

## Denia to Hackney

A feature screenplay synopsis by Daniel Cocklin.

Based on the true story of three fortysomethings, who in memory of a much loved friend and brother, attempt the journey he never made home from Spain, by way of a charity bike ride.

### **Synopsis**

ANDY, a busy entrepreneur and free spirited teacher, STU, are as much friends as they are brothers. Each week they play for their veteran's football team alongside childhood pals, SIMON and DAN. Post match, they plan to meet for their traditional Christmas Eve drink later that week. When the evening arrives, Stu is absent, causing mild amusement when he texts the group to inform them he's bound for Spain with two female friends instead!

A week later, Dan coaches his son's football team when he receives a call from Andy, informing him that Stu has suddenly died. In shock, Dan sobs uncontrollably in front of his startled young players and their parents. At Stu's memorial service, several of Stu's disadvantaged students speak emotionally about the positive impact Stu made on their lives. That evening Andy, Simon and Dan decide there must be a lasting legacy and fitting tribute to Stu. Within weeks there is much excitement generated as both a learning trust and a charity football match are set up in his honour. Sadly, interest quickly wanes. A truly great man, somehow forgotten.

Three years later, a bitterly disappointed Andy attempts to resurrect the penniless charity. He believes the only way to produce funds and create publicity is to make the trip Stu never made home with a charity bike ride from Denia, where he passed, to Hackney where he lived and worked. Although sponsorship and press interest is slow, he unrelentingly continues with the venture and heads for Spain alongside Simon and Dan who will ride with him, and friends MILLSY and CRAZ who will share driving the support car.

After departing from Denia, they are soon lost. Many hours later, they arrive at their destination, starving and exhausted. Typical in a week hampered by a catalogue of disasters. These mishaps can break frazzled minds and bodies. Thankfully, lifelong friends can quickly find humour in such things as they churn towards France. Here they're met by cycling nut, NICK, inspired to join the ride after reading online about the cause. He's the perfect tonic with his laid back demeanour and fluent French.

Tempers fray as little sponsorship money is being raised. The purpose of the ride is frequently questioned, especially when Dan is seriously injured in a terrifying crash. He bravely continues after receiving several pledges of large donations should he get to London. The brutal, undulating route to Calais on their last day on the continent is a major obstacle his co riders doubt he can overcome. Somehow he finds the strength as the team catches the last ferry home with minutes to spare. The team arrive in Hackney the next day to a rapturous reception at their homecoming party. Andy sheds tears of sadness and joy as he hugs his parents. While he still struggles to deal with Stu's passing, he's fully vindicated in organising a life changing trip that could only be shared with his closest friends.



