

FIRE AND ICE

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*(A taconite employee standing near a mound of taconite pellets in Gilbert, Minnesota)*

"For a long, long time, people figured taconite was worthless. Low-grade. But somebody realized if you grind it down to its absolute core - you're left with a treasure."

He picks up a taconite pellet... "A pellet by itself? Can't sell it."

He picks 15 up in his hand... "But together, you've got something in your hand that people want - all over the world."

He drops them to the ground, holding a single one between his fingers.

"It may not look like much to you, but it's *gold* to me."

FADE IN:

SCRIPTED OVER BLACK:

THE MINNESOTA HIGH HOCKEY TOURNAMENT IS ABOUT SO MUCH MORE THAN HOCKEY; WHERE PLAYERS FROM EVERY CORNER OF THE STATE DEFEND THE WEIGHT AND HERITAGE OF THEIR TOWNS, THEIR SCHOOLS AND THEIR FAMILIES.

EVERY WINTER, 120,000 MINNESOTANS MAKE A PILGRIMAGE TO THE STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS. IT CAPTURES HIGHER TV RATINGS IN THE STATE THAN THE SUPER BOWL.

TICKETS TO THE CHAMPIONSHIP GAMES ARE WILLED TO ANCESTORS. SCHOOL CHILDREN ARE GIVEN DAYS OFF TO STAY HOME WITH THEIR FAMILIES TO EXPERIENCE THE FINAL 8 TEAMS' MATCHES.

WE FADE IN:

EXT. A WINDING, FROZEN MINNESOTA CREEK - NIGHT

Not a sound. The dead of winter. It's bone cold. The oak trees that hang over its home are perfectly still. Clouds cover the moon.

Music sneaks in with a disturbing dissonance.

A RUMBLING

It seems to be coming closer.

WE HOLD

on this one spot. It's getting loud and aggressive. The noise disturbs everything on this creek. A group of birds take flight.

CRASHING INTO THE SHOT

a sopping wet, freezing 18-year-old, SHANE KELLY - racing by on his skates. He's carrying a BLUE, NAKED, LIFELESS MAN in his arms.

THE MAN

wears only a pair of socks - and turning bluer and bluer on this unbearable Minnesota night.

## SWEAT IS FREEZING

on this kid's face - he's straining every muscle in his body to carry this man - skating as fast as his body will go. It's hard to imagine the pressure on his limp forearms - pushing, stride after stride, down the creek.

## THE MAN'S BODY

slips out of Shane's rubber arms. Shane throws the body over his shoulder. He pushes off again, building back his speed. His legs must be made of iron to take this kind of punishment.

## A LONG SHOT

in shadows - the quiet, winding creek guides him.

## SHANE'S FACE

Drained. Scared. Freezing.

CUT TO:

## EXT. SAME CREEK - SUNSET - HINSDALE, MINNESOTA

Same location. Very different feeling. A light snow gently falls on this picturesque, tree-banked frozen creek which winds through these Northern Minnesota small towns.

Super-imposed on the screen: ONE MONTH EARLIER.

Judging from the number of folks skating on the creek, it serves as one of the town's avenues of transportation in the winter.

## EXT. LAKE HINSDALE ICE SKATING RINK

Skaters on the creek cross under a bridge that opens up to a stunning, frozen Minnesota lake. They skate across the lake to a popular, cleared-off section off the shoreline.

A SONG echoes across the lake as hundreds of adults and kids of all ages skate under the late afternoon lights. Right off the rink, folks enter the..

## EXT. WARMING HOUSE

A cozy, chimneyed log cabin. Music is interrupted by..

SHANE (V.O.)

It's time for the evening Lake  
Hinsdale Rink Report, brought to you  
by Hancock's Hardware, "your home away  
from home..."

INT. WARMING HOUSE OFFICE

At a clunky office desk full of homework is SHANE KELLY. How could anybody be wearing only a tee shirt in this state? Good-looking and in-shape. Years of skating through Minnesota winters have put a healthy glow on his face.

Looking out the window at the rink/lake, he reads into a crappy microphone...

SHANE

... Happy birthday to Katie Walkowski who turned 12 today, and she can pick up her free three-pack of 100 watt lightbulbs.

CUT TO:

INT. GILBERT TACONITE COMPANY PLANT - CONTINUOUS

The next town down the creek. Everything is brown. Not a lot of light. Enormous machines crushing, melting, moving taconite. Men with protective helmets, eye goggles - with heavily greased, faded orange uniforms. Large mining trains cargo ore in and through the plant. What a rotten place to spend 50 years of your life.

THE BOILER AREA

Huge furnaces. Bright light sneaks in through giant, slow, wall-mounted fans that inadequately suck out the hot, thick air. You can taste the dust.

Day-Foreman BUD RADACOVICH, a proud father, walks his son up to four men in his section. Bud's been there 25 years. Kind, strong, blue eyes, pot-belly.

BUD RADACOVICH

Look who's here...

They gather around. MIKE RADACOVICH. Senior at Gilbert High School. Like his dad, short and stout. Always wears his red Gilbert letter jacket to remind everyone that he's special.

## ONE OF THE GUYS

Mike, we can't shut your dad up.  
We'll all be at the tournament opener  
tonight.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE HINSDALE - LATER

FIFTH GRADERS stand around the ice near the rainbowing  
bridge, where the lake channels off into the creek.

Shane, skating home down the creek wearing a "Hinsdale Park  
Staff" jacket, skates up to the kids. They look at each  
other like he's a celebrity.

SHANE

You know you shouldn't be standing  
near a bridge. Why's that?

GIRL #1

Ice is thin near a bridge.

GIRL #2

My Mom says you're repulsive and a  
horrible example to kids.

BOY #1

Yeah, mine, too.

BOY #2

My Dad says you're a hothead, and the  
only reason you score so many goals is  
because you hog the puck.

SHANE

You should listen to your parents.

GIRL #1

So will you sign my skates?

BOY #2

Yeah, me, too.

BLAST INTO:

EXT. HINSDALE H.S. HOCKEY DOME - HINSDALE, MINN. - THAT NIGHT

Expensive marquee reads:

MINNESOTA STATE SECTIONAL HOSTS  
FIRST ROUND GAMES  
HINSDALE VS. GILBERT

## INT. HINSDALE HOCKEY DOME

Awesome arena. Hosting one of four Sectional Tournaments around the state. It's loud and ABSOLUTELY STUFFED with FANATICAL STUDENTS AND ADULTS.

Home-rink of HINSDALE, the neighboring private school. The area powerhouse. Strong academically, financially and athletically. Their hockey stadium is bigger than the rest of Gilbert's whole damn school. A slew of conference banners drape the arena.

## WE'RE DEAFENED

by the disharmony of opposing fighting cheers thundering from the two crammed sides of the arena. Signs grunt the local rivalry of these two opposite private vs. public schools.

## HINSDALE HIGH SCHOOL

Hot players. Hot uniforms. Hot cheerleaders.

## GILBERT HIGH SCHOOL

Worn uniforms. Old coach. Grizzly cheerleaders.

## WE SLAM INTO

fast, loud, smack-in-your-face, out-of-control hockey. Welcome to the insanity of the Minnesota State Hockey Championships.

(Gilbert's 78 year-old crusty RADIO ANNOUNCER screams out the play-by-play. He sets the stakes: 128 teams - one loss and you're out.)

## GILBERT ANNOUNCER (VO)

... I'm glad I lived long enough to see this. Gilbert knocking Hinsdale out of the State Championships in the first round - this does my heart good.

## INSERT - SCOREBOARD

Hinsdale 3 / Gilbert 5.

## SOME PIMPLY HINSDALE JOCK

winds up with everything he's got in front of the open goal.

## A GILBERT PLAYER

Dives head first into the puck - sliding into a slapping Hinsdale hockey stick and shot. The wooden stick SNAPS IN HALF off his helmet.

IT'S SHANE KELLY, #77

An aggressive, steam-rolling, natural. Grabs the loose puck. Puts on the breaks behind his own net. Sizes up the field.

HINSDALE PLAYERS

Converge on him. Shane smiles down the ice at his enemy.

HE BLASTS OFF

Five seconds after seeing him skate and you know he's in another league from anybody there. Fast, but graceful. Real cocky.

He smirks at the Hinsdale goalie as he charges his way. Teases him with the dancing puck.

SHANE

winds up like a cannon, fakes the goalie out of his jock - and gently flips it over the goalie's shoulder into the net.

Effortlessly. Almost mocking the poor bastard.

THE GILBERT FANS

erupt.

MOMENTS LATER

Coach Radacovich sends his son, Mike, over the boards.

A HINSDALE PLAYER

chases down the spinning puck by the railing.

SHANE

plows into the guy like a diesel truck. It hurts just watching it. Knocks the clear fiberglass panel right off the railing.

A REFEREE PISSES SHANE OFF

with a face-off call. Shane barks right in the ref's face.

COACH RADACOVICH

screams over the crowd for Shane to forget about it.

FACE OFF

Shane whacks teammate Mike in the head for confidence.

SHANE

slaps the puck out to Mike. Mike cautiously feeds it right back. Shane's a one-man-show.

SHANE TAKES OFF

the length of the ice. Everybody's screaming. Shane maneuvers right in front of the net.

WINDS UP

looks at the net - but BULLETS the puck at that REFEREE off to the side. Clocks him square in the balls. He goes down on the ice.

COACH RADACOVICH

Frustrated. Shakes his head.

CUT TO:

INT. GILBERT TEAM LOCKER ROOM - AFTER THE GAME

Coach Radacovich opens the door.

COACH

(to Shane)

He's coming down. He's in a hurry.

Shane quickly heads over to Coach at the door. In walks a confident COACH LUCIA in a "U. of Minnesota" hockey team jacket.

Mike, getting dressed, takes it all in from his locker.

COACH (CONT'D)

(introducing them)

Shane Kelly, an old Navy buddy, Coach Lucia.

LUCIA

(to Shane)

Bud's been calling me for years, "You gotta come see Kelly, you gotta see this kid"...

(to Coach)

(MORE)

LUCIA (CONT'D)

... I always thought it was your kid you were talking about. I remember thinking on the phone, "What the hell did Radacovich name his kid Kelly for?"

Shane looks over to Mike hoping he's not hearing this. Mike looks away.

LUCIA (CONT'D)

And then I see this stumpy kid come flopping over the boards, and I said, "Now that must be Radacovich's kid."

Mike pretending not to listen.

COACH RADOCOVICH

They don't make 'em any better than Mike, I can tell you that.

LUCIA

(to Shane)

Coach says he would've quit coaching five years ago, but he's been waiting around to coach you. He's some salesman you have.

SHANE

My Dad used to drive me down to Minneapolis for a million Gopher games.

COACH LUCIA

(cutting to the chase)

Shane, I'm gonna give it to you straight. I've got two jobs; coaching players, and finding players. My mother told me a long time ago it doesn't matter how long you stir the soup if you got crap in the pot. So I spend more time finding 'em than I do coaching 'em.

(then)

Edina's Bobby Varno?...

Shane nods.

COACH LUCIA (CONT'D)

Saw him last night. Also had two goals. But against Grand Rapids. Edina plays the best teams in the state.

COACH

But he's no Shane Kelly.

COACH LUCIA

At Bloomington, there's Terry Fanning. At New Trier West in Chicago, Brad Vear. And up in Canada; they grow 'em on trees. I see 'em every week of my life.

(then)

All these guys are tested. They're on the best teams, play against the best, and beat the best.

Shane taking it in.

COACH LUCIA (CONT'D)

I got two seniors leaving next year. And I got my pick of any kids in the damn country. Now who do you think I'd rather have? Bobby Varno, first team All American, star of the team that's probably gonna win State, or a kid who shows "potential" on a team nobody's ever heard of up in the Range? You tell me.

He looks in Shane's eyes.

COACH LUCIA (CONT'D)

Win the State Championships. Then we'll talk.

CUT TO:

MIKE'S '87 TWO-DOOR MAZDA GLC - MOVING - LITTLE LATER

Five crammed-in teammates drive back to Gilbert screaming out the windows. Mike drives like he plays hockey; cautiously. Shane's in back behind Mike.

SLEZAK hangs half-out the passenger window with his boots banging into the dashboard. He makes up for a stuttering problem with a large upper body.

MIKE

Hey, get your dirty boots off my new car.

SLEZAK

Radacovich, it's an '81 Mazda.

MIKE

It's new to me.

There's an underbelly to what they're yelling out the windows. The taconite mine's blue-collar workers live in Gilbert. The white-collar executives live in Hinsdale. We taste the built-up resentment living next to the opportunity that Hinsdale represents.

MIKE'S POV - A RAILROAD CROSSING

yards ahead. It's a steep upgrade to get up and over the snowy tracks. The crossing bar starts to come down. Warning bells ring.

Shane and the boys yell to Mike to punch it. Peer-pressured, Mike guns it.

THE CAR FLIES UP

the snowy "ramp" around the guard crossing, gets a little air, and plops down smack into the middle of the tracks. And dies.

Mike looks to his left down the tracks.

IN THE DISTANCE

A speeding train pours straight at him - shining its huge headlight in his face.

Mike quickly turns the key over. Nothing. Does it again. Pumping the living crap out of the gas pedal. Flooded.

MIKE (CONT'D)

GodAlmightyGodAlmighty.

They stare at the bulleting train getting bigger the closer it gets.

BURTKER, lanky and cramped in the middle of the back seat of this two-door deathtrap, is past panicking.

BURTKER

Come on, come on!

The train's DEMANDING HORN shouts the seriousness of the situation.

MIKE

turns the key over so fast there's no way it will start.

THE TRAIN SCREAMS

louder down the tracks.

DRIVER MIKE

flings his door open - and jumps out.

Shane grabs Mike by the back of his jacket - and yanks him back into the driver's seat. Holds him by the back of the collar. Reaching up and over, closes Mike's door.

SHANE

(calmly to Mike)

Pump the pedal gently, put the key in the ignition, and turn it.

Everybody in the car knows they're going to die. Too late now.

THE WEIGHT OF THE HUGE TRAIN

Begins shaking the flimsy Mazda on the tracks. They can't see where the train is because of its blinding headlight. We're waiting for their car to explode.

MIKE PANICS

rummaging through his pockets, with Shane's grasp still on his collar.

MIKE

(at the top of his lungs)

I CAN'T FIND THE KEYS!

BURTKER

(pointing like a madman)

They're in the ignition!

Mike pumps the gas pedal like Shane said. Turns the key slowly. It miraculously starts. Mike puts the car in gear - and begins across the tracks.

THE THUNDERING TRAIN

is on top of them. They cringe, screaming bloody murder.

THE TRAIN

misses the butt of the jalopy by a noodle. The car rolls down the snow-packed hill to safety.

THEY PULL OVER

Dead silence in the car. Shane takes a whiff. Looks at Mike.

SHANE

You shit in your pants, didn't you?

MIKE

(snapping around on fire)

That's right, I shit in my pants! I  
like shitting in my pants!

INT. KELLY HOME KITCHEN - NEXT NIGHT

PEGGY, Shane's sister, sets the Formica kitchen table. A frumpy, intelligent, sweet-looking sophomore at Gilbert HS. From what she wears, the way she walks, the tone of her voice - she's more of a mother in this home than a high school girl.

Shane finishes up a pile of household monthly bills.

Decades-old, dusty hockey trophies fill the upper shelves of a plate cabinet.

SHANE

So what did the orthodontist say?

From the next room.

ANDIE (O.S.)

He said I could wait 6 months to a year.

PEGGY

(correcting her)

He said... the longer she waits, the worse they'll get.

SHANE

Let's set the appointment and do it.

As Andie walks in...

ANDIE

You can set it all day long, I'm not going.

ANDIE. A sassy, bright, opinionated 8th grader.

She points to the front page of the Gilbert newspaper that's magneted on the refrigerator. Reads "GILBERT KING OF HEARTS DANCE NOMINEES," along with a group picture of senior guys.

ANDIE (CONT'D)

(pointing at the pictures)

Dog... Dog... Fag... Major fag... Loser... Loyal loser...

(sarcastically)

Bob Burtker is a "King of Hearts" nominee? Cool class you have.

SHANE

Get that thing off of there.

PEGGY

I want it on there.

ANDIE

You're the only guy that didn't show up for the picture.

SHANE

So what.

ANDIE

So what does a "King of Hearts" nominee have to do anyways?

SHANE

Well, I know what I'm doing. Nothing. I'm not going to any stupid dance.

ANDIE

Peggy said she wants to go.

PEGGY

I didn't say I *wanted* to go, I said I wouldn't mind going.

SHANE

Really? That's good. That's good, Peggy. Well, who you gonna go with? It's a "girl ask boy."

PEGGY

("I'm not a vegetable")

I know it's "girl ask boy."

(then)

There's nobody to ask. Nobody would say yes.

ANDIE

One small detail.

SHANE

I know Mike's got the hots for you.

Andie exaggeratedly falls out of her chair laughing.

ANDIE  
Mike Radacovich with Peggy?

PEGGY  
He does not.

SHANE  
He does, too. He thinks you're a fox.  
He told me.

ANDIE  
(she's hysterical)  
No, he didn't say fox. He said hound.

SHANE  
You're doing the laundry for a month,  
you hear me?

From the ground, Andie makes the "whacking off" gesture with her hand.

SHANE (CONT'D)  
(snapping around)  
I'm going to really pretend I didn't  
see that.  
(to Peggy)  
I'll find out if he's been asked yet.  
Can't hurt to know.

PEGGY  
Don't you dare tell him I want to go.

SHANE  
I won't mention your name. I'll just  
work it into the conversation, and see  
if he's already going. Okay?

PEGGY  
("Yes")  
No.

Peggy sits down with the two of them, admiring her table setting.

SHANE  
Okay, who wants to say grace?

ANDIE  
Why do you ask us this every night?  
You say it every night, so why do you  
ask?

SHANE  
You can say it if you want to say it.

ANDIE  
I don't want to say it.

SHANE  
Okay, then I'll say it.  
(then)  
Dear God, thanks for this food that  
Peggy made, on this special day..

ANDIE  
(mumbling)  
It's always a special day.

SHANE  
I was my usual awesome self in the  
state opener...

They like his stupid jokes.

SHANE (CONT'D)  
... and Peggy got straight A's again for  
the ten thousandth time in a row...

Peggy makes a muscle with a big red smile on her face.

SHANE (CONT'D)  
... And we're getting Andie's report  
card any day now, and it better be  
good...

ANDIE  
It is what it is...

SHANE  
... and God bless Dad, and his job and  
all...

ANDIE  
Nice job. "What does your Dad do? He  
porks his boss for a living."

SHANE  
(looking up)  
Excuse me, God.  
(to Andie)  
We're trying to have a moment here.

PEGGY  
(to Andie)  
You're not getting any dessert now.

ANDIE

We don't have any dessert. We never have any dessert.

PEGGY

Well, if we had any, you wouldn't be getting any.

ANDIE

I'm not praying for him. He's never here.

PEGGY

He happens to work a lot on the road, Andie.

ANDIE

He's not working. It's Saturday. He's hanging out at "Sharon's" condo. Is she a bitch, or what?

SHANE

Andie, you've never met her.

ANDIE

That's just my point. You'd think she'd at least wanna meet us.

SHANE

... Amen.

They all make the sign of the cross.

INT. KELLY GARAGE - LINCOLN TOWNCAR - CONTINUOUS

TOM KELLY, 38, pulls in - he's on the car phone in his spotlessly clean car. What a contradiction to their home.

TOM

(into phone)

... Jack, two weeks. I'll get you not only the last three payments, I'll pay the mortgage for the rest of the year if you want. Come on, you're talking to me, Tom here. Not some lowlife..

INT. KITCHEN BACK DOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Tom bursts in full of life. No doubts about where Shane got his good looks. Dressed in an impeccable suit and coat.

TOM

If it ain't my three little bears.

Kisses the back of the girls' necks. They're all glad to see him. Shane hands him an envelope out of a bowl on the counter.

SHANE

Here's 460 from the routes, and 320 from the rink.

Tom gives him an appreciative look.

TOM

J. Zelnick Construction, only the *biggest* construction company in Wisconsin, guess who's selling 'em 6 bulldozers?

As he flops a promotional/marketing gift "flashlight" in front of his two girls.

TOM (CONT'D)

Gift for you, one for you...

Tom sticks two tickets in Shane's shirt pocket - then pours himself a scotch.

SHANE

(excited)

U. of Minnesota hockey tickets.

TOM

Fifth row from the glass. Sold out. Two seats. Anybody you want.

SHANE

Me and you?

TOM

Next time. Sharon's got tickets to some theater thing. Some special thing or something...

Peggy changes the subject.

PEGGY

You know, the first round game was last night and...

TOM

I know, I know. I got stuck in a meeting. I tried to get there...

They've heard Dad's excuses before.

PEGGY

Shane had two goals and two assists.

TOM

You sound like your old man. 2.2 a game. My season average senior year.

ANDIE

And I'm a 36 D.

PEGGY

(to Shane)

Shane, tell him. Tell him what happened.

TOM

What happened?

PEGGY

Coach Lucia came to see him. From the Gophers.

TOM

See who?

ANDIE

Shane.

TOM

What for?

ANDIE

To see him play.

It's becoming uncomfortable...

TOM

Coach Lucia drove all the way up to see Shane Kelly play hockey? I don't think so.

ANDIE

He was in Duluth. And he's friends with Coach.

TOM

Then he came in town to see his friend - big difference, Andie. So what did he say?

Shane wishes this never came up.

SHANE

Nothing. He said I was good and that's about it.

Peggy looks to Shane eyeing "tell him."

PEGGY

(to Tom)

He said a lot more than that. He was very impressed and said if Gilbert does really well in the State Championships he'd consider Shane for a scholarship.

Tom condescendingly snickers...

PEGGY (CONT'D)

What.

TOM

Peggy, you have no idea what you're talking about.

(then)

First of all, Gilbert has done "really well" already -- they won the first round. Next round is Roseau. They're in a whole other league from Gilbert.

Tom won't let it go.

TOM (CONT'D)

And Shane knows, and I know, it takes a lot more than two goals against some Hinsdale nobody goalie to play for Minnesota or anywhere else.

(then)

And Shane's got some obligations around here, to this household, and this family... Right, Shane?

A long awkward moment.

ANDIE

This is normal. Peggy says some guy thinks Shane is great, and he gets mad about it.

TOM

My name isn't "he," okay? My name is your father.

Tom stares Andie down. Heads upstairs.

INT. SHANE'S BEDROOM - THE BLACK OF NIGHT

Shane tosses in his sleep.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BACKYARD - MINNESOTA - WINTER - SHANE AT 10 YEARS-OLD

Shane's lying in the snow next to his father - who's screaming bloody murder, holding his knee in horrific pain.

VIOLENT FLAMES AND SMOKE

pour out of an opened cellar door leading to their back yard.

SHANE'S MOTHER

frantically races up with Shane's two sisters. His sisters clutch their Mom. They all stare at Shane.

THEIR HOUSE

engulfed in flames.

TOM

angrily looks up at his frightened son - as the WHINE of fire trucks in the distance gets louder.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. SHANE'S BEDROOM - SHANE

jolts up in bed in a cold sweat. His ALARM CLOCK matches the whine of the fire trucks. 4:45 AM. Startled, he whacks the thing off.

Hockey posters, pennants fill his dreary walls. The top of an old dresser is stuffed with his trophies, ribbons and medals. The room is a shrine to the Minnesota Gophers. A full-page newspaper picture of Edina High School's Bobby Varno. There's a magic-markered "circle" drawn in next to his mouth reading, "I'm a pussy."

INT./EXT. ALUMINUM FRONT DOOR - STILL DARK

Shane opens their door that's banging in the cold wind. Barefoot, he hurries down the frozen steps of their small porch - grabbing stacks of bundled daily newspapers from the sidewalk.

We get a glimpse of this street. Colorless, brick homes. Little front yards. Real early. Real cold.

FROZEN GILBERT CREEK - HINSDALE - HALF HOUR LATER

This part of the creek is definitely not in Shane's neighborhood. The backyards of exquisite executive's homes snuggle up to this picturesque creek. The sun begins to sneak through the snow on the trees - and glistens on the ice.

SONG PLAYS. Wearing headphones, with his stuffed sack of newspapers over his shoulder, Shane glides with the grace of a figure skater down the winding creek. His skates effortlessly sculpt a path through the morning dew on the virgin ice.

Like a hunter reaching back for his arrows, he wings the papers to the back steps. Lost in his solitary world, he pushes himself faster and faster.

EXT. GILBERT HS MAKESHIFT ICE RINK - 7 A.M. THAT MORNING

The Gilbert team practices on a dingy, flooded park rink. It's just off the winding creek; like most things in town.

In the ever-present distance, gray smoke churns out of taconite plant chimneys, poisoning the crisp-blue winter skies. Old beat-up wooden boards make the hockey rink borders. On the rink, a couple permanent frozen old nets.

The end of another brutal practice. Their lungs hurt from the arctic cold. They're wearing hats under their helmets. Finger gloves inside their gloves. Double long-johns under their hockey pants.

The only guy not on skates is Coach Radacovich - wearing a red "Gilbert HS" jacket. His name sewn over the chest.

The more brutal and exhausting the drill, the more Shane likes it. They're doing "burpies"; skating as hard as they can up to each "line" on the rink, belly-flopping on the lines, and racing back to the net. It's inhuman.

Shane taunts them all to catch up...

SHANE

Come on!

Nobody can keep up with this obsessed, relentless machine. Coach studies Shane.

INT. GILBERT WARMING HOUSE - LATER

A far cry from the "Starbucks-like" Lake Hinsdale warming hut. The guys change for school, laughing it up. In their underwear, you notice how relatively puny they really are.

The goalie, NAPIER, alone in the corner by the fireplace. A big boy, with a flushed baby face. He's having trouble getting off his jersey and pads; it's exhausting - and embarrassing.

Coach walks in, heading to the office with an armful of pucks.

COACH  
Good practice, boys.

Shane bursts in wailing his glove as hard as he can at four guys getting undressed.

SHANE  
You all suck.

He heaves the other one at Napier, the goalie, even harder. They all duck.

One of the guys who got conked - "ZED" ZEJDLIK. Hard worker. Strong Bohemian blood. In his underwear.

ZEJDLIK  
Screw you, Kelly.  
(pointing to the goalie)  
Napier lost 40 pounds. Zarbinski's playing on a pulled hamstring. I can't sleep at night with these blisters. You suck.

Coach watches from the office door.

COACH  
Kelly, get in here.

INT. GILBERT WARMING HOUSE OFFICE

Coach closes the door behind a steaming Shane. We get a look at Coach's strong, proud, salt-of-the-earth, middle-European face. Thick, used hands.

SHANE  
It's bad enough they stink, the least they could do is try.

COACH

What are you talking about?

SHANE

They won the opening round like that's good enough. It's *not* good enough. We could win this whole thing.

COACH

Oh, and telling everybody they suck, that's the plan?

SHANE

They do suck. This school sucks, practicing on an outdoor park rink sucks. And I'm stuck here. I'll do it myself.

He starts to walk out.

COACH

Get back in here.

He stops.

COACH (CONT'D)

You listen to me, you smart ass. You saying *they* suck, you're telling me *I* suck. I've been coaching those boys 10 years. 10 years. They're not the most talented team in this state, but you'll never, never find 13 boys that have worked harder for something than those right in that room. You know why? You. They believe if they can just be good enough, good enough, to hold their ground - *you'll* shine.

Coach never gets this upset.

COACH (CONT'D)

You're right about something. You can beat crappy teams all by yourself - that's how we got this far. But you *can't* beat a great team. And every team we play from now on *is* great, and then some. You're gonna need them.

Points to the other room. Coach opens the door.

COACH (CONT'D)

(fired up to team)

Tomorrow morning, 5 sharp.

SLEZAK

It's Saturday.

COACH

Tough. Tell your girlfriends and anybody else that you're going to be here till Sunday night. You're not gonna sleep, you're not gonna eat, you're not gonna change clothes, you're not gonna brush your teeth. You be here on time. You're gonna learn how to play like a team.

EXT. KELLY HOUSE - 11 PM THAT NIGHT

A rusty Ford small truck pulls up. The license plates are covered up with mud. Northern Minnesota's red iron-rich soil tattoos itself to the sides and wheels.

Mike opens the back door of the truck. Lets Shane in. Truck speeds away.

INT. BACK OF THE FREEZING TRUCK - MOVING

Also bouncing around is the driver's younger brother. A senior. Skinny kid. No personality.

Driving, behind the glass partition: EDDIE. A 23-year-old who knows he's going absolutely nowhere in life.

SHANE

(to Mike)

So, where's this great party we had to go to at 11 at night?

MIKE

(smiling at Eddie's brother)

It's a surprise.

Shane blows air on his hands. Not a big believer in gloves, hats or boots.

SHANE

(to Mike)

What are you doing the night of Valentine's Day?

MIKE

The same thing I'm doing the night before Valentine's Day. Whacking off.

SHANE

Now you're going to the "Kings of Hearts" Dance.

MIKE

I am not going to no dance.

SHANE

Nice English. "I am not going to no dance." You talk like you're a moron.

(then)

My sister's asking you to the dance, and you're gonna say yes.

Mike looks to Eddie's brother. Mike knows Shane's joking.

MIKE

Right.

Shane slugs him in the arm. Shane likes to slug Mike to remind him of the status of their relationship.

SHANE

It *is* right.

MIKE

(holding his arm)

That hurt. I told you not to do that anymore.

Mike looks to Eddie's brother for an audience.

MIKE (CONT'D)

I don't know how to say this nicely, but your sister is a moose, man.

Shane slugs him harder again in the arm.

SHANE

Don't ever call my sister a moose. You're going.

MIKE

Usually when somebody has the waistline of an ice cream truck, they got a winning personality, or gives great head, or something. Your sister can't even talk.

Mike knew this shot was coming.

SHANE

Who you impressing right now? You trying to impress me?

(MORE)

SHANE (CONT'D)

You're not impressing me.

(then)

Hey, who do you think you are, Tom  
Cruise? You're a fat fuckin' midget.  
You're going.

MIKE

I'm *not* going.

EXT. TRUCK - MOVING

Shane looks out the back window as it bounces along.

SHANE

The party's in Hinsdale?

EDDIE

(yelling to the back)

Did you ask him?

SHANE

About what?

MIKE

(with a stupid smile)

The party. The party's in the truck.

Shane gives Mike a look. Mike pulls two hundred dollar bills  
out of his pocket.

MIKE (CONT'D)

One for you, one for me.

Shane just looks at him.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Eddie thought you would know which  
homes weren't getting their papers  
because, you know, they're out of  
town.

SHANE

Why?

MIKE

Because we could go in their garages,  
get the snowmobiles, and take the  
things.

SHANE

What for?

MIKE  
For 200 dollars.

SHANE  
You've done this before?

Mike is positive involving Shane was a bad idea.

MIKE  
It's no big deal. Eddie does it all  
the time.

SHANE  
(yells up front)  
Stop the truck, Eddie.

Nothing. Shane bangs on the glass partition.

SHANE (CONT'D)  
Stop the truck.

Eddie picks up speed.

EDDIE  
(yells back)  
Jump if you want out so bad.

Shane kicks open the back door latch. Jumps out, hanging  
onto the bumper, "skitching" on the snow-packed road.

EDDIE (CONT'D)  
(sarcastically back to  
Mike)  
Great idea, Radacovich.

SHANE

half-crouching, holding on as the truck barrels down the  
road. Snow kicks up in his face. Shane inches his way along  
the bumper toward the driver's side of the truck.

MIKE

hating every second of this.

SHANE

dangerously reaches around the back corner of the truck  
trying to grab on to the back wheel well on the driver's  
side.

He gets his hand on it. Slides himself around - horrifically  
skitching on the side of the truck.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

looks out his side view mirror. Sees Shane hanging on to the wheel well. Eddie guns it trying to lose him.

BACK TO SHANE

There is no way Shane is going to let go. Shane's legs could slip under the car any second.

MIKE AND EDDIE'S BROTHER FLOP AROUND

in the back as the truck swerves, pouring down the icy road.

EDDIE

looks out his driver's seat window. Shane's looking right in at him.

SHANE

yanks open Eddie's door.

He grabs Eddie by the collar and pulls him out the door. Eddie slams on the brakes, skidding the car and spinning it out of control, around and around.

MIKE AND EDDIE'S BROTHER

bounce off the walls of the whirling truck.

The truck's engine dies, and Shane drags Eddie to the side of the hard, snow-packed road.

Eddie pulls out a switchblade, swiping at Shane.

Shane crams Eddie's head face-first down into the bank of snow. Suffocating him. It's hard to watch. Eddie finally drops the knife. Shane heaves the knife across the street.

SHANE

Who's the big man now, Eddie?

Shane won't let go of his head. Eddie's not moving. Mike and Eddie's brother hurry out of the truck.

Shane finally lets go. Eddie gasps for air. Shane looks Mike square in the eyes.

SHANE (CONT'D)

Don't you ever set me up again.

Shane walks down the dark road with his back to them all.

On Mike, we:

CUT TO:

INT. GILBERT WARMING HOUSE - 5 A.M. NEXT MORNING - SATURDAY

The team in their gear sitting on the benches. An awkwardness between Shane and Mike. Coach comes out of the office. Throws each of them 2 pieces of 4-foot rope.

COACH

Line up in a line. Tie the blade of  
your skate to the guy behind you.  
Then come on out on the ice.

AGGRESSIVE SONG kicks in over MONTAGE.

EXT. WARMING HOUSE - MINUTES LATER

They can't even get out of the warming house. Half of them are on the ground.

EXT. GILBERT RINK - IN FRONT OF THE WARMING HOUSE

Coach draws a starting line with a crayon on the ice.

COACH

I want a full lap around the rink.  
One guy falls, you come back here and  
start all over.

They not only can't go five feet without falling, it's a battle getting back to the starting line.

EXT. GILBERT RINK - AN HOUR LATER

Cocky, they're only a few yards from the finish line - they pick up some speed - and down Zedlick goes. Coach whistles them back to the starting line.

EXT. TACONITE QUARRY - THAT AFTERNOON

The team stands around Coach next to a 16' cement wall that surrounds the quarry. They're covered in dirt. Exhausted.

COACH

I want every one of you over the wall  
and on the other side. Figure it out.

The team stands under this huge wall looking up.

NAPIER

And the next biggest guy stand together at the bottom of the wall with their legs apart. Burtker climbs on top of them. Slezak shimmies up them, reaching the top.

260 lb. Napier stands there at the bottom looking up at them.

They try again. Seven guys make a sturdier, thicker "trestle." Napier is the first one to climb up their human ladder. It takes all of their help to shove him over the top.

One to go. Mike, this time around. Holding on to each other from the top of the wall, they lower a guy down reaching for Mike's arms. They grab him - and pull Mike up and over.

Coach watches.

EXT. GILBERT RINK - LATE AFTERNOON

Five at a time, they awkwardly bring the puck down the ice - blindfolded. The "puck" is a buzzing "cooking timer" in heavily wrapped hockey tape.

COACH

(barking as they skate)

Everybody touches the puck before you shoot...

VARIOUS CUTS

showing their improvement. Shane taking it in.

INT. GILBERT WARMING HOUSE - LATE THAT NIGHT

They're in a circle around the warmth of the brick fireplace.

ZARMBINSKI

Come on, Coach, you gotta let us eat something. We're starving.

COACH

Eat some water. Have all you want.

Coach throws Slezak a hockey mitt.

COACH (CONT'D)

I want each one of you to tell us something you've never told anybody before. It'll never leave this room. Slezak, you start.

INT. GILBERT WARMING HOUSE - AN HOUR LATER

The glove's been passed to a number of guys. There's not a sound other than the crackle from the fireplace.

ZEJDLIK

I had a twin brother that died when I was born. Because it took so long getting me out. That's why my middle name is Thomas. That was gonna be my brother's name. Sometimes I wonder what it would be like to have a brother, play hockey with, share a room..

He throws it to Mike. Mike looks reluctant to share this.

MIKE

You know how, you know, it feels great when you rub your feet after wearing your skates all day, but it's nothing like when somebody else does it? Well, Pucker, you know, my dog -- he loves to lick my damn feet. And so sometimes I stick my foot under the kitchen faucet with warm water and then in the, you know, the big gallon tub of sugar we got, and I let him just lick it off, and he goes nuts for like an hour.

COACH

You stuck your foot, after playing hockey, you stuck your dirty, smelly foot in the sugar container, and then you had your mother and me eat out of that thing?

MIKE

Stays in the room.

The guys love it. Mike throws it to Shane.

Shane passes it to the next guy.

EXT. BASE OF THE QUARRY - CRACK OF DAWN

Coach, freezing, stands at the base of a nine-story trestled conveyor belt that hauls the ore from the base of the quarry to the very top. It's enormous.

A line of Coach's 14 soldiers is a third of the way up this torturous wooden-trestled beast. The moving "belt" on the escalator has been "reversed" - making it absolute torture to climb. Shane pushes Napier's ass to keep going.

LONG SHOT

As warm air smokes out of their lungs, they look like a train slowly grinding up to the top of a mountain.

INT. GILBERT WARMING HOUSE OFFICE - THAT EVENING

Coach takes a rope, wrapping it around all 14 of them. They stand there like a bale of hay. They're dirty, hungry, drained - and, man, do they stink.

COACH

I want you all to inhale big and deep,  
suckin' in each other's stench.  
Memorize that smell for the rest of  
your lives.

INT. COACH'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - THAT NIGHT

A modest, lived-in brick home. They feast on Mrs. Radacovich's famous "Sloppy Joes."

Coach shows his 8-millimeter film of the boys playing hockey on the crappy Gilbert Rink in first grade's Pee Wee league - they laugh it up spotting themselves in Coach's treasured footage.

INT. UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA ARENA - MINNEAPOLIS - NIGHT

Mammoth hockey stadium. 5 National Championship banners mock the rest of the country.

THE MINNESOTA GOPHERS

Take the ice. They gracefully skate the perimeters warming up. An economy of motion.

Shane and Mike study their heroes from their fifth-row seats. They're spitting-distance from their bench.

MIKE'S POV

of Coach Lucia walking down the aisle.

MIKE

Go say hello.

Mike tries to push him out of his seat...

As Shane starts to get up, Coach Lucia greets BOBBY VARNO, the star from Edina High School. Varno is tall, built like a rock, confident.

INT. KELLY HOME - EVENING

A nervous-wreck Peggy paces the living room. Thinking. Steps up to the phone. Dials a few numbers. Hangs up.

Listening from the kitchen, a frustrated Shane and Andie come around the corner.

SHANE

Oh, Jesus.

PEGGY

(annoyed)

Okay, I'll do it. I'll do it. If you just quit bugging me, and get out of here, I'll do it. You're both bugging me.

ANDIE

That's what you said an hour ago.

Shane takes Andie back to the kitchen. More pacing for poor Peggy in the living room. She calls to Shane...

PEGGY

Okay, now what do I say again?

ANDIE

Holy shit.

SHANE

(scolding)

It's not "holy shit," Andie.

(repeating to Peggy)

You say, "Mike, hi, this is Peggy Kelly..."

ANDIE

The Dateless Psycho.

SHANE

And then he says something, and then you say, "Would you like to go to the King of Hearts Dance with me?" And he's gonna say yes, and then you say, "Well, that sounds great, we'll talk over the details another time." And you hang up the damn phone.

PEGGY

What if he says no. That's what he's gonna say. Then what do I say?

ANDIE

Scream in his ear as loud as you can and hang up.

PEGGY

Okayokayokayokay. Just leave me alone and I'll do it.

Shane and Andie wait. Nothing.

Enough's enough. Shane walks into the living room. Grabs the phone.

PEGGY (CONT'D)

(panicked)

What are you doing?

Shane dials.

PEGGY (CONT'D)

Don't you dare, Shane, I mean it.

SHANE

(into phone)

Mike. Here's my sister. She's got something to ask you.

He holds out the phone for Peggy. Peggy backs away. It would be impossible for a person to be any redder. Nice look from Peggy to Shane.

PEGGY

I'm not talking to him.

Shane whispers to her, holding his hand over the receiver.

SHANE

You gotta say something now.

She shakes her head viciously.

SHANE (CONT'D)  
 (into phone)  
 Mike, we've been standing here waiting  
 for her to call you to ask you to the...

Hysterical, she snaps the phone from his hand.

PEGGY  
 (trying to sound normal)  
 Hi, Mike. This is Peggy Kelly. I was  
 going to call you to see if you might  
 be interested in attending the King of  
 Hearts Dance with me.

She's listening.

PEGGY (CONT'D)  
 Hello? Hello?

She looks at a smiling Shane with his finger on the button.  
 She slams the phone down.

PEGGY (CONT'D)  
 You are such an asshole.

Shane and Andie laugh it up. Peggy half-laughs/cries.

SERIES OF SHOTS:

INT. HINSDALE ARENA - SECOND ROUND - ROSEAU VS. GILBERT The  
 Gilbert Team roars out on the ice - imitating their formation  
 when the rope was tied to their skates - gliding in unison.  
 Shane still in his own world.

THE BACK OF THE QUARRY - SUNSET. In front of a large,  
 tangerine sun melting into the cold earth, Shane painfully  
 pushes up a huge "dune" of pellet ore tailings.

THE TACONITE PLANT. Coach Radacovich heads home from work.  
 The co-workers at the plant cheer him on.

HINSDALE ARENA - THIRD ROUND - BRAINARD H.S. A BRAINARD OX  
 slams into our goalie, Napier. Shane drops his gloves and  
 goes after the guy. They're both thrown out. Coach is  
 furious at Shane.

GILBERT BARBER SHOP. An old regular proudly reads the Gilbert  
 paper. Headlines - "KELLY KO'S BRAINARD."

INT. TOM'S REAL ESTATE OFFICE - ST. CLOUD. A realtor shows  
 Tom a picture of Shane on the front page of St. Cloud's  
 sports section. Tom seems indifferent.

GILBERT HIGH SCHOOL - CLASSROOM. Shane struggles to focus.

EXT. GILBERT RINK - TEAM PRACTICE - 5:30 AM. Nasty and freezing. Torturous stamina drill of skating/falling on the ice -- over and over again.

U. MINNESOTA - COACH LUCIA'S OFFICE. Lucia moves Gilbert along on his wall chart. 16 teams to go.

EXT. LAKE HINSDALE RINK - LATE AT NIGHT - AFTER HOURS. Shane has dragged wooden warming house benches out on the empty rink; he's stacked two on top of each other, lined up like "hurdles." Over and over he jumps, back and forth. Shane's legs are rubber. He misses a hurdle, crashing his chin in the ice. Bloodied, he relentlessly goes again.

FIFTH ROUND - GILBERT VS. DULUTH CENTRAL. Coach pulls hotheaded Shane out. A Duluth fan heckles him. Shane starts after him in the stands -- Coach does everything he can to pull him back.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA - COACH LUCIA'S OFFICE. A surprised Lucia fills in Gilbert's name into the Sectional Finals -- 8 teams left in the state.

QUIET OVER THESE SHOTS:

GILBERT SIDE STREETS - NIGHT. Narrow, cold, and empty. Rusty cars line the curbs.

A GILBERT DRIVEWAY - NIGHT. A nameless 10 year-old kid with a "Gilbert HS" jacket shovels his driveway as fast as he can. He wears an earplug with a Walkman in his pocket.

(Note: Gilbert's radio announcer continues over the following moments shouting the opening minutes of the game.)

GILBERT ANNOUNCER (VO)

... I don't know who I'm talking to out there because everybody I know that's living in, or ever lived in Gilbert is right here in this building..

The kid finishes shoveling. Throws his hockey skates over his shoulders - takes off running down the side street.

EXT. GILBERT GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH. It's old. The lit sign reads, "SUNDAY'S SERMON: GOD CAN WORK MIRACLES. PRAY FOR OUR GILBERT DEVILS!"

THAT KID quickly tying up his skates on the bank of Gilbert Creek next to a road. Takes off down the river. He listens through his earplug.

EXT. GILBERT TACONITE COMPANY -- Huge night lights surround the enormous, open mining quarry. Large orange trucks and machines look like tinker-toys mining through the night. The game bellows out speakers -- echoing off the walls of the stripped quarry.

INT. SMALL TOWN BAR -- A handful of old crusty regulars listen to the radio.

THE KID flying down the winding, empty creek. We HEAR only the sound of his skates scraping the smooth bed of ice.

GILBERT ANNOUNCER (VO) (CONT'D)  
 ... Eight teams left in the whole damn state, and we're one of 'em. Tonight we're battling the monster, Grand Rapids, enrollment 6,800. How 'bout that, that's twice as big as our whole damn town...

HINSDALE WATER TOWER. Large banner reads: "IF YOU CAN'T BEAT 'EM, JOIN 'EM. GO GILBERT!"

LONG SHOT OF THE KID zipping down the river in Hinsdale territory. Large rustic homes line the creek.

EXT. LAKE HINSDALE RINK. The snow trickles through lights, giving the lake/rink a soft glow in the night. It's empty.

INT. WARMING HOUSE. A county worker (with the game on the radio) stares at an old couple romantically skate/dancing in the solitude to a TENDER SONG.

THE KID running in his shoes through the snow toward the awesome arena. His skates bounce and clack over his shoulder. He feels the ROAR OF THE CROWD in the majestic Hinsdale Hockey Dome straight in front of him.

WE BLAST INTO:

EXT. HINSDALE HOCKEY DOME - MOMENTS LATER

Marquee READS:

MINNESOTA STATE SECTIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS  
 GRAND RAPIDS VS. GILBERT

INT. HINSDALE HOCKEY DOME

Folks are absolutely nuts. A stuffed arena of 6,500 crammed students and adults echoing off the walls.

THE SCOREBOARD

tied at 4-4. Two minutes to go.

THE PURE SIZE

of Grand Rapids players puts them in another league from Gilbert.

SHANE KELLY

jumps over the penalty box and onto the ice.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

... Well, there's a train-wreck ready to happen. What's Coach thinking putting Kelly in there with Bradley? He's been taunting Shane all night. It's already cost Kelly two trips to the penalty box.

THE GILBERT TEAM

smaller in size and number, combats with endurance. Gilbert digs out a loose puck - they shovel it off to Shane. He still doesn't believe a lot in "passing."

SHANE

plows through, around, and over the mighty Grand Rapids line.

HE MERCILESSLY COCKS

and rifles the puck through the net.

PANDEMONIUM

with thirty seconds left.

FACE OFF

at center ice. Shane against Bradley, some big pretty-boy Grand Rapids Swede.

SHANE

How's *that* feel?

BRADLEY

You're not worth talking to, you small-time piece of shit.

BRADLEY

wins the face-off. Grand Rapid heads down to tie the game.

NAPIER, THE GILBERT GOALIE

barely blocks the shot. Feeds to Shane behind the net.

BRADLEY

cold-cocks and bashes Shane into the boards. Shane buries the puck against the wall -- eating up the clock.

THE GRAND RAPIDS PLAYERS

converge on Shane trying to dig it out. Shane looks up at Bradley, who's screaming right smack in his face.

BRADLEY

Get him out of there! Get him out!

SHANE

Backed into the corner, suffocated by the Grand Rapids players.

WE BLAST INTO:

A FIVE-SECOND FLASHBACK

of 6TH-GRADE PEGGY clutching 2ND-GRADE ANDIE at the top of burning basement steps in the horrific fire looking down at her brother with flames all around him. As Peggy visually screams the words - we hear Bradley's voice..

PEGGY/BRADLEY

Get him out!

SMASH BACK TO:

SHANE

plows out of the pack somehow with the puck.

Two chances he's passing off. He's gonna run out the clock all by himself - he's got the whole Grand Rapids team after him. It's like chasing a dog; the second you get near him, he slides away. You truly see how talented Shane is.

THE PLACE ERUPTS

As the final buzzer goes off.

SHANE

Beelines for Bradley in the corner. Crosschecks Bradley headfirst into the boards.

THEY BOTH COME UP SWINGING

The benches are cleared. Players are slugging. Fans are slugging.

A much bigger Bradley grabs Shane by the jersey and ramrods him into the wall. Shane collapses in a ball on the ice.

Shane gets up. Grabs Bradley skating away -- and viciously slams Bradley's head into the ice. Again and again.

PEGGY AND ANDIE

watch from the stands.

THE REFEREES, COACH

and some fathers try to pull a strong Shane off.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE HINSDALE ICE SKATING RINK - 11:45 THAT NIGHT

Shane, alone. Waters the rink down with a large hose connected to a fire hydrant. A full moon glistens as the water splashes across the smooth bed of ice.

Freezing cold. Not a sound.

DISSOLVE TO:

SMALL, FROZEN MICHIGAN LAKE - WINTER SUNSET - 8 YRS EARLIER

A pink sun melts in the grey iced earth. On the lake, Dad on skates playing with his 3 kids. A good father. Teaching meaty seven year-old Peggy to skate. Not an athletic bone in this kid's body. Wobbling around on freezing skates on a freezing lake in the freezing winter isn't young Peggy's idea of a good time.

5 YEAR-OLD ANDIE

What a pistol. Fishing. Sort of. Kneels on the ice next to a golf-cup sized hole. Pulls some Cheerios out of her coat, floating them on the water. Yells, shoving her hand down the hole like a polar bear hunting for fish. A couple fish trophies flop around next to the hole.

10 YR-OLD SHANE

Beat-up skates, U. of Minnesota jacket. Pours straight at sister Peggy with a shit-eating grin. A natural, picks up speed.

PEGGY  
(in horror)  
Dad...

Shane's gonna plow right into her and knock her on her big ass. Peggy frantically backpedals. Too bad she hasn't learned to do that yet. Down she goes.

Shane slams on his brakes - kicking up an explosion of ice in her face.

PEGGY (CONT'D)  
(furious)  
I hate you.

SHANE  
Good.

He bolts away looking for another battle. Tom can't help but grin -- watching his spitting image roar across the ice.

Tom, in fun, chases after him. Man, can Tom skate. Grabs on to Shane's belt - Shane pulls him along till they fall on each other in a pile on the ice. Two buddies laughing it up.

EXT. THEIR HOUSE AND GARAGE - MINUTES LATER

A small, inexpensive, woodsy family home next to other homes just off this little lake. A snow-packed dirt road connects the houses.

Shane wipes off his skates just outside the garage door - listening and watching through the crack in the garage door.

TOM (VO)  
Your brother...

PEGGY (VO)  
... Is a jerk.

Tom cleans some frozen gunk off the underside of his spotless four-door Dodge Celebrity. He opens the passenger door, sitting Peggy in the seat to keep her warm. He kneels down on the cement floor, wiping her eyes.

TOM (VO)  
 ... is special. Always will be. He's got it. Big things are in store for him.

PEGGY (VO)  
 So.

TOM  
 The older you get, the more that brother of yours is gonna need you.

He tips up her chin...

TOM (CONT'D)  
 I can't get you to hold your head up when people talk to you...

She smiles...

TOM (CONT'D)  
 ... but you're strong. Stronger than him. Do you know that?

PEGGY  
 No.

TOM  
 You're an oak tree. You watch over the other trees in the forest.

She snickers...

TOM (CONT'D)  
 What?

PEGGY  
 Lucky me. Shane is special with big things in store - and I'm a tree.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. GILBERT LIBRARY - NIGHT

Tail end of a heated Gilbert H.S. Board Meeting. At a head table are the PRINCIPAL AND SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS.

In the first row of chairs is Coach Radacovich, and behind him are 50 emotional, opinionated townspeople.

Two Board Members are going at it -- The Athletic Director and an incensed Trustee, ANDREA CRANE.

ANDREA CRANE

(waving a manila folder)

... A young man is lying in a Neuro-Intensive Care Unit with a skull fracture because he was assaulted at a high school sanctioned activity -- and his parents demand action. And it is *our* responsibility to do something about it.

A MOTHER stands up yelling out from the crowd.

MOTHER

School sports is a privilege; not a right!

ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

Andrea, we are in the Final Four of the Minnesota Championships - four teams in the whole state. Do you know the last time Gilbert made it to the Final Four? *Never*. That's when. This tournament is good for the school, it's good for Gilbert - it's good for the damn state. And what you don't seem to understand, Andrea, this kid *is* the team. If he's off - it's over, no more tournament. And then we can wait around another couple hundred years for this kind of thing to happen to this town.

Dissonant opinions. The principal tries to regain order. Another Board member speaks up.

ANNE JENSEN

He was suspended freshman year for fighting, sophomore year for not making his grades, junior year - correct me if I'm wrong, Coach - he went after some father in the stands? *This* is the example we're putting out there? Besides his run-ins with the law?

Coach jumps from his chair.

COACH

Oh, come on, Anne, how many times have we been over this? He's had a few driving tickets.

An enraged mother with an infant in her arms blurts out from the back.

MOTHER

Going 115 down Gilbert Creek Road is  
not just a driving ticket!

The audience erupts. The Principal demands order.

PRINCIPAL

We're taking a 20 minute recess, and  
then we're gonna vote on this thing.

He bangs the gavel.

INT. KELLY HOUSE - DINING ROOM TABLE - CONTINUOUS

A used "BIRTHDAY BOY" banner drapes on the wall over the rarely-used dining room table. It's cheaply, but festively dressed. Shane, Peggy and Andie are finishing up -- wearing their every-birthday, birthday hats.

PEGGY

(to Shane)

Do you think they made the decision  
yet?

SHANE

Let's stick to my birthday.

Shane grabs his pile of gifts.

SHANE (CONT'D)

(excited)

What'ya get me?

ANDIE

I want to do mine first.

SHANE

(to Andie)

Okay, okay. Something you made, or  
something you found?

ANDIE

Something I found.

She gives it to him. A little brightly colored box. Excitedly opens it. It's a flat rock with a "fish" hand-painted on it. He loves it.

ANDIE (CONT'D)

It's a paperweight.

SHANE

Why does it have a fish on it?

ANDIE  
That's your sign.

SHANE  
Now that is an awesome gift.

He gives her a hard kiss on the forehead.

PEGGY  
Mine is something I made. It's a  
poem.

You gotta kind of sing "Yesterday" when you do it.. I mean,  
it's no big deal or anything.

SHANE/ANDIE  
Just do it..

PEGGY  
(to Andie)  
You're gonna help sing on the chorus,  
right?

Pretending that she's annoyed, Andie nods.

SHANE  
Jesus.

Peggy nervously and endearingly sings to the melody of  
"YESTERDAY."

PEGGY  
(turning very red)  
Shane Kelly... You're the best bro-ther  
I've ever seen... And I hope that all  
your dreams come true... 'Cause I  
believe in... Shane Kelly  
(Andie joins in)  
You have... Given me so much hope... For  
I belie-e-eve in Shane Kelly.

Peggy is as red as a beet. He stands to give her a big hug.

INTERCUT TO:

TOM'S BEDROOM UPSTAIRS

Tom pacing on a phone -- hurrying to tie his tie.

TOM

... No, what I'm saying, Sharon, is I'm juggling a lot right now - the Zelnick Construction deal, the three kids, besides the financial stuff. And you start lecturing me about Zelnick's account being important, like I don't know that?

DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Andie and Peggy proudly march in carrying in their cake -- there's a hockey player "drawn" on the cake wearing #77. As they begin singing, "Happy Birthday," Shane's memory takes us to his sisters singing together as kids...

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. SMALL FRONT PORCH, FLORIDA TRACT HOUSE - 7 YRS EARLIER

Peggy (9), Andie (4), and Shane (11) all dressed up -- standing in front of their Dad reluctantly mumbling "Silent Night" to the closed door of a lower middle-class one-story house. Dad holds a Christmas present.

PEGGY/ANDIE/SHANE

Silent night, holy night,  
All is calm, all is bright...

Behind them on the curb is Dad's impeccably clean "Dodge Celebrity." The house has Christmas lights, but they're not on. From the dangling wires and dead front lawn -- it looks as if these lights have been hanging just like this for a few years.

SHANE

(while singing)  
Dad, she's not gonna want to see us.

DAD

Of course she wants to see us.

No one is answering.

PEGGY

(while singing)  
Let's get out of here...

The door opens. It's Shane's Mom. The kids are shocked how different and awful she looks -- in this whole different world. Her face turns horribly angry.

SUE  
Tom, you got big problems, do you know  
that?

The three kids awkwardly stand there.

SUE (CONT'D)  
It's over, Tom. Quit calling me, quit  
writing me - do you hear me?

It's so uncomfortable.

DAD  
We just drove down to say Merry  
Christmas.

She emotionally looks at the kids -- breaking down.

SUE  
I'm sorry, kids. I just can't deal  
with this right now.

She closes the door on them. There they all stand. After a  
moment, Dad pounds on the door.

DAD  
Sue, open the goddamn door!

Nothing. Dad beats on it some more. Some rough, kinda-good-  
looking, jobless GUY angrily opens the door on a banging Dad.

GUY  
She said she doesn't want to see you,  
got it!

He stares a hole through Dad -- and slams the door.

BACK TO:

TOM

hurries down the stairs -- joining in for the end of the  
song. They all clap as the song ends. Shane blows out the  
candles with a huge gust of wind and God knows what else.

ANDIE  
Why don't you just throw up on the  
cake. Jesus.

Tom rubs Shane's head and half-sits down grabbing some cake.

TOM  
Sorry, I gotta run.  
(to Shane)  
(MORE)

TOM (CONT'D)

I got something great coming tomorrow -  
- with your name on it.

ANDIE

Wow. Maybe it's last year's birthday  
present. That's still coming, too,  
right?

Peggy hates any tension in the family.

SHANE

Dad, I don't need a thing.  
(pulling out a sheet of  
paper)  
Before you go, I've gotta go over the  
bill stuff with you.

TOM

I gotta get out the door to this  
dinner meeting...

Shane points to items on a sheet showing Tom the breakdowns.

SHANE

This is the for-sure stuff, and this  
we really need.

TOM

Jesus Christ. Sixty-one hundred  
bucks? For *what*?

SHANE

The regular stuff, and the mortgage,  
car insurance...

TOM

... Braces? Who needs braces?

SHANE

Andie does.

TOM

What's wrong with Andie's teeth?

SHANE

The guy said she needs 'em.

TOM

Just because "the guy said" she needs  
them doesn't mean she needs them.

SHANE

She needs them.

ANDIE  
I don't need 'em.

Tom writes out a check.

TOM  
Here's two. We'll deal with the rest  
next time.

Tom heads to the front door.

SHANE  
Dad, we can't wait till next time,  
these things are gonna bounce.

THE DOORBELL RINGS

Tom opens it. Coach Bud Radacovich in a big hurry.

COACH  
Tom, I'm glad I caught you home.

The kids listen.

TOM  
(coldly)  
I was just heading out.

Tom barely lets him in the door.

COACH  
We got a problem.

TOM  
What's that?

Coach signals that if they could talk outside in private.

TOM (CONT'D)  
I'm really racing to get to this  
meeting.

COACH  
Tom, the School Board is five minutes  
away from kicking Shane off the team  
for what happened.

TOM  
What happened?

COACH  
At the game.

TOM

What game?

The kids really hate this.

COACH

Last night. Shane got in a fight and gave a kid a concussion. And in five minutes they're gonna kick him off the team, so I came to find you to hurry down there.

TOM

And why's that?

COACH

To stand up for your son. To defend your son.

Shane can't listen anymore. Walks out the back kitchen door - still listening.

TOM

What's there to defend? He either did it or he didn't.

COACH

It's not about if he did it, Tom. He did it. Everybody saw him do it.

Coach looks for a reaction. Nothing.

COACH (CONT'D)

You're saying you're not coming.

TOM

I'm saying I've got an important meeting I'm now late to, and I'm saying one of these days Shane is gonna learn there's a price to pay in life for your actions. That's what I'm saying, Bud.

Radacovich stares at him - and heads out the door.

INTERCUT

Peggy and Andie in the kitchen. Shane listening from out the back door.

EXT. FRONT OF THE HOUSE

Coach turns back around, standing on the small front lawn.

COACH

There's no doubt in my mind what's  
destroying your kid. You. You  
selfish, unhappy bastard.

Tom steps out on the porch.

TOM

Who are you, telling me? Some  
"miner?" Some nobody high school  
hockey coach?

Coach turns around on fire.

COACH

Let's get something real straight.  
I'm not a miner, I'm not a hockey  
coach. I'm a father. I'm a husband.  
That's who I am. I'm a miner and a  
coach so I can be a father. Who are  
you, Tom?

TOM

Get the hell off my property!

He slams the door shut.

INTERCUT

Shane. And Peggy and Andie afraid to make even a sound in  
the kitchen. Tom pacing the living room.

TOM (CONT'D)

I'm working my ass off trying to make  
a buck around here to pay for all this  
shit, and school, and food, and I need  
this?

Tom kicks the living crap out of the telephone table. Peggy  
flinches as though she's been hit.

TOM (CONT'D)

"I don't make enough money, I don't go  
to every single stinking hockey game,  
I don't remember his birthday," well  
excuse the hell out of me - I have a  
life, too. I gave up my life, my  
career, for him and this family. But  
that's not enough for anybody around  
here, is it?

INT. GILBERT LIBRARY - MINUTES LATER

Coach at the podium in front of the hostile crowd.

COACH

... I'm sorry his father wasn't home,  
I'm just saying -- why don't we let  
things settle a few days and then take  
a vote.

A majority yelling "It's time to vote," etc.

PEGGY

enters from the back of the room. Coach spots her.

All heads turn around to her. She walks through the crowd to the front. So out of her comfort zone. She stands alone facing everyone.

PEGGY

I know you wanted his mother or father  
to come down here... but he doesn't have  
a mother around. I wash his clothes,  
I fix him dinner. So that's why I'm  
here.

COACH

(warmly)  
Go ahead, Peggy.

PEGGY

(breaking down)  
You just don't know Shane. My brother  
would do anything for anybody.  
Anything.  
(then)  
Please give him one more chance, and I  
promise I'll make sure nothing  
happens.

On Peggy, we:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BACK OF GILBERT RINK - VERY EARLY NEXT MORNING

CLOSE UP of a couple dozen beat-up hockey pucks on the ice.

## A HOCKEY STICK

grabs one - and pulls it aggressively around the ice like an angry shark yanked by a line. The puck blasts into a worn hockey net. Nobody's around. It's the far back corner of the rink where the old nets are always set up.

Shane, drenched in sweat, spansks the pucks, one-by-one, from various angles into the net 40 feet away.

## A CAR ON A GRAVEL ROAD

stops. Coach Radacovich watches Shane from the car. The harsh wrinkles under Coach's eyes are like the rings around an old, strong, weathered tree.

Coach walks across the road towards Shane. Coach stands next to the net; Shane continues to blast away.

## COACH

One more screw up, one more fight, and you're out, cut and dry.

On every shot Shane winds up on, we think Coach is going to get hit.

## COACH (CONT'D)

When are you going to deal with this? When are you going to be a man and talk to me, or somebody, anybody about how insane it is that you're out here killing yourself, *killing* yourself because you *know* how good you are -- with another guy in that fucked-up head of yours telling you to purposely fuck it up. Blow it. Make sure you can't *possibly* be who you were put on this earth to be.

Another shot spansks into the net.

## COACH (CONT'D)

Here's the bottom line whether you like it or not. You're a senior in a high school with shit for grades and no money. This summer you'll start banging a spike into the Taconite quarries for the rest of your life. You'll be hangin' around this park till you're dead bragging about your hockey records - and nobody, *nobody's* gonna give a shit about how peaked in high school.

A puck cracks off Shane's stick..

Coach gets nothing back. Coach starts to walk away. He turns back around.

COACH (CONT'D)

I'm gonna tell you something *nobody* knows. Mike doesn't know. Between you and me.

You think this town is backward now? When I got here it was the goddamn Dark Ages. Everybody in this town had come on a boat. When I was your age, a girl I was dating, 17, I got her pregnant.

You didn't *get* pregnant if you weren't married. If you did, you were a whore. Your whole family were whores. Forever. You know what she did? She jumped off a cliff. No one ever found out why.

At the factory, I took the worst jobs, the worst shifts I could - you know why? To punish myself. Before I could scratch my ass, I was 33, alone, and locked up for life (pointing) in that factory. *That* factory.

And a buddy who worked right next to me on my shift, knocked on my door in the middle of one night on his way out of town. His fiancé just told him she was pregnant. Never saw him again. I *married* her. Seven months later she had his son.

Every day I thank God for letting me save that woman and that boy. Because it saved *me*.

A moment.

COACH (CONT'D)

I know what you did in that house. I've known since you were a kid.

I'm not gonna tell you how you were only 10. How your mother didn't *want* to be a mother, and didn't want to be anywhere near your dad.

(MORE)

COACH (CONT'D)

And the size of your sister's butt, or what a loser your father is -- is *not* your fault.

And I pray every night, every night, for you -- that God, or luck, or whatever you want to call it, gives you what he gave me.

Coach walks away. Shane blasts another one.

CUT TO:

INT. KELLY HOME - PEGGY'S/ANDIE'S ROOM - LATE THAT NIGHT

On the wall above Andie's top bunk; posters of Jim Morrison. Over Peggy's desk; a signed picture of Garfield. Andie is sound asleep.

PEGGY

(whispering)

You up?

ANDIE

Now I am. Please tell me this isn't about the archway.

PEGGY

I was just thinking, if they go in alphabetical order, with "Radacovich," we go third.

ANDIE

Jesus.

PEGGY

I don't know. Do you think they'll do it in alphabetical order?

ANDIE

I don't know, Peggy. But that's a really interesting thing to think about.

After a moment.

PEGGY

Maybe they'll do the archway thing different this year.

ANDIE

(annoyed)

They do it the same every year.

(MORE)

ANDIE (CONT'D)

It's a tradition.

(going over it again)

One by one, the nominees march under the arch and everybody's screaming, "Take her down, take her down." And then the guy grabs his date and totally makes out with her. And the longer and grosser he does it up there, the more they go nuts in the place.

A moment.

ANDIE (CONT'D)

You've never kissed anybody, have you.

PEGGY

(embarrassed)

No.

ANDIE

That is *so* humiliating.

PEGGY

Like you have.

ANDIE

("Don't insult me")

Like I *have*. And then some.

PEGGY

That is a lie, Andie.

ANDIE

You think I made up that stuff about Tommy Morsh?

PEGGY

You *better* have made up that stuff about Tommy Morsh.

SERIES OF SHOTS:

HOUSE. Peggy eating vegetables for dinner.

GILBERT H.S. Between classes, Peggy proudly looks at the pictures of the "Valentine Ball" nominees behind a glass casing. Her date, Mike. People walk by, and she pretends she's not looking.

GILBERT H.S. GYMNASIUM. Peggy looks in as students prepare the auditorium for the dance.

GILBERT H.S. Mike looking at his picture in the glass casing. Looks around to see no one's looking. Pulls out a camera. Takes a quick picture.

PEGGY/ANDIE'S BEDROOM. Peggy "practices" some dance steps with Andie. Not a pretty picture.

COACH'S CLOSET. Mike struggling to choose between one of his dad's ties.

CUT TO:

INT. KELLY LIVING ROOM - LITTLE LATER

Shane and Andie stand at the base of the stairway. Calling Peggy.

SHANE

Come on, we're not gonna stand here forever. Let's see you do it.

After a moment, beet red Peggy strolls down the stairs in a thinning, beautiful dress.

Andie hums the theme to "Gone with the Wind." Shane cheers Peggy on. Peggy's composure snaps half way down the stairs.

PEGGY

I can't do this. I can't even walk in these things.

SHANE

Peggy, you've never looked better.

Shane checks the clock, and dials the phone.

SHANE (CONT'D)

(into the phone)

Mike... What are you waiting for, buddy?

Get over here... What?

(really disappointed)

No, don't say that.

Peggy walks over to hear.

SHANE (CONT'D)

... I don't care *who* asked you at the last minute, Mike, you can't do that to Peggy. She's really been looking forward to this...

Peggy aggressively "mouths" to Shane that it's okay. She doesn't want a scene.

SHANE (CONT'D)

So what's Peggy supposed to do? She's standing here next to me in her dress. With her boutonniere she bought for you, you asshole..

Peggy desperately wants Shane to let it go.

SHANE (CONT'D)

... Hey, I'm not your messenger service. You got something to say, have the guts to say it to her face.

She won't take the phone. She's much madder at Shane than she is at Mike. Shane just stands there holding the phone out. It's so uncomfortable.

She takes the phone.

PEGGY

(into phone)

Mike, it's okay, I under... Mike?  
Hello?

She looks to Shane. He's wearing a big shit-eating grin.

Andie loves it. Peggy hangs up, running after Shane in her high-heals. He rolls in a ball on the ground laughing, and she pounds on him.

DING DONG

Peggy races up the stairs so she can make an entrance. Andie waits till Peggy is completely up - and then answers the door. False alarm. It's their dad.

PEGGY (CONT'D)

Oh my God, I can't take this anymore.

TOM

(seeing Peggy)

Look at you. Don't you look snazzy.  
New dress?

PEGGY

Shane got it for me.

Peggy follows Tom in the kitchen as he makes his drink. She speaks softly so Shane won't hear.

PEGGY (CONT'D)

Dad, I've got an extra ticket for you for the game tomorrow night.

(MORE)

PEGGY (CONT'D)

I know it would mean a lot to Shane,  
you know, if you went to the game.

TOM

We'll see, let's see how work goes.

Shane listening from the other room.

PEGGY

Dad, it's Saturday tomorrow.

TOM

(annoyed)

We'll see, Peggy. We'll see.

He sits in his living room Lay-Z-Boy chair.

ANDIE

Sharon called, babbling about her dog  
or something, and said to call her as  
soon as you got in.

Smiling, Tom knows exactly what it is.

Tom dials in the kitchen. He winks to Andie and Peggy -  
putting the call on the speakerphone. The girls love it.  
Sharon answers.

TOM

(into speaker)

Sharon, I know, I know, I forgot to  
let the dog out this morning..

INTERCUT - INT. SHARON'S POSH TOWNHOUSE - DULUTH

SHARON furiously stands on her white carpet. Everything neat  
and tidy. Looks more like a fancy model home.

SHARON

(into phone)

You know what I'm looking at, Tom?  
I'm looking at a big pile of dog shit  
in the middle of my living room  
carpet.

She sure is.

CUT BACK TO:

TOM

holds his nose and sticks his tongue out, like he's looking at the thing. They're all doing their best not to howl out loud. Peggy has Andie in a headlock holding her mouth.

SHARON (VO) (CONT'D)  
 What is this - the fourth, or fifth  
 time this has happened?

Tom holds up six fingers to the kids.

SHARON (CONT'D)  
 ... Just because you live in some dump,  
 I don't. I want my keys in the  
 morning.

It's suddenly not funny anymore. Tom takes the phone off the speaker. The kids head upstairs, still listening.

TOM  
 What are you talking about?

SHARON  
 This thing has run its course, Tom.

TOM  
 "This thing?" Our relationship for  
 the last three years, is that "this  
 thing?"

SHARON  
 I want my keys in the morning, Tom.

She hangs up. Tom slams the phone down. He pours himself another drink in the kitchen.

TOM  
 (annoyed)  
 Peggy, do we got any chips or anything  
 around here?

PEGGY  
 (from upstairs)  
 One second, Dad.

Shane comes down with an attitude - grabs some chips out of a kitchen cabinet, and throws them on the coffee table.

SHANE  
 Peggy's getting ready for her date.

TOM  
 Hey, who asked you, smart guy?

Shane gives him a look and heads to the kitchen.

TOM (CONT'D)  
So how much was the dress?

Shane turns around to face him.

SHANE  
I don't remember.

TOM  
You don't remember? What, you just bought the dress, you didn't look to see how much it cost?

SHANE  
That's exactly right.

Shane walks away into the kitchen.

MIKE COMES RIGHT IN THE DOOR

carrying Peggy's boxed boutonniere. Looks dapper.

MIKE  
Hey, Mr. Kelly.

TOM  
Well, aren't you all dolled up. Where you going?

MIKE  
(surprised)  
To the "King of Hearts Dance." With Peggy, to the dance.

TOM  
You're taking Peggy? Well, isn't that something.

Andie sticks her head down the staircase. She's nicer to Mike than she usually is.

ANDIE  
She'll be down in a minute.

Checking him out.

MIKE  
(patronizingly)  
Hi, Andie.

ANDIE  
Hi, Mike.  
(embarrassed to say it)  
You look nice.

Runs back up the stairs. Mike feels pretty stupid standing around.

MIKE

Is this town nuts, or what? The Final Four, can you believe it?

TOM

Yeah, it's something.

INTERCUT - UPSTAIRS BEDROOM

They listen, as Andie adjusts Peggy's dress.

MIKE

I can't believe it - 27,000 seats, and my aunts and uncles are up in the rafters somewhere. We got cousins I never even heard of coming in from all over the joint to see this thing. Where are your seats?

Shane steps in hoping to nip this conversation in the bud.

SHANE

(yelling up the stairs)  
Peggy, Mike's here, come on down!

Shane's back to the kitchen.

MIKE

(to Shane)  
I didn't know you were in there.  
(to Mr. Kelly)  
I don't know what everybody's talking about more. If we're gonna win State - or if this guy's getting a scholarship at U. of M.

TOM

Well, I can tell you the answer to the second one is "no."

MIKE

(confused)  
Oh, I think if we can win the thing, there's no way he's not gonna get one.

TOM

Mike, I don't care what you win - he's not going to college, he's not going to get a scholarship, or anywhere else.

An awkward silence. Mike doesn't understand why Shane isn't saying something from the kitchen.

Ignoring that Mike is even in the room, an enraged, all-dressed-up red-beet Peggy charges down the stairs.

PEGGY

(to Dad)

Who are you talking to, are you talking to Mike - or are you talking to Shane?

TOM

(humored at Peggy's anger)

I'm talking to Mike who asked me the question - that's who I'm talking to.

Shane comes in again from the kitchen.

SHANE

Nobody's offered me any scholarships and we haven't won state, so let's just drop it. And, Mike, take her to the damn dance.

Shane exits back into the kitchen.

TOM

Drop it, is right.

Mike is awkwardly putting the corsage on Peggy's chest, while Peggy angrily tries to pin Mike's boutonniere on him at the same time.

PEGGY

No, we're not going to just drop it. Why can't Shane go to college?

SHANE

Peggy, who asked you?

MIKE

Maybe I should just get Peggy and...

TOM

Maybe you two dreamers haven't noticed, but I'm shorthanded around here. I'm trying to make ends meet, and he's in never-never land. Well, this is *real* life, right here, okay? He's got responsibilities around here, and that's the end of it.

PEGGY

It's not the end of it! Just because  
you say it's the end of it!

Shane furiously marches in.

SHANE

Mike, get her out of the house!

Mike can't budge her out the door. Mike better quit pulling  
her shoulder if he knows what's good for him. Tom stands up.

TOM

(to Peggy)

Hey, listen to me, smart-ass. I don't  
know who you think you're showing off  
to right now, Mike or whoever, I don't  
know, but I'm not gonna take a bunch  
of crap from somebody who doesn't know  
a hockey stick from a broom.

PEGGY

Oh, that has a lot to do with it.

TOM

That has *everything* to do with it.  
Shane this, Shane that, like he's the  
second coming of Christ right here in  
this town. Well he's not, and it  
doesn't work that way. You gotta  
deserve it. You gotta earn it. I  
deserved it. I gave 13 years of my  
life being on the road, in the back of  
a crappy bus, playing in one dump  
after another supporting 3 kids and a  
wife back at home, just to get the  
chance to deserve it.

PEGGY

So what you're saying is, just because  
you didn't make it, Shane can't  
either.

TOM

Hey, I *made* it, Peggy. What are you  
talking about "I didn't make it?" I  
made it. I was going to the pros. I  
was there. I gave it up for him.  
Don't tell me "I didn't make it."

PEGGY

You didn't make it! You never would  
have made it! And it has nothing to  
do with Shane!

Tom aggressively walks toward her, pointing to the door.

TOM  
Get out of here, Peggy.

Peggy grabs the staircase banister near the doorway.

Tom grabs her around the waist - pulling her toward the door. She won't let go of the banister.

TOM (CONT'D)  
Let go, Peggy!

She hangs on to the banister with everything she has.

Tom aggressively jerks and yanks her by the waist - lifting her legs off the ground.

Shane listens from the kitchen. Andie hysterically yells from the top of the stairs.

ANDIE  
Let go of her!

TOM JERKS her waist with everything he has. One of the banister "poles" snaps off in her hand. She grabs on to another one.

Shane steps out from the kitchen.

SHANE  
You let go of her.

Tom looks over as he continues holding her. Peggy cries, determinedly holding on.

TOM  
What'd you say?

SHANE  
I said let go of her.

Peggy lets go of the railing - but Tom defiantly continues to hold her.

TOM  
I'm still holding her, aren't I? What are you gonna do about it, big man?

Shane walks toward him.

SHANE  
Let go of her.

Tom does.

TOM  
You better give me your best shot,  
because you won't get another.

Shane winds up and swings at him. Tom catches the punch in the air with his hand. Tom SLUGS Shane with everything he's got right in the gut - lifting him off the ground. Shane doubles over.

Tom aggressively shoves Shane into the TV stand.

TOM (CONT'D)  
Not so big now, are you?

ANDIE  
Leave him alone!

Tom grabs Shane's sweatshirt, yanking it up and over his head - an old hockey trick. Unable to see with his arms tied up, Tom kicks him hard in the ass, banging him dangerously through the aluminum front door.

TOM  
Get the hell out of my house!

EXT. CURB - MIKE'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Mike stands there with the passenger door open waiting for Peggy to get in the car. She won't get in.

MIKE  
... There's nothing you can do in there.  
Just let your Dad calm down, and let  
him be alone.

PEGGY  
Andie's in there.

MIKE  
Andie is fine. Andie and your Dad are  
fine. They *won't* be if you go back in  
there.

PEGGY  
You don't have to take me to the  
dance, Mike. I know Shane just made  
you do it.

MIKE  
Give me a little credit. He didn't  
make me do it.

PEGGY

Yes he did, I know he did.

MIKE

Okay, he did. So what. Now we're going, okay?

Mike sort of shoves her in the car. She wishes she never called about this "date."

He gets in. Closes his car's door. He's freezing. Turns the key over. Nothing. Turns it over again. Deader than a doorknob. He bangs his fist into the steering wheel.

Gets out slamming the door. Kicks the car. Pacing. She gets out on her side.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Let's just skate there. We can skate there.

PEGGY

(upset)

In this dress? I can't do that, Mike. I can't do that.

MIKE

I'll carry our shoes, nobody'll ever know - what difference does it make?

PEGGY

Because I didn't think my date was gonna ask me to skate to the dance!

She's going to burst out crying. What a good time for Mike.

EXT. BANK OF THE CREEK - A BLOCK FROM THE HOUSE - LATER

Peggy awkwardly stands there on her skates - in her beautiful dress and coat. She's afraid to step out on the ice.

PEGGY

I know I'm gonna fall.

MIKE

You're not gonna fall.

She steps on the ice. Mike helps her with her first few steps.

MIKE (CONT'D)

There you go, there you go...

Mike skates right beside her as she wobbles about a-half-a-mile-an-hour down the creek. How could this girl possibly be related to Shane.

She's going down. Mike grabs for her. She grabs on to him.

They both hit the ice. Sitting on the freezing ice, she starts crying.

PEGGY

Please, go to the dance. Just let me sit here. That's what I really want.

He gets up. Talks to her sitting there crying on the ice.

MIKE

Okay, I've got a deal. Let's skip the dance. I didn't want to go anyways. I'll just take you home.

PEGGY

(relieved)

Okay.

Picking her up...

MIKE

Let's just go out another night.

PEGGY

(happy it's over,  
laughing)

Yeah, sure we will.

MIKE

Anything's gotta be better than this.

She laughs through her tears.

PEGGY

You'd really go again?

MIKE

Yeah, why not. Only next time let's meet at *my* house.

He helps her to start "skating," if you'd call it that, back toward the house. They both suddenly feel the weight of the evening off their shoulders. He holds her from behind; she's doing better.

MIKE (CONT'D)

There you go... Keep going... Keep going.

She's laughing for the first time. The more she leans back, the more he holds her in his comforting arms. They skate right by the place where they got on the ice, pretending they didn't notice...

CUT TO:

EXT. GILBERT CREEK - A LITTLE LATER

They're both sitting against the base of a low-hanging oak tree that suspends over the creek. There isn't a soul or sound around. A light snow gently trickles through the red cranberry treetops hanging over the creek.

Peggy has one skate off as Mike gently massages her socked foot.

PEGGY

What do you mean, I've got it made?

MIKE

You're a brain, Peggy. You'll graduate with A's, and you'll get out of here. You'll be a lawyer or something, you'll marry some doctor...

PEGGY

Yeah, right.  
("So can you")  
Same thing for you...

MIKE

My grades suck, we've got no bucks. I'll be working in the taconite plant Tuesday after Labor Day.

A moment passes.

MIKE (CONT'D)

I thought you got out of high school all excited about your dreams. What you're gonna be, what you're gonna do. It's funny, my Grandpa Milan, my dad, his brothers - they toast at every big family thing, "Know who you are..." You know what they're *really* saying? Never forget we're a bunch of dumb-shit Bohemians, and that's we'll always be. As a kid, every time they'd say it, I'd think - not me.  
(MORE)

MIKE (CONT'D)

I'm *never* working in that quarry. Not me. And now I'm 18, with a magnet stuck to my head pulling me right in that dump, and "I know who I am."

A quiet moment. She kneels, and puts the side of her head on the ice, listening to the creek. She hears the aggressiveness of the moving river below.

PEGGY

All these years of being on this ice, and I never heard what was underneath it.

Mike takes her hand and gently sits her back into his cradling arms. Peggy sits up a bit.

PEGGY (CONT'D)

I just realized. You're not going to be there to go through the arches.

MIKE

I don't care. The truth is, I was kind of nervous about that and all.

PEGGY

(pretending she wasn't)  
Why?

MIKE

You don't want to know.

PEGGY

No, I want to know.

MIKE

It's just, you know, you go under that archway, and since we never went out, I was nervous about whether you'd, you know, let me kiss you under the thing, and all that.

She's laughing...

MIKE (CONT'D)

I know it's stupid...

PEGGY

I'm the one who was nervous. I mean, I thought...

He reaches over and gently kisses her.

CUT TO:

EXT. TOP OF THE QUARRY - LATER THAT NIGHT

Bitter cold. Shane dangerously walks across the slick and undefined rim of the quarry line.

IT'S NINE STORIES

to the base of the quarry. He looks straight down. The snow takes forever floating to the bottom.

Shane climbs the short "staircase" to the top of the trestled conveyor belt.

INTERCUT TO:

EXT. LAKE HINSDALE WARMING HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Concerned, Peggy looks around the empty, dark rink for Shane.

SHANE - TOP OF THE QUARRY CONVEYOR BELT

He throws a rock down a two-foot wide metal "slide" that runs along the side of the wooden conveyor belt. (It slides the run-away ore back down to the base of the quarry.)

The rock bounces along the wet slide, picking up speed as it goes. It's too far below and too dark to see or hear it hit bottom.

SHANE STEPS ON THE TOP

of this monstrous, steep slide. On his face:

HE FLASHBACKS:

INT. KELLY'S KITCHEN - MICHIGAN - 8 YRS AGO

Shane's MOM watches Tom through her kitchen window as she furiously scrubs the coffee pot in the sink.

A number of wine coolers on the counter have helped her nervously rehearse this moment. Three kids and a lot of frustration have stripped any glow from her once-innocent, youthful face.

Tom walks in knowing he's in trouble. She scrubs as she talks.

MOM

We were supposed to go into the city today.

DAD

(acting dumb)

The city today?

MOM

Don't pull that on me, Tom.

DAD

I'm sorry, I didn't know you really wanted to go.

MOM

Of course, I wanted to go. That's why I said this morning, "Let's go into the city today," and you said, "That sounds like a good idea."

He tries to give her a hug to disarm her and calm her down.

DAD

Well, let's go now.

She coldly pushes him away.

MOM

Don't touch me. Don't touch me.

DAD

What are you getting crazy about?  
It's no big deal.

Mom whispers so the kids in the basement won't hear - accentuating the anger and frustration on her face.

MOM

It is a big deal. You know what I did today? I scrubbed pots all day. That's what I did today. I'm gonna write in my diary "I scrubbed pots today." That was my great achievement for the day.

Andie opens the kitchen/basement door.

ANDIE

Shane said the "s" word four times.

DAD  
 (sticking his head down  
 the doorway)  
 Shane, knock that shit off down there.

Dad shuts the basement door.

DAD (CONT'D)  
 Well, I'm sorry I'm such a horrible  
 father to spend a Sunday afternoon  
 playing with my kids.

MOM  
 Do you hear how full of shit you are?  
 You come home for three days, you're  
 out every night you are home... I  
 can't live like this.

DAD  
 Like what, Sue?

MOM  
 Like this! In this dump. With you on  
 the road, me cooped up in here with  
 three kids, day and night, never a  
 break. Shane driving me out of my  
 damn mind, Mommy, this, Mommy that..

INTERCUT - THE TOP OF THE BASEMENT STAIRS

Shane and Peggy listening behind the closed door.

DAD  
 That's your job, Sue, to take care of  
 the kids.

MOM  
 Well, I don't like my job!

DAD  
 Well maybe you should have thought of  
 that ten years ago.

MOM  
 Maybe I didn't expect to be doing this  
 ten years ago. Maybe you weren't  
 going nowhere ten years ago, Tom.

DAD  
 I would hardly say playing on the  
 front line of the Minnesota North  
 Stars is...

MOM

(yelling)

You're not *on* the North Stars, Tom.  
You're in the minors on their farm  
team.

DAD

Oh, I'm sorry Miss "I'm So Incredibly  
God-damn Special" that I've had some  
injury problems.

MOM

Oh, please. Injury problems. *You're*  
the problem. You missed the team bus  
for, what, four road trips this  
season? You didn't need to practice  
so you just "skipped it" all the time?  
Every other week you got a new stock,  
or a new "deal" that's gonna make you  
rich, and then you get bored, and  
you're on to a new one. It's the same  
story since I met you. And the one  
thing you can do well, hockey, you  
don't have time for. Nobody's  
interested in a 30 year-old still in  
the minors. Wake up.

DAD

(walking out)

I'm not listening to this shit.

MOM

Your contract ends in two months and  
they're gonna dump you. Then what are  
you gonna do, Tom? We don't have five  
cents put away, and what can you do  
besides play hockey? What? Tell me!

Shane meekly opens the basement door into the kitchen.

MOM (CONT'D)

(viciously)

Can you leave us alone for five  
minutes? Can you do that?

Shane closes the door. Dad puts the bolt on the door so they  
can't be interrupted.

JUMP BACK TO:

EXT. TOP OF THE QUARRY CONVEYOR BELT

Shane, like a snow skier out of the chute - takes off down the slide. Standing straight up, his feet "ski" down the slippery slide - delicately trying to balance -- holding his arms out to the sides.

HE PICKS UP SPEED

pouring down the steep, slick slide. His jacket flaps in the cold wind as he leans forward down this horrendous incline.

If he falls off it's a seven-story drop. He must be going 40 MPH.

CLOSE UP - HIS FEET

are drifting over towards the wooden edge of the slide. If he even skims against this ledge at this speed, he's going over the trestle.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. LAKE HOUSE KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

DAD

You want to talk about truth? Let's talk about truth. How many of those little "wine coolers" have you had tonight? And you wonder why I'm not racing to get home?

MOM

Well, now you don't have to.

She walks to the front door. Dad follows behind her.

DAD

What's that supposed to mean?

She picks up two packed suitcases already next to the front door.

MOM

I'm leaving for a while till I figure some things out.

DAD

What are you talking about?

MOM

It's your turn. I've got one life,  
one life. And I'm not living it in  
this dump, and I'm not living it with  
you. I'm just finally doing today  
what I planned on doing months ago.

She's out the door.

INTERCUT: THE BASEMENT STAIRS

Shane at the door struggling to hear. Andie is in the  
laundry room scrunched up to a TV on the laundry table.

SHANE

(to Andie)  
Turn the TV off.  
(she doesn't)  
Turn the TV off!

She turns it up to spite him. He opens a matchbook and  
"flings" a lit match in Andie's direction.

ANDIE

I'm telling!

He flings another one. He chases her into the paneled  
"family room" of the basement with his "rapid-fire  
ammunition." Andie half-laughs/half-yells hiding behind  
Peggy, who's reading on the couch. The girls laugh at him  
as he burns his finger flinging one.

THE BOTTOM OF A CURTAIN

catches fire.

PEGGY

Shane!

He runs to the sink in the laundry room. Fills up the  
detergent-scooper with water -- heaving a cup on the building  
flames.

Grabs a dirty bath towel on the ground in the laundry room  
and tries to "fan" it out. Only making it worse. It catches  
on a nearby stack of papers.

THE FIRE BUILDS

Peggy and Andie are frozen watching Shane.

SHANE

Well, help me, Peggy.

Andie runs up to the top of the basement stairway. It's bolted shut.

INTERCUT - EXT. SNOW-PACKED DIRT ROAD

Mom dragging her suitcases down the street. Tom yells from the front door.

DAD  
Sue, come here.

She keeps going. He runs after her in his socks. It's freezing. She's pulling her heavy suitcases. We faintly HEAR Andie and Peggy yelling.

JUMP BACK TO:

EXT. QUARRY TRESTLE - LONG SHOT OF SHANE - SLOW MOTION

Shane flying down the slide like a free bird with his arms to the side - five stories above the ground. ALL SOUND DISAPPEARS.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. BASEMENT DOOR - CONTINUOUS

Andie hysterically POUNDS and SCREAMS at the bolted door. Smoke has engulfed the room. Flames jump everywhere.

Peggy runs up the staircase to the locked door with her sister.

Shane helplessly combats the flames throwing water from a bucket - the fire is DANGEROUSLY CLOSE to the gas heater.

PEGGY  
Get away from there, Shane!

Peggy HOLLERS and BANGS at the ceiling with a broom. Three-year-old Andie presses for her life against the basement door.

EXT. ROAD

Tom catches up to Mom on the road, grabs her arm.

MOM  
(crying)  
Let go of me...

As she turns around toward the house, she sees flames pouring out of a basement window - hearing the faint screaming that now comes more into focus.

She drops her suitcases, running for the house. Tom bolts past her.

INT. BASEMENT

Andie and Peggy helplessly clutch the doorknob, as the stairway collapses behind them. You can barely see through the thick smoke. They've lost sight of their brother through the flames.

SHANE IS TRAPPED

in the back corner. He can't push open a locked double-cellar door. Flames surround him. He has no way out.

DAD

runs in the house -- unlocking the kitchen/basement door. He pulls in his screaming girls clinging to the doorknob.

PEGGY

Shane's still down there!

Tom's scream for Shane is eaten up by the violence of the fire.

DAD

(to the girls)

Get out of the house!

TOM JUMPS

where the stairs used to be into the pit of flames.

HE CAN'T FIND SHANE

It's hopeless. Flames in every direction. Tom dangerously steps deeper into the fire.

HE SPOTS SHANE

collapsed in a ball against the cellar door. Flames dance next to his body.

MOM

runs up to the kitchen door finding her girls.

DAD

picks up the partially inflamed couch. Holds it over his head. Runs full speed through a wall of flames toward the cellar door.

HE PLOWS

inches by Shane's collapsed body and runs right up the four cement stairs -- RAMRODING the end of couch into the BOLTED DOUBLE DOORS.

DAD'S KNEE SNAPS

as the doors bust open into the backyard. He SHRIEKS in TERRIFYING pain.

Rather than stopping to take the weight off his leg, TOM THROWS SHANE OVER HIS SHOULDER - carrying him into the backyard.

JUMP BACK TO:

SHANE ON THE SLICK SLIDE

Going even faster. Half way down.

HIS RIGHT FOOT

catches the side of the slide. His body PROJECTS UP AND OVER the side of the trestle.

Shane bicycles in the air, with his arms and legs flailing.

HE DROPS 50 FEET

into the side of a large, steep hill of iron ore pellet tailings.

ROLLING OVER AND OVER

four stories to the bottom of the quarry - PLOWING into a steel fence.

CUT TO:

THE BOTTOM OF THE QUARRY - a LITTLE LATER

Shane against the meshed fence. It's freezing and snowing. Peggy runs up. She's been looking everywhere for him. He doesn't look up. Now that she's there, she doesn't know what to say.

PEGGY

No matter how much money you give him from the rink, the routes, no matter how much you do. It doesn't matter, Shane. You want him to do something he's never going to do. Forgive you.

She looks at him - with his head still down. After a moment, he breaks down crying in his lap.

CUT TO:

EXT. CIVIC CENTER HOCKEYDOME - MINNEAPOLIS - NEXT NIGHT

Large marquee at the entrance of the world-class, mammoth arena reads:

MINNESOTA STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS  
SEMI FINALS  
4PM - EDINA VS. ROCHESTER  
7PM - BLOOMINGTON-KENNEDY VS. GILBERT

INT. CIVIC CENTER HOCKEYDOME

Welcome to the Oz of Hockey. Absolutely cram-packed with 20,000 cheering fans. All 1,715 Gilbert folks only fill a tiny corner of this huge arena.

THE BLOOMINGTON-KENNEDY PLAYERS

Couldn't possibly still be in high school. They're redwood trees.

SCOREBOARD

It's 3-3. A minute to go.

SLEZAK

steals the puck. Takes off down the ice. Feels Shane to his left. Flips a great leading pass to him.

SHANE

is in another world; the puck goes right by him. What a missed opportunity.

GILBERT ANNOUNCER (VO)  
(hoarse, screaming)  
What is Kelly doing out there? His head sure isn't here.  
(MORE)

GILBERT ANNOUNCER (VO) (CONT'D)

This has been a tribute to the boys,  
win or lose, they've hung in there  
despite him.

FACE OFF

Mike gets the puck. He quickly SLAPS IT down the length of  
the rink eating precious seconds off the ever-present clock.

TWO BLOOMINGTON-KENNEDY BUILDINGS

are coming down for the kill. Two short Gilbert defenseless  
warriors on the back of their skates.

INSERT - THE CLOCK

30 seconds.

A BLOOMINGTON-KENNEDY GUY POUNDS A SLAP SHOT

to the goal. It's a miracle the goalie, Napier, stabs it  
away.

ANOTHER BLOOMINGTON-KENNEDY GUY

quickly GRABS the bouncing puck. SLAPS it to the right-upper  
corner of the net.

NAPIER FALLS ON HIS ASS

in the net as the puck reflects off his mitt -- bouncing off  
the goalpost. It falls out of the net.

MIKE

jumps on the free puck.

THE BUZZER SOUNDS

Overtime. The place goes BERSERK.

INT. LOCKER ROOM/HALLWAY - MINUTES LATER

The absolutely exhausted Gilbert team files in -- out of gas.  
Coach furiously stops Shane outside the door.

COACH

Where are you? Play to win or don't  
play.

Shane defiantly looks down. Coach stares at a blank face.

INT. CIVIC CENTER HOCKEYDOME - OVERTIME - TEN MINUTES LATER

The radio announcer explains the "the first goal wins."

COACH

looks down his bench at a furious Shane - benched.

THE BLOOMINGTON-KENNEDY FRONT LINE

POUNDS and POUNDS, shot after shot -- like a punching bag - against wilting Napier, the goalie.

GILBERT COLLAGE

with only 14 players - keeps changing their line to combat the fatigue. Shane, and the fans, can't believe Coach won't put him in the game.

GILBERT

gets the puck. Slezak SHOOTS. It's DEFLECTED right in front of the goal. Their GOALIE is out of position.

MIKE IS RIGHT THERE

Looking at a momentarily open net. The game is on his stick.

MIKE WINDS UP

He does the impossible. He WHIFFS.

He has so much time, he gets to SWING AGAIN. He almost whiffs again, DRIBBLING it toward the net.

THE BLOOMINGTON-KENNEDY GOALIE

helplessly HEAVES his stick at the puck -- deflecting the shot away.

THE REF

blows his whistle. The arena goes insane.

Could the announcer talk any faster than this.

ANNOUNCER

... And that'll be a penalty shot for  
Gilbert -- by Mike Radacovich.

THE ANNOUNCER

sets up the drama. One-on-one, Mike is going to skate from center ice straight at the goalie with a "free" penalty shot.

THE BLOOMINGTON-KENNEDY GOALIE

is very ready in the net.

THE GILBERT BENCH

Coach pats his son hard on the head for encouragement.

COACH

(to Mike)

Don't fake too early. Wait till he commits. Then deke one way or the other. It's your game.

CLOSE ON MIKE ALONE AT CENTER ICE

Looks up at the mammoth, screaming crowd. Petrified.

THE AUDIENCE

is deranged.

MIKE

looks at his Dad. Looks at Shane. Looks in the stands at Peggy. The whistle BLOWS.

MIKE ROARS RIGHT AT THE GOAL

The GOALIE steps out of the box early hoping to poke the puck away.

A SURPRISED MIKE

half-trips/half-plows right into the guy like Pete Rose. God only knows where the puck went. But it ain't heading into the net.

MIKE

lies on the ice like a beached whale.

COACH

looks down the bench at his disappointed, rundown, exhausted team. How much punishment can they take.

A DEAD GILBERT LINE

begins to crawl over the boards for more torture.

COACH (CONT'D)

Looks down at Shane at the end of the bench.

SHANE

walks up to Coach.

SHANE

(right in his eyes)

Let me in this game.

Coach looks at him. Coach swats him on the ass pushing him over the boards.

SHANE

steps on the ice. Finds the puck like a Piranha in a goldfish bowl.

STOPS AND SETS

He's beyond the red line. Nobody would dare to shoot from that far away.

SHANE

yanks his sword over his head. Holds.

SPANKS

the living crap out of the sorry-ass puck.

THE PUCK SNAPS

against the back of the net before the goalie even gets to raise his stick.

GILBERT FANS

crap in their pants.

THE WHOLE TEAM

piles-on at center ice. Coach jumps right on the pile with the rest of his boys.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SNOW-COVERED HIGHWAY - LATER THAT NIGHT

A long row of Gilbert cars HONKING their excitement with FANS hanging out the windows -- trailing the team bus back to Gilbert.

INT. BUS - A LITTLE LATER - MOVING

Things have finally calmed down. An exuberant Shane hops in the seat next to Mike - who's lost in his thoughts.

MIKE

The next game, the crowd... The TV...  
I'm gonna love it. You know why?  
It's never gonna get better than that  
moment. You know where the next game  
after that for me's gonna be? In the  
park.

They look at Mike's Dad up a few rows - glowing.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Did you see him at the bottom of the  
pile?

As Mike looks at his proud father...

CUT TO:

EXT. GILBERT H.S. PARKING LOT - AN HOUR LATER - THE BUS

The players step off the bus, greeted by half the town of tailgating fans.

THERE'S EDDIE

Steps up to Mike and Shane.

EDDIE

(to Mike)  
So is he gonna do it?

SHANE

Gonna do what?

MIKE

(uncomfortably, to Eddie)  
I didn't ask him yet.

EDDIE

Well, ask him.

Mike awkwardly asks Shane so no one else can hear.

MIKE

Eddie wants to go out tomorrow night, and he'll pay you 500 bucks for that list. And you don't even have to go. We're just getting a couple TVs, stuff like that.

SHANE

"Stuff like that?" No, I'm not doing it, and neither are you - and it's the night before the game, you moron.

EDDIE

(to Mike)  
You said he'd do it.

SHANE

(in Eddie's face)  
If you've got something to say, Eddie, why don't you say it to me? What do you want to know, you want to know if I'm gonna give you the list? No, you loser shit crook.

Mike steps in between them -- and Mike pulls a heated Eddie to the side.

EDDIE

(poking Mike)  
You get me that thing. Your Dad isn't gonna be happy when he finds out that his son's been stealing, will he?

CUT TO:

INT. SHANE'S BEDROOM - 1 IN THE MORNING - THE NEXT NIGHT

Shane can't sleep. He lies in bed watching a small black-and-white portable TV on his dresser. A REPORTER is interviewing Edina H.S.' BOBBY VARNO.

INSERT TV - INT. CIVIC CENTER HOCKEYDOME - MINNEAPOLIS

BOBBY VARNO

... Do I feel good?  
(smiling)  
We've got 22 players - they have 14. Game over. We've been State Champions four out of the last six years - this is their first winning season.  
(MORE)

BOBBY VARNO (CONT'D)

The game's in our hometown. We've got 3 All-Americans, the best goalie in this country - and me. They've got "enthusiasm." Yeah, I feel good.

INTERVIEWER

What about Shane Kelly, he's creating quite a stir.

BOBBY VARNO

He's a hothead - like a balloon. You prick it and it pops.

SHANE NOTICES SOMETHING MISSING

on his bulletin board above his desk. He jumps up. Grabs an envelope stuck on the board. He looks in. Empty.

PEGGY'S ROOM

Shane hurriedly wakes Peggy.

SHANE

Have you seen my paper list?

PEGGY

What list?

SHANE

Of the houses to hold back papers.

(then)

Was Mike here tonight?

PEGGY

For a minute, yeah, why?

Shane runs out of there.

POV PEGGY'S UPSTAIRS WINDOW

worriedly watches Shane pull out the driveway in Dad's Towncar.

CUT TO:

THE LINCOLN TOWNCAR - MOVING

Shane combing the pitch-black, icy side streets of Hinsdale looking for Eddie's truck.

HE SEES IT

Right in front of one of Shane's paper route homes. Shane pulls up behind Eddie's truck. A stolen TV on the curb.

SHANE WALKS UP

to the driver's side of Eddie's truck. Nobody's in there.

ANGLE ON A COP CAR

sneaking around the corner.

SHANE

picks up the TV - bringing it back toward the house.

A SPOT LIGHT

blasts on Shane holding the TV.

EDDIE, EDDIE'S BROTHER AND MIKE

in ski-masks bolt out of the house.

EDDIE'S BROTHER

takes off over a fence behind the house.

EDDIE

jumps behind the wheel of his truck.

MIKE

bangs on the side door of the truck. Eddie won't stop to let Mike in. The truck takes off.

SHANE

drops the TV -- bolting for his car.

MIKE

grabs on to Eddie's back bumper, SKITCHING down the snow-packed road.

SHANE SCREECHES HIS DAD'S CAR

out of there with the cops in pursuit of both cars.

THE SIREN BLARES

chasing them down these perilous roads in the middle of the night.

EDDIE'S CAR

picks up speed -- as Mike dangerously holds on to the truck bumper.

SHANE'S CAR

is right behind him them. Mike better not fall off.

EDDIE HITS A SHARP TURN

Mike can't hold on - flying off to the side of the road.

POV MIKE IN THE ROAD

Shane's car coming RIGHT AT HIM -- barely swerves by him.

MIKE

rolls in the bushes out of the sight of the cop car.

A FORK IN THE ROAD

Eddie's truck bolts to the right. Shane to the left.

THE COP CAR

follows Shane's car.

SHANE POURS DOWN

the icy Gilbert Creek Road. The cops catching up.

A DANGEROUS TURN

Shane isn't going to make. He SLAMS on the brakes, SPINNING his car around and around.

IT BASHES INTO A TREE

The whole front end -- pummeled.

THE COPS

are all over the car holding a gun to Shane's head.

CUT TO:

COACH RADACOVICH'S FRONT DOOR - 2:30 THAT MORNING

The cops hold a handcuffed Shane on the front porch. Mike, in a robe - nervously answers. Looks right at Shane.

COP

Mike, can we speak to your father?

MIKE

I'll go get him.

Mike goes up the stairs. The Officer says to Shane while they wait...

OFFICER

I got an 8 year-old boy who thinks you're God. And the biggest night of his life was gonna be seeing you in the game tonight. And now I've gotta explain to him why you're not gonna be there.

Coach walks down the staircase with Mike - seeing Shane and the officers standing in the living room.

COACH

Carl, what can I do for you?

COP

Sorry to get you up this time of night, Coach. But we've got a problem here.

Coach stares at Shane -- who won't look up.

COP (CONT'D)

We caught Shane with a TV in his arms burglarizing a Hinsdale home. Three others escaped.

Coach stares at Shane the entire time. Shane can't look him.

OTHER COP

The last thing in the world we want to do is bring him in with the game tonight.

COACH

Jesus Christ, Shane.

Coach turns to Mike.

COACH (CONT'D)  
 (to Mike)  
 Do you know anything about this?

MIKE  
 No.

COP  
 Coach, if you can get him to explain himself out of this, we'll forget this ever happened. Or we have no choice but to book him.

COACH  
 Did you do it, Shane?  
 Nothing.

COACH (CONT'D)  
 Shane, help me out here.  
 Shane won't even look up.

COACH (CONT'D)  
 The morning of the biggest day of your life, this is what you did?  
 Shane looks right at Mike. Mike saying, showing absolutely nothing.

CUT TO:

INT. KELLY KITCHEN - 7 THE NEXT MORNING

Peggy anxiously prepares breakfast. Tom hurries through the kitchen and heads out the back door.

DAD  
 I'm late. See you tonight.

EXT. GARAGE - BACK REAR OF THE HOUSE

Tom opens the garage door. No car.

INT. KITCHEN - DAD

rushes back in the kitchen.

DAD (CONT'D)  
 Peggy, where the hell's my car? You know anything about it?

PEGGY

No.

TOM

Where's Shane?

PEGGY

I thought he was still sleeping.

Dad marches up the stairs to Shane's room. Peggy nervously waits. Tom viciously slams his door shut. He hurries down the stairs.

KITCHEN

He grabs the phone and quickly dials.

DAD

(into the phone)

Give me the number of Yellow Cab.

(to Peggy)

Count my words. When I get home, he's gonna pay for this.

CUT TO:

EXT. MIKE'S/COACH'S HOME - 9:30 THAT MORNING

Red and white crape-paper adorns all their trees on this freezing winter day. Relative's cars and mobile homes covered with "Gilbert Devils" signs line the street.

INT. MIKE'S HOME

Mike is surrounded by relatives that drove in. Mike looks like Johnny Unitas compared to this burly bunch. Big-boned aunts. Not many tans in this family picture. Grandpa has him over in the corner.

GRANDPA MILAN

My Father. Your Father. And now you.  
Fourth generation Radacovich in the  
Quarry. You make us proud.

EXT. MIKE'S FRONT DOOR

Peggy, out of breath, knocks on the door. Mike answers.

PEGGY

Do you know where Shane is? He didn't  
come home last night.

MIKE  
You don't know what happened?

PEGGY  
What?

MIKE  
Shane got arrested. For stealing.

PEGGY  
What do you mean?

MIKE  
He got arrested for stealing from this  
Hinsdale house. Last night. He's  
kicked out of the game.

PEGGY  
Where is he?

MIKE  
He's at the jail.

She gives him a look and takes off down the street.

CUT TO:

INT. GILBERT COUNTY POLICE STATION - PEGGY

anxiously waits at the counter. A FEMALE POLICE OFFICER  
walks up from the back of the station.

OFFICER  
Peggy, I asked him again, and he  
doesn't want to talk to anyone.

PEGGY  
You told him it was me?

OFFICER  
I did.

CUT TO:

EXT. GILBERT H.S. PARKING LOT - LITTLE LATER

Hundreds of freezing Gilbert folks surround the team bus as  
the town heroes board. The band and the cheerleaders have  
everybody clapping and singing along to their only team song.

A big banner on the side of the bus reads, "STATE  
FINALISTS!!" The bus motor starts up.

ANGLE ON PEGGY RUNNING

towards the parking lot.

ANGLE ON MIKE

signing autographs. He reluctantly makes his way to the bus.

PEGGY RUNS UP

completely out of breath. Grabs Mike's arm as he heads in.

PEGGY

You did it, didn't you? Shane didn't  
have a thing to do with this, did he?

Mike looks at her. She SLAPS him in the face.

IN THE BUS - A LITTLE LATER - MOVING

Everybody on the bus is singing and living it up. Mike  
alone.

CUT TO:

EXT. CIVIC CENTER HOCKEYDOME - MINNEAPOLIS - AFTERNOON

The Gilbert team files off the bus and past the marquee  
reading:

MINNESOTA CHAMPIONSHIP GAME  
8 PM TONIGHT  
EDINA vs. GILBERT

8

8

INT. CIVIC CENTER

The team humbly walks on the stadium ice carrying their  
duffel bags over their shoulders.

The sound of their street shoes on the man-made ice reverbs  
off the walls of this enormous, empty, intimidating, grand  
hockey coliseum.

They look up at the tremendous floating scoreboard. Gold and  
maroon "U. OF MINNESOTA NATIONAL CHAMPIONS" banners drape  
through the thousands of lights on the towering ceiling.

CUT TO:

INT. CIVIC CENTER HOCKEYDOME - A LITTLE LATER

The Gilbert team timorously practices taking it in.

INT. CIVIC CENTER - GILBERT LOCKER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Coach walks in. Mike, dressed in his gear, sits alone on the locker bench.

COACH

Mike, what are you doing?

With tears in his eyes, he looks up at his Dad.

MIKE

Shane didn't do it, Dad. I did it.  
He came to that house to stop me from  
doing it. Shane deserves to play,  
Dad. Not me.

Coach looks away for a moment. Turns around.

COACH

I knew you were there.

MIKE

What?

COACH

I saw it in your eyes at the house. I  
was never more disappointed in you in  
my life. Not for doing it - that's  
one thing. Letting your friend go  
down and just standing there - it was  
like part of me just died right there,  
right there at that door.

(then)

And I wasn't gonna give you the  
satisfaction of telling you I knew.  
Because I knew if you didn't tell me,  
playing in this game would be the  
hardest lesson and the worst memory of  
your life.

Mike tries to hold it back.

COACH (CONT'D)

Mike, what were you thinking of?  
Jesus. Why didn't you *talk* to me?

MIKE

(looking up at him)

We don't talk, Dad, we don't talk  
about anything -- we talk about  
hockey, Dad. We talk about the team,  
what Shane, what Shane's doing. When  
do we talk about me, or you?

COACH

That doesn't mean you go out and steal. You're not a thief. You're a *Radacovich*.

MIKE

I don't *want* to be a *Radacovich*. What would I want to be a *Radacovich* for? And live like *you*? And Grandpa? I want more, Dad. But, no - I get to be "the fourth generation at the quarry." Isn't that terrific. That's *my* inheritance.

They just look at each other.

MIKE (CONT'D)

What?

COACH

I'm looking at you, and I'm seeing my boy... down in the basement, on your roller skates, you whacking pucks at me into the net.., "*Radacovich* from the red line, three seconds, two, one..."

He looks at his son.

MIKE

(trying to hold back the tears)

I'm sorry, Dad.

CUT TO:

EXT. "TRI-STATE CONSTRUCTION PRODUCTS" - DOWNTOWN DULUTH

Medium-size company in this medium-size town 40 minutes from Gilbert.

INT. TOM KELLY'S OFFICE

An executive version of a cubicle.

Tom shoots the crap with someone on the phone. Disorganized papers all over the place. No pictures, nothing on the "walls." But he sure dresses as if he owns the place. Intercom buzzes him.

VOICE (VO)

Tom, Sharon would like to see you in her office.

## INT. SHARON'S OFFICE

Clean corporate office. View of downtown Duluth out the 8th floor windows. Tom enters. She's very business-like. Tom looks at a bouquet of roses on the coffee table.

TOM

Must be from somebody pretty wonderful.

SHARON

I'm taking you off the Zelnick Construction project and letting Joseph handle it.

TOM

(stunned)

What?

SHARON

Zelnick called me today. Furious. And he wants you off the project.

TOM

What are you talking about?

SHARON

He said you've been late every time he's gotten together with you. And you haven't gotten him the new spec sheets that you said you'd do over a week ago.

TOM

First of all, I was late today because my kid took the car, and...

SHARON

Tom, I don't want to hear about it, okay? It's always something, you always have a reason. You were late, Tom. You're *always* late.

TOM

This is about the shit on your carpet, isn't it? This is how you're getting back at me?

SHARON

Tom, this is business. This client is worth a lot to this company, and he wants you off. I'll put you on something else.

TOM

Put me on something else? This is my biggest score, Sharon. I met the guy on the golf course in the fall. I've been wining and dining this guy for 5 months.

SHARON

Well, evidently, too much wining and dining, and not enough work.

TOM

You do this to me, and I'll quit this job.

Tom starts out the door.

SHARON

Who are you gonna blame this one on, Tom -- me? Zelnick? You lost the account, Tom. You blew it. You did it like everything else you do in your life-- half-ass. You did the fun part, but then when it came down to doing the job, you didn't do it.

(then)

Tom, I change my mind. You're right. You're fired.

He closes the door so no one will hear. He panics.

TOM

I'll fix it, I'll call Zelnick right now.

He starts out.

SHARON

You're not calling him, Tom. You're fired.

Tom closes the door again.

TOM

Don't do this, Sharon. I got three kids, I need that money, I'm counting on that money.

CUT TO:

EXT. KELLY HOUSE - FRONT CURB - 4:30 PM

It's getting dark quickly. Peggy waits on the front steps in the freezing cold. She looks up. It's Shane driving the demolished car up the driveway.

She runs up the driveway, meeting him in the garage.

SHANE

Mike told Coach and the cops everything. The cops agreed not to deal with Mike till after the game since it was his first offense. Coach said I could take his van. You're coming with me.

CUT TO:

EXT. CIVIC CENTER

Fans pour into the stadium from a sea of parked cars.

INT. CIVIC CENTER HOCKEYDOME

It's the quiet before the storm. It's already almost filled to the brim. Thousands of GILBERT FANS from "The Range" in red and white cluster in one section. The gold-and-blue AFFLUENT EDINA FANS dominate the rest of the arena.

The Zamboni coming off the ice tells us we're ready to go.

INT. CIVIC CENTER - GILBERT LOCKER ROOM

The team is almost dressed. Mike is looking for Shane every time somebody walks in that door.

It's time. Coach comes in. He looks them over.

COACH

Shane's on his way. In the meantime, we got a job to do.

Coach looks at them.

COACH (CONT'D)

I want you from this moment on to see that rink out there in a whole new way. Let's give them most of the rink. That's theirs. They can skate there, they can do anything they want there.

(MORE)

## COACH (CONT'D)

(then)

But not past the blue line. That's ours. Inside that blue line -- that's Gilbert. That's our heritage.

Past that blue line it's not ice - it's the red ore of the Range. It's our parents, and their parents, and their parents. It's all we've done to get us right here, right now.

I don't care where that puck goes. But they cross that blue line - you *defend* it. Do it for Gilbert. Do it for yourselves. Do it for who you are.

CUT TO:

## INT. KELLY KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Peggy helps Shane quickly gather his skates, stick, etc. He hurriedly heads out.

## SHANE

My other stuff's at the Hinsdale Rink. You go to Coach's house, get the van, and pick me up at the rink.

## INTERCUT - TOM'S CAB PULLS UP

in front of the house. He drops an empty brown-bagged bottle in the curb.

## EXT./INT. GARAGE

Tom opens the garage door. The front end of the car is completely bashed in. He stares at the car.

## INT. KITCHEN

Peggy jumps as Tom opens the back door. Tom sees Shane standing there. Tom can exude so much more anger by never raising his voice.

## TOM

I guess we'll just add this to the list of things you've ruined in my life, won't we?

You can taste the liquor on Tom's breath.

SHANE  
I'm gonna pay for it.

TOM  
You're damn right you're gonna pay for it.

The momentary silence intensifies the tension -- as Shane gathers his skates and some gear from the kitchen table.

Shane starts to walk towards the back door. He has to get passed Tom.

TOM (CONT'D)  
Where do you think you're going, big shot, huh?

Tom stops him, poking his arm into his upper chest. Shane, avoiding a confrontation, steps back. Half-tripping over the leg of one of the kitchen chairs.

The look in Peggy's eyes says so much.

PEGGY  
Please, Dad.

SHANE  
Peggy, go get the van.

Peggy reluctantly leaves through the kitchen door.

SHANE (CONT'D)  
I'm going to the game, and I'm late.

Between Tom and Shane is their kitchen table.

TOM  
You can go to the game. When you come up with the money to pay for what you did to my car. \$3,000, buddy boy, that's my guess. You gotta feed the meter, pal.

Peggy starts to come back in the door.

SHANE  
Peggy, go get the van.

She leaves again.

SHANE (CONT'D)  
I don't have \$3,000. And I'm late.

TOM

Well, that's too bad, isn't it? Maybe you should have thought of that before you took my car -- *my* car -- out joy riding in the middle of the night.

Shane uncomfortably snickers, waiting for this to be over.

TOM SHOVES

the kitchen table into Shane's waist, knocking over a couple of the kitchen chairs tucked into the table.

TOM (CONT'D)

You listening to me?

Shane's had enough. He gathers his things and just starts out.

TOM (CONT'D)

I said you're not leaving this house.

Shane starts past him. Tom pokes him, PUSHING HIM AGGRESSIVELY back into the room. Shane wails his arm, knocking Tom's finger off his jacket.

TOM (CONT'D)

Don't you knock my arm away.

Shane stares Tom down like a Doberman waiting for a command to attack.

Tom gives him another HARD SHOVE with both arms -- banging Shane into the kitchen table.

TOM (CONT'D)

You want to go at it, big man?

SHANE CHARGES HIM

like a bull with everything he's got. He PLOWS Tom the length of the kitchen, knocking the table and chairs everywhere. RAMS him into the base of the plate cabinet.

Tom's trophies bang down on top of him. Shane, enraged, stands over his bleeding father.

SHANE

(screaming)

Not so big now, are you?

Shane grabs his stuff - and heads to the creek.

CUT TO:

MOMENTS LATER - KITCHEN

Tom hurries down the stairs past Peggy. Grabs his keys off the kitchen counter and determinedly heads for the back door.

DAD

He's hurt me and this family for the last time.

Tom gets in his busted-up car in the rear of the driveway.

Peggy runs in front of the car spreading her arms across the bashed in front hood.

PEGGY

(hysterically)

Shane isn't hurting this family, you are!

DAD

Get out of the way, Peggy.

She doesn't move. Tom jumps out and pulls her off, throwing her away from the car in the bank of snow.

He hurries back in -- and starts to gun it. Peggy dangerously runs in front of the moving car.

He SLAMS ON the brakes, and SCREAMS out the car window.

DAD (CONT'D)

Get out of the way, Peggy!

She doesn't budge. She glues her arms to the front hood.

HE dangerously STARTS the car down the driveway, PUSHING her skidding feet. Picking up speed down the sloped driveway...

PEGGY

(screaming)

I'm doing what you *told* me to do, Dad!

Desperately trying to hold her ground, she slips and falls. Dad POURS ON THE BRAKES. The car SKIDS UP INCHES FROM ROLLING HER OVER.

She's right under the front bumper of the car. If he goes forward at all, he'll go right over her...

PEGGY (CONT'D)

WHAT IS WRONG WITH YOU?

INT. LAKE HINSDALE WARMING HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

It's empty. Shane hurries in on his skates.

INTERCUT TO.

GILBERT CREEK - TOM

ominously marches down the dark creek after Shane.

BACK TO SHANE

quickly doing the combination to his locker.

TOM

picking up the pace.

SHANE

opens his locker, grabbing his jersey and hockey pants.

TOM

has the warming house in sight. A couple hundred yards away.

BACK TO SHANE

The tension in the music builds as Shane impatiently looks out the window for Peggy.

TOM

heading under the bridge.

CLOSE UP

The ice gives way right under Tom's feet. He tries to run/tip-toe through this section of thin, cracking ice.

HIS RIGHT FOOT FALLS THROUGH

pounding his body hard face down on the ice. As he tries to get up, the ice collapses right under his knees.

HIS BODY DROPS

into the absolutely freezing water.

THE AGGRESSIVE CURRENT

tries to PULL HIM UNDER and away from the hole. He swims momentarily against the current, GRABBING to the side of the ice in the hole.

His soaked heavy wool overcoat and clothes weigh a ton in the water -- pulling him down, and giving him no mobility. Holding on with one arm to the side of the ice, he THRASHES to get his coat off. As his panic grows, he's sapping his strength -- and swallowing the icy water.

TOM  
(echoing down the creek)  
Help! Help!

INTERCUT - SHANE - LAKE HINSDALE WARMING HOUSE

vaguely hears something muffled through the closed office door. The pre-game chit-chat on the office portable radio drowns the sound.

TOM'S BODY

Numbing fast. The RELENTLESS CURRENT pulls to take his body under the ice.

He gives it everything he has to throw one foot up and out of the hole, hoping to "roll" out on the ice. But the weight and bulk of his boots and pants are anchoring his body under the water.

He desperately kicks his boots off under the water -- the churning current drags them under the ice. He BOBS under the water to yank off his weighted wool pants.

TOM  
(at the top of his lungs)  
Somebody!

INT. LAKE HINSDALE WARMING HOUSE OFFICE

Shane faintly hears something again. Turns down the radio. Silence. Turns it back on.

TOM

can't hold on any longer. His fingers are numb. His hands slip off the ice, and he flails his arms grasping for the ice.

TOM

Shane!

SHANE

hears it. Turns off the radio. Hears it again.

Races out the front door in his t-shirt -- seeing nothing across the dark, empty lake. He HEARS the voice again.

TOM'S

drifts under the water.

SHANE RACES

across the lake. Heads under the bridge down the creek. He gets to the hole. Nothing in the water. He looks around for signs.

SHANE'S POV

He sees his FATHER'S FACE and naked body under the ice -- stuck up against the surface. He's 10 feet down from the hole - clutching to the underbelly of the ice.

SHANE DIVES

Head-first through the hole into the freezing water.

SHANE'S POV - UNDER THE ICE

looking through the dark water for the body.

THE BODY

is no longer on the surface of the ice.

SHANE

frantically searches underwater. He spots him - grabs him.

SHANE'S POV

of the light at the hole now 20 feet away.

WITH EVERY OUNCE OF STRENGTH

Shane swims with one hand, dragging his father's body against the current back to the hole.

THEIR HEADS

pop out of the water in the hole. Shane grabs onto the side of the ice with one hand -- holding the dead weight of his father with the other.

HIS FATHER

is still conscious. Tom sucks in air as Shane holds his limp body.

THEY LOOK EACH OTHER

in the eyes -- inches from each other's faces.

SHANE

Hold on to the ice.

TOM

I can't. I can't lift my arms. I  
can't feel my legs!

With all his might, Shane tries to PUSH his limp body up onto the ice with his one free arm. There is no way. He's 200 pounds of dead weight.

SHANE LETS GO OF THE ICE

for an instant trying to SHOVE his father up to safety. With no leverage, it's absolutely impossible.

SHANE GRABS BACK

on to the ice with his free hand. Shane tucks him up against his side, suspending them both by Shane's one hand gripping the ice.

Shane SCREAMS in the still of the night.

SHANE

HELP US!

Not a sound anywhere. Time races by in the deadening water.

Tom looks in his son's eyes, inches apart. We can see them playing out the choices that they have.

ANGLE - THE WHITE PINE TREES

surrounding this area of the creek. Dead still.

ANGLE - THE BRIDGE

rainbowing across the creek ahead of them.

A VERY LIGHT SNOW

Sprinkles and freezes on the tops of their wet heads.

SHANE IS LOSING HIS GRIP

on the ice and on his limp father. Shane's color in his face is quickly catching up to his father's graying skin.

Tom looks at Shane.

TOM

Let me go.

SHANE

What?

TOM

If you don't, we're both gonna die.

Shane looks at him. Shane screams down the river again.

SHANE

HELP US!

More time. They both know that every second Shane stays in that water increases his risk of never getting out.

TOM

Do it now, Shane. Let go.

SHANE

Oh, yeah, right, I'll just let go.

Unable to lift his arms, Tom squirms trying to free himself from his son's clutching arms. Shane won't let him go.

Tom painfully bursts into tears. Shane holds him tightly against his tiring body. They look at each other.

TOM DRIFTS UNCONSCIOUS

Shane looks around. Decision made.

SHANE GRABS BOTH ARMS

around his father - and lets go of the ice. They drift under together.

POV LOOKING DOWN AT THE ICE

the moon is our flashlight to see the current carrying their bodies underneath the ice.

POV - UNDER THE ICE

Shane swimming with one hand -- trying to see through the dark water.

POV - ABOVE THE ICE

They float under the bridge. Just to their right is a foundation girder for the bridge.

UNDER THE ICE

Shane spots the girder to the right -- he uses his free arm to steer them toward it.

SHANE GRABS THE GIRDER

with his free hand, doing everything he can to hold on to his motionless father.

USING THE LEVERAGE

Shane PULLS himself upside down like a pole-vaulter - and KICKS HIS SKATE into the top of the ice.

OVER AND OVER

he bashes his skates into the hard underbelly of the ice. Nothing is happening. It seems they've been under there for eternity.

KICKS with all he's got.

THE ICE BREAKS

Shane kicks around it trying to make a bigger hole.

HOLDING THE GIRDER

He shoves his father up through the newly-made hole.

POV - TOP OF THE ICE

Tom's naked upper body pushes through, onto the bed of ice.

UNDER THE ICE

Shane pushes himself off the girder, and climbs out of the hole. He DRAGS his blue father away from the hole to safety.

SHANE

on his knees - holds his lifeless, naked father in his arms. Gives him mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. Nothing. And again.

TOM BELCHES

up the water, breathing.

A SOPPING SHANE STANDS

Cradling his freezing father in his arms.

SHANE

pushes off on his skates down the creek.

The water is freezing right on their faces. Shane can't go far carrying this dead weight on his forearms.

Tom's frosting body is slipping out of his exhausted arms.

SHANE THROWS HIM

over his shoulder with his father's head down his back. He pushes off again, building back his speed.

On Shane's face:

CUT TO:

EXT. CIVIC CENTER STADIUM - CONTINUOUS

From the stadium walls comes an incredible roar of the crowd.

INT. CIVIC CENTER HOCKEYDOME

It couldn't be stuffed with more people. The lights are OFF.

A SPOTLIGHT AND ANNOUNCER

introduces the Gilbert team. The manic cheer of GILBERT FANS gets swallowed up in this lop-sided arena.

THE INTIMIDATED GILBERT TEAM

without Shane, nervously slaps each other five, etc.

TELEVISION CAMERAS

surround the ice.

GAME ANNOUNCER (VO)

And now, introducing the four-time and current Minnesota State Champions, from Minneapolis, Minnesota - EDINA HIGH SCHOOL!

The place goes insane.

AN ARMY OF THE EDINA SOLDIERS

led by BOBBY VARNO -- BUST onto the ice. They're huge. Confident. Ready. They egg on the crowd for even more encouragement.

Everything on their uniforms shines. Black SuperTack skates. Itec Fiberglass Clear Masks. Purple gloves. Gold knee pads over their navy blue pants.

ANGLE BACK TO THE 13 GILBERT GUYS

looking at the EDINA TEAM. All 22 of them.

CUT BACK TO:

EXT. GILBERT HOSPITAL - ESTABLISHING SHOT

on Gilbert Creek Road off of the creek.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY

Shane stands outside a hospital room door. Peggy comes out.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

Tom is covered with blankets; an oxygen tube runs into his nose. A few monitors are hooked up to his arm. Shivering. Recovering.

Shane walks in. He stands toward the back of the room.  
He looks across the room at Shane.

CUT TO:

FREEWAY ONRAMP - MOMENTS LATER

Shane and Peggy pass a sign -- Minneapolis, 124 Miles.

Shane has the pedal to the floor pushing Coach's weathered, wobbly van to its limit. The game taunts them on the radio.

GILBERT ANNOUNCER (VO)  
... You gotta see this to believe it.  
All our boys standing on the blue line  
like a pack of Dobermans. Edina  
struggling to get anything going...

CUT BACK TO:

INTERCUT - INT. HOCKEYDOME

The announcer was right. You've gotta see this to believe it.

FOUR FOAMING GILBERT GUYS

are fortifying the blue line in a 4-1 formation.

THE CONFUSED MINNESOTA PLAYERS

retrieve the puck, and come back at the blue line again and again.

YOU'D SWEAR

there are 100 Gilbert players on the ice the second Minnesota steps over that line. Gilbert keeps slapping that puck back to the other side, icing the puck.

THE EDINA COACH

sends in another FRESH LINE from his ENDLESS BENCH trying to wear them down.

CUT BACK TO:

THE MINIVAN

Shane and Peggy stuck in traffic on the snowy freeway. This is torture.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. STADIUM - THIRD PERIOD

Coach looks up at the mammoth scoreboard overhead.

EDINA 1 -- GILBERT 0. 15 minutes left in the game.

SLEZAK, BURTKER AND MIKE

on the back of their skates with rubber legs desperately attempting to hold off Edina's relentless arsenal. Edina infiltrated the blue line a long time ago.

A FRESH EDINA OFFENSE

hops over the board against Gilbert's human punching bags.

COACH RADACOVICH

screaming encouragement over the INSANE CROWD.

BURNETT

looks like a midget back-peddling against Edina's BOBBY VARNO.

VARNO WINDS UP

over his head and CRUNCHES one smack into the back of the net.

GILBERT ANNOUNCER (VO)

(completely hoarse)

That hurt, that hurt, oh, that really hurt.

GLASS BOOTH

U. of Minnesota Coach Lucia looks on.

THREE GILBERT PLAYERS

return from the battlefield and collapse on the bench. Coach Radacovich sends in his second line. He puts his head in his hands.

CUT BACK TO:

THE VAN

They're pouring down the freeway...

CAR RADIO/GILBERT ANNOUNCER (VO)  
... Burtker with the puck, past the blue  
line, over to Zarmbinkski, Radacovich  
back to Zejdlick, Zejdlick shoots...  
(screams)  
SCORES! 2-1 at 13:21 left in the  
game. It's not over yet...

Peggy nervously looks at the gas gauge.

PEGGY  
We're on empty. We gotta stop.

SHANE  
We're not stopping.

CUT TO:

VARNO JUST KEEPS POUNDING

them harder and harder at Napier - our unyielding, stubborn goalie. It looks like Napier will lose another dozen pounds tonight.

Another fresh EDINA FRONT LINE trots over the wall to have some fun.

CUT TO:

INT. VAN

Running through red lights with the stadium now in sight. Blocks away. The radio announcer ticks away the game -- 9:05...

Shane rams his foot through the floor of this old jalopy.

SHANE  
Don't die on me now.

THIS PIECE OF JUNK

just ran out of gas. Shane glides it to the side of the road.

Before the thing even comes to a complete stop, he jumps out and bolts towards the stadium doors.

Peggy starts running at her own pace.

PEGGY  
(yelling ahead)  
Do it, Shane. Do it!

CUT TO:

ZEIDLICK AND TWO OTHERS

crawl over the boards to the bench. They're dead. Zejdlick painfully takes off his skates; his blistered feet are bleeding badly.

COACH AND THE THREE BOYS

look up at the clock. 6:16. They know it's over. Coach turns around.

IT'S SHANE

in his blue jeans and holding his skates.

CUT TO MIKE

on the ice. Sees Shane.

Talk about this team's eyes lighting up. Coach looks down his bench. Looks at Burnett at the end.

COACH  
(to Burnett)  
Strip.

Burnett can't get his stuff off faster. He knows his biggest contribution to the game is how fast he can do this. Burnett stands there in his underwear, holding out a ball of hockey clothes.

Shane throws them on. Ties up his skates.

THE EDINA BENCH

spots Shane.

BOBBY VARNO

(to his line)

Take him down the second he hits the  
ice. Get that hot-head in the penalty  
box.

Over the boards Varno and his boys go.

COACH RADACOVICH

whacks Shane hard on the ass as he jumps over the boards.

THE GILBERT FANS

are psychotic as Shane steps on the ice.

SHANE

forgivingly whacks Mike on the back of the head.

COACH LUCIA

up in the booth watching.

MIKE'S POV

finds Peggy out of breath grabbing a seat in the crowd.

INSERT - THE CLOCK

ticks down. 4:56, 4:55...

BEHIND THE REF'S BACK

VARNO RAMS his stick right into Shane's gut. Knocks Shane  
right off his feet.

GILBERT FANS

explode with anger.

VARNO

stands over Shane taunting him. Shane picks himself up,  
skates away.

BURTKER

grabs the loose puck. Dishes off to Shane behind Gilbert's  
net.

GILBERT FANS ERUPT

as Shane gets the feel of the puck on his stick.

DOWN THE ICE

he weaves.

SHANE'S POV

of the overhead scoreboard. 3:50. Edina 2 - Gilbert 1.

SHANE

past the blue line.

A HORDE OF EDINA UNIFORMS

strangle Shane, stopping him in his tracks. Shane BANGS the puck against the side rail, sending it whistling behind the net.

VARNO

screams in the face of one of his DEFENSEMAN...

BOBBY VARNO

Take him down!

Gilbert and Edina players scramble for the loose puck.

SHANE

digs it out behind the net against the boards.

TWO EDINA GLADIATORS

hit Shane like Mack Trucks -- MUSHING him, and SNAPPING HIS HEAD into the glass.

SHANE'S STICK

snaps in half against the boards.

THEY EGG SHANE ON

but it's water rolling off his back.

COACH RADACOVICH

furious that the refs let it go.

EDINA

rebounds the wobbling puck. They head down the ice.

A STICKLESS SHANE

is helpless behind the boards.

INSERT - CLOCK

keeps ticking - 3:21.

THE EDINA FORWARDS

are like a SWARM OF ANGRY WASP circling our goalie. Fast, crisp passes.

AN EDINA SHOT

deflects off Napier's skate, pulling him dangerously out of position in the net.

THE PUCK FLOATS

right in front of the crease to a waiting BOBBY VARNO.

VARNO CRUNCHES IT

towards the open net.

SHANE

lunges face-first without his stick - SWATTING IT DOWN with his hand.

BANGS HEADFIRST

into the goalpost. On his knees, he swipes it over to Slezak.

MIKE

races up near Shane. Throws him his stick.

SLEZAK

Can't get the puck back to Shane any quicker. Shane dances down the ice, surveying the battlefield.

COACH RADOVICH

looks up at the clock. 2:17 seconds.

SHANE

one-on-one with the ready goalie.

SHANE WINDS EARLY

and BLUDGEONS the puck into the top corner of the net.

GILBERT FANS

are going to blow up with excitement. Tie game.

THE CLOCK

reads 1:57 seconds. 2-2.

FACE OFF

Bobby Varno vs. Shane. They stare at each other. Varno wins the face off, and trips Shane down as they take off.

SHANE

steals it back. Passes off to Mike.

MIKE

does not want to even touch this thing. Quickly flips the hot potato right back to Shane.

Let's face it - no one on Gilbert's team wants this puck but Shane.

SHANE'S

got it. He pours down the side rail.

THREE NEW EDINA TANKS

cut him off at the pass -- SMUSHING Shane into the glass.

SHANE

collapses to the ground.

CLOSE UP

of Varno. Gives his teammates a look like "Now we're talking." Just as a shell-shocked Shane starts to get up

ANOTHER ONE

wallops him with a CHEAP SHOT ELBOW smack in the head. Down Shane goes.

Coaxes Shane to get up and fight. Edina can't believe Shane doesn't swing back - Shane skates away holding his BLOODIED face.

THE REFEREE

whistles. Sends the Edina guy to the penalty box.

SHANE

skates over to the Edina bench - blood ALL OVER his face. He smiles at Bobby Varno and his team.

SHANE

That was your big mistake.

THE GILBERT TEAM

huddles around Coach Radocovich at the glass.

SHANE

Shane skates up. Shane looks over at Edina's coach yelling at his team.

ANGLE ON EDINA'S BENCH

EDINA COACH

He's a hog. Double team him, triple team him, whatever it takes!

COACH RADOCOVICH

screams over the chanting crowd.

COACH RADACOVICH

Okay, listen up, here's our play. Get the puck to Shane. Then spread out. Okay?

They all like that play -- and head out to the ice. Shane pulls them back in the huddle. Shane looks to his team. To Coach.

SHANE

They're gonna key on me. I'm dragging 'em all over to the glass on the right.

(then)  
(MORE)

SHANE (CONT'D)

If somebody is behind the net, and just floats out in front, I'll give you the pass of your life. Who wants it?

They all look down, praying Shane doesn't pick them.

SHANE (CONT'D)

Mike, you're doin' it.

MIKE

Why should I have to do it?

SHANE

You're doin' it.  
(looking him square in the eyes)  
And we're gonna win this thing.

Coach nods in agreement. They hit the ice. Here we go.

THE FACE OFF

Before the drop, Shane nods confidence to Mike.

PUCK DROPS

Edina's got it. They march down the ice. Crisp passes back and forth; waiting for the right shot.

BOBBY VARNO is right where he wants to be. WINDS UP. Cracks the whip to win the game.

NAPIER gets a leg on it. Shane snatches it in. Takes off.

SHANE heads right smack down the middle. EDINA converges. He winds in and out with the puck taunting them to take it away.

MIKE hurries to his spot behind the net.

SHANE DRAGS THEM ALL right over to the corner by the glass on the right side.

MIKE nervously waits behind the net. He *knows* he's gonna blow it. He'll never live this down.

COACH RADACOVICH standing. EVERY PERSON in the building STANDING.

EDINA TROUNCES SHANE

into the boards. PLOWING INTO HIM over and over -- unable to

loosen the puck free. Shane waits. Takes some more punishment while he waits some more.

MIKE SLIPS OUT

finding himself alone smack in the slot in front of the goalie.

SHANE SPOTS MIKE

out of the corner of his eye.

INSERT - THE CLOCK

ticking down.

SHANE

flicks the puck behind his back. It slides across the ice -- handing Mike the chance of a lifetime.

Right on his 800-pound hockey stick.

MIKE

looks at the wide-open corner of the goal. Sees the Edina players converging. He winds. Time seems forever.

SHANE

watching from the side.

COACH

standing behind the glass.

THE EDINA GOALIE

diving for the corner.

MIKE SWINGS

The puck BANGS into the left goal post, RICOCHETS across the crease. Trickles over the line into the net.

THE RED LIGHT

signals victory.

THE CROWD

The cheerleaders, the fans, the relatives, that 10 year-old kid who skated to the game, the cops IGNITE.

MIKE

races to the outstretched arms of Shane.

THE WHOLE TEAM

piles on the two of them. Zejdlick in his bare feet.  
Burnett in his underwear. Coach Radacovich dives right smack  
in the pile.

That poor Announcer is gonna have a heart attack --  
screaming, "We're the Minnesota State Champions."

INTERCUT - THE HOSPITAL ROOM

Tom, alone. Listening to everyone cheering in the hallway..

TOM

That's my son. That's my son.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. CIVIC CENTER HOCKEYDOME

Gilbert fans pour onto the ice piling on all over the place.

BLACK HAWK COACH LUCIA

Up in the glass booth.

MIKE

looks for his Dad. Finds him. Mike grabs his father in his  
arms.

SHANE

looks in the stands.

PEGGY AND ANDIE

pushing through the crowd to get to the ice. Shane spots  
them.

PEGGY AND ANDIE

run into their brother's arms.

FADE OUT.

THE END.