

HEATON I don't know if I could ever leave me Nan.

LOGAN The Gold Coast is one of the Top Ten happiest places on
the planet to live.

HEATON Then why are we so unhappy?

SCENE ELEVEN

SMILEY HIGH STATE SCHOOL. THE GIRLS ARE ON THE PITCH, WARMING UP FOR THE GAME, EXCEPT FOR HEATON. SPEN AND HAZEL ARE ON THE TOUCHLINES.

SPEN I can't believe the facilities you've got at this school.

HAZEL Yeah, well, we don't sell off our sports fields to property developers, like you guys in the UK.

SPEN How many girls do you have wanting to play rugby?

HAZEL There's 85 want to get involved - 18 are selected.

SPEN That's amazing.

HAZEL Believe me, we might be State High School Champions, but it's still a battle with the authorities to keep the programme going.

SPEN You love your sports more in Oz. There's more respect.

HAZEL We appreciate "The Great Outdoors" - life's a good barbeque.

SPEN We treat "The Great Outdoors" as a problem.

HAZEL On the other hand, it's an eleven-hour drive out West to see my son.

SPEN Your girls aren't wandering around the streets or hanging around pubs, like ours.

HAZEL Yeah, but when our girls toured the UK, they went awol on me. I had to wait up half the night 'cause they'd been out clubbing.

SPEN It's hard to keep them focused on their training.

HAZEL I'm sure your girls will be up for it today: after all, this is your "revenge" match.

SPEN I like to think it's more good-natured than that. Don't get me wrong, we want to beat you, all right; but we have to be realistic. We've come here to learn.

HAZEL Bollocks, Spen, you've come here to win.

SPEN Not at any cost.

HAZEL You see, that's why we're better at winning.

SPEN "At any cost" leads to corruption and sports people taking banned drugs and the like.

HAZEL I don't agree with drugs. I'd have a life ban for everyone using drugs.

SPEN I'm starting to wonder how many champions will be left, if we do that?

HAZEL There will always be champions. Sports are about winning.

SPEN It has to be more than that, doesn't it?

HAZEL Not in my book.

LOGAN TURNS UP WITH HEATON. SPEN SIGNALS HIS GRATITUDE TO LOGAN AND TAKES HEATON TO ONE SIDE.

SPEN Good to have you back. Let me see your arms.

HEATON SHOWS HIM. THEY HAVE FRESH MARKS.

I know it's not going to be easy, lass, but we're here for you; this is your rugby family.

HEATON Thanks, Coach.

HEATON JOINS THE GIRLS.

GIRLS POSITION THEMSELVES AND THE GAME STARTS.

SPEN Good to see a female referee.

HAZEL Times like this, I really miss playing.

SPEN Don't we all? I miss the banter. You were a "jillaroo", weren't you, Hazel?

HAZEL 2008 Runners-Up in the World Cup, at the Sunscorp Stadium, Brisbane. Lost to New Zealand in the final 34-0.

SPEN No shame there.

HAZEL No; but like I tell our girls every week: if you think training's hard, try losing a World Cup Final.

SPEN I hope I can be a better coach than I was a player. I grew up in a working-class household, the only boy among three sisters. I knew my sisters were more athletic than me, but I was the only one allowed to go professional. I know I'm part of making changes for these girls; that's enough for me.

HAZEL How's it going with your Shelley?

SPEN I think I might have failed her as a dad.

HAZEL At least she's agreed to play.

HEATON RUNS OFF THE PITCH, HOLDING HER CHEST.

HEATON Coach, I'm in trouble.

SPEN What's happened? Are you hurt?

HEATON (WHIPPING OFF HER BRA) Me bra strap's snapped.

SPEN Give me that! What have I told you about wearing a

training bra?

HEATON Have you got a spare one?

SPEN No, I bloody well haven't. What do you think I am - a mobile lingerie shop?

HEATON What am I gonna do?

SPEN I don't know, do I?

HEATON I can't play without one.

HAZEL Here, she can have mine.

HAZEL WHIPS OFF HER BRA AND SHIELDS HEATON, SO SHE CAN PUT IT ON.

HEATON Thanks, Coach.

HAZEL No dramas. I think you'd best hang on to it.

SPEN No wonder we're bloody losing.

HAZEL You don't get that in the men's game.

CHORUS Real tough game for one and all,
Smiley High swing down like a wrecking ball;
but Batley keep rolling it back up the hill
in what quickly develops into a battle of wills.
Despite a late try from Batley,
final score: 14-4 to Smiley High.
Life's never like it is in the movies.

PLAYERS LEAVE THE PITCH. SPEN AND HAZEL SWOP GIFTS AFTER THE MATCH. GROWN-UPS FORM ONE GROUP AND GIRLS THE OTHER, FOR "SECOND FAMILY"

CHORUS Parents and teenagers
are like perfect strangers

until it comes to the rugby:
it's like your second family.
Learning how to listen to grown-ups,
facing the unknown;
seeing your kids deal with pain,
getting hurt and bouncing back again;
learning right from wrong,
feeling safe and strong,
honour and decency,
loyalty to your team-mates,
celebrating success and enjoying the game,
appreciating your own body
and your own beauty,
the difference between female and feminine,
discipline and self-discipline;
knowing how to fail,
how to make mistakes and recover,
shaking hands when it's all over,
forgive and forget, get on with it
and respect for the opposition.
Parents and teenagers
are like perfect strangers
until it comes to the rugby,
it's like your second family.