

SHARK

INT. ATLANTIC CITY BALLROOM - NIGHT

OVERHEAD WIDE. A giant, elegant BALLROOM. Rows and rows of POOL TABLES. Female players fill every table.

CLOSE ON a gleaming white CUE BALL.

A POOL STICK rips through frame. We PULL BACK to reveal the YOUNG WOMAN who's just unleashed the thunderclap break. QUINN SULLIVAN. 19. Striking in her intensity and focus.

SUPER: *Women's World Championship. Atlantic City. 1989.*

Montage. We follow Quinn as she moves through different matches. Hitting tough shot after tough shot. An assassin.

Back to the OVERHEAD WIDE as players DISAPPEAR. ON QUINN as she strikes a *final, mesmerizing shot.* The crowd applauds.

She moves from the table. In the crowd her coach, NOVA (40s. Black) stands and applauds as well, nodding at Quinn.

As Quinn takes her seat, she's startled to see a middle-aged couple, MARTHA and JACK (50s) and an older woman HELEN (80s) take seats in the small crowd.

Jack looks strange. He wears a HEAVY WINTER COAT. His hair is greasy. He stares at the floor with a flat, vacant affect.

Quinn freezes.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Quinn splashes water on her face, rattled. She lights a cigarette. Nova enters.

NOVA
You okay?

QUINN
(she's not)
Yeah.

NOVA
Don't worry about them, alright?
Focus on what's at stake.

INT. ATLANTIC CITY BALLROOM - LATER

The SINGLE CHAMPIONSHIP TABLE is lit. A sizable CROWD surrounds it. Anxious anticipation fills the air.

Quinn stares straight ahead. Her leg pistons uncontrollably. She steals furtive glances into the stands.

ANNOUNCER (O.C.)
Ladies and gentlemen, final match.
Newcomer Quinn Sullivan of the U.S.
versus returning world champion
Kelly Doyle of Ireland. Players
ready.

KELLY DOYLE (30s) moves to the table. Quinn follows. The two women shoot the LAG. Doyle overpowers so Quinn wins the break. An ATTENDANT moves to set the rack.

Quinn chalks her cue and tries to focus her scattered attention on the table. A sudden outburst from the crowd--

JACK
(calling out)
Keep your elbow tucked, Ace!

MARTHA
(shushing him)
Jack, stop--

Quinn turns to the stands. Jack looks down, scolded.

JACK
(to himself)
Elbow tucked...

Quinn tries to refocus but she's spiraling. She steps to the table and finally strikes the cue ball but MISHITS badly, barely spreading the rack. Scattered GASPS from the audience.

After a BEAT Quinn slowly walks back to her chair. She looks up into the stands one last time. She picks up her CUE and starts to walk out of the ballroom.

NOVA
(rising)
Quinn--

But Quinn ignores her. Her fury grows with each quickening step. She flees through some double doors and into a HALLWAY.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Away from the crowd, Quinn EXPLODES, smashing the pool cue against a trash can, splintering it into oblivion. She slumps against a wall. Nova comes through the doors.

NOVA
What are you doing??

Quinn doesn't answer. She feels like tearing her skin off.

NOVA
They're going to disqualify you--

Quinn's mother, MARTHA, comes out.

QUINN
Oh my god-- get the fuck away from
me--

MARTHA
Honey, wait--

QUINN
(whirling back around)
Are you out of your fucking *mind!*?
You *brought him?*

MARTHA
It was Grandma --

QUINN
I don't want dad here -- I don't
want *any* of you here.

Martha shrugs, exasperated. Nova steps forward.

NOVA
We need to go back inside.

But Quinn turns and flees.

NOVA
Quinn!

Quinn's racing now. She fights to hold back tears. She bursts into an EMPTY BALLROOM and continues her sprint.

Running, running, running. Building to a crescendo until--

INSERT TITLE SEQUENCE - **SHARK**

INT. FRAT HOUSE. COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY - NIGHT

SUPERIMPOSE: 1 Year Earlier (1988)

A crowded party. Quinn sits on a couch by herself. She looks softer now, innocent even compared to the woman we saw in the previous scene. She anxiously sips a SOLO CUP full of BOOZE and glances around the party for someone to latch onto.

She tries to smooth her THRIFTED SKIRT. Self conscious next to the wealth that surrounds her.

LIVING ROOM - LATER

Quinn stands just on the outside of a group of other STUDENTS talking and laughing. She tries to smile and lean in as if she's part of it.

LATER

Quinn stands at the food table, picking at snacks. She clocks a few GIRLS from that same small group gathering their coats. Her freshmen roommates AMANDA, LUCY and RACHEL.

QUINN
(approaching)
Are you guys leaving?

AMANDA
Uh...We got invited to another party at Burkman Hall.

QUINN
Oh--

AMANDA
Yeah. It's just-- we would invite you but there's, like, a guest list? It's so stupid but--

Rachel and Lucy gather their things.

LUCY
Amanda, come on--

A gut-punch but Quinn tries to cover.

QUINN
Totally. I'm probably going to this new club downtown anyway so...

AMANDA
Oh yeah?

QUINN
Yeah, free drinks, hot boys...Maybe you guys could meet me.

AMANDA
(not happening)
Maybe...

An awkward beat. Quick goodbyes. Shame ripples through Quinn as she spins back into the party.

Back at the FOOD TABLE. Quinn grabs a handful of PIGS IN A BLANKET and shoves them in her mouth. She chews rapidly then downs several more.

LATER. At the makeshift BAR. She downs a SOLO CUP OF BOOZE.

Now Quinn sits tucked away in a corner of the party. She holds a SMALL PLATE piled with more snacks. She methodically downs it all.

INT. PARTY - CONTINUOUS

Quinn weaves through the crowd. High from the food and drink. She moves deliberately, like a cue ball on the table.

EXT/INT. BATHROOM -

She slips through a BATHROOM DOOR then --

We're outside the STALL. We only see Quinn's FEET as she kneels on the floor, hear her RETCHING. JUMP CUT TO:

The sink. Quinn splashes water on her face. She checks her body in the mirror. A BANGING is heard on the door.

STUDENT (O.C.)
Hurry the fuck up!

She quickly puts on lipstick.

INT. KITCHEN - LATER

It's packed with STUDENTS. Quinn struggles to fill her solo cup from the keg. A young man sidles up beside her. This is EZIO (20s. Greek. Handsome). He speaks with an accent.

EZIO
Here, there's a trick...

He takes Quinn's cup, smoothly pumps the keg and fills it at the same time. He hands it back to her.

QUINN
Thanks...

They awkwardly cheers solo cups and drink.

EZIO
This is terrible.

QUINN
It's fucking disgusting.

They both laugh. Quinn sizes up the gorgeous young man standing before her.

EZIO
(offering his hand)
Ezio.

QUINN
Quinn.

EZIO
You here by yourself?

QUINN
My roommates left for another party.

EZIO
And they didn't take you?

QUINN
Uhhh...no.

EZIO
Well that wasn't very nice...

Quinn shrugs. She clocks two ATTRACTIVE GIRLS pushing up to the keg. Ezio ignores them, his attention on her.

More KIDS push into the kitchen. Loud. Chaotic. Quinn gets jostled. Ezio steps closer to her. Shouts above the din.

EZIO
You wanna get out of here?

She considers Ezio. Downs her cheap beer. Why the fuck not?

INT. NIGHT CAFE - LATER

Quinn and Ezio sit at a BAR. A few drinks in. Quinn is already enamored with him.

EZIO
The exchange program goes until December. But Columbia says there's a possibility I can extend until May so--

QUINN
What dorm are you staying in?

EZIO
No - not a dorm. Um...it's a hall -- St. August?

QUINN
St. Anthony's?

EZIO
Yes! That's it --

QUINN
(can't believe it)
You're living in St. A's? The
fraternity?

EZIO
Yes. It's very nice. Very fancy...
(a beat)
...You're from here? New York?

QUINN
I'm from Michigan.

EZIO
Michigan??...What is it like,
Michigan?

QUINN
It's cold. And boring. My whole
life all I wanted to do was get the
fuck out of there.

EZIO
...but you like Columbia?

QUINN
It's okay...I haven't really made
any friends yet.

EZIO
(playfully)
What? I don't believe that. You are
so easy to talk to...

Ezio reaches out and tucks a fallen strand of hair behind her
ear. Quinn blushes. She finishes her drink.

QUINN
(to the bartender)
Raheem, can we get two more?

The bartender RAHEEM (40s. Black) nods at them. Ezio has spun
around and is looking out at the crowded bar. He sees TWO
POOL TABLES toward the back.

EZIO
Hey, lets play--

Quinn turns, sees the tables. Ezio stands and tries to pull her towards them.

EZIO
Come on.

QUINN
No thanks.

EZIO
-- it'll be fun.

QUINN
I don't really play--

EZIO
(playfully tugging her)
Me neither! Who cares?

QUINN
(sitting back down)
No--

But Ezio pulls her again.

EZIO
(pulling)
Come onnnnnn---

QUINN
(severe)
I said I'm *good*.

Quinn yanks her arm back a little too abruptly. An awkward moment hangs in the air. Ezio tries to recover.

EZIO
Okay. No problem.

Raheem drops the drinks in front of them. CLOSE ON Quinn. She looks over her shoulder at the pool tables. On the sound of a RACK BREAKING we SMASH CUT TO:

INT. QUINN'S CHILDHOOD HOME - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Battle Creek, Michigan. The basement of Quinn's childhood home. It's worn. Run down. 70s MUSIC plays on the radio.

The sound of the BREAK carries us back in time. **11-YEAR OLD QUINN** and her father JACK play pool. The balls roll around the table. Quinn eyes them carefully.

JACK
Now what?

YOUNG QUINN
the 7 ball?

JACK
 Remember what I told you. Always
 think at least two shots ahead.

Quinn studies the table carefully. Wheels turning.

YOUNG QUINN
 If I sink the 3 ball, draw it back,
 I can set myself up for the 6. And
 then...maybe go for the 7 in the
 corner?

JACK
 Good.
 (Quinn lines up the shot)
 Spot lower on the ball. And
 remember to follow through.

A dog starts BARKING OUTSIDE. WATER runs from upstairs. Quinn
 fidgets with the cue. She pulls back.

YOUNG QUINN
 It's too hard.

JACK
 No. You can do it. Tuck your elbow
 and focus.

Quinn leans back over the table. A WHOOSH sound and
 everything fades away. The *barking*, the *water running*, the
music. Suddenly COMPLETE SILENCE. Quinn strikes the cue ball.
 Perfect. She smiles triumphantly. Jack nods his head.

JACK
 That's enough for today.

YOUNG QUINN
 What?

Jack moves to set down his cue.

JACK
 I have work to do.

YOUNG QUINN
 But...just a little longer--

JACK
 No, Ace--

YOUNG QUINN
 Please--

JACK
Keep practicing.

He goes up the stairs. A deflated Quinn turns back to the table and continues to shoot.

INT. NIGHT CAFE - NIGHT (PRESENT DAY)

Quinn downs her drink. Ezio looks around, contemplates an exit strategy. Quinn leans forward over the bar to call out to Raheem and drunkenly loses her balance. As she slips off her chair, Ezio catches her.

EZIO
Whoa-- hey, maybe we should--

Quinn leans in and kisses him passionately. Then--

QUINN
Maybe we should what?

EXT. RIVERSIDE PARK - LATE

A PARK BENCH overlooking the Hudson River. Ezio and Quinn make out. Quinn suddenly pulls back --

QUINN
Do you think I'm pretty?

EZIO
I think you're beautiful...

QUINN
(drunkenly nuzzling him)
You do?

EZIO
Of course.

She straddles Ezio, kissing him deeply. Pulls back --

QUINN
Will you take me to St. Anthony's?

EZIO
Any time you want.

Quinn kisses him again. She begins to grind on his lap. Back and forth, back and forth. It builds and builds until --

INT. QUINN'S DORM - 3AM

Late. They lie in Quinn's bed. Ezio sleeps. Quinn gazes at him. She lifts his arm and cozies up onto his chest.

ON QUINN. A BANGING ON A DOOR carries us into...

INT. QUINN'S DORM - MORNING

...the next morning. More BANGING.

LUCY (O.C.)
(pissed)
Quinn!

Quinn startles awake, disoriented and HUNG OVER. She turns over. Ezio is GONE. She stumbles out of bed and out into--

LIVING ROOM/KITCHEN

Her roommate AMANDA packs her bag for class. RACHEL reads on the couch, side-eyeing Quinn. LUCY stands in the middle of the wrecked kitchen holding an EMPTY WINE BOTTLE.

LUCY
What the fuck! I bought this for a party.

QUINN
Sorry--

AMANDA
You left the kitchen totally trashed. Again.

LUCY
And ate everyone's food. This cost me 40 bucks, Quinn!

QUINN
I'll pay for it --

LUCY
Don't fucking touch my stuff, okay?
Don't touch anyone's stuff.

RACHEL
And please don't have dudes stay here unless you give us a heads up. It's not cool.

QUINN
 Yeah, I'm--
 (to Lucy)
 I'll pay you back. I'm sorry--

She heads back into her room, mortified.

BEDROOM

Quinn goes to her DRESSER DRAWER. She opens it to grab some cash but...it's GONE. *Fuck*. She rifles through her stuff. Checks another drawer, then another. She looks around the room, panic setting in. It dawns on her. *Motherfucker*.

Quinn races out of her room--

LIVING ROOM/KITCHEN

QUINN
 My money's gone --

AMANDA
 What?

QUINN
 My money -- Did you see that guy
 leave? Ezio?

AMANDA
 No.

Rachel and Lucy shake their heads. Quinn's in a state of shock. Her mind races. She runs back to her room.

BEDROOM

She rummages through her drawers again. Trying to will the money to appear. Reality continues to sink in. The roommates stand in her doorway. Quinn frantically starts to dress.

RACHEL
 Do you think he took it?

QUINN
 -- I don't know --

AMANDA
 How much was it?

QUINN
 (tying her shoes)
 \$5000 dollars -- more --

AMANDA
 Oh my god.

QUINN
It was my housing money, all my
spending money for the year--

LUCY
You kept 5 grand in cash in your
room?

QUINN
(racing past them)
Fuck off Lucy--

Quinn grabs her jacket and bolts out the door.

EXT. COLUMBIA QUAD - DAY

A crisp FALL DAY. Quinn races across the QUAD dodging students. She's on fire.

INT. ST. ANTHONY'S FRATERNITY - DAY

Quinn stands in the ornate alcove of the historic fraternity with CHARLES (20). His buddy WILL (20) stands by the door.

CHARLES
Ezio?

QUINN
Yeah - Pantelis, I think -- I don't
know how to spell it--

CHARLES
There's no Ezio here.

QUINN
Are you sure? Can you ask?

CHARLES
Can I *ask*? There's only 40 people
in the frat - you have to be
invited to join.

WILL
We know everyone.

Quinn deflates, her eyes darting around the room. Will opens the door for her to leave.

EXT. COLUMBIA QUAD - DAY

Quinn makes her way across the QUAD again, headed out to the city streets.

PROFESSORY ALVAREZ (O.C.)
Ms. Sullivan!

The sound of her name jolts Quinn around. It's her clinical psych teacher, RAY ALVAREZ. (50s. Warm. Avuncular).

PROFESSOR ALVAREZ
We missed you in class this morning.

QUINN
Sorry, I'm-- I wasn't feeling well.

PROFESSOR ALVAREZ
(sensing something's off)
Everything alright?

QUINN
Yeah.

PROFESSOR ALVAREZ
You're sure?

Quinn nods her head. Starts to move again.

QUINN
I'll see you next week.

INT. NIGHT CAFE - DAY

Raheem sets things up behind the bar. Quinn rushes in, wired.

QUINN
Raheem --

RAHEEM
Hey.

QUINN
Last night -- I was with a guy --

RAHEEM
Yeah, I remember.

QUINN
You know him by any chance?

RAHEEM
The guy? No.

QUINN
His name's Ezio. You're sure?

RAHEEM

Yeah. I'm sure. Sorry...
 (Quinn slumps against the
 bar)
 You alright?...Quinn?
 (Quinn doesn't respond)
 Did something happen?

QUINN

(distracted)
 What?

RAHEEM

Did something happen. With the guy.

QUINN

Oh...no. It's....no...

Quinn stares into the abyss. A crack of a POOL BREAK behind her. She turns. Two MONEYED IVY LEAGERS, BRANDON and NATE are playing. There's a small CROWD.

QUINN

(to Raheem)
 Can I get a shot of tequila?

Quinn turns back to the tables. BRANDON strikes a *showboating shot*. The small crowd claps reluctantly. Brandon takes MONEY from his friend. *Quinn clocks this*.

BRANDON

(taunting)
 How many games is that? 4? 5?
 (to the crowd)
 Who's up? Huh? Come on you pussies!
 Who wants a game?

Back on Quinn. Raheem places the shot in front of her. She downs it. Lights a cigarette.

QUINN

One more please.

He pours. Quinn turns back towards the table. Considering. She downs the second shot.

INT. QUINN'S CHILDHOOD HOME - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Christmas morning. Only a few PRESENTS under the tree. **11 YEAR-OLD QUINN** excitedly unwraps one while her parents watch. Her little brother TOMMY (8) sits off to the side playing with his toys.

Quinn finally gets the gift unwrapped. It's a VELVET CUE CASE. She runs her hand over it then carefully opens the lid revealing a LUCASI POOL CUE.

JACK

I learned to play on that stick.

Quinn pulls it out and starts screwing it together.

JACK

Be careful with it, now.

Martha glances at Jack, confused.

MARTHA

(under her breath)

You didn't tell me you were gonna do that.

Jack ignores her. Quinn holds up the cue stick in awe. She runs to Jack and wraps her arms around him. He awkwardly hugs her back.

INT. QUINN'S BASEMENT - LATER (FLASHBACK)

Quinn shoots pool by herself. Her skill has grown. Only the NINE BALL remains on the table.

A difficult shot. Quinn concentrates. She strokes the LUCASI. The ball banks off the corner and runs all the way down the long, green felt. It drops gently in the corner pocket.

INT. GARAGE - CONTINUOUS (FLASHBACK)

Quinn runs out into the cluttered garage. She holds the LUCASI. Jack stands staring intently at the wall. He's taped a number of MAPS to it. He smokes a CIGARETTE.

YOUNG QUINN

Dad, I ran the table!

Jack doesn't turn from the maps. He's lost in them.

JACK

What's that?

YOUNG QUINN

I sunk all nine without missing a shot.

(Jack doesn't answer)

Can we play?

(nothing)

Dad.

Distracted, Jack turns and finally takes her in.

JACK
Maybe in a bit, Ace.

Jack turns back to the MAPS. He makes a mark on one.

INT. QUINN'S BASEMENT - LATER (FLASHBACK)

Quinn sets the rack. Angry to be left alone again to play. She reels back and unleashes a THUNDERCLAP BREAK.

INT. NIGHT CAFE - LATER (PRESENT)

The SOUND OF THE BREAK carries us back into the BAR.

It's crowded now. Raucous. CLOSE ON the POOL TABLE as the balls roll around. We pull back to reveal *Quinn is playing Brandon*. She watches him shoot.

Brandon sinks a ball. Then two more to win. He celebrates, moving around the table doing KARATE MOVES with his stick.

BRANDON
(twirling the stick)
Werewolf of London, motherfucker!

The SMALL CROWD laughs along with this narcissistic charmer.

BRANDON
You wanna run it back, pretty lady?

Quinn hands him a crumpled TWENTY.

QUINN
(naively)
Why not.

BACK AT THE BAR

NOVA enters. (40s. Black. *Quinn's coach from the teaser*). She walks with the grace of an athlete. Tall and lithe. Not a woman to trifle with.

She heads to the bar, sees her son JUSTIN (12. Earnest). He sits at a small table eating and doing homework.

NOVA
Hey, baby.

JUSTIN
Hi, mom.

NOVA
I'm gonna check in with your dad,
okay? You good?

JUSTIN
Yup--

Nova moves to the bar. Raheem makes drinks.

RAHEEM
I gave him dinner.

NOVA
Okay...hey, I didn't get the child
support.

RAHEEM
Well, I mailed it.

WAITERS at the end of the bar wait for their drinks.

WAITER
Raheem!

Frustrated, Raheem moves away. Nova looks around the bar. She notices the SMALL CROWD that surrounds the pool table. And the striking young woman playing.

Quinn bends over the table for the next shot. At the last moment she *adjusts her grip slightly*. Her shot just misses. But Nova can tell she *dumped*.

Nova sits with Justin, keeping her eyes on Quinn.

JUSTIN
Can I finish my burger?

NOVA
Sure, baby.

BACK AT THE TABLE

Brandon misses his shot. Quinn sinks a ball. Then another.

BRANDON
Not bad.

Quinn lines up her next shot.

QUINN
Beginner's luck.

Nova watching. *Quinn dumps again.*

BRANDON

So close!

Brandon shoots. He quickly sinks three balls in a row. He swipes up Quinn's money.

BRANDON

(to Nate)

Easy money, bro.

(to Quinn)

Again?

(off Quinn's reluctance)

Come on. I like seeing your ass move around the table.

QUINN

You do, huh?

BRANDON

Oh yeah.

QUINN

Well, then maybe we should up the ante.

BRANDON

(moving in on her)

Hey. Tell you what. You win the next game, I'll give you 50 bucks and buy you a drink. I win...

(so only she can hear)

I get to fuck your brains out.

Quinn smiles, pretending to enjoy it.

QUINN

Sounds good to me.

Smirking, Brandon goes to grab his cue.

QUINN

But lets make it \$500.

(this stops him)

I mean, my ass is worth more than 50 bucks, right?

A BEAT. Brandon feels the eyes of the crowd.

BRANDON

Lets do it.

The CROWD around the table grows. Nova moves closer. Quinn steps up to the table to break.

QUINN
You mind?

BRANDON
Ladies first.

Quinn pulls back the cue and unleashes a THUNDERCLAP BREAK. The BALLS spread around the table. Two balls drop. The cocky smile fades from Brandon's face.

She moves stealthily around the table, playing quickly. Nova watches closely. *Quinn sinks 3 balls in a row.* But she overplays the last hit, leaving a very tough shot. Brandon stands up.

QUINN
What are you doing?

BRANDON
(cocky)
Just gettin' ready.

QUINN
(taking aim)
Sit the fuck down.

Quinn strikes the cue ball, and sinks the unplayable shot. Brandon sits. Quinn quickly sinks another ball and then finishes it. The crowd claps. Brandon's friends chuckle.

NATE
Goddamn.

Brandon burns. He counts out the cash.

BRANDON
Lets run it back.

Now Quinn smirks. The crowd grows. Nova watches. Brandon racks. Quinn unleashes another THUNDERCLAP BREAK.

Shot after shot drops for Quinn. Back on NOVA and JUSTIN.

JUSTIN
Hey mom, I'm ready.

NOVA
Just a minute.

ON THE CROWD - clapping. ON BRANDON - getting more pissed. ON NOVA - watching this young assassin.

Quinn strikes the last shot. The 8 BALL rolls to the side pocket, just on the edge of falling in. Brandon stands.

But Quinn knows she's given it enough juice. *It drops in the pocket.* The crowd APPLAUDS.

QUINN
(faux apology)
That was just...that was lucky.

Brandon begins to rack.

NATE
Dude, let it go.

BRANDON
Shut the fuck up!

QUINN
We're going again?

BRANDON
Just fucking break.

Quinn lines up to break. As she unleashes the cue we CUT TO:

LATER. CLOSE ON MONEY landing on the table. Quinn has smoked him again. Brandon turns to his IVY LEAGUE PALS.

BRANDON
I'm short.
(Nate stares at him)
Come on, assholes! I'm short!

His THREE PALS dig through their pockets.

CLOSE ON THE TABLE. Brandon counts out the final bills. Quinn snatches up the cash.

QUINN
Easy money, bro.

She leaves. Nova watches her go.

EXT. NYC STREET - NIGHT

Quinn comes out of the bar and moves down the street. Nova follows quickly after.

NOVA
Hey!

Quinn stops.

NOVA
That was quite a show you put on.

QUINN
 (wary)
 Thanks.

A BEAT.

NOVA
 I'm opening a pool hall. Downtown.
 Charlie's. You should come by
 sometime.

QUINN
 I don't really play anymore. That
 was just...

Quinn lets it hang there. The two women take each other in.
 Nova digs through her pocket. Hands Quinn a business card.

NOVA
 My name's Nova. The address is on
 there. I'm running a 9-ball
 tournament at the end of the month.
 Should be some good players.
 (Quinn nods. Stares at the
 card)
 Cash prize for the winner.

QUINN
 ...Okay. Thanks.

Quinn starts to move away.

NOVA
 You dumped on the 7.

Quinn stops.

QUINN
 Excuse me?

NOVA
 You dumped on the 7. And then you
 dumped again on the 3. That little
 squib on the bank shot. That was
 the one that really hooked him.
 (a beat)
 Come check it out sometime.

Quinn doesn't respond. She turns to leave. Then--

NOVA
 What's your name?

QUINN
(hesitating)
Quinn.

NOVA
...have a good night, Quinn.

Nova goes back into the bar. Quinn stares at the card in her hand.

INT. LIQUOUR STORE - NIGHT

A beat-up, edgy liquor store. Quinn buys a SIX-PACK.

EXT. COLUMBIA CAMPUS - LATE

Quinn sits on the stone steps, finishing the last beer. Very drunk now. She glances around at the majestic campus - The Columbia Lion statue, the Low Memorial Library.

After a moment she digs through her pocket and pulls out the WAD OF MONEY she won.

INT. NOVA'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

Sounds of the CITY STREET drift into the apartment. Nova sits at the WINDOW SILL smoking. She looks out. Deep in thought.

Her girlfriend PEARL (30s) comes in, wrapped in a blanket. Half asleep.

PEARL
You alright?

NOVA
Can't sleep.

Pearl moves to join her on the sill. Nova presses her hand against her chest, trying to calm herself.

NOVA
I wake up every night now, thinking about the pool hall. A lump right here. And my head just spins and spins...

Nova eyes well with tears. Tries to smile through it.

PEARL
You're doin' great, babe. You're gonna get there.

NOVA

I hope so...

Pearl leans in and softly kisses her. The two women sit on window sill for a beat. Nova recovers. Then --

NOVA

There was a girl at Raheem's tonight. On the table...

(a beat)

It was like looking in the mirror.

PEARL

That good, huh?

NOVA

Better. Lights out.

JUSTIN (O.C.)

Mom?

Nova and Pearl turn. A sleepy Justin stands in the doorway.

JUSTIN

Can you rub my back again?

As Nova moves to him --

EXT. COLUMBIA CAMPUS - MORNING

Bright and sunny. Quinn passes through the COLUMBIA FRONT GATES -- moving quickly - students flood past and around her.

WIDE SHOT. The whole of Columbia. Quinn picks up her pace.

Like a ball on the table, Quinn flows through the students. She clocks them as she goes. Not feeling a part of it but wishing she was. Imposter syndrome.

INT. LECTURE HALL - DAY

A GIANT LECTURE HALL. Impressive and intimidating. Quinn sits near the top of the auditorium. Professor Alvarez finishes writing something on the board.

PROFESSOR ALVAREZ

Before we start I want to announce the final student selected for the Eastern Psychological Association Conference in Boston.

Quinn is half-listening. She pulls something from her back pocket. CLOSE ON: Nova's crumpled BUSINESS CARD.

PROFESSOR ALVAREZ

As you know, my decision was based
on your recent term papers...

As she shoves the card back in her pocket --

PROFESSOR ALVAREZ

...Quinn Sullivan will be joining
our previously announced students,
Ben Whitman and Miranda Roy.

The class begins to APPLAUD. Quinn looks up. Stunned. Excited
at first. But as she feels the eyes of the class on her, she
slumps down in her seat.

INT. LECTURE HALL - LATER

The class has emptied out. BEN WHITMAN (Midwestern. Warm),
MIRANDA ROY (Asian-American. Bookish) and Quinn sit in front
of Professor Alvarez.

PROFESSOR ALVAREZ

...You'll be joining a group of
upper classmen on the trip, juniors
and seniors. Late November. It'll
be panels, different speakers. But
you'll also present one of your
papers so get together and decide
what you want to do. That's it for
now. Congratulations.

They gather their things.

PROFESSOR ALVAREZ

Ms. Sullivan--

Quinn turns back.

PROFESSOR ALVAREZ

We have our advisory meeting next
week.

QUINN

Yes. I'll be there.

She starts go.

PROFESSOR ALVAREZ

Quinn--

(she stops)

You've already missed my class
twice this semester.

QUINN
Sorry-- I was...I've been sick.

A beat.

PROFESSOR ALVAREZ
I think our relationship will probably go better if we're straight with each other. Don't you think?

Something unspoken passes between them. Quinn nods. Alvarez goes back to his work. Quinn leaves.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Quinn exits. BEN and MIRANDA stand waiting for her.

BEN
Hey. We were thinking we should make a plan to talk about Boston.

QUINN
Okay --

Quinn leaves them. Ben and Miranda exchange a look.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY CONTINUOUS

Catching up to her --

MIRANDA
I'm Miranda.

QUINN
Quinn.

BEN
What was your paper on?

QUINN
Multi-Store Model.

BEN
Multi what?

EXT. COLUMBIA CAMPUS - DAY CONTINUOUS

They exit the building and head up steps to the main campus.

QUINN
Memory theory -- the different
states and how they relate to each
other.

MIRANDA
(confused)
That wasn't one of the topics.

QUINN
I know.

BEN
Uh, we were thinking we could meet
Saturday. Maybe at Butler?

Quinn stops. Lights a cigarette.

QUINN
The *library*? Why don't we go to a
bar.

Ben and Miranda look at each other. An awkward beat.

MIRANDA
Um. I'm only 18.

QUINN
I can get us drinks at Night Cafe.
I've got a fake.

BEN
(laughing)
Uh, ok, sure, lets meet at a bar.

QUINN
Great.

BEN
(offering his hand)
I'm Ben by the way. Ben Whitman.

His directness unnerves her. She clasps his hand, suddenly
vulnerable. He smiles. A subtle current between them.

INT. NOVA'S POOL HALL - 9TH AVENUE & 23RD STREET - NIGHT

Nova's pool hall is run-down but spacious. High ceilings and
about TWENTY TABLES. Large windows overlook 9th Ave.

A WORKER polishes the floor. Two other WORKERS paint the
walls. A couple of CUSTOMERS shoot pool.

Nova stands at the counter. Her young employee BOBBY (early 20s) stands on a ladder painting the new sign - CHARLIE'S. Bobby has *Tourette's*. He's covered in TATTOOS. Wiry strong. At a young age already a lot of mileage on him.

He concentrates on the mural. A few paint strokes then - Bobby's head involuntarily TWITCHES. Goes back to painting.

NOVA
Bobby, it's beautiful.

BOBBY
Yeah?

NOVA
Perfect.

BOBBY
All those times getting arrested
for graffiti finally paying off.
(He twitches again. Gazes
around the hall)
Nova.
(she turns to him)
It looks really fucking good.

She smiles. Looks around. Almost there...

INT. COLUMBIA'S BURSAR'S OFFICE - DAY

Quinn stands at the bursar's counter counting out her CASH. A long line behind her. The BURSAR WORKER eyes her impatiently.

BURSAR WORKER
(taking the cash)
The scholarship covers the tuition
but we still need \$2000 to secure
the second semester housing.

QUINN
Can I get an extension?

BURSAR WORKER
We can give you to the 15th.

Quinn contemplates this. A beat.

QUINN
Is there a supervisor I can talk
to?

BURSAR WORKER

They won't tell you anything
different. Now please, ma'am. Step
aside.

Quinn sees the LONG LINE that's formed behind her. She grabs her things and walks out.

INT. NIGHT CAFE - NIGHT

COLLEGE STUDENTS fill the bar. Quinn sits by herself, a few drinks in. She clocks the GROUPS OF FRIENDS, laughing, enjoying each other. Separate from all of it.

She sees the two empty seats where she sat with Ezio. Then--A glance over her shoulder at the KIDS playing POOL. A long hard look. Quinn downs her drink and leaves.

INT. NOVA'S POOL HALL - NIGHT

Late. The pool hall empty except for Nova. Everything ready. Fresh paint and sleek pool tables. Bobby's sign done. Nova methodically sweeps a table with a felt brush.

A beat. Quinn appears in the doorway. Nova doesn't see her. Quinn takes a cautious step in. Hands shoved in pockets. Uncomfortable. Nova finally notices.

NOVA

Hey...
(Quinn manages a small
wave)
Come on in.

QUINN

You closed? I can come back.

NOVA

(waving her in)
No -- No, I was just cleaning up.

Quinn enters, taking in the pool hall. An awkward beat.

NOVA

...whaddya think?

QUINN

(looking around)
Looks good.
(beat. steps forward)
I wanted to..uh....you said you're
running a tournament?

NOVA
Next weekend. Kind of the grand
reopening so...

QUINN
And there's a cash prize for the
winner?

NOVA
A thousand dollars.

QUINN
(considering)
Okay...okay -- well, thanks.
(steps back)
Sorry to bother you.

Quinn turns to go.

NOVA
You wanna play? Just had the tables
re-felted...I mean, you came all
the way down here.
(Quinn shrugs)
Oh, right -- I forgot. You're
retired. I mean, except for that
kid you smoked the other night...

Quinn eyes the tables.

INT. NOVA'S POOL HALL - LATER

Quinn and Nova in the middle of a game. Nova sinks a shot.
Then a miss. Quinn steps to the table. Begins to shoot.

NOVA
Where'd you learn the game?

QUINN
...My dad...

Quinn sinks a tough shot. Then another.

NOVA
My grandfather taught me.
(points to the sign)
Charlie. This was his place. I
basically grew up here.
(Quinn sinks a shot)
He still play? Your dad?

QUINN
I don't know.

She sinks another ball. Considers the table.

NOVA
How do you see it?

QUINN
(smug)
What. You looking for tips?

NOVA
Just curious how your mind works.

A quick glance at the table then --

QUINN
2 in the corner. Bring it back for
the 4. The 7. Bank to the 8 and
then...9 in the side pocket.

Nova nods. Quinn quickly sinks all 5 balls.

NOVA
(racking)
Why you ever stop playing? Someone
as good as you. Doesn't make sense.

Quinn moves to the table. She leans over to break. A beat.
She suddenly stands back up, leans the cue against the table.

QUINN
I should probably go.

NOVA
What?

QUINN
It's late, I've got work.

NOVA
Okay.
(a beat)
You hungry. You want to get
something to eat first?

Quinn eyes her. She'd rather escape but...

INT. DINER - LATE

Nova and Quinn sit at a booth. Pouring rain outside.

NOVA
...I played 6 hours a day. Every
day. Wanted to play professionally
but no women back then.

Definitely no black women. Plus I
ran into some trouble so...

(beat. About to say more
but she pivots)

...then I got pregnant with my son
Justin and...things shifted...

A WAITRESS stops by, fills their coffee.

WAITRESS
Anything else?

NOVA
(to Quinn)
You want dessert?

QUINN
No...

The waitress drops the check. Quinn digs in her pocket.

NOVA
It's okay -- I got it.

QUINN
Thanks.

Nova puts cash on the table. She looks at Quinn.

NOVA
You're good enough to play on the
tour right now. It's different.
There's lots of women. Tournaments
all over the place. Money.

QUINN
-- I'm in school --

NOVA
You play on the weekends. Summer.
You can train at my place.

A beat. Quinn eyes her.

QUINN
What is this? Why are you doing
this? You don't even know me.

NOVA
I know how good you are. You walk
into a tournament right now, you're
better than any player there.

QUINN
I told you -- I don't play anymore -

NOVA
We just played --

QUINN
I know --

NOVA
The other night -- you played --

QUINN
It's not -- I did that because I'm
in a jam, that's all --

NOVA
You think it's an *accident* we met
the other night? That's a higher
power at work.

QUINN
(glib)
Higher power?
(then)
What's your angle?

This catches Nova. She's not quite sure. Quinn stands.

QUINN
I really gotta go.

NOVA
(letting it go)
yeah -- sure...

Quinn's doesn't know how to end it. Then --

QUINN
Thanks for dinner.

And she's gone.

INT. QUINN'S DORM ROOM - LATER

Quinn sits on her bed going through PHOTOS. CLOSE on one - a picture of her and Jack playing pool. Quinn is 5.

NEXT PHOTO - Her FAMILY. Quinn a little older now. Jack is smiling. Everyone looks happy.

NEXT PHOTO - Just her and Jack. Quinn even older. She beams. Jack has his arm draped awkwardly on her shoulder. His face is blank. His eyes dead. No expression. No feeling.

We're on QUINN which carries us back to...

INT. QUINN'S CHILDHOOD HOME (FLASHBACK)- DAY

13 YEAR-OLD QUINN sitting on the living room couch. Anxious. The LUCASI POOL CUE rests on her lap. Martha crosses through -

MARTHA
(calling out)
Jack?

INT. QUINN'S BASEMENT (FLASHBACK) - CONTINUOUS

Martha comes down the stairs. Jack sits in a chair in front of the MAPS. He stares at them, a million miles away.

MARTHA
Jack?
(Jack doesn't budge)
Jack, the tournament starts at 10.

Jack finally looks up at Martha. But he stares right through her. Something's off. He finally stands and moves past her.

MARTHA
Honey, are you okay?

Jack stops and turns back to her, distracted. Vacant.

JACK
What's that?

MARTHA
Well, lately you just...

She stops herself. Not wanting to rock the boat.

MARTHA
Nothing...Quinn's ready.

Jack turns and heads up the stairs.

INT. QUINN'S LIVING ROOM (FLASHBACK)- CONTINUOUS

Jack heads to the front door without looking at Quinn.

JACK
(flat)
Let's go.

Quinn hops off the couch and follows her dad out the door. A concerned Martha watches them leave.

INT. MICHIGAN POOL HALL (FLASHBACK) - DAY

A tournament. Final match. Quinn plays an OLDER MAN. She lines up the shot as a LARGE AUDIENCE surrounds the table, mesmerized by her prodigious talent.

Quinn sinks it. Awed applause. CLOSE ON Jack. Men pat him on the back.

MOMENTS LATER. The TOURNAMENT ORGANIZER hands Quinn the trophy.

TOURNAMENT ORGANIZER
 Congratulations, young lady.
 (to Jack)
 You got a hellava player there,
 mister.

MOMENTS LATER - Jack leads Quinn through the CROWD. She grips her trophy. Beams up at a distracted Jack. The men APPLAUD.

INT. CAR (FLASHBACK) - DAY

Jack starts the engine. He's edgy. Disheveled.

YOUNG QUINN
 Can we go for ice cream?

JACK
 (pulling off)
 I've gotta drop you off, Ace.

YOUNG QUINN
 Why?

JACK
 Picking something up for your mom --
 (a sparkle in his eye)
 A surprise.

YOUNG QUINN
 But -- can't I come?

Stopped as traffic goes by. Jack looks at her.

JACK
 Yeah?
 (scattered)
 Yeah -- yeah, okay -- sure.

Pulling out --

YOUNG QUINN
 I was good, right?

JACK
What's that?

YOUNG QUINN
The tournament. I was good.

JACK
You were great, Ace...you were great.

EXT. USED CAR DEALERSHIP (FLASHBACK) - DAY

Jack walks around a giant, well worn MOTOR HOME. He's like a kid on Christmas morning. He runs his hand along the side of it. Quinn watches. The DEALER follows Jack.

DEALER
It only has 80,000 miles -- the brakes were just replaced, new tires too --

JACK
(studying it)
Uh huh.

DEALER
The previous owner took great care of it. Runs like a charm.

JACK
Whaddya think, Ace?

Quinn studies the Motorhome. Excited to be included.

YOUNG QUINN
I like the red stripe. And that part. It's shiny.

The back half of the motorhome is covered in CHROME. It sparkles in the sun.

JACK
Yeah. I like it too.

Jack and Quinn stand in front of the chrome. Their image REFLECTED in it. Quinn hooks her arm through her dads.

JACK
She's a beauty...
(he turns to the dealer)
I'll take it.

DEALER
 (flummoxed)
 You will?

JACK
 Yup. I'll give you my car and--

Jack pulls a THICK ENVELOPE from his pocket.

JACK
 -- ten thousand dollars. Will that
 do it?

Quinn beams. The dealer takes the envelope. He can't believe the dumb luck he just fell into.

DEALER
 Uh, yes sir. That should do it.

INT. MOTOR HOME (FLASHBACK) - DAY

Jack drives, electrified. Quinn rides shotgun, euphoric to share this with him. She's never seen Jack like this. They go over a BUMP. Quinn shrieks. Jack smiles at her then turns onto their street.

EXT. QUINN'S CHILDHOOD HOME (FLASHBACK) - DAY

Jack and Quinn climb out of the motorhome. Martha comes out of the house. Her brother Tommy watches from the window.

JACK
 (as Martha approaches)
 Isn't she beautiful?

MARTHA
 (anxious)
 What...what is this?

JACK
 It's a motor home.

YOUNG QUINN
 (smiling)
 We bought it.

MARTHA
 You *what*?

JACK
 I traded in our car. Had to give
 him a little cash too.

MARTHA
 -- you traded in our car?

Jack starts moving towards the house.

JACK
 Martha, I had to. For Mexico.

Jack pushes through the front door into the house. A confused Quinn follows her parents.

INT. QUINN'S CHILDHOOD HOME (FLASHBACK) - CONTINUOUS

Jack heads downstairs. Martha and the kids follow.

MARTHA
 How much money did you give him?

JACK
 \$10,000.

MARTHA
What? Jack, your mother gave us
 that for the mortgage --

Jack begins putting things in boxes.

JACK
 That was a bargain, Martha. A
bargain. We need to start packing.
 We have to leave tonight.

MARTHA
 -- What are you talking about --

JACK
 Kids. Go to your rooms and start
 packing.

MARTHA
 -- slow down --

Quinn and Tommy stand frozen. Glancing between parents.

JACK
 Only the important things. There's
 boxes in the garage --

MARTHA
 Jack --

JACK
 There's no time to waste, we have
 to leave tonight--

MARTHA

Jack!! What is this -- what's wrong
with you?

Jack is on fire. He moves towards his wall of MAPS.

JACK

Martha, I've been trying to tell
you. They're after us. My mother
and all the rest of them --

MARTHA

(lost)
-- your mother? --

JACK

Listen--
(running his finger across
the maps)
I have it all charted out. We head
south first, through Kentucky, then
Arkansas, they won't expect that,
then down into Texas--

MARTHA

Jack you're scaring me --

JACK

(exploding)
Goddammit, Martha! Just -- shut up.
Shut up and *listen*. We have to
leave. There's no other choice.
They're coming for us.

Martha and the kids are stunned.

INT. QUINN'S CHILDHOOD HOME (FLASHBACK) - NIGHT

Quinn lies in her bed. She can hear the MUFFLED VOICES of her
parents arguing downstairs.

INT. QUINN'S CHILDHOOD HOME (FLASHBACK) - NIGHT

Now hiding on the stairs, Quinn watches them fight.

MARTHA

You're going to move us to Mexico??
To do what??

JACK

It's the only way.

MARTHA

Jack, we have *no money* -- you're not making any sense --

JACK

I *am* making sense-- I'm making perfect sense. Why can't you see it?? What is *wrong* with you, Martha?

Jack goes to the wall and pounds on his maps.

JACK

This is the way. The only way. I'm trying to *protect* you. *And* the kids. Can't you understand that?

Martha is terrified. Quinn scampers back up to her room.

INT. QUINN'S CHILDHOOD BEDROOM (FLASHBACK) - LATER

Martha moves around the room picking up. Pensive. Stressed. Quinn watches her. Tommy pretends to sleep.

YOUNG QUINN

Is Dad okay?
(she doesn't respond)
Mom?

MARTHA

He's fine.
(cold)
Quinn, you have to do a better job of keeping things organized.

Martha grabs clothes off the floor.

YOUNG QUINN

We can take the motorhome back.

MARTHA

What?

YOUNG QUINN

The motorhome. We can take it back.

MARTHA

No -- we can't.

YOUNG QUINN

Why not?

Martha grabs her COCKTAIL off the dresser and starts to exit.

MARTHA

Go to bed, Quinn.

YOUNG QUINN

We can just take it back and get the money --

MARTHA

(snapping)

We can't take it back! They won't take it back! Now go to bed -- I mean it.

She flips off the light. No kiss. No comfort. After a moment, Quinn climbs out of bed and looks out her window.

Below her in the backyard, Jack paces. He manically smokes a cigarette. Sits. Then starts pacing again.

INT. QUINN'S CHILDHOOD BEDROOM (FLASHBACK) - LATER

An anxious Quinn lies in bed staring at the ceiling. She looks at Tommy. Sound asleep. She quietly slips from her bed.

She tiptoes through the hallway and down the stairs to their LIVING ROOM. Jack is asleep on the couch, fully clothed. She slows for a moment then creeps past him.

INT. KITCHEN - (FLASHBACK) - CONTINUOUS

Quinn goes to the FRIDGE and grabs a CARTON OF ICE CREAM. She has a small bowl but instead starts eating straight out of the carton, methodically devouring huge spoonfuls.

INT. QUINN'S CHILDHOOD HOME (FLASHBACK) - DAY

A few weeks later. Quinn stands at her living room window, staring out at her father.

YOUNG QUINN

Where will he live?

She watches as Jack piles his suitcases and some boxes into the back of a sleek CADILLAC ELDORADO. Jack's mother HELEN (70. Proper. Manicured) sits stoically behind the wheel.

MARTHA

He'll stay at Grandma's for now.

Jack goes to get in the car. Glances towards the window. Quinn waves at him. He doesn't wave back.

INT. POOL HALL (FLASHBACK) - DAY

Another tournament. Quinn sinks a shot to win. The crowd applauds. Quinn smiles shyly then looks to the FRONT DOOR then around the room. No sign of Jack.

INT. QUINN'S BASEMENT (FLASHBACK) - DAY

A few weeks later. Quinn slowly rolls pool balls up and down the table. She looks depressed. Sad. After a few moments --

MARTHA (O.C)
Quinn! Your father's here!

She runs up the stairs.

INT. QUINN'S LIVING ROOM (FLASHBACK) - CONTINUOUS

Martha shuffles Quinn and a grumpy Tommy out the door, handing them their overnight bags.

YOUNG TOMMY
Do we have to go?

MARTHA
Grandma will be there too. It'll be fun. I'll pick you up on Sunday.

EXT. QUINN'S FRONT YARD (FLASHBACK) - CONTINUOUS

Jack waits on the street by the Cadillac. As soon as Quinn sees her father she smiles broadly and races towards him.

Jack steps forward and as Quinn is about to leap into his arms, he thrusts out his right hand abruptly, stopping her.

JACK
No.

Quinn freezes, totally confused. A seismic moment.

JACK
No touching. Get in the car.

Numb, Quinn goes to hop in the front seat.

JACK
Back seat, Ace.

YOUNG QUINN
But Tommy got the front seat last time.

JACK
Girls in the back seat.

Quinn reluctantly gets in the back. Martha calls out, trying to put a happy bow on it.

MARTHA
I'll see you Sunday!

Jack ignores her and pulls out.

INT. CAR (FLASHBACK) - CONTINUOUS

They drive in silence. After a moment --

YOUNG QUINN
Why do girls have to ride in the
back seat?

JACK
Because girls are bad and boys are
good.

YOUNG QUINN
...why are girls bad and boys good?

JACK
Because boys shoes don't have high
wedges.

Jack says it without any emotion. As if it's just a fact of life. Quinn stares at him, shamed, trying to puzzle out the logic. Her brother Tommy glances down at his shoes.

INT. GRANDMA HELEN'S HOUSE (FLASHBACK) - DAY

Grandma Helen's house is grand and ornate. Quinn and Tommy sit at a long dining room table playing CARDS.

GRANDMA HELEN
Do you have.....a 6?

YOUNG TOMMY
Go fish.

As Helen digs through the pile of cards, Quinn looks through the window into the backyard. Jack sits on the patio by himself. He smokes a cigarette, deep in thought.

INT. CAR (FLASHBACK) - DAY

Months later. Martha drives. Quinn sits in the back seat, a BIG TROPHY beside her. She holds the LUCASI. Despondent.

MARTHA
 (trying to ignore her
 upset)
 You need to do some studying when
 we get home. Your math test's
 tomorrow, right?

Quinn stares out the window, says nothing. She fights to hold back tears. Her rage rising. Martha tries to cover.

MARTHA
 You played well, honey.
 (then)
 I don't know why your dad didn't
 show up again. He said he'd be
 there.

They pull into the DRIVE WAY. Quinn jumps out of the car.

MARTHA
 Quinn --

Quinn ignores her, stalking toward the BACKYARD.

MARTHA
 Quinn Sullivan!

Quinn whips around, EXPLODING in a burst of fury and tears.

YOUNG QUINN
 LEAVE ME ALONE!

She races to the backyard and violently hurls the VELVET CASE into the woods.

MARTHA
 Quinn, stop!

Quinn ignores her. Crying harder now.

And running, running, running

EXT. COLUMBIA CAMPUS - PRESENT DAY

Quinn moves across the campus, dazed...

INT. DORM - DAY

She walks down the dorm hallway towards her suite. As she opens the door --

INT. QUINN'S DORM ROOM - LATER

Amanda, Lucy and Rachel sit around the table, gossiping. Quinn enters and they quickly end their conversation.

AMANDA

Hey.

QUINN

Hey.

Amanda and Rachel stand, gather their books.

AMANDA

(as they leave)

We were just headed to class.

Lucy throws Quinn a fake smile and goes into her room.

AMANDA

(turning back)

Oh. Your brother called.

QUINN

What?

AMANDA

He said he's in the city. He left a number.

Quinn picks up the note. She turns to say something to Amanda but they're gone. She stares at the phone number.

EXT. TIMES SQUARE - NIGHT

Quinn emerges from the subway onto the street. It's the Times Square of the 80s: edgy, gritty. A broken down carnival.

Tons of people swarm around. Quinn approaches a touristy HOTEL. She pushes through the spinning front door.

INT. HOTEL FLOOR - NIGHT

Quinn steps off the elevator. She moves down the hallway checking the room numbers. She stops in front of one and knocks. No answer. She knocks again. Harder.

A few rooms down a door opens and her brother TOMMY (16. Midwestern earnest) sticks his head out. He's shirtless. And very, very DRUNK.

TOMMY
(excited)
Quinny! Over here!

He ducks back inside. Quinn walks to the room and peaks in. There are several raucous YOUNG MEN. Athletes. Two wrestle, crashing around the room. Another jumps on the bed.

Empty BEER BOTTLES and PIZZA BOXES everywhere. As Tommy leaves the room, pulling on a shirt --

YOUNG STUD
That your sister, Sullivan?!

YOUNG STUD #2
Invite her in!

The drunken boys laugh. Tommy laughs too, closing the door.

TOMMY
Come on -- it's nuts in there.

QUINN
What are you doing here?

TOMMY
It's crazy right? Right?? I'm here!

He drunkenly hugs her.

QUINN
Are you drunk?

TOMMY
No! Yes...a little.
(he laughs)
Come on, come here. No -
wait.
(an epic light bulb)
I wanna show you something!

QUINN

Tommy --

She's reluctant. Thrown by the whole situation.

TOMMY
(pulling her)
Come on, Quinny!

EXT. HOTEL ROOFTOP - NIGHT

They stand at the RAILING. The whole of New York City sparkling before them.

TOMMY

Isn't that *awesome*? - I mean, look at that! I can't believe you live here. It's insane.

QUINN

Tommy, what are you doing here?

TOMMY

Hockey -- we had a tournament in Providence but some of the older guys wanted to come here for the night and they let me tag along - it's fucking *wild*!

He stumbles onto one of the couches. Digs in his pocket.

TOMMY

Hey - look. Look at what one of them gave me - look at this --

He pulls a small packet from his jeans. A tiny bag of COCAINE. He giggles and shows it to Quinn.

QUINN

Tommy!

TOMMY

What?

QUINN

(grabbing it)
Are you fucking stupid?

TOMMY

What?? You do it.

QUINN

(smacking him)
You're *sixteen*.

TOMMY

(hurt)

Sorry...I just...I was trying to...I don't know. I wanted them to think I was cool...fuck...

QUINN

What is wrong with you?

Quinn flops back on the couch. Tommy struggles to sit up. He sways. Rubs his head. A long beat.

TOMMY
Dad's gone.

QUINN
What?

TOMMY
Dad's gone. They can't find him.
Someone from Crystal Shores called
Uncle Dave. He hasn't come to work
all week.

QUINN
What are you talking about?

TOMMY
I don't know -- I don't know. Dad's
missing...they don't know where he
is...

Tommy sways. Quinn tries to process what he just told her.

TOMMY
You should call mom.

QUINN
(quiet. vulnerable)
That never goes well. You know
that.

Tommy sits up abruptly.

TOMMY
I don't feel good...

He suddenly leaps from the couch. Starts THROWING UP in the
nearby flowers. Quinn holds him up as he pukes.

QUINN
It's okay --

Tommy tries to stand but hurls again. Finishes. Lays down.
Rolls on his side and curls up into a ball.

TOMMY
Dad's gone...
(He starts to cry)
I'm sorry, Quinny...I'm sorry...I
don't feel good...

Quinn rubs his back. Scared.

INT. PROFESSOR ALVAREZ'S OFFICE (PRESENT DAY)

A ragged Quinn sits across from Professor Alvarez.

PROFESSOR ALVAREZ

You've missed several classes. Not just mine.

(Quinn shrugs)

Three unexcused absences in most of these equals a failing grade, which affects your scholarship, right?

(she nods)

Well, it certainly doesn't seem like something worth putting in jeopardy. Does it?

QUINN

(defenses down)

No.

PROFESSOR ALVAREZ

...How's everything else? Friends? Social life?

QUINN

It's...fine.

About to probe more but stops himself.

PROFESSOR ALVAREZ

Okay...well, I guess that's it for now. I'll see you in class.

Quinn stands. As she gets to the door --

PROFESSOR ALVAREZ

You want to be here, right?

QUINN

(stopping)

Excuse me?

PROFESSOR ALVAREZ

You want to be here. Columbia.

QUINN

Yeah. Of course.

PROFESSOR ALVAREZ

Then why are you trying to sabotage it?

Deep cut. Quinn doesn't know how to respond.

PROFESSOR ALVAREZ

Your grades are perfect. You wrote one of the best first year papers I ever read...you deserve to be here, Quinn.

She tries to take it in, to believe it's true. Turns and leaves.

INT. NIGHT CAFE - NIGHT

Quinn drinks in the quiet bar. The single POOL TABLE sits empty toward the back. Quinn stares at it.

INT. NIGHT CAFE - NIGHT - LATER

The bar is packed. Quinn, Ben and Miranda are squeezed around a table. Quinn downs her beer. Well on her way to drunk.

BEN

So you based it on the Atkinson and Shiffrin paper?

QUINN

And something called the HM case study, also Glancer and Cunitz's primacy and recency effect --

BEN

-- And the three stores are sensory, short term and long term --

QUINN

And how memory travels between them, retrieval, decay --

MIRANDA

How does it move from short to long term?

QUINN

Well, take this moment now.

(she eyes Ben)

If you go over and over it, think about it enough, it shifts to long term.

Raheem approaches them.

RAHEEM

You guys need anything else?

QUINN
Yeah. Lets do some shots.

BEN
Ooh--

MIRANDA
I'll try one.

BEN
Sorry - I've gotta go.

QUINN
What?

Ben stands. Raheem moves away.

BEN
I have to prep for the SDS.

QUINN
What the fuck is that?

MIRANDA
(impressed)
Students for a Democratic society --
you're *in* that?

BEN
I meet with them tomorrow morning.

QUINN
(an edge)
Oh my god. That is *so* fucking lame.

Ben flinches. Too harsh.

BEN
Jesus. Okay...

An awkward beat hangs there. Quinn shrinks.

BEN
So...did we accomplish anything?

MIRANDA
We're presenting Quinn's paper.

BEN
Right.
(throws on his jacket)
You gotta walk me through it
again....I'll see you guys next
week.

A look to Quinn. He leaves.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Quinn and Miranda walk down the street. Both pretty drunk. Miranda smiles like she just discovered something.

MIRANDA
This is fun.

QUINN
Right??

MIRANDA
Yeah. I feel good. Warm.

QUINN
Me too.

Walking. Then--

MIRANDA
I haven't had a lot of fun since I got here.

QUINN
What? Why?

MIRANDA
I haven't made any friends. Mostly I just go home at night and sit in my room.

QUINN
That sucks.

MIRANDA
Yeah...it's lonely.

They continue walking.

QUINN
I haven't really made any friends either.

MIRANDA
You haven't?

QUINN
No....My roommates aren't that nice to me.

MIRANDA
Why?

QUINN
(pained)
I don't know...

They walk for a few moments.

MIRANDA
Maybe they're jealous. Because
you're so pretty.

QUINN
Yeah. I don't think so.

Quinn suddenly stops. The girls drunkenly face each other.

QUINN
You wanna be friends?

MIRANDA
Yeah.

QUINN
Really?

MIRANDA
Yeah.

QUINN
Okay. Okay, good.

Both girls laugh. Quinn slings her arm around her. They start walking, giggling.

QUINN
Lets go dancing.

MIRANDA
Dancing?

QUINN
Yeah. At a club. It'll be *fun*.

MIRANDA
Where do we go?

QUINN
(grabbing her)
Where ever the night takes us,
Miranda!

Miranda shrieks with laughter. They stumble down the street.

INT. LIMELIGHT NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

A packed CLUB. Dark. Sweaty. Strobe lights bounce off the walls. The music pulsates. The bass line shakes the floor.

Quinn and Miranda are in the middle of the dance floor. Miranda is awkward but committed. Quinn's eyes are closed. She dances passionately, as if in another world.

After a few moments Quinn opens her eyes and glances at her new friend. She smiles. As she continues to dance she looks around the club at all the people.

Her eyes stop on a figure on the other side of the dance floor. The person is difficult to make out. The lights. The alcohol. Quinn begins to inch closer.

She's within feet of the figure when she finally realizes who it is. *Ezio*. She's stunned. He dances with a YOUNG GIRL. His attention (and hands) all over her. Quinn moves to him.

QUINN
(shouting over the music)
Hey!

It takes him a second to register her.

EZIO
Oh my god! Quinn!

QUINN
Yeah!

EZIO
I'm -- I've been trying to call you!

QUINN
(sarcastic)
You have?

EZIO
Yes! Oh my god. I'm so glad to see you!

QUINN
I went to St. Anthony's.

EZIO
(pretending not to hear)
Say again?

QUINN
(leaning into him)
Where's my money?

EZIO

What?

QUINN

My money -- the fucking money you stole --

Ezio just stares at her, feigning confusion.

EZIO

I can't -- I'm sorry! I can't hear you!

Quinn suddenly grabs Ezio with both hands, driving him backwards. She's like a wild animal.

QUINN

-- Where's my money motherfucker--

Ezio reaches for her arms. They struggle. Chaos. Miranda rushes over, horrified. Quinn rages, inches from Ezio's face.

QUINN

Give me my money you fucking asshole!

She swings at him. Ezio grabs her and shoves her back into the crowd. Quinn stumbles to the floor. He races off.

Quinn leaps up and runs after him. She grabs a BOTTLE off a table and just as Ezio reaches the edge of the dance floor she *smashes it over his head*.

He falls in a heap. In a flash, Quinn is on him. She begins violently punching his face as hard and as fast as she can.

The strobes continue to flash. The music grows. Quinn continues to pummel a bloodied and now unconscious Ezio. An unrelenting barrage. BOOM. BOOM. BOOM. People finally reach in to pull her off, building in a chaotic crescendo until--

INT. COP CAR - NIGHT

Silence. The back of a POLICE CRUISER. Quinn is cuffed, full of fury. Her eye is bruised. A deep, reddening scratch covers her cheek.

A frantic Miranda appears in the car window.

MIRANDA

Should I call someone?

QUINN

No.

MIRANDA
Your parents? Just give me the
number --

Quinn just shakes her head.

POLICE OFFICER (O.S.)
Ma'am, step away from the car.

MIRANDA
Quinn --

The police cruiser begins to pull out.

MIRANDA
(calling after her)
Quinn!

We stay with Quinn. CLOSE ON her face. A thousand yard stare.

INT. POLICE STATION - LATE

Quinn is on a PAYPHONE. An officer stands nearby. Several RINGS and then the operator finally breaks in --

OPERATOR (V.O.)
No one's answering, ma'am.

A despondent Quinn hangs up the phone.

INT. JAIL CELL - MORNING

About TWENTY WOMEN in a dirty, dark holding room. Quinn sleeps on a bench, balled up protectively.

OFFICER (O.C.)
Quinn Sullivan!

Quinn's eyes flutter open as if waking from a three-day bender. She slowly pulls herself to sitting. A GUARD stands at the cell door. The other inmates eye her suspiciously.

INT. HALLWAY - MORNING

Quinn is led into a hallway by the guard. Standing several feet away two MEN speak in hushed tones. The man with his back turned finally turns to her. Quinn's startled to see it's RAHEEM.

RAHEEM
(coming up to her)
Hey -- you alright?

QUINN

Yeah.

She starts to cry. Raheem leads her to a bench.

RAHEEM

It's okay - it'll be okay--

QUINN

(confused)

What...why are you here?

RAHEEM

Your friend Miranda came into the bar last night. After it happened. She said there was no one to help you.

QUINN

Is she okay?

RAHEEM

She's worried about you. Is your... did you speak to your family?

Quinn shakes her head no. Tries to keep from crying.

RAHEEM

Quinn.

(she tries to focus)

The detectives said the guy you attacked, he's done this before --

QUINN

What?

RAHEEM

To other women. Ezio. I mean, they think your money's gone but...it sounds like your charges are gonna be dropped.

Quinn nods. Tears stream down her face.

RAHEEM

(he glances toward the holding cell)

I've got some experience with that. It's -- that's a lot...it's gonna be okay.

QUINN

Yeah, I'm fine. I'm good. I'm fine.

Trying to hold it together. But the tears continue.

INT. CHURCH BASEMENT - DAY

An AA meeting. 20 or so people sit in a giant circle. All ages, genders, ethnicities. Nova holds a small GOLD COIN.

NOVA

I lost a lot of years to
fear...waking up every morning,
going to bed every night, believing
the worst was going to happen...

People in the group nod in support.

EXT. RIVERSIDE PARK - CONTINUOUS

An overcast, gusty day. While Nova continues Quinn sits on a PARK BENCH overlooking the river. The same spot she was with Ezio. The wounds from the fight with him still fresh.

NOVA (O.S.)

...that I would never get the
things I really wanted, the dreams
I kept hidden away...

Quinn pulls a PHOTO out of her pocket. CLOSE ON the photo. The one of her and Jack with his arm slung around her, his face emotionless. She studies it.

NOVA (O.S.)

That somehow I didn't deserve them.

EXT. COLUMBIA CAMPUS - CONTINUOUS

Quinn walks across the QUAD.

NOVA (O.S.)

So I drank, and I did drugs...

INT. QUINN'S DORM ROOM SUITE - DAY

Quinn enters her suite. Her three roommates are there. They haven't seen her in days. As she crosses towards her room --

AMANDA

(trying)
Hey, Quinn.

She ignores them.

INT. SHOWER - DAY

Quinn stands numb under the scalding water.

NOVA (O.S.)
But today, I'm ten years sober.

INT. CHURCH BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

NOVA
They say at 5 years you get your
brains back, but at 10 you actually
start using them --
(everyone laughs)
I feel like...

Nova stops. Overwhelmed. She struggles to speak.

NOVA
I feel like now maybe, just
*maybe...*I can finally step a little
closer to the dreams I've always
had up here.

She taps her head. Gathers herself. Looks up at the group.

INT/EXT. VARIOUS - DAY

- Quinn reaches for something under her bed. The LUCASI.
- She crosses Columbia CAMPUS.
- On the SUBWAY.
- Emerging up onto the STREET.

INT. NOVA'S POOL HALL - NIGHT

The pool hall is crowded. Several players warm up. Pearl is there. Justin sits at the counter doing his homework.

Bobby stands on a ladder, pinning the last corner of a BANNER high up on the wall - "*Charlie's 9-Ball Classic.*"

Nova looks around the pool hall, soaking in what she's accomplished. She steps forward, about to address the crowd when suddenly Quinn appears in the entrance doorway.

She has the Lucasi tucked under her arm. All business. She looks at Nova and nods. Nova nods back. After a moment, Quinn steps into the pool hall.

CUT TO BLACK. CREDITS ROLL.