

MIGHTY DUCKS III

Screenplay
by
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based on the
screenplay
by
Steven Brill

based on the
screenplay
by
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Based on the story by Ken Johnson

Based on Characters Created by Steven Brill

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SLOW FADE IN:

GORDON, THE BOY ON THE LAKE OF THE ISLES POND, skates alone, happy.

DISSOLVE TO:

FLASHBACK - FINAL GAME DUCKS I

The following should overlap and echo to create a dream-like montage.

GORDON puts a hand on CHARLIE'S shoulder.

GORDON

Look around. Who'd of thought we'd come this far? Triple deke and you got 'em.

CHARLIE

Thanks coach.

CHARLIE scores the goal. The DUCKS go mad with celebration.

DISSOLVE TO:

FLASHBACK - FINAL GAME DUCKS II

The full stadium rocks. THE DUCKS are hit hard, losing. We see Gordon on the bench and hear...

GORDON

We're not goons, we're not bullies. You, who are you?

As the voices echo, "Dean Portman, Chicago, Illinois, Connie Moreau Minneapolis, Minnesota...etc.

A series of overlapping dissolves shows us brief shots of the faces of our kids.

RUSS

Russ Tyler, South Central Los Angeles

CHARLIE

Charlie Conway, Minneapolis Minnesota.

We see FULTON'S shot that knocks the Iceland goalie over, we see JULIE make her game winning save. And we see the DUCKS win and go crazy. GORDON in the middle.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. AIRPORT - NORTHWEST TERMINAL - FLASHBACK

A news conference is under way. GORDON and DUCKS listen as DEAN FRANKLIN BUCKLEY makes a speech for the press. Buckley's warm tone suggests sincerity, but in reality he's smooth and slippery...the perfect politician. Among the crowd we see the proud local parents, especially a beaming CASEY. In the b.g., we note a not-so-happy THOM PORTER, President of the Varsity Parents' Booster Club.

DEAN BUCKLEY

(looking at the Ducks)

And so, it's my great pleasure to award you these full athletic scholarships to the Westbrook Academy, where we hope the Ducks will be happy Warriors under the leadership of The Minnesota Miracle Man himself, and former alumni...Gordon Bombay.

APPLAUSE. CHARLIE looks over to CASEY, then up to GORDON. GORDON looks surprised.

AIRPORT - LATER

GORDON corners BUCKLEY.

GORDON

I can't accept the job. You knew that.

DEAN BUCKLEY

(instantly apologetic)

Sorry, Gordon. I let my enthusiasm get the better of me.

GORDON nods, looks to the DUCKS and CHARLIE.

CHARLIE

We're gonna rule in high school!

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LAKE OF THE ISLES POND - FALL - PRESENT TIME:

GORDON BOMBAY sitting on a park bench near the now unfrozen pond. It's fall and leaves drop from the trees. Some real ducks make circles near the edge. GORDON looks at them. In his hand he holds a letter.

Suddenly something flies over his head, GORDON jumps a bit. It's CHARLIE on ROLLERBLADES leaping over the back of the bench and skating before him. He does a spinning move --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

"spinorama" -- shoots an imaginary puck, scores, sits down right next to him.

CHARLIE

You rang, master.

GORDON

Wow! Where did you learn that?

CHARLIE

Spinorama? I've been working on it all summer. I figure they know I got the triple deke, let's show 'em something new, Coach.

GORDON

(looking down)

I'm not going to be your coach this year.

CHARLIE

Very funny.

GORDON

I got the official word today.

(re: letter)

The Junior Goodwill Committee has named me the director of player personnel. I'll be in charge of their junior hockey program worldwide.

CHARLIE

(desperate)

You could do both -

GORDON

(shaking his head)

I'll be on the road all the time.

CHARLIE

So that's it? You stick us in some stupid fancy school and then -

GORDON

Charlie, listen to me. What the Ducks need now is a coach who can take you to the next level. What I do best...are little ducks. Do you understand?

CHARLIE'S up, near tears. Can't believe this.

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CHARLIE

Yeah. You're skating on me just like my old man. Do me a favor. Don't send me a birthday card.

GORDON

Come on, Charlie. I don't deserve that.
(gently)
The good news is, I think I found you a terrific coach.

CHARLIE

I don't want a new coach!

CHARLIE moves off quickly down the path, plowing right through a DUCK crossing, sending a single mallard off in the air, away from CHARLIE, GORDON and the POND.

THE MALLARD

Becomes a speck in the sky.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. AIRPLANE - TOUCHES DOWN

INT. AIRPORT - AUSTIN GATE

DWAYNE comes striding off. Two small suitcases in hand, wearing a cowboy hat and a huge smile.

DWAYNE

Howdy, Minnesota. Great to be back.

ANGELA DELVECHIO appears on an airport tram. She wears a name tag that identifies her as a member of the Westbrook Faculty. Twenty-something, with a killer smile, she's every high school boy's dream.

ANGELA

You must be Dwayne.

DWAYNE

How'd ya guess?

INT. LOS ANGELES GATE

RUSS is causing a ruckus. He holds his head-set as he leaves the jet-way, a surly STEWARD chases after him.

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STEWARD

Sir, you may not keep the headsets.

RUSS

I paid four dollars for this licorice stick with q-tips, and all I got was the Kenny G audio channel and a Michael J. Fox movie. I'm keeping it.

STEWARD

It was a rental.

RUSS

I'm extending the rental period.

(sees COWBOY)

Cowboy! Howdeee, Partner!

(gives headset back)

Here, I was just messin' with ya!

He jumps on the Tram and they wiz off.

ANOTHER GATE - MIAMI INBOUND

We see a couple kissing passionately. They separate. It's LUIS and a PRETTY GIRL. The girl is tearful. LUIS smiles, wipes her tears away.

LUIS

Tu siempre eres mi corozon. I'll see you again.

He looks up and sees the TRAM. He smiles and jumps on.

RUSS

Man, Luis, who was that?

LUIS

(all eyes on Angela)

A girl I met on the plane.

ANOTHER GATE - BANGOR, MAINE

JULIE exits her plane loaded with carry-ons. A MAN tries to help her. The luggage drops to the floor.

MAN

What do you have in here, weights?

JULIE

Yup.

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CONTINUED:

LUIS
HEY CATLADY!

She picks up the bag, looks up to see the tram with her friends on it. She jumps on. They ride along, HAPPY, singing "We will rock you!" Angela joins in on the song.

SAN FRANCISCO GATE -- KEN WU runs gracefully towards the moving tram. With one fantastic leap, he lands beautifully on the back. The Team pulls him in and they are off.

EXT. FULTON'S ALLEY - DAY

FULTON and CHARLIE hit pucks into an open suitcase. FULTON misses and sends the puck out of the alley. We hear the screech of tires.

FULTON
No Coach! No Portman! I can't believe it.

CHARLIE
When he heard Bombay was out, he stayed in Chicago. Everyone else came though.

CHARLIE shoots, nails one. He's been practicing.

FULTON
How could he break up the bash brothers? What good is one bash brother?

CHARLIE
Tell me about it, man.

FULTON
How about calling me, Mr. Bash, or "The Bashman?"....Nah...

Frustrated, he shoots another wild shot that ricochets off something and breaks glass somewhere.

CHARLIE
No bash brothers, no Gordon, a school filled with preppy snots. Face it. This year is really gonna suck.

In anger they both wind up and shoot, we hear the sound of breaking glass, a car screeching, a cat shriek, and a person's scream. They cringe.

Pause. AVERMAN and JESSE on rollerblades, turn the corner. AVERMAN holds his head with one hand and an errant puck with the other.

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CONTINUED:

AVERMAN

Don't shoot, don't shoot.

FULTON

Sorry, Averman.

AVERMAN

It's okay, you just hit me in the head.
It's not like I need it for school or
anything.

(they laugh a little)

You ever think about shooting back the
other way?

FULTON looks down the alley, it certainly would make sense.
He shrugs, "no."

JESSE

Come on, let's go meet up with the rest.
First day of school, we gotta be on time.

EXT. BAND BOX RESTAURANT - DAY

Ready to skate, GOLDBERG, CONNIE and GUY are waiting. CONNIE
& GUY however are fighting. GOLDBERG is between them.

CONNIE

You tell him that I don't want him in any
of my classes.

GOLDBERG

Guy, Connie apparently thinks...

GUY

She broke up with me. I don't want to be
in her classes either. Tell her...

GOLDBERG

I'm not a licensed therapist.

GUY

And another thing.

CONNIE

I don't want to hear it.

GOLDBERG

Come on you two...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GUY & CONNIE
Stay out of it, Goldberg!

GOLDBERG
It's gonna be a great year.

AVERMAN, JESSE, CHARLIE, FULTON skate up, quacking. They high-five.

CHARLIE
Alright, Ducks let's move out. We're picking up Banks on the way.

CONNIE
Why do we have to skate to school the first day? I'll be all sweaty and gross.

CHARLIE
Ducks fly together.

EXT. BANKS' HOUSE - UPPER CLASS - DAY

ALL the DUCKS plow into his yard and start quacking.

JESSE
Come on out, cake-eater, let's go to school.

BANKS is dressed all preppy, on blades. The KIDS LAUGH.

GOLDBERG
Nice tie. Where you goin', a funeral?

AVERMAN
That a clip on?
(yanks it, it isn't)
Whoops, sorry.

BANKS
Hey, I care about the way I look, what's wrong with that?

CHARLIE
Nothin' Banksie. Let us help you.

CHARLIE, AVERMAN and GOLDBERG attack him, mess up his hair, pull out his shirt.

CHARLIE
There, much better.

BANKS' anger turns into a smile, he's a duck.

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CONTINUED:

AVERMAN

I've devised the perfect shortcut.
Follow me.

They all skate off, except for BANKS who remains in place with arms folded. Soon, AVERMAN leads the flock back the other way.

BANKS

Which way, Columbus?

AVERMAN

Minor course correction.

They skate off. BANKS falls in line.

EXT. WESTBROOK SCHOOL

The preppy student body walks to class. The Dormers: JULIE, WU, LUIS, RUSS and DWAYNE walk to the auditorium feeling like immigrants.

JULIE

I want to know who this new coach Orion is. My Dad said, if I didn't like him I could come right home.

RUSS

That's nice. My Dad said I better stay in on scholarship or he'd whip my butt.

LUIS

I heard in the dorm the dude played for the Minnesota North Stars.

DWAYNE

Dallas Stars now, pardner.
(proud)
We done rustled us a hockey team.

JULIE

(whispering)
I wouldn't brag about that up here.

RUSS

Look Cowboy, Indians.

A PICKET LINE

Sure enough a GROUP OF STUDENTS, and some NATIVE AMERICANS, and STUDENT ACTIVISTS are picketing. SIGNS read "NATIVE AMERICANS ARE PEOPLE NOT WARRIORS." THE WESTBROOK symbol of the Indian warrior has a circle and line through it. And we

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CONTINUED:

see LINDA JEFFRIES, a cute, young freshman with a confidence that far outstrips her years. Her vintage clothing and committed attitude marks her as anything but a spoiled preppy.

DWAYNE

Who're they?

RUSS

Ain't you never seen a protest?

DWAYNE

You bet I have! One time back home they said we couldn't spray the horseflies? Man, that sure 'nuff kicked up some dust!

A PREPPY overhears this and turns to a friend:

PREPPY

Where'd they find these guys? On Hee-Haw?

RUSS

(turning)

I heard that!

EXT. STREETS

The DUCKS fly in the V down the street. Looking cool. AVERMAN moves to lead point, adjust his glasses and checks a MAP; he directs them to the right.

DOWN A SIDE STREET

They fly and head right down a STEEP HILL. They pick up way too much speed, too fast to stop. GOLDBERG teeters.

GOLDBERG

I'm not a skater...I'm just a goalieeeee!

GOLDBERG regains his balance, but this time, he is going backward, panicked...out of control.

GOLDBERG

Out of my way, Goalie comin' through.

He flies by the rest of the pack, backwards. The DUCKS look at each other. CHARLIE peels off like a jet fighter and goes after the stray.

ON THE HILL

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHARLIE closes on him. We see at the bottom the hill a huge lake. A small fishing pier juts out.

GOLDBERG is flailing backwards, CHARLIE IS right on him. Gaining. He reaches for him. Just misses.

AT THE BOTTOM

The road turns, GOLDBERG does not. GOLDBERG rockets out onto the pier, CHARLIE right on him. They pass startled old fishermen...GOLDBERG'S about to go right off the end, when CHARLIE grabs him by the belt buckle, puts on the brakes and with great effort stops him from going into the lake.

GOLDBERG'S back wheels are just off the pier. A beat. A breath.

GOLDBERG
Thanks Charlie.

CHARLIE
No problem, Goldberg.

They 're about to move off...

OLD MAN(V.O.)
I caught one, I caught one!

An OLD FISHERMAN yanks hard on his pole, the fish flies out of the water and smashes into CHARLIE'S face, sending him right into the water.

INT. ASSEMBLY HALL - DAY

The fabulously preppy students watch as the DUCKS move to their seats. Behind them, RICK, the varsity captain, appears. He has MINDY, the head cheerleader with him. And COLE, his enforcer thug. Other VARSITY THUGS hover nearby.

RICK
You don't belong at Westbrook. We don't need you ruining our good name.

RUSS
I'll give ya a good name. Otto.

RICK
Otto?

RUSS
Yeah, outto my face before I knock you into the next grade.

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CONTINUED:

COLE

Oh, we got us a real tough homeboy.

RUSS

I ain't your homeboy, punk.

DWAYNE

Easy Russ. They must think we're someone else.

Meanwhile, LUIS is making serious eye contact with MINDY. Who despite it all, kinda digs him back.

DWAYNE

I'm Dwayne, we're the new hockey team. And you are...?

RICK

The only hockey team. Varsity. State Champs. My little brother lost his JV slot when they brought you yo-yo's in here.

JULIE

Probably wasn't good enough.

Intrigued SCOTT, the Varsity goalie, locks eyes with her. She stares defiantly.

RICK

Yeah, well we'll see who's good enough when we kick your little duck butts back to the swamp you crawled out of.

COLE

Where's the rest of you pukes?

RUSS

Pukes? That one of your preppy put downs?

(pulling out a notepad and writing it down; sarcastic)

Man, I got to get that down. That is bad.

EXT. BOTTOM OF HILL NEAR LAKE OF THE ISLES - DAY

BANKS

Watchout, Fulton!

FULTON has accidentally knocked into BANKS.

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CONTINUED:

CHARLIE, wet but determined, races along with the rest. They are not sure where they are. The road dead ends into thick woods. They look at Averman, who consults the map.

BANKS

Nice shortcut.

AVERMAN

These trees shouldn't be here.

INT. AUDITORIUM

Proceedings are about to begin. DEAN BUCKLEY stands at the podium.

DEAN BUCKLEY

"LUX ESTO!"

DWAYNE

What'd he say?

RUSS

(looking at Dwayne like he's
dumb)

LUX ESTO!

DWAYNE nods, "Oh."

DEAN BUCKLEY

"Let there be light!"

(beat)

Since 1903, the headmaster has commenced the school year with those inspiring words.

RUSS

He looks good for a man that age.

WU, JULIE, LUIS and others crack up.

DEAN BUCKLEY

Yes, we cherish our tradition at the Westbrook Academy...but we also recognize the need for change. And so today, we are proud to open our doors to a truly gifted group of student athletes...

EXT. ROAD

THE EXHAUSTED DUCKS turn a corner on the road and stumble upon the gates of WESTBROOK.

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CONTINUED:

AVERMAN

I told you I knew where I was going.

They give him dirty looks.

CHARLIE

Come on, we can make it.

Suddenly four horses, rode by proper ENGLISH RIDERS, run in front of them. CHARLIE almost gets trampled. They look up at them as they pass by without a look. It's the equestrian team. CHARLIE looks down just in time to sidestep a pile of horse manure.

INT. AUDITORIUM

The DEAN Presses on.

DEAN BUCKLEY

Will you join me in a big "Warrior
Welcome" for -

LINDA

(shouting out)

"Warriors" is offensive to all Native
Americans.

DEAN BUCKLEY

(quieting the stir)

This is a serious issue that I personally
have recommended for consideration to the
Board of Directors.

LINDA

Where do you stand on the issue, Dean
Buckley?

DEAN BUCKLEY

I stand for tolerance and respect...
whichever way the Board rules.

LINDA and others boo. THE VARSITY turns to quiet them. The
PROTESTERS march out.

EXT. SCHOOL - THE DUCKS

Racing to auditorium. They try a side door, it's locked.
They race around to what they think is a front door. It's
open. They hear the DEAN inside. CHARLIE quiets them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHARLIE

We'll slip in the back row. No one will notice.

INT. AUDITORIUM - SAME TIME

The door opens into darkness. CHARLIE leads them in. They take one step into darkness and find themselves flying down a set of stairs. They are backstage.

DEAN BUCKLEY

...the 1991 Minnesota State Pee-Wee champions...the gold medal winners of the Junior Goodwill Games...I present to you-

CHARLIE

WHOOOAAA!

CHARLIE, followed by the rest of the out of control DUCKS fly right onto the stage and wipe out behind the DEAN. GOLDBERG is about to crash into him, when he grabs the curtain, yanking it down with a mighty rip. It completely covers everyone. SILENCE.

ALL in the audience are aghast, especially THOM PORTER, the hockey Booster Club President. DEAN BUCKLEY stares. CHARLIE's head peeks out.

CHARLIE

Hi, We're the Ducks.

CUT TO:

EXT. DEAN BUCKLEY OFFICE - THE DUCKS ARE GATHERED

A large, tastefully furnished office. The DEAN'S DEGREES hang on the walls as do SEVERAL PHOTOGRAPHS of the DEAN with various VIPS. We note one of him shaking hands with WALTER MONDALE. There's one curiosity in the corner that immediately catches the DUCKS' attention -- a GIANT ANT FARM in a huge aquarium. Red ants and sand.

JESSE

Check this out. Antsville.

FULTON

Look at 'em go. Whoah.

DEAN BUCKLEY

You can learn a lot from ants.

Everyone looks up startled. BUCKLEY enters.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEAN BUCKLEY

An amazing species, Brazilian fire ants.
One queen. The rest are workers.
Everybody pulls their weight and nobody
complains. Wouldn't it be nice if things
ran so smoothly for the rest of us?

CHARLIE

Nice for who? The queen or the workers?

Stifled laughs. BUCKLEY grins at Charlie, then balances
himself on the edge of his desk.

DEAN BUCKLEY

Kids, I need your help here. Quite
frankly, bringing you all in was a bit of
a risk. We've got a group of Booster
Club Parents whose feathers are a little
ruffled -- if you'll pardon the pun. You
see, they think that because they pay,
their kids should get to play. So, what
we need is for you to keep up those
grades and keep winning those games.
That way, we're all covered. I just want
you to remember I'm on your team. Any
questions?

GOLDBERG

Is it true, sir -- Terrible Ted Orion is
going to be our coach?

DEAN BUCKLEY

(smiling and nodding)

It was quite a coup to get him.

AVERMAN

They say nobody picked a fight with
him...if they wanted to live.

DEAN BUCKLEY

(winking)

That's what they say.

(checking his watch)

Time for your first class.

INT. MATH CLASS - MONTAGE

WU, RUSS, GOLDBERG, CONNIE, GUY, CHARLIE, stare as MRS.
MADIGAN explains her rules.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MRS. MADIGAN

Every Monday, you will have a practice quiz. Every Wednesday you will have a real quiz. Every Friday you will have an exam. And every time I feel like it you will have a surprise quiz or exam. There will be no calculators or modern calculating devices allowed. You will only have the use of a number 2 pencil...

She continues on as we see the horrified look of our kids.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MR. BARBER'S HISTORY

JULIE, AVERMAN, FULTON, BANKS and others watch MR. BARBER, a black teacher with a booming voice, as he "demonstrates" history with the aid of two dolls, a giant and a dwarf.

MR. BARBER

It's been said that the present is to the past like a dwarf on the shoulders of a giant. If the dwarf holds his seat, he can indeed see further than the giant. But beware if the dwarf forgets his place!

(flinging the dwarf to the floor with great emphasis)

History is a giant. Get ready to ride it.

The class is spellbound and scared.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ANGELA DELVECHIO'S ENGLISH CLASS

She is just starting to take attendance.

ANGELA

Lester Averman...

AVERMAN

(sheepish)

You can me Averman.

ANGELA

(nodding)

I used to hate the sound of my own name too. An-gel-a. And I'll tell you a little secret. When I was 14? I changed my name. Well, actually, I just started

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGELA (cont'd)
using my middle name -- Mary. Now, hey,
there's a nice uncommon name -- Mary! No
more Angela or Angel for me, boy. Just
please-don't call-attention-to-me-God-
Mary!

(beat)

Then, one day, a new girl comes to
school. All the guys drop dead over her.
What's her name? You guessed it!
Angela! Wait a minute, that's my name!

Everybody LAUGHS.

ANGELA

You know something, Lester Averman? Some
of the coolest characters ever have some
really strange names. Huckleberry Finn.
Hester Prynne. Holden Caulfield. The
Great Gatsby. You're going to meet all
of them in here. And you're going to see
their names are cool because they are
cool -- just like you.

LESTER AVERMAN smiles.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - BETWEEN CLASSES

LUIZ looks at MINDY and starts following her. He is body
checked hard into a locker by COLE.

WE PICK UP other DUCKS walking the other way.

AVERMAN

Homework on the first day. I don't
believe it.

GOLDBERG

I know we better be careful or we're
gonna learn something here.

WU

You see the computer lab. This place is
state of the art.

DWAYNE

I'm gonna take band. Down home I used to
fiddle some with the sax.

CONNIE

Cowboy, how are you going to learn French
when you murder English?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

INT. HALLWAY - SAME TIME

CHARLIE is a little lost, looking for his next class. He sees LINDA, the girl from the picket line. She is trying, with no luck, to get students to sign her petition. CHARLIE is instantly smitten.

LINDA

Hi, will you sign a petition -

CHARLIE

Sure, what's it for?

LINDA

We're demanding the Board change the demeaning Warrior name.

CHARLIE

(about to sign)

Warriors isn't so bad, is it? I mean, you got the Indians, the Braves, the Hawks, the Redskins -

LINDA

You're a jock, aren't you?

CHARLIE

(puffing up)

Yeah, I play hockey. I was captain of -

LINDA

(pulling back her petition)

Forget it. All you Warrior jocks stick together.

She walks away. CHARLIE calls after her.

CHARLIE

I'm not a Warrior. I'm a duck.

WEIRD DAVE, a kind of stoner guy looks at him.

DAVE

And I'm a rooster, Man. Watch. Cock a doodle dooooo!

CHARLIE looks at this strange guy and moves on.

INT. THE STUDENT DINING ROOM - LUNCH HOUR

RICK, COLE and the VARSITY are eating their lunch in this classy wood-paneled, nicely carpeted dining hall. Captain RICK holds court.

We see LUIS on the periphery winking at MINDY, who can't believe his arrogance and nerve. She doesn't bust him though.

RICK

They don't belong here. My Dad says it was just a publicity stunt, but it's gonna wind up killing the school's reputation.

COLE

Yeah, them rejects shoulda stayed on their side of the tracks.

SCOTT, the varsity goalie, isn't a jerk.

SCOTT

Those rejects, genius. And besides we don't have tracks, Cole. There are no trains, therefore no tracks, get it?

COLE

Well, they should stay out of our school. Don't get smart with me, goalie!

COLE snarls at SCOTT. RICK steps in jokingly.

RICK

Come on, Scooter, you know better than to confuse, Cole. We're on the same team.

CHARLIE, brown bag in hand, wanders past their table. WU is with him.

RICK

Well, look at captain duckie...

He grabs CHARLIE'S bag and tosses it to COLE. SCOTT moves away, disgusted. COLE'S happy that he has someone to pick on.

CHARLIE

Hey, give me that...

RICK

(pulling out a Twinkie)
Oh, look, Mommy packed a Twinkie.

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CONTINUED:

CHARLIE tries to grab it away. RICK tosses the Twinkie to COLE who is about to eat it.

CHARLIE
I wouldn't eat that.

COLE
But I'm not you, am I?

COLE smiles maliciously and gulps it in one bite. He spits it out immediately, some of it landing on RICK.

COLE
Eeechh, it's all wet.

CHARLIE
That'll happen when you fall in a lake.

WU and CHARLIE crack up. COLE moves to grab him. Just then FULTON and RUSS show up. LUIS jumps in too.

FULTON
Get your hands off him.

COLE
Ohhh, look a bash brother. I'm sooo scared.

They get right into it. It could turn into a brawl, even though the DUCKS are outnumbered. But, DEAN BUCKLEY steps right in.

DEAN BUCKLEY
Well, well, I see the two hockey teams are making fast friends. Rick, are you extending every courtesy to our new student-athletes?

RICK
Yes, Dean Buckley. Charlie is our special new friend. Right, Charlie?

Throws a rough arm around him.

CHARLIE
Oh yeah, buddies for life.

INT. THE WESTBROOK RINK - AFTER SCHOOL

ON A WESTBROOK WARRIOR BANNER

Against a background of GREEN, a RED Indian head stares straight at us above two crossed Indian tomahawks.

THE RINK

VARISITY CHAMPIONSHIP banners hang from the ceilings. ON THE side wall is a huge, long display case of hockey trophies and medals and pictures.

The DUCKS (J.V.) in full gear look at the case.

RUSS

So, what, they got trophies. I don't see no Goodwill Gold Medals.

CONNIE

No, but look at this.

INSERT - GORDON

Captain of the Debate Team, making a fevered point.

GOLDBERG

Captain of the debate team, Gordon Bombay? Look at that.

AVERMAN

Look at that haircut. It's Greg Brady.

They all take a moment to look, a little nostalgic.

CONNIE

I miss him already. I wish he was here.

CHARLIE

Yeah, well, he's not is he?

Suddenly, we HEAR A LOUD YE-HAW!

DWAYNE

ROUND 'EM UP, DOGGIES!

Everyone looks at each other, breaks out in smiles and runs for the ice.

Here comes Cowboy DWAYNE with his LASSO. Everybody scatters as DWAYNE whips his lasso and charges forward.

CHARLIE narrowly escapes the first throw by executing a great spinorama...THE LASSO falls inches short.

EVERYONE'S flying around the ice, WHOOPING and LAUGHING, having a blast as they play their special brand of tag.

We see CHARLIE helping FULTON and RUSS skate, encouraging them. DWAYNE zeroes in on RUSS. He throws the lasso and at

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

the last minute CHARLIE pushes RUSS out of the way.
Unfortunately, it encircles CHARLIE and pulls him to the ice.

CLOSE ON CHARLIE

On his side, he feels like a hopeless calf...then HEARS THE
SHRILL BLAST OF A WHISTLE.

CHARLIE'S POV

Moving towards him are TWO LARGE SKATES. His gaze moves up
to reveal his new coach, TED ORION. Wonderfully weathered
for a man still in his thirties, he seems larger than life.
There's an air about him that radiates authority. It starts
with his intense gaze. He leans down to untie Charlie.

COACH ORION

My name is Coach Orion. You may call me
"Coach" or "Coach Orion."

CHARLIE

(testing the waters)
You can call me Charlie.

The FRESHMEN stifle their laughs.

COACH ORION

(fixing his gaze on Charlie)
I tell you what, Charlie. You give me
ten.

CHARLIE flips over and starts doing push-ups.

COACH ORION

(blowing his whistle)
I meant laps! Go! Now!

CHARLIE takes off, the OTHERS take note. The COACH starts
tightly wrapping Dwayne's rope around his hand like a noose.

COACH ORION

Now listen up. Listen good. We are here
for one reason -- and one reason only...

(staring at AVERMAN)

Do you know what that is?

(AVERMAN is at a loss.)

I'll give you a hint. It starts with a
"W."

AVERMAN

To win!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COACH ORION

No. To work! High school hockey is work. Learning to play hockey the way it was meant to be played is very hard work. And it all begins with defense.

(beat)

I've seen your tapes. I know you can score goals. I just don't know that you can stop them.

GOLDBERG

(taking offense)

Hey -

(ORION stops him with a stare.)

Sorry, Coach. Coach Orion. Sir.

COACH ORION

So, here's the deal. If you want to play in my barn, you better be ready to work your tails off...at both ends. Is that clear? Count off!

DISSOLVE TO:

THE ICE - MOMENTS LATER

The "ONE'S" (GOLDBERG, DWAYNE, BANKS, JESSE, GUY, and WU) line up behind the goal line in start position. The COACH stands a few feet in front of them, whistle and stopwatch ready.

COACH ORION

Conway, you're dogging it. You owe me another ten. Everyone else. Let's climb the mountain.

He WHISTLES, off they go. "Climb the Mountain" is a killer conditioning/sprint drill.

We see that BANKS and DWAYNE quickly skate away from the pack. Others struggle and tire quickly.

CHARLIE, out of breath, finishes his laps and falls in behind AVERMAN, who waits for the "two" whistle. ORION'S keen eye seems to evaluate everything in an instant.

AVERMAN

This guy was an All-Star...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHARLIE

For one season, didn't he wash out?

AVERMAN

Dropped out. No one knew why. He just disappeared.

CHARLIE

Well, here he is...just our luck.

COACH ORION

What's that, Conway?

CHARLIE

I was just saying what a nice change it is to skate instead of practice the game.

COACH ORION

If I want your color commentary, I'll ask for it.

TIME CUT TO:

SHOOTING DRILL

The One's take turns shooting at GOLDBERG. BANKS beats him clean. So does DWAYNE. So does FULTON. Everyone seems to beat him -- except CHARLIE, who makes one move too many.

COACH ORION

Triple deke, Conway? Save the fancy moves for the dance floor.

At the other end of the ice, JULIE appears to be stopping the Two's cold.

TIME CUT TO:

STICKHANDLING DRILL

DWAYNE is a whiz as he leads the way around and through the cones, with pucks. BANKS is equally smooth. CHARLIE cuts a cone too closely and trips. He gets up, determined, all heart.

COACH ORION

This is why we drill, Conway.

CHARLIE

Why are you picking on me?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The COACH skates off, deliberately not hearing the question.

CHARLIE
Bombay never did any of this stuff.

AVERMAN
Bombay never played pro...

CHARLIE stares off at the new guy with intense dislike.

LATER

COACH dumps a puck bag in front of FULTON, RUSS, CHARLIE.

COACH ORION
Okay hot shots, let's see it. Let's see
you score.

FULTON
With pleasure.

ORION moves about twenty feet between FULTON and the net.

FULTON
I wouldn't stand there.

COACH ORION
Thanks for the warning.

CHARLIE
(under his breath)
Let it rip, Fulton.

FULTON unwinds a blistering slapshot. The COACH drops to his knees and easily smothers the puck.

FULTON is stunned. ORION waves him on. FULTON shoots another. ORION blocks it easily. He shoots a barrage. ORION blocks them all. The net remains empty.

RUSS steps in and winds up his knucklepuck and amazingly, ORION swats it out of the air with his glove like it was a fly. Then, he skates up to CHARLIE and slides him the puck.

COACH ORION
Lead the charge, Conway.

CHARLIE
Three on one?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COACH ORION

Many as you need.

CHARLIE circles at center ice, motions for BANKS, CONNIE and AVERMAN to join him, RUSS and FULTON. They attack six on one. ORION assumes his perfect defensive stance inside his blue line. Without a trace of panic, he effortlessly follows the play, managing to hold them off at every turn. Finally, he intercepts a pass from CHARLIE to BANKS and non-chalantly flips the puck the length of the ice. All net. He motions for the whole team to gather around.

COACH ORION

(matter-of-factly)

The name of the game is defense.

(blowing his whistle)

Alright, let's finish with ten laps.

EVERYBODY GROANS. ORION fixes them with a gaze that would rattle Dirty Harry.

COACH ORION

(with an eery calm)

I'll say this once. *Winners don't whine.*

INT. THE BOYS' LOCKER ROOM - LATER

The FRESHMEN lie on their benches in front of their lockers like beached whales. Their tongues hang out from exhaustion. They're too tired to undress.

GOLDBERG

Somebody get a shovel and bury me right here in my gear.

They immediately jump up as COACH ORION enters.

COACH ORION

From the moment practice ends, you have 15 minutes to clear the locker room. You have homework to do. The Westbrook Academy requires you to maintain a "C" average to compete. I believe that's a bad rule. I don't want any "C" players on my team. So, if you want to play rather than ride the pine pony, you better make "B's"...or better!

He strides to the bulletin board and posts a roster with definite authority.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COACH ORION

(turning)

One more thing. Stay away from the
Varsity until we play them in December.
Is that clear?

Everybody nods. Exit the COACH.

RUSS

Fifteen minutes? Man, I can't move!

AVERMAN

(imitating Coach with a
vengeance)

I'll say this once. *Winners don't whine.*

Rubbery legged, RUSS gets up and starts to stagger around as
if in response to "Coach Averman's" command.

RUSS

Defense...Defense...Defense...arghhhh...

RUSS bangs into the lockers as if they were the boards.
People laugh despite themselves.

CONNIE

Hey, he posted our positions.

Everybody breaks for the bulletin board.

FULTON

I don't believe it! I play the left side
not right.

RUSS

Third line, man. That is a major dis'.

The UPROAR CONTINUES...everybody's upset at their positions.

BANKS

I'm not even listed.

RUSS

You are. ADAM BANKS third line
center...Varsity!?

BANKS

(mixed emotions)

I made varsity?

GOLDBERG remains on his bench, pulling off his jersey as
AVERMAN walks back to get undressed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GOLDBERG

(confidently)

You know the great thing about goalie?
You always know where you stand. I just
mind my own business and take my place
between the pipes.

AVERMAN

(placing a hand on Goldberg's
shoulder)

You're riding the pine pony, pal.

GOLDBERG

Very funny.

AVERMAN

Julie's one. You're two.

GOLDBERG

(jumping up, insane)

I'm back-up?

He charges like an angry bull towards the bulletin board
where DWAYNE and CHARLIE stand in dumbfounded silence.

GOLDBERG

(to DWAYNE)

How could he do this to me?

DWAYNE

(shrugging)

Look what he done to me.

GOLDBERG

(looking back at the list)

What are you talking about?

DWAYNE

He give me a "C" -- and you know what
the fella said about C's...

GOLDBERG

"C" means Captain. You're Captain,
Dwayne!

DWAYNE

(confused; turning to CHARLIE)

That's your job, Charlie...

CHARLIE is too shocked to respond. He storms out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EXT. JAN AND HANS' CHALET - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT

INT. JAN & HANS' CHALET - NIGHT

JAN & HANS are in the back near the blade sharpener. HANS sharpens. JAN re-stitches some hockey gloves. They listen to Norwegian records on an old 78 player.

JAN

You're edging it too much.

(HANS ignores him)

I said, that's too sharp.

HANS

I've been sharpening skates for sixty years, Jan.

JAN

You've been making them too sharp for sixty years. They're skates, not sabres.

(under his breath)

Strudel head.

HANS

I heard that. Do I tell you how to stitch, do I? Do I?

JAN

No, because you can't do that either.

HANS turns off the machine in a huff.

HANS

I swear I'm going to Florida. One day, you're gonna wake up and I'll be gone.

JAN

What would you do in Florida?

HANS

I'll open a surf shop. Anything as long as I'm away from you.

JAN

Go. Go on, then. Go hang ten, Hans!

HANS

No! You go hang ten!

(pause)

What is hang ten?

Pause. They look at each other, then burst out laughing. CHARLIE enters. They are still laughing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHARLIE
What's so funny?

HANS
I'm moving to Florida.

CHARLIE is so depressed, he actually believes them.

CHARLIE
Oh great! You're leaving too -

HANS
Easy, easy...it is a joke.
(CHARLIE recovers)

JAN
School was not so fun, today.

CHARLIE
It's a nightmare...especially our hockey coach. You remember Ted Orion?

JAN
Oh, yes. There was some big scandal. What was it? Gambling maybe?

HANS
No, no. He killed a man.

CHARLIE
Really?

HANS
(nodding)
It was the trainer. Rumor was he failed to sharpen the edges of Terrible Ted's skates. Isn't that right, Jan?

JAN
Pay no attention to him, Charlie.

HANS
Leave it to Gordon to run off and leave you with such an awful fellow.

CHARLIE
What do you mean?

HANS
He makes Gordon look good, ja?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHARLIE
(wistful)
Makes him look real good.

CHARLIE lowers his head, clearly feeling sorry for himself.

HANS
I know how you feel. I still miss Greta
Thordesen.

CHARLIE
Who was she?

HANS
(gently sardonic)
My teacher...from first grade.

CHARLIE smiles despite his self-pity. He really loves Hans.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SCHOOL - NEXT DAY

AT A TABLE

GOLDBERG and AVERMAN are in the cafeteria line.

GOLDBERG
So what if she's got a quicker glove?
Who's got the better stick?

AVERMAN
(monotone, tired of reassuring
him)
You do, Goldberg.

GOLDBERG
Who's got the game experience, me or the
cat girl?

AVERMAN
You do, Goldberg...She's just faster,
quicker. That counts on this level.

GOLDBERG
Do you think if I lost a few pounds, I'd
be number one again?

AVERMAN
(looks at his plate)
Might be easier to have her gain a few
pounds.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GOLDBERG looks down at his food, thinking.

We see the gauntlet of VARSITY, harassing FRESHMEN. They grab WU'S lunch bag as he goes by. COLE reaches in and takes what he wants, lets him go with a thump on his head.

CHARLIE, FULTON & RUSS enter and see this. CHARLIE looks down at his paper bag lunch.

FULTON

If I had Portman here, those guys
wouldn't be so cocky.

CHARLIE

They want lunch, let's give 'em lunch.

A plan is hatching.

INT. SCHOOL ROOM - LINDA

Alone, LINDA sets her lunch down at an empty seat.

CHEERLEADER 1

Excuse me, this seat is taken.

LINDA

No one is sitting in it.

CHEERLEADER 2

It's a cheerleading section. Warrior
Cheerleaders only...

(sarcastic)

Are you a cheerleader?

LINDA

(sweetly)

I'm sorry. I thought this was the no-
idiots section.

She shakes her head and leaves. THE CHEERLEADERS huff.

At the other end of the table. LUIS fearlessly sits down next to MINDY. RICK is just twenty yards away harassing freshmen.

MINDY

The freshmen girls are over there.

LUIS

Yes, I know. But I am in search of a
real woman...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MINDY

You're crazy, you know that?

LUIS

Loco, yes. For you. Just give me five minutes after school. I will die a happy man.

MINDY

(amused)

If you don't beat it, you probably will die. My boyfriend gets pretty jealous.

As if on cue, RICK turns around to wave. She waves back. He blows her a kiss. She looks to her left, finds an empty seat.

UNDER THE TABLE - LUIS

The always quick LUIS crawls on his hands and knees away from trouble. He passes several girl's lower halves. Cheerleader skirts? He stops. Should he look up their dresses?

EXT. SCHOOL - SAME TIME

The boys sit on top of a wood fence near the school. Waiting.

CHARLIE

Here they come.

FULTON

Tails up.

RUSS

Good sign.

The EQUESTRIAN TEAM trots by on several horses. Bingo.

CHARLIE

Make sure it's fresh.

FULTON

Steam is a good sign, right?

RUSS

Very good sign.

CHARLIE removes his empty lunch bag.

INT. LUNCH ROOM - SAME TIME

GOLDBERG moves over to JULIE with a wonderful assortment of sweets, candies & cakes.

GOLDBERG

I just want to congratulate you on being number one. I didn't have time to bake you a cake so I bought you a yummy array of Hostess products. Here, pink snowballs, cupcakes...

JULIE

Thanks, Goldberg.

GOLDBERG

No problem. You're gonna need a lot of energy to play on this level. Carbo loading, you know. These Twinkies are loaded with energy. I'll be your nutritional adviser. No charge.

JULIE

Thanks, Goldberg.

She's buying it. She tries a pink snowball, yummy. AVERMAN shakes his head in dismay. GOLDBERG smiles.

INT. LUNCH ROOM - A LITTLE LATER

CHARLIE, RUSS, FULTON pass the gauntlet of VARSITY players. CHARLIE has the "Bag" in hand. As expected COLE grabs it and RICK knocks his hat off.

CHARLIE

Aww come on, my mommy made me brownies.

FULTON

Fresh warm ones.

RICK

Hey, too bad about your Bash brother, heard he was scared to leave home.

FULTON

Portman isn't scared of nothing.

JUST as COLE reaches into the bag without looking. It's real soft and wet in there. He looks down in horror.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COLE

What the hell kind of brownies are these!

CHARLIE

I gotta stop telling her to use the
horseturds in the recipe.

COLE looks at his hand.

COLE

Ahhhhh...

He tosses it without looking. It lands right in the middle
of the cheerleader table. Totally grossed out, THEY bolt
away from the table like lightning.

LINDA smiles as the CHEERLEADERS pass.

LINDA

Thanks for not letting me sit there.

BEDLAM has broken out. The BAG OF TURDS has caused a
stampede for the exits.

COLE and the VARSITY take off after CHARLIE, FULTON and RUSS,
who race through the crowd and out the door, still laughing
their heads off.

We see ANGELA DELVECHIO caught in the crowd, her tray knocked
from her hand.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

FULTON, CHARLIE, & RUSS tear down the hall and make a left.

Seconds later the VARSITY runs out. They are about to go left
when DEAN BUCKLEY comes from the right. THE VARSITY
immediately slows down. The DEAN struts a little, smiling at
his own power. Just then, what looks like the entire
cafeteria bursts through the double doors and streams right
at him. He jumps back against a locker to avoid being
trampled.

INT. JANITOR'S CLOSET - HIDING PLACE

CHARLIE, FULTON, RUSS stand near some buckets and mops. They
crack up, high five.

INT. EMPTY CAFETERIA

EMPTY. Except Weird DAVE who sits calmly eating his lunch,
oblivious. BUCKLEY looks around bewildered.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEAN BUCKLEY

What happened in here?

DAVE shrugs, then offers him a hard-boiled egg.

INT. JANITOR'S CLOSET

The door swings open to reveal the three hiding. They wince, expecting to see the Varsity. It's ANGELA.

RUSS

I knew this wasn't the right classroom.

ANGELA

I saw what you guys did. Pretty gross.

CHARLIE

We're sorry?

ANGELA

(licking her finger and miming
a "score")

Score one for the freshmen. Now get to
class, before they catch you.

What? They look at each other. Alright, Ms. Delvechio.

INT. RINK - AFTERNOON

The FRESHMEN are skating hard, doing warm-up laps. JULIE is lagging behind. GOLDBERG is beating her.

COACH ORION

Work those legs, Gaffney. Where's your
energy?

JULIE

I think I'm going to be sick.

She leans over the boards and tries to heave. GOLDBERG
skates along innocently.

Meanwhile, CHARLIE and FULTON skate side by side..

CHARLIE

This is total crap! I can't play for
this drill sergeant.

FULTON

Then don't. Play for the Ducks. Stay on
the team, Charlie. We need you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHARLIE looks at his friend, struggling to keep up. He softens a bit.

CHARLIE

Come on, bend your knees a little more.
Let's go. Smooth strokes...

FULTON falls. CHARLIE is right there to give him a hand. The two skate with CHARLIE really encouraging and helping his friend.

COACH ORION sees this as he seems to see everything. He WHISTLES everybody in. He looks over at JULIE by the boards.

COACH ORION

Julie the Cat, what's the matter? Eat a furball?

GOLDBERG

(laughing a little too loud)
Good one, coach. Furball, ha!

COACH ORION

Just get in the net, Goldberg.

GOLDBERG

Me? Sure thing, Coach. My pleasure.

At the boards, JULIE again almost heaves. She looks up and sees a hand extend her a towel. It belongs to SCOTT, the varsity goalie. She wipes her pale, sweating face.

JULIE

Thanks.
(looking back to the goal)
I'm gonna kill him.

LATER - MID-PRACTICE

We're in the middle of a "Wonder Drill" -- five attackers (FULTON, CONNIE, DWAYNE, AVERMAN AND RUSS) skate in on two defenders (CHARLIE and GUY). The COACH skates in their midst. DWAYNE and GUY jostle for the puck in the corner. DWAYNE kicks it free behind the net where CHARLIE picks it up, looking for an opening to clear it. He moves left, but CONNIE and RUSS come flying at him. He panics and sends the puck across the net where AVERMAN intercepts it and gets set to pull the trigger. WHISTLE.

COACH ORION

Freeze!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Everybody holds their positions, including AVERMAN whose stick is in mid-air. The COACH skates over to CHARLIE.

COACH ORION

Where's the one place you never want to clear the puck?

CHARLIE

It looked -

COACH ORION

Answer the question, Conway.

CHARLIE

(exploding)

I'm not a defenseman! I'm a scorer!

COACH ORION

(calm; pointing)

That's a misconduct. Ten minutes. Penalty box. Everybody else, down.

As CHARLIE storms off towards the penalty box, the FRESHMEN drop on the ice at the COACH'S feet. He holds the puck.

COACH ORION

What's the one thing all great teams have in common?

AVERMAN

Great coaching?

COACH ORION

Don't try to suck up to me, AVERMAN.

(beat)

Defense. Unlike scoring, defense never takes a day off. It never quits. But to play great defense, you need one thing above all else...Confidence.

(gesturing with the puck)

If you learn nothing else here, learn this...because it's not just about hockey. It's easy to be confident when you're in control of the puck. It's very, very difficult to keep your confidence when you have to take whatever strange bounces or wicked shots life throws your way.

He throws the puck straight up in the air. WE FOLLOW IT as it turns and turns and falls...until the COACH'S outstretched hand snatches it out of mid-air.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COACH ORION

When you're not afraid to attack the game
when you're not in control...

(putting the puck in his
pocket)

The game is yours!

The FRESHMEN take note. They may not like him, but they are starting to respect him. FULTON looks back over his shoulder towards CHARLIE who sits in the penalty box. CHARLIE is pissed, not having heard a word.

EXT. LORING PARK BUS STOP - NIGHT

A city bus pulls in and loads up. CHARLIE is late and runs past the Guthrie Theatre and Walker Art Center trying to catch it.

He runs past LUIS who is behind a tree with MINDY. He does a double take. He just catches the bus before it leaves.

INT. BUS - NIGHT

It's real crowded. One seat left. It's right next to LINDA.

CHARLIE

Oh joy.

CHARLIE sits down next to LINDA. LINDA starts to move.

CHARLIE

You're just like the rest of those snobs.

LINDA

I am not a snob.

CHARLIE

Oh yeah, right. You don't like me because I'm an athlete. That's a snob. You don't even know me.

LINDA

I'm sure if I knew you I wouldn't like you.

CHARLIE

Try me. Hi, I'm Charlie. I'm a 14 year old, almost six feet, non-smoking, Leo. I like hockey, pizza and music. I dislike this school and everything about it...except maybe you.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHARLIE (cont'd)
(she laughs)
Now you go.

LINDA
I'm Linda. I like the pizza and music
part, and I hate going to a school that
calls itself the "Warriors."

CHARLIE
Do you think the Indians -- excuse me --
the Native Americans really mind?

LINDA
Of course. Wouldn't you?

CHARLIE
I guess. I just never thought about it
very much.

LINDA
Maybe you should start...

CHARLIE
So why do you go to Westbrook, your
parents make you?

LINDA
(shaking her head)
Unfortunately, it's the best school in
the city.

CHARLIE
With the best hockey program in the
state...

LINDA
I wouldn't know. I don't pay any
attention to sports.

CHARLIE
(playful)
Maybe you should start...

EXT. DISTRICT 5 PARK - NIGHT

LINDA walks up a plaza towards a fountain. CHARLIE, on
rollerblades, skates around the fountain and back to LINDA,
showing off for her.

CHARLIE
It's the greatest sport ever. The feeling
of flying. When you're really going,
you're so lost in it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LINDA

So that's what being a Duck is?

CHARLIE

You never heard of the Mighty Ducks?
They named a professional team after us.

LINDA

Yeah, sure.

They stop under a light. He looks her in the eye.

CHARLIE

I'm serious...

(She looks down.)

Hey, we have a game Friday. Maybe, you know, you could come, and after we could get a coke or something. I mean, if you want to...

LINDA

I don't know. I don't think I can sit there and listen to all those horrible Warrior cheers.

CHARLIE

Don't listen. Just watch.

They smile and continue walking.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ICE CENTER - NIGHT

The arena is packed with students, fans, parents & alumni.
The two teams circle the ice in warm-ups.

THE BROADCAST BOOTH - SAME TIME

At center ice between the two opposing benches, a small box serves as a radio booth. JOSH, an aspiring Al Michaels, wears headphones and speaks into the WWAR microphone.

JOSH

It appears the entire school has turned out to see the once Mighty Ducks -- I mean the Westbrook Warriors battle the Blake Freshman Barons.

JOSH turns and finds WEIRD DAVE at his shoulder.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAVE

Hey, Dude, could you play something by
Toad the Wet Sprocket?
(doing a strange little dance)

JOSH

Dave, this is a hockey game, not a dance,
okay?

ON THE ICE - CHARLIE

The WARRIORS warm up, CHARLIE scans the stands. He sees LINDA, who seems uncomfortable in these surroundings. She sits in the visitors section. Wrong move. CHARLIE gets her eye and waves her over. She waves back. He points. She gets it. Moves over.

HE looks over and sees BANKS in the stands, with the VARSITY. BANKS can only shrug.

THE FOUNDER'S CIRCLE

DEAN BUCKLEY, several BOARD MEMBERS and distinguished ALUMNI look down from their center ice pavilion. Directly behind them, we see the VARSITY BOOSTER CLUB PARENTS. Their president, THOM PORTER, sits with his arms folded and a skeptical look on his face.

THE WARRIOR BENCH

The team gathers around ORION.

COACH ORION

(tapping his forehead)
Think defense.
(sticking his hand out)
Alright on three, Go Warriors.
One...two...three...

ALL BUT CHARLIE

(with little enthusiasm)
Go Warriors!

CHARLIE looks up to the stands to catch LINDA'S disapproving eye. His look pleads innocence. "I didn't cheer."

CHARLIE

(to FULTON)
Let's show this guy what the Ducks can
do.

CUT TO:

THE FACE-OFF

DWAYNE wins the draw, stickhandles through a crowd, shoots a pass to FULTON in the slot...FULTON passes up the shot, dumps it back to CHARLIE at the point who comes in, beats two guys right up the middle in a bold move. And does his wild SPINORAMA to score! CHARLIE spreads his arms in a wide triumphant V; the FRESHMEN mob him.

THE STANDS

The crowd goes nuts. BUCKLEY and his cronies nod with pleasure. However, THOM PORTER and the Varsity Boosters offer polite applause at best. CHARLIE looks up to LINDA. She cheers, despite the fact the PEP BAND has struck up the WARRIOR FIGHT SONG.

COACH ORION

Knock off the celebration. Act like you've scored before.

DISSOLVE TO:

SERIES OF SHOTS: (THE BLAKE GAME) It's a reel of offensive highlights:

--AVERMAN skates in on a lone BLAKE DEFENSEMAN, leaves a perfect pass for the trailer, GUY, who buries the puck in the upper right corner of the net. CONNIE goes to high five him, he skates by her.

--RUSS fires a knuckle puck. The GOALIE gets a hand on it. It falls where WU knocks in the rebound. They are overjoyed.

---CHARLIE stick handles too much, gets stripped and a BLAKE defender heads towards JULIE. CHARLIE hustles back and from behind makes a sprawling dive to knock the puck away. He over-celebrates that too.

---LUIS races in and fakes, can't stop, goes all the way around the net, the GOALIE spins back, too late. LUIS wraps it around and right in. Goal.

---JULIE is bored at the other end. She sings to herself.

--ORION watches now as CHARLIE leads an attack down the boards, he tries a through the legs drop. FULTON shoots, a BLAKE defender goes down, the force of the shot spins him around like a demented break dancer. The puck winds up on CONNIE'S stick, she puts in an easy one.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE WESTBROOK ARENA - NIGHT

ON THE SCOREBOARD

It reads: WESTBROOK 8 - BLAKE 0...5 SECONDS to play in the second period.

THE ICE - SAME TIME

CHARLIE shoots from center ice...the puck bounces over the BLAKE GOALIE's stick just as time expires.

THE STANDS - SAME TIME

DEAN BUCKLEY & the BOARD are ecstatic.

DEAN BUCKLEY

I think we're witnessing the birth of a dynasty.

The VARSITY watches the game, bored silly -- except for BANKS who stands and cheers. COLE yanks him down into his seat.

THE BROADCAST BOOTH

JOSH

Unbelievable! Conway gets the hat trick from somewhere out in the ozone! At the end of two, it's Westbrook 9, Blake 0. It's over, folks.

INT. BENCH

The KIDS are real loose, full of self-congratulations. ORION, however, remains strangely aloof.

FULTON

(whispering to CHARLIE)

Check out Orion. You'd think we're losing.

CHARLIE

Who cares what he thinks? We can win without a coach.

THEY jump over the boards for the start of the final period.

INT. THE WESTBROOK RINK - THE THIRD PERIOD

MOVING WITH THE ACTION

The Warriors are in the midst of a power play. DWAYNE sets up behind the net, feeds a pass to CONNIE who flips it back

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

to CHARLIE at the point. The puck skips over CHARLIE'S stick -- and a BLAKE FORWARD comes flying up the wing. Nobody chases him except for CHARLIE, but the BLAKE FORWARD beats JULIE clean, spoiling the shutout.

THE ICE - MOMENTS LATER

AVERMAN lines up from the OPPOSING CENTER for the face-off.

AVERMAN

Relax, it's over...

Blake takes the face-off and immediately starts to buzz in the Westbrook zone. AVERMAN, LUIS and RUSS fail to backcheck. And a BLAKE FORWARD bangs it in. GOAL! We can feel Blake's confidence start to soar.

TIME CUT TO:

THE GAME - A MINUTE LATER

Blake continues to apply the pressure. Westbrook is standing still, no hustle at all. LUIS tries to clear the puck with his back to the play. He sets up a BLAKE FORWARD perfectly. Goal!

TIME CUT TO:

THE GAME - A FEW MINUTES LATER

DWAYNE is determined to get one back. He tries to stickhandle all by himself through the Blake defense. He's stopped cold. As the puck comes back the other way, CONNIE barely waves at her man. Here comes a forward one-on-one with CHARLIE.

ON THE COACH

COACH ORION

Make him make the first move Conway!

But, CHARLIE lunges first. The BLAKE FORWARD scoots around the sprawled CHARLIE and gets another goal!

CHARLIE breaks his stick over the boards. THE REF penalizes him. ORION'S expression never changes.

PENALTY BOX

CHARLIE moves into the penalty box, throwing a temper fit. Yelling at the ref.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STANDS

LINDA isn't impressed by his macho display.

JOSH

Oh, my! Conway is really hot, he gets
two for unsportsmanslike conduct. Where
has the Warrior defense gone this period?

ON THE BENCH

ORION, keeping his cool, sends GOLDBERG in for JULIE.

JULIE

Total breakdown up front. It's up to you.

GOLDBERG

Not a problem.

ON THE ICE

A BLAKE player dumps it in, GOLDBERG leaves the net to stop
it, it takes a wicked bounce off the glass and winds up in
front of an empty net. BLAKE taps it in.

STANDS

BUCKLEY & the BOARD are white. The ALUMNI are not pleased at
all. Behind them, THOM PORTER speaks loud enough for the big
shots to hear.

THOM PORTER

Are you telling me my youngest boy isn't
good enough for this team?

ON THE SCOREBOARD

It now reads: Westbrook 9 - Blake 8...30 SECONDS to go.

BACK TO THE ICE

JOSH (V.O.)

Thirty left, the Warriors are desperately
trying to hang on. Conway's out of the
box and skating hard.

Blake pulls their GOALIE in favor of a SIXTH ATTACKER.
CHARLIE picks up the loose puck in his own zone.

AVERMAN

Clear it, Charlie. Kill the clock.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHARLIE is thinking of that fourth goal. Instead of dumping the puck the length of the ice, he stick handles to center ice. He tries a spinorama and loses the puck. BLAKE takes it and races down 6 on four. THEY SCORE!

THE BUZZER SOUNDS, the game ends. It's a very disappointing tie for the WARRIORS. BLAKE celebrates like they have won.

INT. THE LOCKER ROOM - LATER

The Freshmen are subdued and embarrassed. CHARLIE sits in the corner by himself, head down, exhausted.

CHARLIE

The guy tripped me in the spinorama.

AVERMAN

We didn't need anymore goals.

CHARLIE

Hey, I was trying to win it, Lester.

AVERMAN

Well mission unaccomplished, Conway.

They start pushing at each other. Enter the COACH. He stops the shoving with a wicked glare.

COACH ORION

How long's it take to score a goal?

He hurls a puck across the room into a locker, bang.

COACH ORION

Bam. See. Less then a second. That means no lead is safe if you can't play defense. Get this straight! I don't give a damn how many goals you score. I want one number on your mind. Zero. As in shutout. Got it? Practice tomorrow - 5 a.m. You've got to get up early if you're gonna hunt for goose eggs.

He leaves. Silence. GUY looks back in his locker.

GUY

Hey, who took my clothes?

AVERMAN

Me too, very funny.

They all turn to see their clothes are gone from the locker room. Silence. We hear a single shower on in the b.g. They move into find...

INT. SHOWERS

Their clothes are in a giant pile on the shower floor, soaking wet. A shower still remains on, drenching the mass. Written in shaving cream on the wall is: "Freshman Stink."

INT. HALLWAY - SAME TIME

BUCKLEY stops Coach ORION in the hall. He places a "consoling" hand on ORION's shoulder.

DEAN BUCKLEY

Ted, I know you're just as disappointed in that tie as we -

COACH ORION

(deadpan)

Actually, I'd have preferred a loss.

DEAN BUCKLEY

You're kidding, right Coach?

COACH ORION

One thing I know. You learn a helluva lot more from losing than winning.

DEAN BUCKLEY

(blurting it out)

We don't have time for learning. We need to win!

COACH ORION

You're kidding, right Dean?

Exit the COACH. Here comes THOM PORTER, steam pouring out of his ears. DEAN BUCKLEY quickly regains his slick composure.

THOM PORTER

Buckley, I want a word with you!

DEAN BUCKLEY

Thom, relax. I'm on your team.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - LATER

Several kids point hair dryers at their clothes. It's futile. Everyone sits around mad. We hear the sounds of the VARSITY game starting.

GOLDBERG

Should have these dry in about two hours.
No problem.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WU

Could be worse. Ever see what liquid nitrogen can do to your clothes.

(they look at him)

I spilled some in science class. They got this big tank there.

They all look at him. He smiles a little devilishly.

RUSS

How big a tank?

WU

Not too big...portable.

They look at him with determination.

INT. ARENA - SAME TIME

LINDA waits. No CHARLIE. She decides to leave.

INT. VARSITY LOCKER ROOM - SAME TIME

RUSS, WU, and CHARLIE hold this large tank of liquid nitrogen and hose down the varsity team's clothes. It makes white smoke everywhere. They look at their work and smile. They stop at BANKS' locker.

RUSS

What about Banks?

Pause. CHARLIE thinks. It's not an easy one.

CHARLIE

He's one of them now...isn't he?

Sadly true. His clothes receive a full blast.

GOLDBERG and JULIE further the matter by squirting shaving cream into the toes of all shoes and sneakers. CHARLIE laughs, then sees the CLOCK on the wall and panics.

CHARLIE

Oh, no!

GOLDBERG

What? We got a year -

CHARLIE whispers something to GOLDBERG who promptly announces it to the world.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GOLDBERG

You had a date with -

CHARLIE slaps his hand over GOLDBERG'S big mouth.

CONNIE

You may as well tell us who she is,
Charlie. Soon as you leave, we'll beat
it out of him.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - LATER

Varsity comes in happy after a victory. They go to their lockers. Cole notices his clothes. They are standing up without hangers. Frozen solid, socks and all. He touches them and they literally shatter.

The other players do the same, their clothes shatter into a million pieces of colored ice.

They look up and see writing. "Varsity Sucks Ice"

A player slips on a sneaker, we hear the squish of cream. It overflows. Banks looks at his clothes, sighs.

INT. SCHOOL - DAY

Montage

----WU walks down the hall, the Varsity check him hard into the lockers.

----CHARLIE sees a Preppy Guy signing Linda's petition. She gets her signature, looks up and sees Charlie, then walks away.

---FULTON drinks from a fountain, the Varsity pack walks by and shoves his head down into it. Fulton looks up to actually see Banks with the group. Traitor.

----LUIS is caught holding Mindy's hand. The Varsity chases him.

----ANGELA, clad as Hester Prynne, scarlet letter upon her Puritan gown, stands on her desk as if it were the scaffold. From this lofty perch, she reads to them from Hawthorne's novel. The kids look up to her, enthralled.

----DWAYNE, alone in his dorm room, practices his sax.

----THE RINK. The Coach demonstrates how to block shots. Fulton shoots and Orion drops to smother the puck. No problem. He motions for Charlie to try. Fulton shoots, Charlie jumps out of the way.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

---A GAME IN PROGRESS, the opposing player shoots, CHARLIE moves out of the way, it's a goal. BUCKLEY looks up at the scoreboard...WARRIORS 7 EAGLES 6. BUCKLEY can feel the hot breath of THOM PORTER on his neck.

ON the bench. ORION benches CHARLIE who protests vehemently.

CHARLIE

Why don't you put me where I belong?

COACH ORION

(fixing Charlie with his gaze)

Right now, you are where you belong.

CHARLIE turns to the stands to see HANS & his MOM look back at him. Embarrassed he slams his stick down.

EXT. MICKEY'S DINING CAR - ESTABLISHING - DAY

INT. MICKEY'S DINING CAR - SAME TIME

CHARLIE sits at the counter with his head down. CASEY stands over him. In the b.g., another waitress, JEANETTE, cleans up.

CASEY

Jeanette covers my shift so I can watch you get benched?

CHARLIE

I didn't ask you to come.

CASEY

I don't like your attitude.

CHARLIE

Yeah, well, I don't like this school.

(shaking his head)

Man, what was Gordon thinking?

CASEY

What was Gordon thinking? You're the one who's not thinking here, mister. All Gordon Bombay did was give you a free shot at the best education possible. Don't blow it, Charlie.

(beat)

What do you want to eat?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHARLIE

Nothing.

Exit CHARLIE. JEANETTE exchanges a sympathetic glance with CASEY as if to say, "Teenagers."

INT. HANS AND JAN'S CHALET - NIGHT

CHARLIE is shooting into an indoor goalie net. JAN plays goal, CHARLIE hits the corners. HANS sits nearby, nursing a bit of a cold. HANS calls out the corner, CHARLIE shoots.

HANS

Upper right...Good. Left stick...ya!

JAN

I surrender. I surrender.
I'm spritzing. I need a shower.
(he leaves to back room)

CHARLIE exchanges a high-five with HANS.

CHARLIE

See, I'm an offensive machine. This coach hasn't got a clue.

HANS

He has own system.

CHARLIE

His system sucks.

HANS

Why do you have to talk this way?

CHARLIE

I'm fourteen, this is the way I talk.

(He softens, taking a seat at
Hans' feet.)

Sorry, his system stinks. Besides, he's a real -- is it okay if I say jerk?

HANS

(smiling)

Once upon a time, you thought Gordon was a jerk.

CHARLIE

This is different...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HANS

How?

CHARLIE

Gordon changed. This guy...forget it.
You could run Orion over with a truck and
he's never gonna change.

HANS

(gently squeezing Charlie's
neck)

Maybe it's you, Charlie, that needs to do
the changing.

INT. CAFETERIA - ANOTHER DAY

The VARSITY approaches the J.V. table. They brace for a
clash. BANKS is with them.

RICK

Congrats on the big win.

CHARLIE

Yeah, right.

RICK

You made it through the hazing. It's
hands off after you win your first game.
School tradition.

BANKS

It's true guys. I asked.

RICK

We're all Warriors now. You guys proved
your guts. So you all set for dinner
Friday.

RUSS

Dinner?

RICK

It's a Westbrook tradition. Varsity gotta
treat the Freshmen to dinner. So round up
your posse and meet us at six at Murray's
Steak House downtown. Anybody need a
ride, we can take you. You guys like
steak don't ya?

They look to BANKS who shrugs. "It's okay."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHARLIE

Yeah. We do.

COLE

I don't like you puking, but this is tradition. And at Westbrook I learned to care about tradition.

FULTON, RUSS, CHARLIE look at each other. The VARSITY walks by, BANKS is the last.

BANKS

It's cool.

EXT. MURRAY'S STEAK HOUSE - NIGHT

RED-VESTED VALETS stand guard at this very swanky restaurant.

INT. A PRIVATE DINING ROOM - SAME TIME

Four tables form a rectangle in this elegant room made up of marble, brass, glass and wood. The VARSITY look like they belong in their WESTBROOK TEAM BLAZERS. The FRESHMEN look less to the manner born in their diverse form of dress.

A small group of FORMALLY CLAD WAITERS attend their every need, filling their water glasses and putting fresh rolls on their plate

RICK

Hey, you gotta show me that spinorama, man, that thing is cool.

CHARLIE

Yeah, sure. It's easier than it looks.

RICK

You're being modest.

GOLDBERG shrugs, turns to JULIE.

GOLDBERG

(offering his roll to Julie)
Another roll?

She elbows him hard in the chest; he falls over.

JULIE

No, thanks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GOLDBERG
(getting up)
I'm just trying to help.

SCOTT, who sits on the other side of Goldberg, leans forward, enthralled by Julie's accent.

SCOTT
You're from the East?

JULIE
(swallowing and smiling)
Maine.

GOLDBERG
I'm from Philly.

SCOTT
I hear Maine's beautiful.

JULIE
(nodding)
Somebody told me you're going to Dartmouth.

SCOTT
(modest)
Yeah.

JULIE
You'll love New Hampshire.

GOLDBERG
(more to himself)
Philly's nice...

RUSS stares at his salad, unsure which fork to use. He picks up the big one, sets it down, picks up the small one, drops it on the floor. A WAITER is quickly at his side to replace it.

RUSS
I don't need anymore damn forks. Jeez.

A FORK TAPS ON A GLASS

Captain RICK stands, his water glass raised for a toast. The VARSITY all raise their glasses.

RICK
On behalf of the Westbrook Warrior Varsity State Champion Hockey Team, I'd like to welcome the future state champs, the Westbrook Freshmen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VARSAITY

Here...Here!

FAVORING BANKS

He sits between TWO VARSITY PLAYERS, feeling really uncomfortable.

RICK

We're just glad you loaned us Banksie so we'd have a chance to beat you guys in the annual freshman-varsity showdown.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MURRAY'S - LATER

The WAITERS clear the dinner dishes. The FRESHMEN sit back in stuffed satisfaction. All the Varsity have left their seats except for SCOTT, RICK, COLE and the lonesome BANKS.

RICK

Nobody move. There's something we have to take care of.

BANKS seems reluctant to go, but finally gets up with his compatriots. The Freshmen are all alone.

GOLDBERG

(knowingly)

Listen, I don't want to spoil anything...but I overheard some things in the men's room.

(beat)

It's a cake. Act surprised, okay?

A couple of WAITERS roll in a LARGE CAKE ILLUMINATED BY SPARKLERS.

It reads: "THANKS FOR DINNER, LOSERS!"

The MAITRE'D ceremoniously places the bill on the table: \$857!

INT. KITCHEN - LATER

Under the watchful eyes of the MAITRE'D, we see a SERIES OF SHOTS:

--GOLDBERG, LUIS, & JESSE wash the dishes, shirtsleeves rolled up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

---CHARLIE stands with a vacuum.

--CONNIE & GUY sweep the floor.

--WU cleans the toilet.

--FULTON takes out the trash to the dumpster behind the restaurant.

--RUSS hoses down the parking lot. The red-vested VALETS watch and smile. CHARLIE and AVERMAN sweep the sidewalk.

CHARLIE

We gotta do something. We gotta respond.

AVERMAN

Like physics. Each action requires an equal if not bigger reaction.

RUSS

Be cool. I don't want to mess up my scholarship.

(they stare)

I mean, let's not get caught.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. VARSITY DORM ROOMS - NIGHT

COLE, RICK sleep in the senior dorm.

Like commandos, DWAYNE, AVERMAN, FULTON...run lengths of clear straw-like tubing under the doors.

EXT. COMMAND POST - A TREE OUTSIDE

Up in a tree, with binoculars LUIZ and JULIE look into the VARSITY rooms.

THEIR POV (BINOCs)

They can see the tubes running into the rooms. They speak on a walkie talkie back to the tube runners, issuing directions.

LUIZ

Little to the left, good. Room B, four feet straight ahead.

INT. HALL

They maneuver the long straws accordingly.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

INT. DEAN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

CHARLIE, GOLDBERG, RUSS carry a large sack over to the huge ant farm. They smear some honey inside and lay the bag down.

CHARLIE

Be careful, they're not called fire ants for nothing.

RUSS

Sure he's not gonna notice 'em missing?

GOLDBERG

I doubt he keeps a head count.

INT. HALLWAY - A LITTLE LATER

CHARLIE is in charge. He orders the FRESHMEN to tie the doorknobs of the doors across from each other together. The ropes have very little slack.

EXT. COMMAND TREE

JULIE

(on walkie)

To the left. You are at the foot. Release the hungry fellows.

LUIS

Ya know you look good in black.

JULIE

Let it go, Luis.

INT. VARSITY BEDROOM

RICK and COLE sleep, unknowingly. The tubes run right under their sheets, up their legs.

INT. HALLWAY

FULTON sticks the tubes into the bag on ants. The ants are marching.

CHARLIE moves the bag to the other door. The ants go marching. We can see them through the clear tubing.

INT. BEDROOM - ONLY A MATTER OF TIME

COLE scratches. RICK scratches. What the...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COLE

AHHHHHH!!

RICK

AHHHHH!

They run to open their door, but the knob is connected by ropes to the door across the hall. A push me pull you happens. It's a tug of war to open the doors.

EXT. HALL

ALL THE ROPES to all the rooms hold. Now in full Duck uniform on rollerblades, the DUCKS ride through the center slicing the ropes with a knife.

INT. ROOMS - SAME TIME

The doors fly open, ALL sets of jocks go flying back.

INT. HALL

A beat and the JOCKS come swarming out into the hall, to meet the DUCKS, protected in gear. They start playing hockey, bumping into them. THE JOCKS are itching and slapping like crazy, running for the showers.

RICK tackles CHARLIE.

RICK

You think you're funny. You think you're worth a damn. You're just white trash...

RUSS

Who you calling white trash?

CHARLIE

We'll take you on anywhere, anytime.

COLE

Tomorrow, dawn. AHHHH.

Unable to take the biting, he runs off to the showers.

CUT TO:

INT. THE SCHOOL RINK - DAWN

Morning light streams in through the upper windows. Charging through the boards come the FRESHMEN wearing their old DUCK JERSEYS..

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Here come the VARSITY. Huge, cruel and fast. With red dots on their faces from the ant attacks.

GOLDBERG takes his place in goal and starts doing his pre-game stretches. JULIE skates over to him.

JULIE

Coach says I'm the starter.

GOLDBERG

(looking around)

Coach? I don't see any coach.

JULIE

We'll split the shifts. I want a piece a these guys.

GOLDBERG nods. Yeah. They're together. BANKS, in varsity gear, circles past and CHARLIE steps up to him.

BANKS

They didn't tell me 'til it was too late.
You gotta believe me.

CHARLIE

Yeah, right, Preppy.

The VARSITY does militant looking warm-ups. On his way across the ice, SCOTT, catches up with Julie.

SCOTT

Can we call it even?

JULIE

I hate ties. They're like kissing your brother.

JULIE skates off, SCOTT smiles.

INT. THE RINK - CENTER ICE

CHARLIE and RICK face off.

RICK

First to ten, full check.

CHARLIE

Bring it on.

RICK easily wins the draw, and throws an elbow into CHARLIE'S face as he goes by. COLE goes around FULTON like he's standing still. GUY and CONNIE converge on COLE who slides the puck back to RICK and then levels CONNIE and GUY. RICK skates in unopposed, shoots right...GOAL!

QUICK DISSOLVE TO:

THE GAME - JUST MOMENTS LATER

CHARLIE leads the flying V out of the Freshman zone. They cross their own blue line...

The VARSITY assumes their defensive posture, skating backwards with perfect balance and ease. The instant the V hits the center line, the Varsity CENTER takes a run at CHARLIE. He throws a beautiful "fake check" which CHARLIE literally falls for...and the flock falls over CHARLIE! The VARSITY CENTER picks up the loose puck, skates in...looks right...shoots left...GOAL!

The Varsity CENTER slides on one knee -- triple pumping with his best hot dog move.

ON THE BENCH - SAME TIME

JULIE slams her goalie glove down.

JULIE

Come on, defense. Let's go!

RUSS, AVERMAN and RUSS hop the boards for a line change.

RUSS

Knucklepuck!

ON THE VARSITY NET - MOMENTS LATER

SCOTT stays ever alert in goal. RUSS winds up, shoots...here comes the treacherous KNUCKLEPUCK...and up comes SCOTT'S HAND to snatch it out of the air like it was a feather.

RUSS stands dumbfounded at the blue line as RICK charges right over him with the puck.

GOLDBERG moves out of the net to cut down the angle, but now he's fair game, and here comes COLE to blindside him flat. RICK comes to a complete stop right at the goalie crease, like a football player walking into the end zone. He slides it in.

RICK

QUACK-QUACK-QUACK!

INT. BENCH AREA

They try to regroup, beaten and breaking.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUSS

We can't win if they're gonna cheap shot us to death.

CHARLIE

Don't show 'em we're hurt. Keep skating.

BACK INTO IT - ICE

Skating hard, CONNIE passes to CHARLIE who does a give and go, ducking a major check. COLE crashes into the boards. Just BANKS to beat. BANKS plays CHARLIE who at the last minute passes of to WU who scores.

CHARLIE pushes BANKS into the wall hard. They go at each other.

CHARLIE

How you like it?

BANKS

Interference. You'd be in the box.

CHARLIE

Go cry to your rich parents.

They start fighting. Everyone gathers round. The Varsity love it. THEN RICK pushes FULTON and they square off.

EVERYONE PAIRS UP AND SQUARES OFF. It's a very unfair slugfest. The VARSITY has got the FRESHMEN down and almost out. COLE is pounding on DWAYNE. FULTON breaks away to help out. They are outmanned.

Suddenly the floods come on. And ORION is there, livid. He hurls players apart. He's really intense.

COACH ORION

STOP! Break it up. NOW! Right now!
(to Rick)

It's a damn good thing I'm not your coach...Get your team out of here!

RICK and the VARSITY quickly disappear, leaving the FRESHMEN to face the Coach's wrath. Their heads are down. ORION'S eyes burn with anger, but his low, controlled voice makes him sound even scarier than when he was shouting at the Varsity.

COACH ORION

Congratulations. You have just forfeited whatever mental edge you might have had over the Varsity. Now they know they own you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The FRESHMEN raise their heads. This thought never occurred to them before.

COACH ORION

This isn't pee-wee's. Your little Duck tricks won't work at his level. For the last time, stay away from the Varsity, and I want those Duck jerseys off now!

The order takes a beat to register. Then, the FRESHMEN start to peel off their jerseys.

CHARLIE stands with his arms folded across his Duck jersey, a definite act of defiance.

The pile of Duck jerseys lies at the COACH'S feet. The COACH locks eyes with Charlie.

COACH ORION

You have two choices, Conway. You take off your jersey right now---or you don't play.

CHARLIE, flushing red, looks at his friends. He won't do it. Can't.

COACH ORION

Goodbye, Conway. Anybody else.

FULTON steps forward defiantly. ORION stares him down. FULTON slinks away.

COACH ORION

It seems to me, your pride as Ducks is holding you back as hockey players.

(beat)

From this moment on, the Ducks are dead!

The death knell of the Ducks hits them hard. CHARLIE and FULTON look back before they step off the ice for good. They are disappointed to see their friends stay.

INT. COACH ORION'S OFFICE - DAY

CHARLIE and FULTON barge into ORION'S office. ORION does not appear to be the least bit upset by their presence.

COACH ORION

What can I do for you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHARLIE

Why are we here?

COACH ORION

These are philosophical questions,
Charlie. I'm just a hockey coach.

CHARLIE

How come the Dean hasn't expelled us?
You kicked us off the team. Don't we
have to play to keep our scholarships?

COACH ORION

Who said I kicked you off the team? I
kicked you off the ice. I expect you
both at practice this afternoon..

CHARLIE

What if we don't want to come back?

COACH ORION

I don't deal in "if's." You either do or
you don't. You're big boys. You decide.

INT. SCHOOL - HALL - LATER

CHARLIE and FULTON clean out their lockers while their DUCK
friends try to dissuade them.

RUSS

Come on man, we need you.

CHARLIE

It's too late. I'm not going back. Not
after what he did to the Ducks.

FULTON

Look around...this isn't for us.

LUIS winks at MINDY as she passes.

LUIS

I don't know. It's alright.

RUSS

I can't quit, man. This school's my
ticket...

CHARLIE

Russ, no one's asking you to quit. I
understand.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FULTON

You gotta do what you gotta do.

CHARLIE and FULTON head for the exit as the other DUCKS head for class. As CHARLIE and FULTON pass the music room, they hear the STAGE BAND really cooking.

THEIR POV

DWAYNE, at the center of the action, now performs a killer solo on the sax.

BACK TO CHARLIE AND FULTON

CHARLIE shakes his head as if to say, "Man, look what's happened to the Ducks."

EXT. DISTRICT 5 FULTON'S ALLEY - DAY

CHARLIE and FULTON sit with their backs against a dumpster, sucking down slurpies.

CHARLIE

Sure beats school, huh?

FULTON

Yeah...all we need's a raft, and we can float down the Mississippi.

CHARLIE

What are you talking about?

FULTON

You know, Huck Finn.

CHARLIE

I haven't read it yet.

FULTON

Man, I couldn't put it down -

CHARLIE

Forget Huck Finn. We're going to the N.H.L.!

FULTON

Damn right!

CHARLIE

Way I figure, we go play juniors in Canada -

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE SOUND OF ROLLERBLADES interrupts Charlie's reverie. Enter the DUCKS led by AVERMAN. CHARLIE stands, thrilled to see his teammates joining him.

CHARLIE

Alright! Ducks fly together!

Before CHARLIE knows what hits him, the DUCKS fly into action. GOLDBERG and JESSE each grab CHARLIE by an arm, spin him around and drop him on a crate which GUY slides under his butt. AVERMAN now plays the part of ROBIN LEACH replete with grating accent.

AVERMAN

Welcome to the lives of the almost rich and famous! Tonight, the story of Charlie Conway, the captain of the once Mighty Ducks.

Here comes DWAYNE, miming the part of Charlie.

AVERMAN

Charlie attended the famed Westbrook Academy in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

COWBOY DWAYNE struts, resembling Charlie not in the least.

AVERMAN

But he dropped out at 14 to pursue his dream of playing professional hockey. How did it go? Let's ask his former Westbrook teammate, Nobel Prize winning physicist, Professor Kenneth Wu...

As DWAYNE skates in circles...

WU

Conway? Yes, I remember him. All the N.H.L. scouts were after him. A true rising star in the minors...

CHARLIE smiles as DWAYNE vaults into a spinorama. GOLDBERG and JESSE each catch him by a leg, holding him spread-eagled in mid-air. DWAYNE looks down, horrified by his vulnerable position. GOLDBERG and JESSE launch DWAYNE into a backwards flip. HE crashes flat on his back, arms and legs flailing. The DUCKS gather around in a circle.

WU

What goes up, must come down.

CONNIE weeps and says something in French.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AVERMAN

Excuse-moi, mademoiselle?

CONNIE

I said, if only he had a good education to fall back on, he could have traveled the world like me...CNN REPORTER, Constance Moreau.

RUSS now kneels at DWAYNE'S side.

AVERMAN

Wait, aren't you Russell Tyler -

RUSS

Dr. Russel Tyler -

AVERMAN

Dr. Russell Tyler, the famed neurosurgeon of the world-famous Mayo Clinic! Didn't you and Charlie attend Westbrook together?

RUSS

Don't touch the suit, man. It cost 600 bucks! I did the attending -- Charlie did the dropping out, remember? Matter of fact, I operated on the poor boy, got him back on his feet...

(helping DWAYNE up)

Yes, sir, he landed a position with the Boston Bruins...

The crowd CHEERS.

AVERMAN

Ah, dreams do come true. Let's see how Charlie fared in the N.H.L.

DWAYNE

(limping around)

PEANUTS...PEANUTS...GET YOUR HOT-ROASTED PEANUTS!

LUIS and JULIE play the part of spectators.

LUIS

Is that Charlie Conway selling peanuts?

JULIE

Don't be silly. What would Charlie be doing selling peanuts? Oh...I forgot...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AVERMAN

Well, there you have it, the sad story of Charlie Conway who forfeited his scholarship to Westbrook Academy. Tune in next week when we profile Fulton Reed.

FULTON looks at the DUCKS, then at CHARLIE.

GOLDBERG

Make up your mind, guys. If we don't get back to school in ten minutes, we'll do two weeks of detention.

FULTON

I'm going back.

CHARLIE sadly shakes his head. The DUCKS skate off without him. CHARLIE is left alone to think.

INT. MALL OF AMERICA - LATER THAT DAY

CHARLIE stretches out in front of a fountain. A TWITCHY YOUNG MAN, 17, wearing a Video Arcade t-shirt, sits next to him. He constantly fiddles with a changemaker on his belt.

CHARLIE

Where are all the girls?

CHANGEMAKER

In school. Where do you think?

(twitching)

You need change, man? I can make you change...

CHARLIE shakes his head. Exit the CHANGEMAKER. CHARLIE stares into the fountain, then hears a familiar voice.

CASEY (O.S.)

Charlie Conway?

CHARLIE

(turning)

Hi, Mom.

CASEY

So, now we're skipping school, are we?

CHARLIE

No, Mom, I quit.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CASEY

Really?

(very cutting)

Well, that's just great...

CHARLIE

You can't make me go back there, Mom.

CASEY

I'm not holding a gun to your head, mister. You want to wreck your life, hey, that's your business.

(beat)

Do me one favor. Don't kid yourself, Charlie. You're not just quitting school. You're quitting on yourself.

Exit CASEY. Again, CHARLIE is left alone.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

PRE-GAME. GOLDBERG starts to don his goalie gear.

COACH ORION

Goldberg, you ever skate up?

GOLDBERG

You kidding?

COACH ORION

With Conway gone, we're caught short-handed on defense.

GOLDBERG

I could try.

COACH ORION

That's the spirit, Goldberg.

(winking)

Don't be afraid to lay on the body...

GOLDBERG smiles as it dawns on him that his weight could prove an advantage.

EXT. HANS AND JAN'S CHALET - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT

INT. HANS AND JAN'S CHALET - SAME TIME

HANS is in a chair, covered by a blanket, not feeling well. He listens to the WARRIOR GAME on the radio.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOSH (V.O.)

And with ten to go in the second, it doesn't look good for Westbrook. The one bright spot is Greg Goldberg on defense. He's a one-man wrecking crew.

Enter CHARLIE, badly shaken by the day's events.

HANS

Charlie, Charlie, how come you're not at the game?

CHARLIE

I don't know...I quit.

HANS

Ja?

CHARLIE

(sadly)

Yeah.

THEY listen to the game.

JOSH (V.O.)

These little Warriors can't seem to buy a break. At the end of two, it's the Cardinals 4, the Warriors 1.

HANS turns off the radio.

HANS

Sounds like the team needs you, Charlie.

CHARLIE

They don't need me. They need a new coach.

HANS

The coach needs you too.

CHARLIE

Why? So he can have someone to pick on?

HANS

You know why Orion picks on you, Charlie?

CHARLIE

Yeah, because he hates -

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HANS

No...because he sees something in you the others don't have.

CHARLIE looks at HANS strangely.

HANS

It's not your skating...it's not your shot. It's your love of the game. So, he must push you to respect every part of the game -- even the parts that are not so much fun. He knows that once you meet his challenge, the others will follow. And your love of the game will grow with your respect...

CHARLIE

How do you know this?

HANS

Because I see it too...

CHARLIE looks down at the floor. Hans' words are a revelation to him. When he looks up, he sees HANS' head slumped on his chest. CHARLIE'S eyes open wide. He knows in an instant something is wrong.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

The FRESHMEN hang their heads in defeat. Only GOLDBERG is happy. He throws a mock elbow at RUSS.

GOLDBERG

It's more fun to give than receive. Who knew?

RUSS

Yeah, well the way we been giving up goals, the man's gonna give us about a million laps.

Enter the COACH. The team hushes up, expecting the worst. Indeed, ORION is very somber.

COACH ORION

Conway just called from the hospital.
It's your friend Hans...

Everyone looks to one another. Oh, no.

INT. A HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - LATER

We see a DOCTOR talking to JAN. CHARLIE stands off to the side, outside earshot. JAN slowly nods, the DOCTOR pats him on the shoulder, then walks away.

JAN looks at the floor, then HEARS A COMMOTION. Here come the DUCKS hauling down the corridor, followed by CASEY. JAN gathers his strength as the team surrounds him. He holds a single finger to his lips to silence their shouts.

JAN
(calm)
Hans had a heart attack tonight.
It was his time.

The news registers as if in slow motion upon the KIDS. They are trying to grasp it.

CHARLIE
Hans is dead?

CASEY tries to give her son a hug, but he pulls away, and after a few uncertain steps, suddenly bolts down the hallway.

EXT. THE HOSPITAL - MOMENTS LATER

CHARLIE comes flying out the main doors running at breakneck speed.

He almost runs into a taxi-cab that pulls up in front of the hospital. Hold on the cab. A passenger in the back, obscured by shadow turns to see the boy run.

EXT. THE OLD NEIGHBORHOOD - LOW ANGLE - A LITTLE LATER

CHARLIE'S FEET FLY down an old cobblestone street. We HEAR HIS HEART RACE IN HIS BREATH.

EXT. LAKE OF THE ISLES POND - HIGH ANGLE - A LITTLE LATER

Out of breath, CHARLIE stops near the pond and drops to his knees.

Illuminated only by the moonlight. It's an eerie echo of Gordon's missed shot from his own childhood.

He is caught up in a storm of emotions. Winded, hyperventilating, choked. He looks up at the silent pond. And he cries...alone.

Then through his tears he looks up and sees a form...He blinks and can't believe it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

It's GORDON BOMBAY.

He moves to CHARLIE who thinks he's hallucinating.

CHARLIE

Gordon...?

GORDON

Jan told me Hans was getting worse. I was on the first plane...

CHARLIE

You're too late.

GORDON

I know.

CHARLIE turns away, not wanting to let Gordon see him cry. GORDON kneels down behind him, touches Charlie's back.

CHARLIE

Please...go away. Go back to whatever you were doing.

GORDON

Charlie, I know what you're feeling... because I've felt it too.

(beat)

After my dad died, I wasn't sure about anything -- especially myself. I felt all alone, you know? But Hans...he always believed in me. Always. And somehow that was enough to carry me through...

CHARLIE doesn't turn, but he no longer tells Gordon to go away.

GORDON

There's nothing I can do to pay Hans back for what he did. All I can do is believe in you -- the way he believed in me. And I do.

CHARLIE looks up into GORDON'S eyes.

GORDON

Always.

CHARLIE softens like the kid he is. He reaches for GORDON and hugs him. Hard, trying to hold on, like any father and son.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EXT. THE SKY - SAME TIME

The BRIGHT MOON is swallowed by an immense dark cloud.

FADE OUT:

EXT. THE SKY - MORNING

A BRIGHT SUN now replaces the moon. A FLOCK OF DUCKS IN V FORMATION flies across the early December sky.

EXT. A CEMETERY - SAME TIME

GORDON delivers the eulogy. JAN stands between CASEY and CHARLIE. The DUCKS are all there.

GORDON

Hans was only 14 when he boarded the big ship for America...and he didn't know a single soul beyond his small village.

The DUCKS are amazed. Fourteen? Wow, he was their age.

GORDON

I am told that when Hans said goodbye to his family, his little brother cried. "Brother," Hans said, "soon we will laugh together in the new world." And they did...

GORDON chokes up at the memory of the two brothers as he knew them. JAN comes forward to hug GORDON.

JAN

The day has come again, I must say farewell to my brother. Please let not today be a time of tears. Today, let Hans hear our laughter.

CHARLIE turns and embraces his mother.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. A RINK - A LITTLE LATER

Unorthodox to have a "skating wake" but fitting here. The KIDS and GORDON play a game of pick-up hockey. It's wide-open, all-offense, anything goes...nothing but fun.

JAN, on skates, sits on the bench watching, the emotion in his eyes. CASEY sits next to him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BANKS skates onto the ice and into the welcoming embrace of his "real team."

AT THE BENCH

GORDON skates over for a quick drink of water.

GORDON

Whew! These kids are wearing me out!

CHARLIE and AVERMAN fly to his side.

CHARLIE

Hustle up, Gordon. You're on our line.

GORDON

(tongue hanging out)

Where you gettin' your energy?

AVERMAN

(doing a wicked ORION)

Quit dogging it, Bombay. Gimme 10, now!

It suddenly registers on CHARLIE who is the source of their endurance: ORION. As the puck bangs off the boards, AVERMAN and CHARLIE are off. GORDON catches his breath.

CASEY

Thanks for being there, Gordon. For Charlie...

GORDON looks over to JAN, then back to CASEY.

GORDON

People were there for me.

TIME CUT TO:

THE RINK - LATER

SERIES OF QUICK SHOTS:

--WU demonstrates a new figure skating move. GOLDBERG, the new man on skates, tries, goes up, does a half-spin, lands straight on his butt. Everyone laughs.

---RUSS shoots a knucklepuck over the goal...over the boards and out the exit!

----AVERMAN holds a lasso. DWAYNE mimes the proper action. AVERMAN nods, lets the rope fly straight in the air. It comes down on him!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

---CONNIE and GUY do a fun/bad figure pair routine to the music.

---CHARLIE goes around GORDON with a "fake" spinorama and scores. GORDON is impressed.

GORDON

Where'd ya pick that up? K-mart?

CHARLIE

There's more where that came from.

GORDON

Cocky...I like it.

--GORDON goes one on one with CHARLIE, GORDON beats him through his legs. CHARLIE rushes back and playfully tackles him from behind. PENALTY SHOT!

INT. THE RINK - LATER

GORDON gets ready to take a penalty shot on JULIE. The KIDS line the sidelines watching this moment where Gordon faces his "demons" once and for all. CHARLIE and BANKS coach GORDON at center ice.

GORDON

Triple deke?

CHARLIE

Quadruple deke.

GORDON

Four dekes?

BANKS

And a backhand flip.

GORDON takes a breath, circles at center.

REVERSE ANGLE - FROM BEHIND THE NET

Here comes GORDON...he dekes left, right, left, then throws the fourth deke -- JULIE bites! He flips it up on the backhand side. Nothing but net!

MOVING WITH GORDON

He turns and slides on one knee in triumph. The FRESHMEN race from the sidelines, mob him and bury him in a pile. JULIE dives on top.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE HOSPITAL - DAY

JAN and CHARLIE walk slowly towards the hospital entrance.

INT. THE HOSPITAL - A LITTLE LATER

A NURSE presents JAN with a form to sign while CHARLIE waits dutifully at his side.

NURSE

If you'll just sign here, I'll get your brother's things...

JAN nods, CHARLIE'S eyes go down the corridor where he sees a figure he seems to recognize take a right turn.

CHARLIE

I'll be right back.

MOVING WITH CHARLIE as he hustles down the hall, making his turn and proceeding until his path dead-ends at a double door marked: *PHYSICAL THERAPY*. CHARLIE looks through the window in the door.

CHARLIE'S POV

There is COACH ORION watching a THERAPIST help a 9-YEAR-OLD GIRL pull herself forward along rails with the aid of leg braces. ORION'S expression seems to will her forward. A giant smile illuminates his face as she completes her walk.

ORDERLY (O.S.)

Can I help you?

BACK TO CHARLIE

CHARLIE

Is that, you know, his -

ORDERLY

Daughter. They been coming here every day for five years. Ever since her accident. You never hear 'em complain neither.

CHARLIE nods, with a sudden flash of insight into his coach.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHARLIE
(more to himself)
Winners don't whine.

INT. A BUS - MORNING

As LINDA goes over her homework, she looks up and sees CHARLIE coming her way. There are plenty of empty seats, but he sits next to her. She goes back to her work.

LINDA
Where you been?

CHARLIE
Busy...

LINDA
Doing what?

CHARLIE
Being a jerk.
(She now looks up.)
I still owe you a coke.

LINDA
(going back to her work)
You owe me...a pizza.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - DAY

The FRESHMEN suit up for practice. In the b.g., by the door, ORION tapes up a new stick.

AVERMAN
(to RUSS)
You got 93 on the history exam?
(RUSS nods proudly.)
What'd you do, pull an all-nighter?

RUSS
No way, man. I don't need to cram. I
just put in my two hours every night.
(winking)
History takes time.

Enter CHARLIE with his gear. HE hesitates at the door, not sure of the COACH'S reaction. The TEAM watches.

COACH ORION
(matter-of-factly)
Hustle up, Conway. You'll do an extra
lap for every minute you're late.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AVERMAN
(starting a cheer)
Charlie...Charlie...

The CHEER spreads. CHARLIE smiles wide as he takes his place at his locker. The COACH smiles to himself, but his smile fades with the entrance of DEAN BUCKLEY. The CHEER dies...

DEAN BUCKLEY
Coach, I just need a minute here, okay?

The COACH nods. The DEAN pulls up a chair, turns it around backwards and sits, one of the "team."

DEAN BUCKLEY
Listen, I owe you all an apology. I think we -- everybody at the Academy -- have put too much pressure on you kids. Pressure to win...Pressure to keep up with your studies...It really isn't fair, is it?

The COACH looks at the DEAN, not liking where this may be going.

DEAN BUCKLEY
We have to think long term here -- what's in your best interest. Hard as it is for me personally, because, quite frankly, you kids are a breath of fresh air around here, I have to agree with the Board that you would be better off returning to your public schools after the Christmas break.

COACH ORION
Dean, I need a word with you.

DEAN BUCKLEY
I'll be done in a second -

COACH ORION
Now!

The DEAN smiles falsely and follows the COACH into the corridor.

DWAYNE
What's he sayin', Russ?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUSS
(sadly)
We're otta here. Hello, South Central...

AVERMAN
Shhhh.

AVERMAN stands by the door trying to overhear the COACH and the DEAN. The others creep over.

INT. THE CORRIDOR - SAME TIME

COACH ORION
Pressure? Who are you trying to kid?
You're the one caving to the pressure
from that damn Booster Club.

DEAN BUCKLEY
("shocked")
Ted, I'm trying to do you a favor here.
Now, you'll get to recruit your own team.
Let's face it, these Ducks are drowning
here.

COACH ORION
I've got my team. They stay or I go.

DEAN BUCKLEY
We'll miss you, Ted.

INT. THE LOCKER ROOM - SAME TIME

The DUCKS have heard it all. They know the score -- and who is really on their side.

EXT. THE BANKS OF THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER - NIGHT

GORDON and ORION walk along together. It's a clear, beautiful night. The Minneapolis Skyline sparkles behind them.

GORDON
You ever miss it -- the game?

COACH ORION
Long as you can skate, you're in the
game.
(beat)
It's funny though, I'm liking coaching
more than I thought.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GORDON

I told you, it grows on you.

COACH ORION

The thing is, you can sure see yourself in some of those kids. Same spirit. Same mistakes. Same smart-ass attitude...

GORDON

(laughing)

Tell me about it.

COACH ORION

You should be damn proud, Bombay. You did a helluva job with that team.

GORDON

(deeply touched)

Thanks, Ted. That really means something. Coming from you.

COACH ORION

Let's talk strategy...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BOARD MEETING - NIGHT

The large, fancy oak-paneled conference room is packed. Standing room only. The DISTINGUISHED 12 MAN BOARD sits up front on a dais with DEAN BUCKLEY in the center. On one side of the room, we see the VARSITY and their BOOSTER CLUB PARENTS. On the other side, we the DUCKS and their SUPPORTERS. We join the meeting in progress with COACH ORION addressing the BOARD from a microphone set up in the center aisle.

COACH ORION

...And so, I ask you now, to reconsider your decision to cancel the scholarships awarded to the Freshmen hockey team. I ask you to let them fulfill their four-year commitment to the Westbrook Academy.

DEAN BUCKLEY

(turning to the BOARD)

Do I have a motion to reconsider?

The BOARD stands mute. THOM PORTER and his BOOSTER CLUB cronies smile. The DUCKS look downcast. CHARLIE looks over his shoulder and sees CASEY standing in the back next to ANGELA and LINDA, who waits to present her petitions.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEAN BUCKLEY

I'm sorry, Coach. Without a motion and a second, the decision stands.

COACH ORION

You leave me no choice but to bring in my attorney.

Enter GORDON, briefcase in hand, dressed in his highest-power suit, ready for legal battle. As GORDON strides to the microphone, the DUCKS instinctively start to QUACK. ORION smiles, then stops them with a sidelong glance.

GORDON

Dean Buckley, Members of the Board, as counsel for Coach Orion and the Freshman Hockey Team, I am here tonight to set forth your legal options...so that you may make the best possible decision for all parties concerned.

DEAN BUCKLEY

(trying to be friendly)

Mr. Bombay, this isn't a legal proceeding.

GORDON

Not yet. But I can assure you it will be.

(pulling papers from his briefcase)

These scholarships became binding contracts upon the signatures of the recipients...to wit, the Ducks. They cannot be voided except for cause -- which, I guarantee you, you have none. Should you pursue their cancellation, I will slap you with an injunction within 24 hours. I will tie this matter up in court for years...until long after these freshmen have gone on to college. And I will collect damages. I will win because I am very good. And you know why I am so good? Because I had a good education. You gave it to me...and you will give it to these kids whether you like it or not.

LUIS

(whispering to CONNIE)

He is good.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CONNIE

Just warming up.

GORDON

Now, perhaps, some of you are snobbish enough to believe these Ducks don't belong at Westbrook. But I tell you, you're dead wrong.

ON THE DUCKS

They fly high with Gordon's inspiring rhetoric.

GORDON (O.S.)

I know these fine young people. You give them their full shot, and I promise you, they will beat everybody's brains out...not just on the ice, but in the classrooms too. I know what they can do. I demand you reinstate their scholarships. Now!

The DUCK side of the room bursts into APPLAUSE. RUSS now stands and comes forward to the microphone.

RUSS

Gordon, I don't want these folks thinkin' they're doing me any big favor.

GORDON

(whispering to RUSS)

Let me handle this, okay?

RUSS

(determined to speak)

Now, I've been workin' hard to get my A's, but I say, if we can't beat these State Chumps in the Freshmen-Varsity game, then we don't deserve to be here! I say let's settle this on the ice where it belongs.

The DUCKS are QUACKING again. GORDON looks over to ORION who nods.

RICK

(standing and shouting)

Let's get it on!

CHARLIE

(coming forward)

How 'bout we make it interesting? If we lose, the school name stays the same.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHARLIE (cont'd)

But if we win, the Warriors become the Ducks!

DEAN BUCKLEY

That's a separate issue.

LINDA pushes her way forward from the back.

LINDA

Dean, I'd be proud to call myself a Duck.
And I'm sure I speak for the majority of
underclassmen and women.

SHE dramatically places her petitions in front of the DEAN.

LINDA

I say let them play for it -- if the
Warriors aren't chicken!

With LINDA'S bold challenge, the VARSITY are up in arms,
ready to play. THOM PORTER quiets them down.

THOM PORTER

Dean, on behalf of the Varsity and the
Booster Club, I second the motion. Let's
get this over with -- and kill two birds
with one stone.

It's the VARSITY'S turn to cheer. The DEAN quickly realizes
he's in a no-lose situation.

DEAN BUCKLEY

(to the BOARD)

If neither side has a problem...

BANKS

(jumping up)

I have a problem! I play with the Ducks!

DEAN BUCKLEY

(pounding his gavel)

So be it!

The DUCKS quickly huddle around GORDON, the hero of the hour.

CHARLIE

(to GORDON)

Will you be at the game?

GORDON

I wouldn't miss it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They're all slapping him on the back, happy. For one brief moment, it's Gordon's team...just like the old Duck days.

INT. THE COACH'S OFFICE - NIGHT

ORION watches a videotape of the Varsity and makes notes late into the night.

INT. THE RINK - 5 A.M.

The DUCKS -- led by CHARLIE -- do their laps without prodding. As they fly by one by one, there is a look of grim determination on each of their faces.

Enter ORION hauling a large rubber garbage barrel. He blows his WHISTLE. The DUCKS circle around him at center ice. ORION looks up at the Varsity's State Championship Banners, then down at the DUCKS.

COACH ORION

I've been doing my homework on the Varsity all season. I'm not going to lie to you. They're good. If we played 'em in a 7 game series, I'd bet on them to win. But we only have to win one. And the better team is always ripe for an upset the first game, if the underdog is prepared. I know. I've been on both sides...

The DUCKS pay very close attention as ORION removes an empty tuna fish can from the top of the barrel.

COACH ORION

There's one thing the Varsity does very well. They're vultures around the net. They find every piece of loose trash. That's how they beat you. Not with the first shot...but the second...and the third. They bang in the junk. If we're gonna win, we have to pick up the garbage.

TIME CUT TO:

GARBAGE DRILL

The DUCKS form two lines on either side of the net. ORION stands with his garbage can 10 feet in front of JULIE in goal. He fires a stale bagel at her. She kicks out the rebound. CHARLIE swoops in and clears the bagel out of harm's way.

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The drill continues with ORION reaching into his barrel and shooting in rapid succession an empty soda can, shampoo bottle, half-eaten apple, shoe polish container, rubber dog toy, etc... The DUCKS in turn clear the trash. They're working hard, but they're having fun.

Now here comes GOLDBERG catching a rock-like donut as it ricochets high off JULIE'S pads. He studies the donut sheepishly.

COACH ORION

Don't eat it, Goldberg.

GOLDBERG

No, I forgot. I'm not the goalie anymore.

COACH ORION

Only natural. Okay, 5 minute break.

CHARLIE

Let's keep playing.

AVERMAN now howls in the manner of DICK VITALE...

AVERMAN

IT'S GARBAGE TIME, BABY!

The DUCKS raise their sticks and shout like warriors.

CUT TO:

INT. THE WESTBROOK RINK SCOREBOARD - FRIDAY NIGHT

We watch the numbers being set for the big game to begin.
Period: 1. Time: 15:00. Score: Varsity 0 - Freshmen 0.

INT. THE RINK - SAME TIME

The stands are starting to fill. BUCKLEY, THE BOARD, THOM PORTER, BOOSTER PARENTS, LINDA, ANGELA, JAN, CASEY, DUCK PARENTS, Everyone. Except GORDON.

THE DUCKS head out to the cheers of about one quarter of the school. The underclassmen are rallying behind their team.

INT. THE RINK - SAME TIME

Captain RICK leads the VARSITY on a fast warm-up lap. They are wearing their GREEN WARRIOR JERSEYS. Meanwhile, Captain DWAYNE leads his squad towards the rink. They are wearing their freshman RED JERSEYS, but the DUCK LOGO now replaces the warrior head. They are also wearing black arm bands in

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honor of HANS. Just as DWAYNE sets foot on the ice, RICK does a hockey stop. They stare each other down.

THE STANDS

CASEY squeezes JAN'S arm.

CASEY

See what they're wearing. It's for Hans.

JAN nods and brushes away a tear.

THE RADIO BOOTH

JOSH

What's in a name? Tonight, we'll soon know the answer as the Westbrook Varsity Warriors do battle with the Westbrook Freshmen Ducks!

WEIRD DAVE leans forward and taps JOSH on the shoulder.

DAVE

My name is Evad. That's Dave backwards.

THE VARSITY BENCH

COACH WILSON issues his final instructions to the VARSITY.

WILSON

Play the first minute like it's the last minute of the game. Don't let 'em think for a second they belong.

THE FRESHMAN BENCH

The FRESHMEN gather nervously around COACH ORION. AVERMAN looks up in the stands, then turns to CHARLIE.

AVERMAN

You see Gordon?

CHARLIE

We'll be alright.

COACH ORION

(sticking his hand out)

Alright, on three, Quack, Quack, Quack.

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The tension is immediately released as the DUCKS pick up their familiar chant.

CENTER ICE - MOMENTS LATER

BANKS gets set to face off against RICK.

RICK

You're gonna wish like hell you stuck with us.

BANKS

Save the trash talk.

The REFEREE drops the puck. BANKS wins the draw, slides it back to CHARLIE on defense. CHARLIE waits for COLE to come barreling at him, then slides the puck over to FULTON who feeds a pass to CONNIE on the left who dumps it in the Varsity zone, avoiding a hard check.

RICK picks up the puck from his DEFENSEMAN and starts to make a charge. He's met at center ice by BANKS who poke checks the puck back into the Varsity zone.

COLE gets it and flies up the left wing. FULTON takes him hard into the boards -- it's a GIANT CRASH between two big men. There's a scramble, RICK comes up with it...makes a move on CONNIE who doesn't bite. CONNIE strips the puck from him and sends it back up FULTON'S wing.

The first minute has elapsed and the Freshmen have stood their ground. THE DUCK crowd loves it. THOM PORTER and the BOOSTER CLUB PARENTS appear none too happy.

DISSOLVE TO:

JULIE - LATER IN THE FIRST PERIOD

She follows the action, her head totally in the game.

Here come the VARSITY on a rush. The CENTER crosses the blue line, slides a pass to his LEFT WING who immediately lets loose a wicked slap shot. GOLDBERG who stands ten feet in front of JULIE times his drop perfectly and blocks the speeding puck with his body...then smothers it before the Varsity can get a rebound.

JULIE

Thanks, Goldberg.

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GOLDBERG
(non-chalant)
Nothing but junk.

COLE stares with venom at these upstarts.

THE VARSITY BENCH - AFTER THE FIRST PERIOD

RICK takes a seat and slams his helmet down. COACH WILSON has the look of a man who does not like to lose.

WILSON
Let's get chippy, shall we?

INT. THE RINK - SECOND PERIOD ACTION

The VARSITY mounts a relentless attack deep in the Freshman zone.

RICK beats GUY to a loose puck in the corner...flies behind the Freshman net, hits COLE with a perfect pass in the slot. JULIE makes a save and COLE keeps coming, he crashes right into her. There's a LARGE "OOH" from the crowd.

A total cheap shot, this leads to big scrum in front. JULIE is shaken up. GOLDBERG, CHARLIE and FULTON go after COLE. He fights them all. Giving GOLDBERG a shot in the stomach with his stick.

BANKS gets attacked by not one, not two, but three WARRIORS!

THE REFS are too busy breaking everything up to see. ORION almost climbs onto the ice to save BANKS. A REF stops him. The WARRIORS leave BANKS crumpled on the ice and skate away innocently.

COACH ORION
Hey, Ref, that's not a necklace you're wearing! Blow the damn thing!

Hunched over, BANKS is helped over to the bench.

BANKS
I'm okay. Don't take me out. We can't quit now.

ORION looks at him, closely. He can play.

THE FACE-OFF - TO JULIE'S RIGHT

RICK wins the draw, moves straight in on goal -- SHOOTs!
AVERMAN gets the rebound in the corner....BAM! He is double

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teamed so hard, he actually lifts off the ice about three feet.

A VARSITY FORWARD lands on top of him on purpose and knees him in the back.

MONTAGE NOW - CHEAP SHOTS

The VARSITY is very good at this. After the whistle, when the ref isn't looking, they brutally assault the DUCKS.

FULTON and GOLDBERG try to double team RICK with the puck, but he splits the two with elbows high and catches GOLDBERG hard in the face. He falls. The tide is turning.

The COACHES shout from their respective benches.

WILSON

Keep hitting, they'll break.

COACH ORION

Heads up, Ducks! They're headhunting!

The defense is still clearing all loose pucks and preventing second chances, but it hurts, and they are dead tired.

GUY goes down. CONNIE is hit hard. WU is knocked out of mid-air and does a somersault!

SHOTS FLY AT JULIE FROM EVERY ANGLE...she bats the puck left...kicks the puck right...finally, deflects a wicked shot up into the crowd. THE BUZZER SOUNDS.

THE RADIO BOOTH - SAME TIME

JOSH

Another golden opportunity for the Varsity stoned by Gaffney. What a game! Two periods down and still no score. I just wonder how long the Freshmen can take this pounding...

WEIRE DAVE now does a very strange song and dance.

DAVE

I'm-a-Duck-I'm-a-Duck-I'm-a-Duck...

INT. THE FRESHMAN LOCKER ROOM - AFTER THE SECOND PERIOD

It's like a civil war field hospital. They are in real bad shape.

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LUIS
Where's the Coach?

AVERMAN
Probably looking for a new job.

Gallows humor. Nobody laughs.

JESSE
They're kickin' our butts!

CHARLIE
We gotta kick back!

FULTON
With what. We're giving everything we got.

Enter ORION, calm and confident. He looks over his line-up card.

COACH ORION
Alright, listen up. I've got a line change. We need some fresh legs.

RUSS
(looking around)
Excuse me, Coach -- but uh, unless I'm missing something, ain't no fresh legs in here...

COACH ORION
You're missing something.
(blowing his WHISTLE)

Enter GORDON followed by DEAN PORTMAN.

PORTMAN
Hey guys, miss me!?

Stunned. Overwhelmed the team rises.

GORDON
He had this scholarship just lying around his house in Chicago. I convinced him he might as well sign it.

FULTON
The bash brothers are back!

THEY mob him in a huge embrace!

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INT. ICE - THIRD PERIOD

The DUCKS skate out renewed and ready. PORTMAN, FULTON and GOLDBERG are the new bash brothers. Ready to do some damage of their own.

BEHIND THE FOUNDERS CIRCLE - THOM PORTER furiously descends to DEAN BUCKLEY'S side.

THOM PORTER

Who is that? He can't play!

BUCKLEY turns to see GORDON BOMBAY sitting calmly in the stands next to CASEY and JAN. He waves a contract at him and smiles.

BUCKLEY shrewdly senses a shift in the wind.

DEAN BUCKLEY

Kid's got a contract, Thom. My hands are tied.

INT. ICE - THIRD PERIOD

COLE skates by PORTMAN trying to stare him down. PORTMAN just smiles. THE PUCK is dropped.

COLE takes a run at PORTMAN who turns to see him coming. He does something incredible. He simply bends, catches COLE as he's flying in, lifts him up and throws him right over the boards and into the stands!

The DUCKS GOES BANANAS! THE VARSITY just stares.

COLE, in a daze, popcorn all over him, struggles to his feet and falls again.

FULTON skates over to PORTMAN.

FULTON

Six rows. Good toss.

PORTMAN

I thought for sure he'd go nine.

ICE - LATER IN THE THIRD PERIOD

PORTMAN, FULTON and GOLDBERG dish it out hard. Every time a DUCK is hit, a WARRIOR is hit just as hard.

GORDON, CASEY and JAN are on their feet.

SERIES OF SHOTS - THE FRESHMEN ON THE ATTACK

--AVERMAN leads a three-man rush, feeds to GUY who crosses the line and sends it to a streaking LUIS who overshoots the net and hits the boards.

--CONNIE swoops in on the left wing, passes to JESSE who just misses.

--ON THE SCOREBOARD. It reads: VARSITY 0 - FRESHMEN 0 with a little over two minutes to play. It is a war, the fifteenth round of a heavyweight fight.

INT. THE RINK - MOMENTS LATER

PLAY continues. RUSS, GUY, WU and LUIS jump over the boards for a change of line on the go. The second they hit the ice...WHISTLE. The Freshmen appear confused, what did they do? The REFEREE skates over to inform them.

REFEREE

Penalty! Too many men on the ice!

COACH ORION

(keeping his cool)

Luis back on the bench. Wu go to the box.

THE FACE-OFF

It's five on four. RICK takes the draw and charges forward. RUSS reaches for the puck, catching RICK'S skate. RICK goes down like he's been hit by a bullet. A total dive. WHISTLE.

RUSS

He took a dive!

CHARLIE skates over to calm RUSS down.

CHARLIE

We can handle it. We can handle it.

(to the REF)

Time-out!

STANDS

Many "BOOS". Bad call. LINDA AND ANGELA look very concerned. THOM PORTER and the BOOSTER PARENTS are elated.

JOSH

Oh, my! I don't know about that call!

The Varsity now enjoy a two man advantage with two minutes to play.

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WEIRD DAVE HISSES like a snake.

THE FRESHMAN BENCH - ON THE TIME-OUT

Everyone gathers around ORION. CHARLIE'S eyes instinctively go up to GORDON.

CHARLIE'S POV

GORDON now starts a chant: DEFENSE...DEFENSE...It spreads like wildfire around the crowd. CHARLIE'S focus goes back to ORION.

COACH ORION

(almost hypnotic)

The pressure's all on them. With every beat of the clock, it's going to get harder and harder for them to swallow. FULTON, BANKS, CONWAY...we're going with you.

The CHANT OF DEFENSE now reverberates like thunder. The Ducks have clearly won the crowd, if not the game.

COACH ORION

Charlie, one more thing. They won't expect offense here. You get the chance, make it count.

CHARLIE is stunned by the Coach's confidence in him. DWAYNE now peels off his velcroed "Captain's C" and sticks it over CHARLIE'S heart. ORION looks over to DWAYNE, then back to CHARLIE.

COACH ORION

Go get 'em, Captain.

THE FACE-OFF

Five on three...RICK wins the draw, flips it back to the point. The VARSITY move the puck around, looking for the open shot. CHARLIE chases at the top of the rotating triangle defense.

Now the puck is whipped behind the net. RICK tries to jam it in -- JULIE stops it, but the puck comes loose in front. JULIE dives for it, misses...

MAD SCRAMBLE - SLOW MOTION

As the puck is lifted towards the open net, BANKS dives across the crease and just bats the puck wide.

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FULTON races into the corner and backhands the puck the length of the ice.

THE SCOREBOARD

As it ticks under one minute, it now registers time to the tenth of a second, giving the action a sense of acceleration.

RICK comes out of his zone well ahead of the other attackers. He's going to do this himself. He's coming straight up the center, a full head of steam.

CHARLIE'S back on D, alone, in perfect position, on guard.

RICK throws a fake to his left, but CHARLIE doesn't bite. BOOM! CHARLIE upends him with a perfect hip check. RICK goes flying, but this time, it's for real. CHARLIE picks up the puck. COLE bears down on him. CHARLIE executes the best SPINORAMA you have ever seen and goes right around COLE.

He's one on one with the GOALIE and he dekes once, twice, three, FOUR times! Quadruple deke, he flips his backhand shot up, up...over THE GOALIE'S outstretched glove and into the upper right corner.

GOAL!

TIME EXPIRES. THE DUCKS WIN!

1 to 0. What a game!

MOVING WITH CHARLIE

Madness descends. The UNDERCLASSMEN rush onto the ice. The VARSITY sits collapsed. Beaten.

IN THE STANDS

GORDON, CASEY & JAN hug.

THOM PORTER and the VARSITY BOOSTERS are ashen. Defeated. Stuck with the Duck tag forever.

DEAN BUCKLEY appears unruffled.

DEAN BUCKLEY
That's my team!

ON THE ICE

PARENTS embrace their kids. RUSS hugs DWAYNE.

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SCOTT, the Varsity Goalie, lifts his mask and shakes hands with JULIE.

SCOTT
Great game, Gaffney.

JULIE
Thanks, Scooter.

LINDA races down and kisses CHARLIE.

RICK, on his butt on the ice, looks up to see LUIS kiss his girlfriend MINDY. What the?

LUIS
Sorry, our little secret.

RICK is too tired to even object.

PORTMAN & FULTON bash each other silly with joy.

GORDON & ORION shake hands.

GORDON
I'd say the Ducks are in good hands.

COACH ORION
That means something. Coming from you.

AND GORDON moves to CHARLIE

GORDON
Hey, kid...I've got a plane to catch. You stay here and straighten this joint out. Make me proud.

Choked up, CHARLIE nods. As GORDON heads out, CHARLIE calls after him.

CHARLIE
Gordon! Teach those little Ducks how to play the game.

GORDON smiles, takes one last look at his team, his creation...his friends. Charlie. Then, he disappears down the tunnel.

CHARLIE now turns to see the DUCKS lifting their new coach, ORION, on their shoulders. He joins the flock. The torch has successfully been passed.

THE END