

# **The Flying Fathers**

Screenplay by

Matt Ragghianti

Story by

Matt Ragghianti and Christopher C. Murphy

regular beans entertainment

8126 naylor avenue

los angeles, ca 90045

mragghianti@regularbeans.com

www.regularbeans.com

WGA Registered

US Copyright TXU1-071-638

**BASED ON A TRUE STORY...**

BEGIN MAIN TITLES

**SUPER: Kingston, Ontario March - 1958**

INT. KINGSTON PARISH CHURCH - DAY

A small town church, jammed with the local inhabitants of Kingston. All are dressed in their "Sunday best".

FATHER KENNEDY, an old and austere looking priest is in the midst of his sermon. As he drones on about the glories of the Catholic faith, we close in on one particular row of worshipers. This is our first look at the Murphy family.

They are a handsome group. Three teenage daughters, two teenage sons sit quietly beside their parents. As we move across we see that they are all paying attention, but Mrs. ALICE MURPHY appears to be hanging on every word.

CUT TO:

EXT. KINGSTON PARISH CHURCH - LATER

Mass has ended and the parishioners make their way out to chat while bundling up against the late winter cold. We close in on one, MR. MORIARTY (50) in the midst of conversation.

MR. MORIARTY

What about it, Bill, are the boys gonna be ready for the championship game?

Meet BILL MURPHY. At eighteen, he is the oldest of the Murphy children. Handsome, popular and as we shall see, very tough.

BILL

Put your money on us, sir.

MR. MORIARTY

(patting Bill on the arm)  
Good lad.

As Mr. Moriarty walks away we see one of Bill's friends TIMMY MCINTYRE waving Bill over. Bill goes over to him.

BILL

Hey, Tim. Hello Mrs. McIntyre.

MRS. MCINTYRE, a pleasant looking woman is beside her son.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MRS. MCINTYRE  
Hello, Bill. Wasn't it a wonderful  
sermon, today?

BILL  
It certainly was.

MRS. MCINTYRE  
Say hello to your parents for me, okay?  
Timmy, I'm going to the car. Find your  
sister and join us there.

TIMMY  
Okay, Mum. See you there.

She leaves the scene. As soon as she is out of earshot...

TIMMY (CONT'D)  
Jesus H. Christ, I thought Kennedy was  
gonna go on forever.

BILL  
I swear I've never known a man who could  
talk for so long and have so little to  
say.

TIMMY  
It looks like he's got a little to say to  
your mother.

Bill turns around and sees his mother Alice engrossed in  
conversation with Father Kennedy.

BILL  
Wonderful.  
(beat)  
I'm outta here, see you at practice.

Bill makes his getaway.

FADE TO:

EXT. MURPHY RESIDENCE - EVENING

We see Bill Murphy arriving home. It is clear, from his  
clothing and the hockey stick and skates he carries that he  
is returning from hockey practice. He hustles up the stairs  
to the house, dragging his bike. He opens the door and we  
find ourselves...

INT. MURPHY RESIDENCE - SAME

Nobody would call it fancy, but care has been taken to make  
the place as cozy as possible.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALICE (O.S.)  
That you, Bill?

BILL  
(shouts)  
Hi, Mum.

Bill goes to the kitchen where Alice is cleaning the dishes from the night's meal. He goes and gives her a kiss.

ALICE  
Are you hungry?

BILL  
I am, thanks.

Bill grabs some leftovers and throws them on a plate.

ALICE  
I spoke with Father Kennedy today and we've agreed that it would be a good idea if you two sat down to talk about your future. He's coming over for dinner tomorrow night after your game.

Bill rolls his eyes behind his Mom's back.

BILL  
Where are Dad and Danny?

ALICE  
Where do you think?

BILL  
I'll just pop down and say hello.

Before Alice can protest, He hustles out of the kitchen.

CUT TO:

INT. MURPHY RESIDENCE - TV ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Bill enters to find his father, CHARLIE MURPHY and his younger brother, DANNY. They are both wearing Montreal Canadiens hockey jerseys and are glued to the small black and white television.

BILL  
What'd I miss?

DANNY  
Relax, hot shot, they're just about to sing the anthem.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MUSIC UP: Oh Canada (Canadian National Anthem)

As soon as the music begins to roll, Charlie and Danny stand to join Bill who is already standing straight and quiet.

The Murphy men are enraptured as the TV picture rolls over the faces of the legendary Canadiens. It sweeps around the Forum and to the rafters where we see the nine Stanley Cup banners that hang there. This year they will hang their tenth. The third of what will be five in a row.

The music ends and they excitedly take their seats to watch their heroes.

From behind, Two of the Murphy girls, MARIE and NADINE come down the stairs.

NADINE  
(disappointed)  
Oh, there's a good movie on tonight.

DANNY  
Piss off, the hockey's on.

MARIE  
You watch your mouth, Daniel Murphy.

Danny turns around and tries to turn his eyes down toward his mouth. He looks ridiculous.

DANNY  
I'm trying, but...it's not so easy.

Marie and Nadine are not amused and leave in a huff as the boys return to the hockey game. We are looking at the television over their shoulders.

We zoom in closer and closer until we are tight on the TV and then on the action itself. We see the thrash of legs, skates and sticks as we gradually

DISSOLVE TO:

INT REGIOPOLIS HOCKEY RINK-DAY

It looks as if the action never skipped a beat, but this time the game is live. We are at the Provincial Championship Game between the Regiopolis Redskins and the Creighton Bears.

Bill Murphy is on the ice and is wearing the "C" on his Regiopolis jersey distinguishing him as the team captain.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Redskins home arena is jammed to the rafters. The same rafters that are home to the 5 Provincial Championship banners that hang there. There are two things that matter at "Regi": Hockey and religion. Most of the time it's difficult to tell where one stops and the other begins.

It's all tied up as the players line up for the third period and the tension is thick. Bill wins the face off and passes the puck to his right wing who starts to drive the net. He doesn't get far.

The defensive player for Creighton hauls him down and is called for obstruction. Regi is going on the power play.

Once again it's Bill taking the face off. He easily wins and dumps the puck back through his legs to his defenseman who takes a quick shot.

The goalie stops it, but the rebound is loose and Bill is zooming in to play it. This is dangerous. He arrives at the play before anyone else and muscles the puck into the net.

Over the next two minutes Regi gains momentum from the goal as the Creighton team starts to panic. The number one lines hit the ice again and Bill and his left wing, Timmy McIntyre end up with a two on one. The crowd comes to its feet knowing that one more Redskins goal will seal the victory.

Bill winds up for a slap shot, but fakes it and passes to Timmy who goes top shelf and knocks the water bottle off the net. Bill and Timmy meet behind the net to celebrate the goal, but the Creighton defenseman they just burned has other ideas and nails Timmy. Cheap shot.

A linesman gets to the Creighton player and takes him to the penalty box for a 5 minute game misconduct. Timmy picks himself up off the ice and struggles to the bench.

BILL

Nice shot, Timmy, you water bottled him.

TIMMY

(angrily)

You should have taken it, Murph, you could've had a hat trick.

Bill smiles at the fire in Tim's voice. He's just fine.

CUT TO:

INT. REGIOPOLIS HOCKEY RINK-MOMENTS LATER

The puck goes into the corner, Bill chases and pins the defenseman with the puck against the boards.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

While he's holding this guy up, another Creighton defenseman takes a run at Bill from behind and comes in with his elbow high. He smashes Bill's face into the glass.

In a flash, Bill's gloves are on the ice and he's throwing punches. The Creighton player is game and drops his own gloves, but he's on the wrong end of a beating here.

The ice is littered with gloves and equipment. Bill is going crazy, pounding any Creighton player within range while Timmy has found the guy who cheap shotted him and is paying him back with interest.

The referees finally regain control and Bill is ejected from the game for throwing a late punch. Timmy is given five minutes for fighting. Since there are under three minutes to play, they skate off together. The crowd cheers them loudly.

TIMMY

That's the worst beating I ever saw a guy take.

BILL

I put my guy on his ass too.

TIMMY

I was talking about your guy.

They share a hearty laugh as they enter the tunnel.

FADE TO:

INT. REGIOPOLIS HOCKEY RINK-DAY

A close up of the scoreboard shows the score at Regiopolis 4, Creighton 2 as the clock winds down the final seconds. The buzzer sounds as the stands erupt. Regi has done it again.

CUT TO:

INT. COACH REVELLE'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

COACH REVELLE is at his desk speaking with someone seated in front of him. There is a knock on the door.

COACH REVELLE

It's open.

Bill pokes his head around the door.

BILL

You wanted to see me, Coach?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COACH REVELLE

Yeah, come on in, there's someone who wants to meet you.

Bill comes walking into the tiny office and sees a short man in a nice suit get up and offer his hand.

After looking at him for a few seconds, we notice the suit doesn't fit right. He's the kind of guy who could wear a tuxedo and still look like he just rolled out of bed. Alone.

STEVE FRANCHETTI

You played a hell of a game out there today, son.

COACH REVELLE

Bill, this is Steve Franchetti...

Looking at Coach Revelle's face, hidden amidst the scars earned over a lifetime of playing hockey, is the world's smallest grin.

COACH REVELLE (CONT'D)

...He's a scout for the Canadiens.

Bill's eyes go wide. He attacks the man's outstretched hand.

BILL

Thanks, Mr...

STEVE FRANCHETTI

Franchetti. I know, it's not easy. Kind of makes you hungry though, doesn't it?

Steve laughs way too hard at his own joke.

BILL

Yes, sir, I guess it does a little.

STEVE FRANCHETTI

You always play that well?

BILL

(uncomfortably)

I don't know.

COACH REVELLE

Usually plays even better. Coulda scored four or five goals if he wanted to.

STEVE FRANCHETTI

That right? Well, I'll tell you why I'm here, Bill. Montreal runs a summer camp to try out new prospects for the club.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

STEVE FRANCHETTI (CONT'D)

We'd love to have you come out and skate with us for a few weeks.

Bill face shows immediate glee followed very quickly by sudden doom. It's obvious to both Steve and Coach that something is wrong.

STEVE FRANCHETTI (CONT'D)

You more of a Leafs fan or something?

BILL

No, it's not that. I'd love to go. More than you know, but I have to work all summer. We need the money.

STEVE FRANCHETTI

I understand. We'd pay for your trip and your lodging. And if you make the team, of course you'd be well compensated.

BILL

It's a fantastic offer, it's just...Can I get back to you?

In a flash, Steve has a card out of his pocket and in Bill's hand. He could do that in his sleep. Probably does.

STEVE FRANCHETTI

Here's my card. Coach and I go way back, so if you lose it he'll know how to get a hold of me.

BILL

(are you kidding?)

I won't lose it.

STEVE FRANCHETTI

That's what I like to hear. I gotta use the can, be right back.

Franchetti leaves the little office and Revelle shuts the door behind him.

COACH REVELLE

What do you think?

BILL

God, Coach, it sounds so great. Its' just...

COACH REVELLE

Listen Bill, I know about Father Kennedy.

Bill looks surprised.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

COACH REVELLE (CONT'D)

I know he's pushing you towards the priesthood. Hell, he's pushing every student here that way, that's his job. I'm not condemning religion, okay? Half the guys in that locker room are going to be priests and if that's their ticket out of this town, well, good for them.

Bill is trying to take all this in. He is staring at the trophy case, crowded with awards and is fixated on the 1920 Olympic Gold Medal next to Coach Revelle's team picture.

COACH REVELLE (CONT'D)

But I know you love this game. You have to love it to play the way you do.

(beat)

This could be *your* ticket, Bill.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MURPHY RESIDENCE - EVENING

Bill enters the house. As he is putting his bike aside, he is mobbed by his sisters and Danny. They hug him and congratulate him on another great game. As he is absorbing it all he becomes distracted.

BILL

What *is* that?

Bill sniffs the air once, then again.

BILL (CONT'D)

It smells like...Nah it couldn't be.

DANNY

It is.

BILL

All right, Mum!

NADINE

Bill, wait!

Bill goes running toward the kitchen. When he arrives he is blown away by what he sees. Alice is cooking steaks. The Murphys never have steak. Way too expensive.

Bill leans his face over the grill to get a good long whiff. He isn't allowed to indulge his fantasy for long though.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALICE (O.C.)  
Out of there, Bill, these are for Father  
Kennedy...He likes steak.

Bill turns to see his mother enter and set down a few cans  
from the pantry.

BILL  
(defeated)  
Yeah. Me too.

ALICE  
Well, if there's any left over... You  
get washed up now, he'll be here soon.

Bill slinks out of the room as we...

FADE TO:

INT. BILL AND DANNY'S ROOM - EVENING

Danny and Bill are getting ready for dinner. The walls of  
their room are covered with Montreal Canadiens posters and  
clippings. Neither of them appears to be enjoying the  
prospect of an evening with Father Kennedy.

BILL  
It's too much, Dan, I'm only eighteen and  
they've got my whole life planned for me.  
All I want to do is play hockey, is that  
so bad?

Danny just shakes his head.

BILL (CONT'D)  
A scout for the Habs talked to me after  
the game today.

DANNY  
(genuine surprise)  
What! Are you kidding me, what'd he say?

BILL  
(angry)  
Keep your voice down, I don't want  
anyone to know.

DANNY  
Oh my God, Oh my GOD!

BILL  
He wants me to come try out for the team  
this summer. In Montreal. Tim McIntyre  
got invited too.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Danny is about to bounce off the walls. It takes a warning from Bill to bring him back to Earth.

BILL (CONT'D)

Danny, I'm serious. If you tell anyone about this I'll break both your arms.

DANNY

(softly)

Okay-okay, but oh my GOD, the Habs?  
That's incredible.

BILL

I know, I couldn't believe it.

DANNY

How are you gonna get Mum and Dad to let you go?

BILL

That's the trouble, I have no idea.

(beat)

We better get down to dinner. We never had this conversation, all right?

DANNY

Okay I Got it. But...Wow, Bill.

Bill lets his guard down for just a second and gives his brother a little punch to the arm.

BILL

Thanks, Dan.

The two exit the room.

FADE TO:

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

We join the conversation mid-meal. Once again, the Murphys are dressed in their church clothes and even the modest dining room has been made to look it's best. Alice shines in her best dress.

ALICE

Is there anything else I can get you, Father Kennedy?

Father Kennedy sits at the head of the table.

FATHER KENNEDY

I wouldn't say no to more steak.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Alice gets up and serves him the last piece, his second. Bill watches him accept it and does his best to hide his disappointment.

ALICE  
Did you hear about the game today,  
Father?

DANNY  
Yeah, we won! Bill scored two goals, he  
got player of the game.

Alice moves to put this train back on track...

ALICE  
More importantly, it was the *last* game of  
the year. Bill can focus on his future  
now, can't you, dear?

BILL  
(uncomfortable)  
I suppose so.

FATHER KENNEDY  
Yes, your future. What about that,  
Murphy? I understand there's a family  
tradition of service to God.

ALICE  
(beaming)  
That's right. The eldest son in my  
family has been a clergyman for four  
generations. My brother Michael is a  
priest in Alberta and my Uncle Pat is a  
Monsignor in America now.

FATHER KENNEDY  
Well, you have been blessed, haven't you?  
There really is nothing as fulfilling as  
working to spread the glory of the Lord.  
What a wonderful team to be a part of.

DANNY  
I can think of a few teams I'd want to be  
a part of.

Bill shoots Danny a look that is half panic and half rage.

DANNY (CONT'D)  
(recovering)  
Uhh...what I mean is you can find honor  
in lots of traditions, can't you Pop?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CHARLIE

Security, that's what counts. You enter the priesthood, you've got a job for life.

FATHER KENNEDY

What do you think, Bill? Now that you're done chasing that disc all over the ice are you ready to get serious?

BILL

Serious, Father?

CHARLIE

You've got to think long term Bill, you can't play forever.

BILL

I know, Pop. But-

CHARLIE

Look, I know you love to play hockey, but a man can't spend his life playing a game. You've got to remember, for every "Rocket Richard" there's a hundred guys who never even get close. And then where are they?

Bill is taking it from all sides here.

FATHER KENNEDY

Yes, a dangerous world awaits you, Bill. Damnation lies behind every corner, only the righteous win the day. Remember Job thirty-six: "If they obey and serve him, they shall spend their days in prosperity and their years in pleasures. But if they obey not, they shall perish by the sword and they shall die without knowledge."

Father Kennedy moves in for the kill.

FATHER KENNEDY (CONT'D)

You're lucky to have such a strong parents to guide you along the path, Murphy. So many get lost along the way.

(beat)

Which is why I've decided to recommend you for the Seminary in the Fall.

This definitely gets everyone's attention. Bill looks like he just had the wind knocked out of him. Alice can barely contain herself.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ALICE

Oh Father, really! That's wonderful!  
Charlie, isn't that wonderful?

CHARLIE

(genuinely proud)  
It is, Mum. Wonderful, well done Bill.

Bill looks to his brother, but Danny has already turned his eyes back to his dinner plate.

FATHER KENNEDY

It's a gift, truly it is. But one you  
can repay, Bill. Through a lifetime of  
service.

The family comes over to the Bill's side of the table to hug and congratulate him. He hasn't had time to say a word.

CUT TO:

INT. BILL AND DANNY'S ROOM - NIGHT

The boys are getting ready for bed. The tension from the evening's meal has followed them here.

BILL

(frustrated)  
"If they obey and serve him they shall  
spend their days in prosperity and  
pleasure"? What a crock. Is that what  
Mom and Dad have here?

DANNY

He took seconds on everything, do you  
know what that meal cost? Unbelievable.

The boys climb into bed and settle in before turning out the lights. Even the ceiling is covered in Montreal clippings.

DANNY (CONT'D)

Just think of it, Bill. A Canadien.

A glimpse of Bill's face tells us he *is* thinking of it.

DANNY (CONT'D)

I better get good seats for all the  
games. Well, until I'm old enough to  
make the team myself that is.

BILL

I think the Canadiens already have a  
skate sharpener, Danny.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DANNY

You are such a jerk.

Bill manages to laugh for the first time since dinner as we

FADE TO:

TWO MONTHS LATER.

**SUPER: May - 1958**

EXT. KINGSTON TRAIN STATION-MORNING

Bill and the rest of the Murphy family are standing on the platform gathered around a small suitcase and a big bag of hockey equipment. The sun is shining bright.

MARIE

I still don't know why you're lugging all that equipment. In case you haven't noticed, it's summertime.

BILL

Timmy's brother said the boys have a pretty good summer league going up there, so I figured I'd get in on that.

ALICE

Just remember you're there to *work*, not mess around playing hockey.

BILL

I know, Mum, I will.

CHARLIE

You be sure to thank Timmy's brother for getting you on that construction gang when you arrive, eh? There's good money to be made there.

DANNY

Has the potential to be real good.

Bill shoots Danny a nasty look. Behind him, the train pulls into the station.

BILL

This is mine, guys.

Charlie leans into Bill and shakes his hand. With the other hand, he tucks a little money into Bill's shirt pocket.

CHARLIE

Some walking around money.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BILL  
Thanks, Pop.

DANNY  
Good luck out there, Bill. I hope this  
all works out.

BILL  
Thanks, Dan. Me too.

Alice is doing her best not to cry. She gives Bill a hug.

ALICE  
Promise you'll get to church. And make  
sure you're back here no later than  
August, we've got to get you ready for  
the Seminary.

BILL  
I will Mum, I promise. I should get  
aboard now, g'bye everyone.

NADINE  
Write to us, Bill.

DANNY  
Jesus, it's only three hours away.

MARIE  
Shut up, Danny.

Bill's sisters give him a hug and say goodbye. Bill throws  
his luggage on the train and boards as we...

CUT TO:

INT. TRAIN - MOMENTS LATER

As the train begins to pull away, Bill waves out the window  
to his family.

TIMMY O.S.  
Excuse me, sir, is this seat taken?

Bill turns to see his teammate and friend Tim McIntyre.

BILL  
Actually, yeah. There's a gorgeous woman  
sitting with me.

TIMMY  
Oh, I didn't know your sister was making  
the trip.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BILL  
You are going to die.

The two of them share a laugh as Timmy sits down.

CUT TO:

INT. KINGSTON PARISH CHURCH - AFTERNOON

A number of parishioners are waiting in several pews. As we pan across their faces, most look worried to one degree or another. We learn why as the camera lands on a CONFESSIONAL BOOTH.

One of the sides is vacated and Mrs. McIntyre enters. She kneels and the grille separating her compartment opens.

MRS. MCINTYRE  
Bless me Father, for I have sinned. It has been one week since my last confession.

PRIEST (O.C.)  
Go ahead.

MRS. MCINTYRE  
Well, father. I feel like I'm losing control of my son. He's never lied to me before and...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. KINGSTON PARISH CHURCH - LATER

We see Mrs. McIntyre exit the confession booth and head to the altar to say her act of contrition.

As the camera holds on the booth, the center door opens and Father Kennedy appears.

CUT TO:

INT. BOARDING HOUSE - EVENING

The boys are being led into a boarding house by Steve Franchetti. There are several other young men in the lobby.

TIMMY  
I think I just saw Andrew Perry.

BILL  
From St. Ignatius? Couldn't be.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TIMMY

Jesus, not Perry - I thought he was in the slammer.

BILL

Beat up a linesman or something, right?

TIMMY

Broke his frigging jaw's what I heard.

STEVE FRANCHETTI

If you ladies are done gossiping back there, I have a few things to tell you.

BILL

Sorry, Steve, we're all ears.

CUT TO:

INT. BOARDING HOUSE - BILL & TIMMY'S ROOM - SAME

Steve opens a door and they step into a small room with two single beds and a desk.

STEVE FRANCHETTI

Bathroom and showers are down the hall. That phone will get you the front desk only, you want to call anywhere else it comes out of your pocket.

Nods from the boys.

STEVE FRANCHETTI (CONT'D)

Now, this is important. Be downstairs at seven a.m. *sharp* tomorrow to catch the bus to the rink. You miss it and you're cut. When practice is over, the bus leaves the rink to come back here at five thirty. You miss that bus and you're cut. Bottom line, don't miss the bus. Ever. Got it?

TIMMY/BILL

Got it.

STEVE FRANCHETTI

I suggest you get some sleep tonight, you're gonna need it. Good luck to you both.

TIMMY/BILL

Thanks. Thanks a lot, Steve.

Bill closes the door behind Steve as he exits.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BILL

I'm gonna take a leak. When I come back  
I better not see those beds pushed  
together.

It's all Bill can do to get out the door before being hit  
with a pillow.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BILL AND TIMMY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Bill steals a glance at Timmy who snores in a deep sleep. He  
carefully gets out of his bed and kneels beside it. After  
crossing himself he folds his hands in prayer.

BILL

God, I'm sorry I had to lie to my parents  
about this, but I didn't see any other  
way. Please give me a sign to let me  
know if I'm doing the right thing by  
coming here. Amen.

He climbs back into bed and settles down to try and get some  
sleep. After he appears to get comfortable, he reaches down  
and throws a shoe at Timmy. It hits him in the chest and he  
springs up immediately.

TIMMY

(still dreaming)  
High stick! Open your friggin' eyes,  
that's a high stick!

Just as quick as he sat up, he's back down and rolling over.  
Bill smiles until, seconds later, the buzz-saw starts again.

CUT TO:

INT. MONTREAL PRACTICE RINK - DAY

Practice is in full swing. A WHISTLE BLOWS and we find Bill  
and Timmy bent over trying to find some breath.

COACH 1

That's two minutes. When we come back,  
split the rink, Offense one versus  
defense one down here. Everyone else with  
coach Blake. Keep it up now!

Bill and Timmy are on offense one and gather to start a power  
play drill. Timmy is looking into the stands.

BILL

Keep it up? I'm trying not to *throw* up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TIMMY

Oh my God.

Timmy points with his stick to a group of ten or so people in the stands. Amongst them, right in front is Alice Murphy.

BILL

Jesus, Mary and Joseph.

From the stands, Alice waves at Bill. He waves back and skates to the glass. She walks down to meet him as he arrives.

BILL (CONT'D)

Mum? How-

ALICE

Is this how I've taught you to behave?  
Didn't you listen to a word I've said to  
you over the years? Bill, it's *Sunday*.

A WHISTLE BLOWS.

ALICE (CONT'D)

This can only lead to pain and-

BILL

I've got to get back. We'll talk tonight  
though, okay? I really need to talk to  
you.

Bill skates away as a disappointed Alice begins to climb back up to where she was sitting.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MONTREAL PRACTICE RINK - MOMENTS LATER

Murphy is still staring at his mother in the stands.

COACH 1

Murphy, quit gawking and line up!

The players are set-up and the puck is dropped. Bill is working the puck around and passes to his wing. As he does, he hears a cry from the far end of the ice. Some of the coaches have skated over to the glass. Others in the stands are rushing to the location as well.

Bill can't see his mother. Worried now he keeps looking back and forth through the stands. Still no sign of her.

The drill isn't over. One of the offensive players is being hooked and sends the puck Bill's way. He isn't even looking.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANDREW PERRY, trying as hard as anyone else to make the team, follows the puck toward Bill. It hits the boards right next to Bill, but he doesn't even hear it.

Perry arrives from his blind side at the same moment and annihilates Bill into the boards. Lights out.

FADE TO:

INT. MONTREAL GENERAL HOSPITAL - DAY

Bill is still partially dressed in his hockey gear. He is sitting in the waiting room with an ice pack on head.

PHYSICIAN

You must be Bill Murphy.

In a flash, Bill is on his feet.

BILL

Is my Mum all right?

PHYSICIAN

She's taken a whack to the head and needed some stitches. We're going to keep her here overnight to be safe. You can go in and see her now if you like.

CUT TO:

INT. ALICE'S HOSPITAL ROOM - AFTERNOON

Alice is lying in bed. She is resting with a bandage wrapped around her head. Bill comes up and takes her hand in his.

BILL

(softly)

Oh God. I'm so sorry.

Alice opens her eyes and starts to sit up before wincing. She sees the lump on Bill's forehead from the hit he took.

ALICE

Looks like bumps on the head are going around these days, eh?

BILL

I'm sorry, Mum, I never wanted you to be hurt. Never.

ALICE

You want to know what hurts the most, Bill? The fact that you lied to me. You lied to all of us.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BILL

I know, but you didn't want to listen.

ALICE

Listen to what? Hockey is a game. Life is very serious. You need to grow up, I need to know you're going to be okay.

BILL

I will be, Mum. All of us will, you've done such a good job-

ALICE

(interrupting)

Then why are you doing this?

Alice is on the verge of tears. It profoundly affects the way Bill carries himself. Still, he tries again.

BILL

This isn't about you.

ALICE

You are about me, Bill. You're my child. What happens if you get hurt playing hockey? Really hurt I mean? Then what?

Bill turns away for a moment to try and compose himself. His face shows the strain of not being able to tell his mother what he feels. The guilt and the confusion. The frustration and the fear of an unknown and perhaps an unwanted future are almost too much to bear.

BILL

I just wanted to know. These guys are the best in the world and they wanted *me* to come and skate with them. Haven't you ever wanted to know if you could be one of the best?

ALICE

(sincere)

You are one of the best. You always have been.

Alice smiles in spite of the situation.

ALICE (CONT'D)

Your whole life people have followed you. Not just on the ice, everywhere. Your brother was practically attached to your hip when you were little boys.

(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ALICE (CONT'D)

Think of the good you could do in the church. Bill, you were *made* for it.

Bill comes back to his mother's side.

BILL

I'm not sure if it's what I want.

ALICE

You're just frightened, that's all. A lot of people are frightened by the future.

Alice reaches out and grabs his hand.

ALICE (CONT'D)

But you can't run away from your destiny, Bill. None of us can.

Bill looks at the clock on the wall next to the bed. It is five twenty five. As he watches the second hand sweep the decision out of his hands.

His shoulders fall and he grabs both his mother's hands.

BILL

Okay, Mum. Okay.

(beat)

Let's go home.

Alice smiles and extends her arms to hug her son.

As Bill and Alice embrace we pull slowly back and out of the room. There, leaning against the wall is Father Kennedy.

Smiling, he slowly and quietly makes his way down the hall.

FADE TO:

SUPER: **SEPTEMBER - 1966**

INT. RECEPTION HALL -NIGHT

Most of the Murphy family is gathered around the table as guests mill about and dance. We are obviously at a wedding reception. Albeit it, a very modest one. Danny is posing for pictures with his new bride, BRENDA.

As soon as there is a break in the action, the newlyweds return to the family table. Brenda goes to her new brother-in-law.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRENDA

Thank you Bill, that was such a lovely ceremony.

Bill is in full priests uniform, his features hardened into those of a man. If anything, he is even better looking.

BILL

A beautiful bride deserves a beautiful ceremony.

BRENDA

(blushing)

Thank you.

DANNY

Jesus, take it easy Casanova, you're supposed to be on duty tonight.

The two boys exchange some playful blows before Charlie brings the table and the room to attention.

He TAPS HIS GLASS with a fork.

As the crowd begins to quiet themselves, Charlie rises to make a toast.

CHARLIE

I'm not a man of many words, most of you know that. But there are some occasions that demand something be said.

Charlie looks around the table.

The children now grown, the girls sitting next to boyfriends. Alice in heaven at Charlie's side.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

I've been soblessed. I look around this table and I see a family that has made me prouder than I could have ever dreamed.

(beat)

I see my two sons, one of whom is off to serve the church in Napanee next week. The other, tonight begins a different adventure altogether.

Charlie raises his glass, as does the rest of the room.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

This toast is in two parts: To Father Bill Murphy, without whom, it would be impossible for me to do this.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Charlie goes to the side of the table and takes the hand of Danny and Brenda in each of his.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)  
 Congratulations and very best wishes...to  
 Doctor and Mrs. Daniel Murphy.

The crowd cheers and drinks. Danny and Bill make eye contact. No words are spoken, but a lot is being said.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. NAPANEE CHURCH - MORNING

A small truck pulls up in front of a church surrounded by a few other dilapidated buildings. From the looks of the place, we have a hard time imagining this is God's house.

As Bill climbs out of the passenger door, an older priest, LARRY COSTELLO (late forties) appears in the doorway of the church.

As Costello arrives at the truck

COSTELLO  
 May not look like much, but it'll feel  
 like home soon enough.  
 (beat)  
 Larry Costello. Everybody calls me Cos.

Bill takes his hand and shakes.

BILL  
 Bill Murphy.  
 (beat)  
 You look kind of familiar to me, is that  
 crazy?

COSTELLO  
 Nope. Accepting a posting to this parish,  
*that's* crazy.

BILL  
 Terrific.

COSTELLO  
 Kidding. C'mon, I'll give you the nickel  
 tour.

Costello leans over to pick up one of Bill's bags.

CUT TO:

INT. RECTORY - DAY

Not much to it. Just four small bedrooms and two dingy bathrooms.

Costello opens the door to a room and enters with Bill close behind.

COSTELLO

This is yours. I'm just next door and the other two rooms are empty right now. New teacher will probably be taking one soon.

BILL

Teacher?

COSTELLO

Yeah. Most of the families in this area are farmers. A lot of the kids have to help out and can't get to the school in town, so we kind of pick up the slack.

BILL

No wonder you needed help out here.

COSTELLO

We're definitely a full service parish. Church, meeting hall, school, hockey rink. You name it.

BILL

Wait a minute, You're *Larry Costello!*

COSTELLO

I thought we'd covered that.

BILL

I saw you play for the Leafs when I was a kid. You won the Stanley Cup, I can't believe I didn't recognize you.

COSTELLO

New uniform tends to throw people off.

BILL

I suppose it would. You still skate?

COSTELLO

Sort of. The pond out back freezes over and I get to teach the kids a thing or two. It's a lot of fun.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COSTELLO (CONT'D)

Listen, you get settled in, eh, and when you're finished, we'll go to town. I know Father McKee wants to say hi.

BILL

Will do. Thanks Cos.

Costello pats him on the arm and leaves the room. Bill looks around and tries to figure out where to start.

CUT TO:

INT. ERCOLE'S BAR - NIGHT

Hockey pennants hang from the walls alongside photographs of fishermen displaying their catch. Peanut shells cover the floor, but it's not dirty. Just very...comfortable. Murphy, Costello and FATHER BRIAN MCKEE sit in a booth to the side.

FATHER MCKEE

I hope you find the room as comfortable as I did, Bill. To tell you the truth I'm going to miss that place.

BILL

It's just fine, Brian, thanks.

FATHER MCKEE

I've got to be on a train in two hours, so I'll be on my way.

COSTELLO

You mean it's not all sunglasses and autographs at the Archdiocese these days?

FATHER MCKEE

Hardly. Instead of worrying about keeping one church afloat, I get to worry about seven. All of 'em need to be looked after. All of them are a struggle.

BILL

That bad, eh?

COSTELLO

Afraid so. We do all the maintenance work ourselves and we try to cut as many corners as possible, but it's still a struggle every month.

(off Bill's look)

It might take a little while, Bill, but I think you'll find this is a place worth fighting for.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BILL

Never ran away from a good fight.

McKee gets up and grabs his coat and hat.

FATHER MCKEE

Glad to hear it. Bill, welcome aboard.

BILL

Thanks. Good to be here.

Father McKee shakes Bill's hand and waves goodbye to TERRY the bartender on his way out.

COSTELLO

Good man, McKee.

BILL

Seems it. You two work together long?

COSTELLO

About three years. Then he got bumped up and that's where you came in.

BILL

Gotcha.

(beat)

So tell me, what got you off the skates and into church?

COSTELLO

It's a lot warmer in church.

We leave the two in happy conversation as we pull back.

CUT TO:

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Father Murphy is performing mass in the church. The pews are full with the local population and Bill is giving communion.

CUT TO:

EXT. A NAPANEE FARM - EVENING

Bill and Cos are on the doorstep of a farmhouse. When the door opens, they hand a box of food to a very grateful woman whose children cling to her apron.

CUT TO:

EXT. NAPANEE CHURCH - DAY

Bill is up on the roof of church. He is patching one of several holes with makeshift shingles. Next to him is one of his parishioners.

BILL .  
 (shouts)  
 Cos, send up more nails!

We move off the roof and down to the grass below where Costello is napping comfortably.

CUT TO:

EXT. CHURCH OUTBUILDING - DAY

The old truck that Bill arrived in has broken down again. The hood is up and Bill stands back and gives the thumbs up sign.

The engine sputters and coughs before finally turning over. Bill starts to flash a smile, but we hear a loud POP and smoke starts to pour out of the engine.

Cos climbs out of the cab, coughing and waving his hands.

BACK TO:

INT. NAPANEE CHURCH - MORNING

Bill giving communion. Behind, a row of worshipers are seated in a pew. Suddenly, one side of the pew COLLAPSES and everyone slides down the slope.

Bill gives a sigh, but nobody seems the least bit surprised.

CHURCHGOER  
 (sotto)  
 I'll help you fix that up this afternoon.

BILL  
 Thanks, Ted.  
 (playing through)  
 The body of Christ.

CHURCHGOER  
 Amen.

CUT TO:

EXT. POND BEHIND CHURCH - AFTERNOON

Bill is skating back and forth across the ice, holding hands with some of the smaller kids, towing them like a train.

The older kids have set up a makeshift net in one end of the ice and they are all practicing their best Gordie Howe slap shot with the few pucks.

One of the biggest kids isn't letting any of the others have a chance. When one of them tries to go for a shot off the rebound, the bully muscles him out of the way and knocks him to the ice.

CUT TO:

EXT. CHURCH - AFTERNOON

A small car arrives at the front of the church. From inside emerge Father McKee and a pretty, if somewhat frazzled looking woman. This is SAMANTHA RYAN, the new teacher.

FATHER MCKEE

I'm just going to track down our Fathers,  
Ms. Ryan. Be right back to help with  
your things.

Father McKee walks up the stairs and into the church. Samantha gives the place a visual once-over.

SAMANTHA

(sighs)  
Well. It's a start.

We begin to hear some noise off in the distance that, to Samantha, is quickly recognized as the shouts of children.

CUT TO:

EXT. POND - SAME

The boy who was knocked to the ice is up and trying to hit back. He is much smaller, though and is knocked to the ice repeatedly. He always gets up again and comes back for more.

CUT TO:

EXT. SIDE OF CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Following the sound around the side of the church, Samantha sees Bill move in to separate the two boys.

CUT TO:

EXT. POND - SAME

Bill tells the bully to skate to the edge of the pond and wait there. He then picks up the smaller boy, BRENDAN HOULIHAN (nine) one of his favorites, and brushes him off.

BILL

Okay now, Brendan, are you all right?

Brendan is caught in the frenzy of rage and adrenaline that accompanies fighting at any age, but especially with kids. His lip is bleeding and he's halfway to sobbing.

BRENDAN

It's not fair, Father Murph, he won't let any of us have a turn! He thinks since he's bigger he can do whatever he wants!

BILL

What do you think about that?

BRENDAN

(on auto pilot)  
I think it stinks!

BILL

Me too. You know there's more to a fight than just size.

CUT TO:

EXT. SIDE OF CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Samantha is making her way to the pond.

CUT TO:

EXT. POND - SAME

Bill is waving to the bully.

BILL

All right, come on back. Let's keep it clean now.

Bill skates out of the way. Brendan has calmed down considerably and has his fists up and at the ready.

CUT TO:

EXT. SIDE OF CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Samantha intends to put a stop to this once and for all. She is moving as fast as she can considering her attire and the snowy conditions.

CUT TO:

EXT. POND - SAME

The boys are still circling each other, Brendan being careful to remain just out of range of Chris.

Chris, bored with the chase, moves in to deliver yet another beating.

As soon as he punches, Brendan dodges to the left and hits Chris as hard as he can in the stomach. Chris doubles over and Brendan pulls his coat over his head. Holding on to the hood with one hand, Brendan reaches back and gives the still doubled over Chris an uppercut.

Chris goes down. The crowd goes wild and Brendan skates around in glee as the other kids go to congratulate him.

Bill skates over to Chris and is helping him up and back into his coat as Samantha arrives. She is not pleased.

SAMANTHA

You there!

Bill turns to see Samantha shuffle awkwardly onto the ice.

BILL

Hello?

SAMANTHA

Just what do you think you're doing?

BILL

Excuse me?

SAMANTHA

Excuse *me*. I asked you what you think you're doing?

BILL

Teaching a boy how to defend himself.

SAMANTHA

Is that what you call it? What's your name?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BILL

Bill. Yours?

SAMANTHA

Samantha Ryan, not that it's any of your concern. What *is* of your concern is that I'm the new teacher here and I intend to inform the priests of your behavior.

Bill lets a look of doom come over his face.

BILL

Are you sure that's going to be necessary?

SAMANTHA

I most certainly am.

FATHER MCKEE (O.S.)

(shouts)

There you are.

Both Samantha and Bill turn to see Father McKee approaching.

SAMANTHA

Now, we'll just see about this.

FATHER MCKEE

Cos said you'd be out here.

(to Samantha)

I see you've already met Father Murphy.

While she slow burns to Bill, he flashes a huge smile and takes a glove off to shake her hand.

BILL

We were just getting acquainted.

CUT TO:

INT. RECTORY - NIGHT

In the small kitchen of the rectory we see Fathers McKee, Murphy and Costello along with Samantha sitting around a little table. Dinner has just ended, plates are still on the table and they are drinking tea.

FATHER MCKEE

Well, I'm afraid I have to be going now.

COSTELLO

You double booked for desserts tonight?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FATHER MCKEE

You'll find the fathers are something of a handful, Samantha. The kids will probably seem like a vacation.

O.S. The TELEPHONE RINGS. Father McKee is already up and putting on his coat.

FATHER MCKEE (CONT'D)

Got it.

He leaves the room to answer the phone. Meanwhile, Samantha gets up from the table and begins to collect dishes.

BILL

(to Samantha)

Don't believe a word he says, he's management.

Bill gets the silent treatment.

BILL (CONT'D)

You're not honestly still mad about what happened earlier?

SAMANTHA

It wasn't a very nice thing to do, Father Murphy.

COSTELLO

Really hit it off already, eh? Don't worry, Sam, Murph and I get along just fine out here and I don't like him either.

Father McKee enters the kitchen. He looks stunned.

BILL

What is it?

FATHER MCKEE

That was Roger. There's been an accident.

Costello and Bill are sitting up ramrod straight now. Samantha turns from the sink to listen.

FATHER MCKEE (CONT'D)

Jack and Christine Houlihan's truck flipped on some ice on the way to town.

BILL

How badly are they hurt?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

McKee doesn't answer. Doesn't have to, his silence tells them all the horrible truth. The Houlihan's are dead.

COSTELLO

Oh no.

FATHER MCKEE

Roger wants one of us to go to the farm with him. They haven't told Brendan yet.

A collective squirm as it sets in.

FATHER MCKEE (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, lads, but I've got to get back to the diocese. We've all been ordered back for a meeting. If I miss my train...

BILL

I'll do it.

COSTELLO

You sure, Murph? I can take it.

BILL

No. I'll go.

FATHER MCKEE

Roger's on his way here.

(to Samantha)

I'm sorry to have to throw you into this.

What can you say to something like that? Samantha just nods her head and looks at the floor.

CUT TO:

INT. HOULIHAN FARM - NIGHT

Brendan Houlihan is watching television in the family room of the small farmhouse. Beside him, MRS. DYLAN, a neighbor, sits looking very shaky indeed. She knows what's coming.

There is a knock on the door.

BRENDAN

There they are!

MRS. DYLAN

Brendan, wait, I'll get it.

Too late. With his nine year old's speed, Brendan pops up and flies to the front door before Mrs. Dylan can stop him. When he flings the door open he sees ROGER, the sheriff, with Bill standing next to him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Already, Brendan looks worried.

BRENDAN

My mom and dad aren't home.

Bill and Roger exchange a look. They both step into the house and Roger removes his hat.

BILL

Brendan, let's go sit down, okay? I need to talk to you.

Brendan is getting more and more frightened. He sees the looks on their faces. He's not stupid, he's just young. There's a difference.

BRENDAN

Am I going to jail, Father Murph?

BILL

No, no...There's been an accident. Your mom and dad had a car accident.

Here come the tears.

BRENDAN

(struggling)

When are they coming home?

BILL

I'm so sorry Brendan, the doctors did all they could, but...they won't ever be coming home.

Brendan starts to sob. When Bill goes to him he strikes out at Bill, trying with all his strength to make this go away. He's not strong enough. None of us is. With each blow, he gives over a little more until finally, he melts into Bill.

Seeing Brendan is too much for Mrs. Dylan. She starts to cry and Roger takes her into the other room.

BILL (CONT'D)

Your parents were very special people, Brendan. God needed them in heaven.

Bill continues to hold him and Brendan continues to cry...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. POND - NIGHT

Bill skates furiously around the pond. He has a stick and a puck and is going as fast as he can from one side to the other. Around and around until finally, he blasts the puck into the net and doubles over in exhaustion. Steam rises from his body as the sweat hits the cold night air.

COSTELLO (O.S.)

Keep your head down on your slap shot,  
you'll get more power.

Bill looks over to Costello who comes out of the dark and onto the ice.

COSTELLO (CONT'D)

Roger just called. Said you did a good job. It's always tough the first time.

BILL

(not in the mood)  
Oh, it gets better?

COSTELLO

No. It never gets better. But it will get easier, I promise.

BILL

I mean, here you have this wonderful kid. Goes to church, loves his parents and then, wham! They're taken from him and for what?

COSTELLO

It was their time, Murph.

BILL

Come on! That's all well and good when we're talking about theory, but it isn't quite up to snuff when you're telling a nine year old boy his parents are never coming home again.

COSTELLO

Life isn't fair, Murph. You know that as well as I do. Bad things happen to good people all the time and try as we might, there's nothing we can do about that. But, do we forget about all the good in the world and allow ourselves to spiral into defeat and madness?

Costello takes a step closer to Bill.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COSTELLO (CONT'D)

Or do we make an effort to console ourselves and others by believing that there's a better place waiting for us in God's kingdom?

BILL

Do you believe that?

COSTELLO

In my soul, I do.

Bill stands up straight and lets out sigh.

BILL

I want to believe it too, Cos, I really do. It's just hard having to be the guy with all the answers, you know?

Costello takes a step closer and puts his hand on Bill's shoulder.

COSTELLO

Come on inside, eh? We're not gonna make sense of this thing out here tonight.

BILL

Sometimes out here is the only place anything makes sense to me at all.

FADE TO:

INT. RECTORY - DAY

Bill walks into the classroom where Samantha is reading homework assignments from her class.

BILL

Have you seen Cos?

SAMANTHA

I saw him leave. He said he wanted to go for a walk before it started snowing. Is there anything I can do for you, Father Murphy?

BILL

You can start calling me Bill.

SAMANTHA

Is there anything I can do for you...Bill?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BILL

Brendan Houlihan is going to be staying with us for a while.

SAMANTHA

Oh, good. I was wondering what was going to happen to him.

BILL

He's in Toronto with some relatives right now, but they're not sure what's going to happen long term. I figured he could stay here with us until it's sorted out. So I thought it might be nice to bring his personal thing over.

SAMANTHA

(touched)  
Need some help?

BILL

You?

SAMANTHA

I'd like to do something for him, he's the only one I haven't met yet.

She takes the work in front of her and fashions it into a pile.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Just let me get my coat.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. TRUCK - DAY

Bill and Samantha are in the beat-up truck. Outside, a light snow has begun to fall.

MUSIC UP: December '63 (Oh, What A Night) by Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons.

RADIO

"Oh, what a night. Late December back in sixty-three..."

BILL

Ooh, good song.

Bill leans in to turn the volume up. He sings the next verse with the radio. What he lacks in hitting the correct key, he compensates for by missing the lyrics.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BILL (CONT'D)

"What a very special line for me. As I remember what a sight."

(to Samantha)

You get the next verse.

Samantha gives him a look, *You must be joking*. The next line comes and goes without any help from her.

BILL (cont'd) (CONT'D)

What? Don't you like Frankie Valli?

SAMANTHA

Sorry.

BILL

Hey, don't be. I'll take it.

When he realizes he doesn't have any idea what the next line, is he turns the volume back down to let himself off the hook.

BILL (CONT'D)

So, what brought you all the way out to Napanee?

SAMANTHA

Same as you, I suppose. A job.

BILL

Sure, but I didn't have any choice in terms of where I was going to be posted. Where are you from anyway?

SAMANTHA

Nestor Falls.

BILL

Gotcha. Never mind then.

Samantha gives him a playful backhand slap on his arm.

Snow has begun to fall harder now. Bill turns on the windshield wipers. Better make that "wiper". Only the driver's side has a blade attached.

SAMANTHA

That makes it more interesting, doesn't it? Can you see?

BILL

Sort of. We should be OK to make it to the Houlihans', it's just a few kilometers now. Good thing though, I think it's going to get worse.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Bill leans forward, straining to see as we...

FADE TO:

EXT. HOULIHAN FARM - EVENING

Really dumping now. The wind swirls, turning conditions into what will very soon be called a blizzard.

In the distance we see faint headlights come slowly through the gate of the property. As they get closer, we make out the church truck.

It comes to a stop and Bill climbs out. He's being blown all over the place.

He runs to the door of the Houlihans' house but finds it chained shut. Looking around, barely visible through the snowfall, is the outline of a barn.

CUT TO:

INT. BARN - EVENING

Bill and Samantha burst through the door of the barn covered in snow.

BILL

I don't know what's going on, but the place is locked up tight.

Bill starts to brush the snow off himself.

SAMANTHA

Can't we break a window or something?  
It's freezing!

BILL

And then what? Let the snow pour in through that? Nope, I think this is it for tonight. Lucky it was here.

SAMANTHA

There's got to be something else. I-

BILL

We need to stay here until the storm ends, Sam. It may not be the Hilton, but it's going to keep us warm and dry, okay?

She just looks at Bill.

BILL (CONT'D)

We're going to be fine, I promise.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Bill begins to brush the snow off her shoulders. As he does, she snaps out of it and takes over for herself.

Bill looks around to see what he has to work with. He begins to gather leftover hay from around the barn as we...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BARN - NIGHT

Bill and Samantha are sitting in a large pile of hay. Samantha is wrapped in a horse blanket they managed to find and a lantern hangs from a hook on a post nearby. It casts the scene in a soft glow.

SAMANTHA

I'm hungry.

BILL

Me too.

(beat)

Candlelight, a pile of hay, not a scrap to eat and a man who's taken a vow of celibacy. Can't say I don't know how to show a lady a good time, eh? All we need now is some music.

Samantha starts to laugh.

BILL (CONT'D)

What?

SAMANTHA

(chuckling)

Your voice. Earlier in the truck.

BILL

What about it?

Samantha is laughing harder now. She struggles to speak.

SAMANTHA

It's...it's terrible!

He's happy to see her start to relax.

BILL

It is not.

Samantha can't stop laughing and Bill starts to join in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BILL (CONT'D)  
 (reconsidering)  
 It is pretty awful, isn't it? I used to  
 drive my brother crazy.

SAMANTHA  
 Thank goodness they don't sing Catholic  
 mass anymore, everyone would convert.

BILL  
 Hey!

Bill picks up a small handful of hay and tosses it at  
 Samantha who is still laughing quietly. He reaches and grabs  
 the lantern off the hook.

BILL (CONT'D)  
 I think we'd better save some of this  
 fuel in case we need it later. Probably  
 should try and get some sleep anyway.

Samantha curls up under the blanket and tries to get  
 comfortable. Bill turns out the flame.

BILL (CONT'D)  
 Good night, Sam.

SAMANTHA  
 'Night.  
 (beat)  
 Thank you, Bill.

BILL  
 For what?

SAMANTHA  
 Just...thank you.

If the light were still on, we would see Bill smiling.

FADE TO:

INT. BARN - DAWN

Samantha and Bill are asleep in the hay. Samantha opens her  
 eyes and notices Bill's arms wrapped around her. Still  
 groggy, it takes her a moment to remember the situation. She  
 starts to move his arms and in the process wakes Bill. The  
 two are face to face and Bill quickly sees what she's doing.

They both spring up and out from under the blanket, dying to  
 get out of the moment.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAMANTHA

Well, sounds like the storm is over.

BILL

Yeah, yeah, I think you're right. Better get loaded up and back into town before they send out the search party, eh?

Bill walks very deliberately to the door and outside.

Back in the barn, Samantha lets a little smile creep over her face.

EXT. CHURCH - LATER THAT DAY

Bright winter sunshine blazes off fresh white snow as the truck arrives back in front of the church.

Bill and Samantha have barely stepped out when McKee and Costello are upon them.

BILL

Not to worry, boss, all personnel present and accounted for.

SAMANTHA

We couldn't move until the plow got there. Must have dumped three feet.

McKee and Costello both have a sour look on their faces.

BILL

It's only snow, guys. It'll melt.

FATHER MCKEE

I've just returned from the diocese. Things aren't going so well. They've decided to close down some churches.

(beat)

We're on the list.

BILL

What! After all we do to scrimp and save, we still can't make it?

COSTELLO

There just isn't enough money, Murph. They can't justify the expense of supporting several small churches when the money could be combined to pay for one big one.

BILL

Where is this "big one" going to be?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FATHER MCKEE

Nothing's decided, but nowhere close.

BILL

But these people depend on us! I mean...  
How much do we need?

FATHER MCKEE

We've been behind on our lease for the  
last thirteen months. The bank just  
can't carry our loan any longer. There's  
a few things the diocese can do to  
transfer some of..

BILL

Brian, please. How much?

FATHER MCKEE

Eleven thousand, six hundred and forty  
four dollars.

BILL

Jesus, Mary and Joseph.

SAMANTHA

How long do we have?

FATHER MCKEE

Sixty days. Seventy tops.

Father McKee looks dejected. As bearer of this news, his was  
the first heart broken.

FATHER MCKEE (CONT'D)

I'm sorry guys. I really am.

SAMANTHA

I know, Brian.

BILL

When do we tell everyone?

FATHER MCKEE

After mass on Sunday? We'll do it  
together. The four of us.

They all nod in agreement.

FADE TO:

## INT. CHURCH - DAY

The congregation has heard the news and is lined up to talk to the Fathers and Samantha on their way out. As one family reaches Bill, their young son, MATT, looks up at him.

MATT

Won't we be able to come and skate with you anymore, Father Murph?

BILL

(heartbreaking)

For a little while, Matt. Then we'll have to figure something else out, okay?

CUT TO:

## INT. SCHOOL ROOM - DAY

The room is stuffed with all manner of merchandise. Samantha sits behind a small table, a collection box in front of her.

The parishioners aren't going without a fight. One by one, they step over to Samantha to purchase a lamp or a tool or a stack of records they don't need and can't afford.

Though their smiles say otherwise, the pile of money in front of Samantha is impossibly small.

CUT TO:

## INT. RECTORY - NIGHT

Bill sits at his desk, intently reading a letter. A beat later, he crumples the letter up and throws it in the corner where it lands amidst a few others.

He starts again at the top of a fresh piece of paper and addresses the letter to the Diocese of Ontario.

DISSOLVE TO:

## INT. RECTORY - LATER

Samantha is hanging a poster of a hockey player on a wall of an empty bedroom. She tacks it up next to a small crucifix.

SAMANTHA

There, that should do it.

As she turns to start on the next item, she accidentally knocks the crucifix a bit crooked.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BILL  
Careful, Sam. Got to give the man his  
proper respect.

Bill steps to the wall. He goes right past the crucifix and  
adjusts the poster ever so slightly.

SAMANTHA  
Who is he?

Bill looks at her like she's speaking Chinese.

BILL  
You're joking?

SAMANTHA  
No, really, I don't know who he is.

BILL  
That's Bobby Hull. He's only one of the  
greatest players in the game.

Samantha just shrugs her shoulders and gets back to work.

BILL (CONT'D)  
Not much of a hockey fan, eh?

SAMANTHA  
I like hockey. There was just always so  
much else to get done.

BILL  
You sound like my mother.

SAMANTHA  
Your mother must be a brilliant woman.

She turns and flashes him a sly smile.

BILL  
In her own way.

Samantha unrolls another poster and turns to show Bill.

SAMANTHA  
Wait, let me guess...Frankie Valli?

CUT TO:

EXT. POND BEHIND CHURCH - DAY

Bill and Costello are on the pond, skating with the kids.  
Smiles are still easy to come by out here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Costello looks worn out from being chased by all the kids.  
Behind them, Father McKee arrives at the edge of the pond.

FATHER MCKEE  
Hello, lads. Listen, can you meet me at  
Ercole's in an hour or so?

COSTELLO  
(breathless)  
How's about half an hour?

FATHER MCKEE  
Grand. See you about five-ish then.

Father McKee walks with a spring in his step back towards the church. Bill and Cos give each other a shrug.

CUT TO:

INT. ERCOLE'S BAR - EVENING

Bill, Costello and McKee sit in their usual spot. McKee continues to be surprisingly upbeat.

FATHER MCKEE  
I think I know how to save the church.  
(beat)  
Hockey.

BILL  
Hockey?

COSTELLO  
You planning on turning some of the grade  
fivers pro?

FATHER MCKEE  
Hear me out. What if we formed a team of  
priests to play in a charity game?

BILL  
Are you serious?

FATHER MCKEE  
Absolutely. Don't you think people would  
want to see that?

COSTELLO  
I'm not sure *I* wanna see that.

FATHER MCKEE  
Cos, you won a Stanley Cup-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COSTELLO  
(interrupting)  
In nineteen forty eight!

FATHER MCKEE  
Exactly! If you're playing it'll bring  
people out. And I've watched you skate  
Murph, you're no slouch out there either.

BILL  
Thanks, but that's only two of us.

FATHER MCKEE  
I know you both played in the Seminary.  
Murph, you said yourself a lot of guys  
could have probably gone on to play at  
some level.

BILL  
A fair few played some damn good hockey,  
that's for sure.

COSTELLO  
Suppose we do get some guys to play for  
us. Who's going to play *against* us?

Mckee waves Terry over.

FATHER MCKEE  
Terry, show 'em the thing.

TERRY  
It's not finished.

FATHER MCKEE  
Just show 'em, would ya?

Terry rolls his eyes and goes back into the storage room.

FATHER MCKEE (CONT'D)  
I figured you guys would be up to this,  
so I took the liberty of setting up a  
little exhibition match.

Terry has returned to the table with a rolled up poster.

FATHER MCKEE (CONT'D)  
Go ahead, Terry, unroll it.

TERRY  
Alright, don't have a stroke or anything.

Terry unfurls the banner across the table in front of them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Though unfinished, it reads: "Sunday night, Come see your Napanee Knights take on the Ontario Seminary All Stars in a match to benefit your local church - \$5 Kids get in free."

FATHER MCKEE

And get this, we get to keep the gate money. It's not eleven thousand, but it's a start, right?

COSTELLO

Wait, you don't mean *this* Sunday night?

FATHER MCKEE

Course not.

BILL

Thank goodness.

FATHER MCKEE

I mean next Sunday night.

COSTELLO

Are you insane? That's twelve days away!

FATHER MCKEE

The Heavenly Father created the world in six days. I'm giving you two twice that.

COSTELLO

Wait a minute. How did you ever get the Knights to agree to this?

TERRY

He bet them. Losers buy the winners drinks all night after the game.

Costello looks to Bill and starts to smile. All three of them pick up their glasses.

COSTELLO

I'm in..

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. RECTORY - DAY

\*

Bill and Cos are at a table on the phone. Bill is just finishing up a call.

BILL

That's great, Dave, we'll see you here on Friday.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COSTELLO

Do we have ourselves a goalie?

BILL

We got ourselves some trouble that's for sure. But he's solid in the net, too.

COSTELLO

Great! That's everybody then. What do you say we celebrate? Thirsty?

\*

There is a knock on the door. Before anyone can get to it, the door is opened and Roger pokes his head in.

ROGER

Anybody home?

Bill and Samantha enter the foyer from different rooms.

ROGER (CONT'D)

There you are. Got something here for you guys.

As the door is opened wider, Brendan Houlihan is revealed. He is just back from Toronto and his parents' funeral.

BILL

Hi, Brendan.

BRENDAN

(half hearted)

Hi.

SAMANTHA

Hello, Brendan, I'm Miss Ryan, your teacher. It's very nice to meet you.

Brendan just stares at the floor. Bill and Roger make eye contact. *Has he been like this the whole way?* Roger shrugs.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Well I don't know about you, but train rides make me hungry. I'm just going to make a few sandwiches, do you like peanut butter?

He *is* hungry. Brendan nods his head.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Me too. Be right back.

BILL

Thanks for picking him up, Rog.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ROGER

Sure. You need anything, just call.

Roger leaves and Bill and Brendan are alone for now.

BILL

I heard you were very brave at the funeral. That's not an easy thing to be. Not for anybody. And you know what?

Bill crouches down to Brendan's level and picks up his chin to look him in the eyes.

BILL (CONT'D)

I'm proud of you.

BRENDAN

(hopeful)  
Yeah?

BILL

Yeah.

Just a little bit of light back in Brendan's eyes.

BILL (CONT'D)

Come on. Let's get you upstairs.

CUT TO:

INT. RECTORY - MOMENTS LATER

Bill and Brendan arrive at the top of the stairs and stop at the door of the vacant room. Brendan looks up at Bill.

BILL

Go ahead.

Brendan goes to the door and opens it. What was a drab and dreary room has been completely transformed. His hockey posters on the wall. His comic books and toys. His clothes and his bedding. It's all there. Warm and familiar. Safe.

Brendan turns around and goes to Bill. Hugs him around the waist. No words, just holds on as tight as he can.

Samantha arrives with a plate of sandwiches and a glass of milk. She sees the scene.

SAMANTHA

I'll just leave these on the desk.

She does just that and turns to go. Before she's gone...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRENDAN  
Thanks, Miss Ryan.

Sam and Bill make eye contact and share a warm smile.

SAMANTHA  
(still looking at Bill)  
You're welcome, Brendan.

CUT TO:

EXT. POND BEHIND CHURCH - DAY

Lots of old friends reuniting on the ice. Some are still struggling to put on their equipment which doesn't seem to fit quite as well as it did the last time they put it on.

McKee is addressing the group.

FATHER MCKEE  
Some of you I've known for years and others I'm just meeting for the first time. Regardless, all of you answered a call from either myself, Murph or Costello, so from all of us...thanks.

There is a brief round of applause from the Fathers.

FATHER MCKEE (CONT'D)  
I've contacted our parishioners, whom you'll meet later. They've each agreed to welcome one of you into their homes for the next week. That being said, I'll turn it over to Cos.

COSTELLO  
All right, we've got a lot of work to do and not a lot of time to do it. Let's break off into offense and defense and see what kind of numbers we have here. Buntz, you get in goal.

FATHER DAVE BUNTZ is already conveniently dressed in mismatched goalie pads.

FATHER BUNTZ  
Aye, aye, sir.

COSTELLO  
Offense over there with Murph. Defense with me. Here we go now.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Fathers spring into action, as we...

FADE TO:

EXT. POND BEHIND CHURCH - DAY

Priests skate this way and that trying to make their bodies remember how to do this. It's rusty, but you can tell they've all been here before. To a man, they are smiling.

McKee shuffles up to Costello.

FATHER MCKEE

Are you watching this?

COSTELLO

What?

FATHER MCKEE

Murphy. Just look at him.

Bill has the puck behind the net and is shuffling this way and that before bringing it out and taking it up ice.

He glides along, avoiding defensive players with no problem at all. He's playing a game of keepaway and is badly fooling all who come at him, keeping the puck right on his stick.

He skates to the net and flips one past Father Buntz and into the goal. Beautiful.

COSTELLO

Good Lord, where's he been hiding that?

Practice continues. The sun sinks into the horizon behind the pond and the Fathers are reduced to shadows. Through the haze, you can still hear them laughing.

FADE TO:

INT. ERCOLE'S BAR - NIGHT

The little bar is crowded and alive as the Fathers take over. Some are in their collars, others dressed more casually. FATHER ROBERT ADAMS, is at the bar with Costello, talking about his playing days with the Toronto Maple Leafs.

FATHER ADAMS

The year you won the cup, weren't you leading the league in something?

COSTELLO

Hangovers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

In a booth, FATHER CURT MAHONEY, very big and muscled has fashioned three coasters into cards and is playing three card monte with a handful of other priests.

FATHER MAHONEY

All right, where is it, Phil?

FATHER PHIL DELORD, a large French Canadian priest points to one of the coasters and speaks in his heavy Quebecois accent.

FATHER DELORD

Zat one. 'As to be.

Of course, it isn't. Father Mahoney flips the coaster that Father Delord chose and it's blank on the other side. He then flips the middle one over to reveal a black cross.

FATHER DELORD (CONT'D)

Merde!

FATHER MAHONEY

Thought you had me on that one, Phil, I really did. Make mine a Labatt's, eh?

Father Delord makes his way to the bar, shaking his head.

FATHER MAHONEY (CONT'D)

All right then, who's next? I'll take any action up to a fiver.

Bill is talking to FATHER ERIK BAIERS at the door as he is putting on his coat and hat.

BILL

Thanks again for coming, Erik.

FATHER BAIERS

Are you kidding? I haven't had that much fun in years. I think I'm already sore.

BILL

(laughing)

I know. Tomorrow should be interesting.

Bill shuts the door behind him and turns to survey the scene. Everyone seems to be getting on very well.

In the center of the bar, the now finished banner hangs from the ceiling. It turned out great.

CUT TO:

INT. RECTORY - LATE NIGHT

Bill is in the small room that doubles as the school. He is standing at the chalkboard drawing up plays for use in the game. Brendan sits on the floor, reading.

SAMANTHA (O.S.)

So that's what happened to all my chalk.

Samantha enters with a large drawing of a thermometer. Whenever there's a fund-raiser they pull one of these out. At the bottom is "zero" and at the top is the goal of \$11,644. With each dollar, it gets closer to the top.

Bill turns to face her. Smoking gun in hand.

BILL

I'm just trying to come up with a few plays here.

SAMANTHA

Every night this week I've been laying out new chalk for class and every morning, I find a couple of nubs.

BILL

Sorry, Sam. I didn't realize...

SAMANTHA

(smiling)

I'm going to have to start hiding it from you, that's all.

She lays her project on her desk and walks back out of the room. Brendan and Bill look at each other.

BILL

Busted?

Brendan nods his head. *Totally...*

CUT TO:

EXT. NAPANEE WAR MEMORIAL - AFTERNOON

There is a large crowd waiting in line to get in.

CUT TO:

INT. LOCKER ROOM - SAME

The Fathers are in the final stages of gearing up for the game. There is an air of excitement.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Bill is by himself in the corner, lacing up his skates.

Costello steps up on one of the benches.

COSTELLO

Listen up. This is an important day for us. All of you know the situation with the church and the community. These people could use a boost, so let's go out there and work hard tonight for them, eh? Take a knee.

All the players take a knee for the pre-game prayer. Father Mckee does the job.

FATHER MCKEE

Heavenly Father, please watch over your sons tonight as they take the ice to further your glory. Protect *all* the players in tonight's game from serious injury and let them perform with all the gifts you have bestowed upon them. We ask this in your name, Am...

COSTELLO

(interrupting)

One more thing, Lord. Let us put the hurt on these clowns. I don't want to buy a drink tonight. I want to *have* a few, eh? I just don't want to buy them.

Laughter and applause from the Fathers.

FATHER MCKEE

Eloquent as ever, Larry. Amen

ALL

Amen.

COSTELLO

Two minute shifts out there, boys. Watch me for the changes. Let's go now!

The Fathers stampede out of the locker room. Bill stops Costello on his way out the door.

BILL

Cos, wait. There's something I've got to tell you.

COSTELLO

You're not in love with me, are you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BILL

Cut it out - I'm worried about the game.

COSTELLO

You just go out there and play like you know how to.

BILL

That's just it, Cos. I only know one way to play and that's all out. What if someone gets hurt?

COSTELLO

This isn't a tennis match, Murph, just use your best judgement.

Costello throws an arm around Bill's shoulder and they leave.

CUT TO:

INT. NAPANEE WAR MEMORIAL - AFTERNOON

The players are all on the ice, getting set for the opening face-off. The referee brings the two centers in to the circle. Bill is taking the face-off for the Fathers.

REFEREE

I want a good clean game here. Keep it moving and keep those sticks down.

The puck is dropped, Bill wins it and sends it behind him as the Knights swarm into the Fathers' zone.

As Father Baiers tries to send the puck up ice, he is muscled off the play by a forechecking Knights forward who wins the puck and sends it down behind the Fathers' net.

Bill and the other forwards had already headed up ice in anticipation of the play and are late getting back

The Knights have numbers and set up a wide open shot. The horn blows and just like that, the Fathers are down a goal.

Bill and Costello skate back to the bench.

COSTELLO

That's all right, boys, it's okay. We're just getting started here.

FADE TO:

INT. NAPANEE WAR MEMORIAL - LATER

A HORN SOUNDS and the camera is tight on the scoreboard. Middle of the third period, still 1 - 0 in favor of the Knights. The Fathers are tired and it shows. Bill and Cos are on the bench coaching and cheering their team on.

COSTELLO

Delord! Adams! Watch the odd man rush  
off this face-off!

Father Delord makes a nice move off the drop and manages to swipe the puck.

BILL

Good, Phil, now get up ice! Allez!

Delord begins to bring the puck up ice. Just as he starts to pick up some steam, a Knights player hooks him from behind, right in front of the linesman who raises his hand.

The Fathers are going on the power play.

Costello looks up at the clock as he and Bill take the ice.

COSTELLO

Four minutes, Murph, time to make me look  
good.

The puck is dropped in the Knights' zone and won by Bill. He knocks it through his legs to Father Adams. Costello is tapping his stick on the ice, calling for the puck.

Adams sends the puck his way and Costello lets a one timer go that flies past the goalie and into the net.

As time is winding down, Costello wins the puck in the Fathers' zone and sets up one last break.

Bill and his wingers are racing up ice. The puck arrives off the boards and Bill controls it. It's a three on two for the Fathers. As they approach the net, Bill winds up for a slap shot and the Knights defenseman flops to the ice to block it.

Bill pulls the puck back, skates around the fallen defender and flicks a wrist shot past the goalie.

The horn sounds and the Fathers spill over the bench to join the celebration on the ice. In the stands, the parishioners cheer their hearts out. Final Score: Fathers 2 - Knights 1.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ERCOLE'S BAR - NIGHT

The little bar is jammed with the Fathers and parishioners. The Knights players are also here, though in far less celebratory spirits.

Bill, Samantha, Brendan and Father McKee are in a booth.

SAMANTHA

I can't believe it. I really can't.

FATHER MCKEE

We raised eight hundred and sixty dollars how 'bout that, eh? And just look at everyone. I haven't seen so many smiles since we canceled confession last winter.

BILL

Wanna help me play some music, Brendan?

BRENDAN

Sure!

Brendan and Bill get up and make their way to the Jukebox.

FATHER MCKEE

(to Samantha)

You think Cos is enjoying this?

CUT TO:

INT. ERCOLES BAR - CONTINUOUS

Costello is holding court at the bar. Several priests and a few Knights listen to him tell stories of his NHL days.

From behind him, a small man is trying to approach.

MAN

Pardon me, please, Father Costello?

COSTELLO

I'm in the absolution business, my friend. If you're looking for a pardon you'll need to go to Ottawa.

MAN

I just wanted to talk to you for a bit.

COSTELLO

(gestures to his crowd)

I'm kinda in the middle of a something.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAN

I'm with the Ontario News Service. I'd love to do a story about the team.

COSTELLO

You see that lads? Fame just seems to find its way to the righteous.

Costello shoos one of the Knights off an adjacent bar stool.

CUT TO:

INT. ERCOLES BAR - JUKEBOX - SAME

Bill and Brendan at the jukebox. Bill shows him how it works. Brendan presses the buttons Bill calls out.

MUSIC UP: December '63 (Oh What A Night) by Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons.

Samantha and McKee are talking in the booth when Sam recognizes the song. She looks to find Bill with Brendan on his shoulders dancing around the jukebox to make him laugh.

Sam and Bill make eye contact and she flashes a smile that lights up the room before starting to laugh herself.

CUT TO:

INT. ERCOLES BAR - LATER

Costello is still at the bar, relishing the spotlight. The man continues his interview.

MAN

You haven't played competitive hockey in almost twenty years. Were you at all surprised to get the win tonight?

COSTELLO

I haven't played professional hockey in almost twenty years. Every hockey game I play is competitive.

KNIGHTS PLAYER

Jesus, you get one lucky win and all of a sudden you're Bobby Orr.

COSTELLO

Luck had nothing to do with it.

KNIGHTS PLAYER

Yeah. Uh-huh.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Mahoney breaks in.

FATHER MAHONEY

Why don't we make it interesting? We'll play you again, Winner takes the gate?

COSTELLO

(feeding off each other)  
We'll take on anyone, anywhere keen enough to give us a go. I'm calling my shot, The Fathers can't be beat.

KNIGHTS PLAYER

Right. And cows can fly.

COSTELLO

Cows can't. But we can.

The Knights player rolls his eyes. Costello downs his drink.

COSTELLO (CONT'D)

You know, I seem to be empty here.

Costello's crowd laughs enthusiastically and holds their glasses up as well. The Knights player shakes his head. Won't this night ever end?

FADE TO:

INT. TIMMONS ICE RINK OFFICE SUITE - DAY

CLOSE UP on a desktop - A newspaper is slammed down. The headline reads: "FLYING FATHERS CAN'T BE BEAT!"

DAWSON O.S.

I think you should see this sir.

Meet DAWSON, the good-hearted assistant to the OWNER of the Timmons Beavers hockey club.

OWNER

What did I tell you about slamming things on my desk, Dawson?

DAWSON

I'm sorry, sir, it's just...

OWNER

It's an antique, isn't it, Dawson?

DAWSON

Yessir, it *is* an antique. I guess I...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OWNER  
(looking at the paper)  
You're kidding me? Priests?

DAWSON  
Oh...yes, sir. Could be a chance to  
increase our fan base.

OWNER  
(continuing to read)  
Why would we want to play a bunch of  
priests? What if one of them gets hurt?  
That kind of publicity, I *don't* need.

DAWSON  
Well, yessir, but if you read the whole  
article, they've got some legitimate  
players there. And when they say the  
team is led by player/coach, "Father  
Costello" - they mean *Larry Costello*.

OWNER  
From the Leafs? Talk about an antique.

DAWSON  
Good one, sir. Here's the best part. It  
says they'll play for the gate money. As  
long as we win, the whole thing won't  
cost us a dime.

OWNER  
That changes things a bit, doesn't it?  
(beat)  
A little free publicity never hurt  
anyone, did it? Make the call.

CUT TO:

INT. CHURCH RECTORY - AFTERNOON

Bill, Samantha and Costello read the paper. They are  
enjoying the coverage of the game.

The TELEPHONE RINGS and Cos goes to answer it. After a beat,  
they hear him speaking in a raised voice from the hallway.

COSTELLO (O.S.)  
No, no thank *you* very much.

Costello re-enters the room.

SAMANTHA  
What was that all about?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COSTELLO

That was the marketing director for the Timmons Beavers. They want to play the Fathers!

BILL

You're joking?

COSTELLO

(grabs the paper)  
They saw the article. And get this, they'll play for the gate money. Winner takes all! We're in business!

The three of them celebrate with a spontaneous group hug.

CUT TO:

EXT. TIMMONS - DAY

McKee, Murphy and Costello are jammed in the truck with Samantha. They're leading a procession of other cars through the streets of Timmons, Ontario.

SAMANTHA

Looks like a nice place.

COSTELLO

You should have your vision checked.

Everyone gives Costello the stink eye.

COSTELLO (CONT'D)

Kidding. Geez, you cram some people in a truck for 3 1/2 hours and they completely lose their sense of humor.

FATHER MCKEE

Lucky it's only one way. Sam, we can get a ride back tonight with the Frawleys.

BILL

Over there, Brian.

CUT TO:

EXT. TIMMONS ICE RINK - AFTERNOON

A bit fancier than the Napanee War Memorial, but still a small town hockey complex. Like most small Canadian towns, it's the center of the community.

CUT TO:

INT. TIMMONS ICE RINK - EVENING

The Fathers are getting dressed for the game.

COSTELLO

Listen up, boys, they're not going to just give us that check tonight. A lot of these guys think their only chance of getting out of here is by gooning their way to the NHL, so keep your heads up.

INT. TIMMONS ICE RINK -EVENING

There is a good crowd on hand. Both teams warm up. Then a HORN BLOWS.

CUT TO:

INT. TIMMONS ICE RINK - EVENING

Players line up for opening face-off. Bill skates in.

BILL

Good luck tonight, my son.

TIMMONS PLAYER

Save it, Dad. I'm an atheist.

Play is very physical and there isn't a whole lot of room on the ice. Neither side can get much going and both teams make a line change. As they are skating back to the bench...

FATHER MAHONEY

These boys came to play.

BILL

Fine by me.

The second line for the Beavers is big. Real big. And they like to play the body. One of them, MOSER, is into it with Father Burgoon right in front of the Fathers' net. He spears Burgoon hard in the ribs causing him to drop his stick. Dirty. As Burgoon is bending to retrieve it, a shot comes from the point that Moser deflects past Buntz for a goal.

FATHER BUNTZ

(to referee)

He speared him, open your eyes!!!

The ref doesn't want to hear it.

Bill comes back on for the next shift and passes the man who took the original shot. It's the same player he faced off against moments ago.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TIMMONS PLAYER  
Chalk one up for Darwinism, eh, Padre?

CUT TO:

INT TIMMONS ICE RINK - LATER

Bill has the puck and flies up the wing. He works his way behind the net and sees Father Adams pinching in from the point. He feeds Adams a beautiful pass that he pokes past the goalie. The Fathers are back in the game.

The intensity is up another notch. As the period ticks away, the play is back in the Fathers' zone and it's the same story between Burgoon and the Moser.

Burgoon get speared continually until he goes down again. Nothing from the ref. Buntz takes his goalie stick and chops Moser right behind his knee. He goes down and the HORN BLOWS to end the period.

REFEREE  
Two minutes. Slashing.

FATHER BUNTZ  
Me? He's going at my guy like a lumberjack!

REFEREE  
You wanna make it four?

FATHER BUNTZ  
You telling me you didn't see that? If you had one more eye you'd be a cyclops!

Referee BLOWS HIS WHISTLE.

REFEREE  
You just got four!

FATHER BUNTZ  
Put on a Timmons jersey, you cheat, you're skating for them anyway!

REFEREE  
That's it, you're gone! Get outta here!

Buntz is ejected. The crowd cheers and he goes ballistic. It's all the other Fathers can do to control him as he is led off the ice.

CUT TO:

INT. LOCKER ROOM - LATER

The game has resumed, but Buntz is still seething. He makes his way back through the tunnel and towards the rink. There is a guard posted to prevent just this sort of thing.

GUARD

Sorry, Father, can't do it. You know the rules, once you've been tossed that's it.

Buntz pleads his case, but it's no use. He turns and begins to walk back down the tunnel. To his left, 3 nuns are in line at the concession stand.

CUT TO:

INT. TUNNEL - MOMENTS LATER

A nun carrying water bottles walks up to the guard at the entrance to the rink. Her face is hidden by the cloth of her habit and she has her head down.

GUARD

Hello, sister.

NUN

More water for the team.

GUARD

Oh, okay.  
(stands aside)  
Right through there.

NUN

Bless you, child.

As she walks away we can see that "she" is wearing skates.

CUT TO:

INT. TIMMONS ICE RINK - CONTINUOUS

The nun walks into the bench area and sits down next to Father Adams. We now see that this nun is Father Buntz.

FATHER BUNTZ

How we doin'?

Father Adams is looking Buntz up and down?

FATHER ADAMS

That's an interesting look.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FATHER BUNTZ

Yeah, yeah...Where's that goon, Moser?

Moser is back on the ice, up to his old tricks in the corner.

FATHER ADAMS

Right where you left him.

FATHER BUNTZ

Gimmie your stick.

FATHER ADAMS

Are you kidding? You're not even supp-

Buntz grabs the stick and, as the Fathers are switching lines, jumps over the bench. It takes a moment for the crowd to notice, but there's a penguin on the ice.

Father Delord, just back to the bench can't believe his eyes.

FATHER DELORD

Qu'est-ce qui se passe?

Adams just shrugs his shoulders.

Buntz streaks straight towards Moser who is still chasing the play in the corner. Just as the puck is freed and play opens up, Buntz leaps up and crushes him from the blind side.

The crowd goes absolutely nuts, the referees blow their whistles and the players don't know what to do.

FATHER ADAMS

Well, you don't see that every night.

Father Delord crosses himself.

Buntz beats a hasty retreat back to the bench and through the tunnel with the referees in hot pursuit.

Players start shoving and it doesn't take long for the first fist to fly. Bill gets into it with Moser and away we go...

CUT TO:

EXT. NAPANEE CHURCH - MORNING

Bill and Costello have arrived home.

Before they are even out of the truck, Samantha and McKee are upon them. Samantha runs to Cos and Bill and gives both a quick but joyful hug. Bill's eye is swollen and will soon be a nasty shiner.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAMANTHA  
 Congratulations!  
 (off his eye)  
 Ooh. Does it hurt?

Lying, Bill shakes his head, *No*.

BILL  
 Congratulations? We lost.

Samantha can barely contain herself.

SAMANTHA  
 You're famous! Five other teams have  
 called and want to schedule games. Same  
 stakes, winner takes all!

BILL  
 (holding up a newspaper)  
 Do they read the papers?

Above a picture of the debacle in Timmons is the headline:  
 FLYING NUN FAILS TO INSPIRE FATHERS TO VICTORY.

FATHER MCKEE  
 The crowd loved you guys. The Timmons  
 office has been flooded with phone calls  
 asking when we're coming back. Can you  
 believe it? The Flying Fathers are going  
 on tour!

Bill and Cos are speechless. The Lord works in mysterious  
 ways.

Brendan comes running into the scene, his skates in his hand.

BRENDAN  
 Can we go skating, Father Murph?

BILL  
 You bet, just let me get changed.

BRENDAN  
 Whoa! Your eye looks cool.

Bill reaches over and musses Brendan's hair. *Thanks*.

CUT TO:

EXT. RECTORY - LATER

Bill and Brendan are on the porch. As they are taking off  
 their skates, Samantha opens the door.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAMANTHA

There you are. Phone call for you, Bill.

CUT TO:

INT. RECTORY - CONTINUOUS

Bill arrives at the phone.

BILL

Hello?

CUT TO:

INT. MURPHY KITCHEN - DAY

ALICE

It's not a very good photo of you.

THE FOLLOWING DIALOGUE IS INTERCUT BETWEEN THE MURPHY  
RESIDENCE AND THE NAPANEE CHURCH RECTORY.

BILL

(surprised)

Mom?

ALICE

You usually look so nice. Still, you  
look better than the guy dressed as the  
nun.

BILL

You know about that, eh?

ALICE

Mothers know everything, Bill.

BILL

(damage control)

Listen, Mum, we only played because-

ALICE

I think it's wonderful. It's all here in  
the newspaper, Bill, those people are  
very lucky to have a priest like you.

BILL

You're not mad?

ALICE

You're a priest. Priests do all they can  
to help their flock. If you can help them  
by playing hockey, you should do it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BILL

But you hate hockey.

ALICE

I just had to make sure it didn't lead you astray. If the Lord sees fit to put it back in your life now it must be for good reason.

BILL

(sincerely)

Thanks, Mum.

(beat)

Hey listen, we got a few more games. We might actually pull this thing off.

ALICE

I'd like to help. Mrs. Derrick and I are organizing a bake sale. I'm making my apple pie.

BILL

That's terrific, every little bit helps.

ALICE

Just promise me you'll remember what's really important while you're doing this? And *please* be careful, Bill. You are being careful, aren't you?

Bill leans to his right to look at his reflection in a mirror. His eye is starting to look worse.

BILL

Absolutely.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Dinner has just ended, Brendan and Bill are washing the dishes as Costello and Samantha clear the table.

The PHONE RINGS.

Samantha leaves the room to get it. She returns a moment later.

SAMANTHA

For you again, Bill. Says he's an old friend.

CUT TO:

INT. RECTORY - CONTINUOUS

Bill arrives at the phone

BILL  
Hello?

FATHER KENNEDY (O.C.)  
You've made the newspaper, you must be  
very proud.

All the blood seems to drain out of Bill's face as he goes  
white. That voice...

CUT TO:

INT. KENNEDY'S OFFICE - SAME

It is Kennedy. A little older perhaps, but just as direct.  
He drops the newspaper on his large and ornate desk.

FATHER KENNEDY  
I think it's time we got caught up,  
Murphy. There's a seven-thirty train to  
Toronto tomorrow, make sure you're on it.

CUT TO:

INT. ARCHDIOCESE - NEXT DAY

Bill is waiting in an outer office. He is nervously adjusting  
his uniform when an assistant enters the room.

ASSISTANT  
Monsignor Kennedy will see you now.

CUT TO:

INT. KENNEDY'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Bill takes a seat in front of that ornate desk. Behind it,  
*Monsignor* Kennedy is looking every bit in charge.

FATHER KENNEDY  
(off Bill's eye)  
The more things change, the more they  
stay the same, eh? You're still letting  
hockey close your eyes to the future.

BILL  
I'm just trying to help my parishioners.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FATHER KENNEDY

What would *help* your parishioners is to accept the fact that this is going to happen. Difficult times await us, Murphy, the faithful need a place to come together.

BILL

Isn't that why I'm in Napanee?

FATHER KENNEDY

The church needs to grow. What better way to attract the faithful than a glorious new cathedral?

BILL

My parishioners don't need marble on the floor, sir, just a place of their own.

FATHER KENNEDY

None of us owns, Father Murphy. We are all but a small part of the flock.

BILL

Yes, sir. I only hope we don't confuse the flock for the fleece.

FATHER KENNEDY

(annoyed now)

The archdiocese has placed the bulk of Ontario in my care and I intend to build something great here. You and your...*team* need to ask yourselves if you want to be a part of it.

Bill slides down a bit in his chair and settles in to ride this call out.

CUT TO:

INT. RECTORY - EVENING

Bill and Samantha and Costello are sitting at the table. From the looks on their faces, he's given them the gist of the meeting.

COSTELLO

Who *is* this guy?

BILL

Trust me, you don't want to get into it. He's threatening suspension or even relocation to anyone who misses even one of their regular parish duties.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COSTELLO

Gonna make this tour a little tricky if we have to come back between games.

BILL

Everybody on this team has got to know what's on the line. I won't blame anyone who wants out, but the decision has to be theirs.

COSTELLO

I'll see if I can get them to a meeting.

Costello gets up to start calling the other players. Samantha starts to get up, Bill grabs her hand.

BILL

Sam, this affects you, too. If you continue, Kennedy could make it tough for you, he's that kind of guy.

SAMANTHA

What could he do, I'm not a priest?

BILL

I don't know, write a poor performance report, make it harder to get another job? I wouldn't put it past him.

(beat)

You've been wonderful, Sam, we couldn't have done this without you. I just don't want to see you get hurt.

Samantha lets it soak in as Bill goes to join Costello.

CUT TO:

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Father Baiers is on the phone in his church.

BILL (O.S.)

It's going to be tougher now. A lot tougher...

CUT TO:

INT. CHURCH - AFTERNOON

Father Delord on the phone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COSTELLO (O.S.)  
If you want to back out, we'll  
understand...

CUT TO:

INT. LOCAL DINER - AFTERNOON

Father Buntz is in a phone booth at his local diner.

BILL (O.S.)  
If you're in, be here Thursday at noon,  
ready to go..

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE - NIGHT

Father McKee on the phone...

BILL (O.S.)  
Hope to see you here.

CUT TO:

INT. RECTORY -NIGHT

Bill hangs up the phone and looks to Costello and Samantha.  
Brendan sits on her lap.

BILL  
Guess we'll find out on Thursday.

He looks exhausted as he climbs the stairs and out of the  
scene.

CUT TO:

A FEW DAYS LATER

INT. CONFESSIONAL BOOTH - DAY

We join a boy's(let's call him Christopher)confession already  
in progress. Nothing major here. Just your standard sins.

CHRISTOPHER  
...and I took the Lord's name in vain  
and, umm...last week I stayed up and read  
comics for two hours after my Mum told me  
to go to sleep.

Silence from the other side of the shadowy grille.

CHRISTOPHER (CONT'D)  
That's about it, Father.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PRIEST

Well, now, that wasn't too bad. Try and make an effort not to use the Lord's name in vain and remember to listen to your parents, eh? They really do know what's best for you right now.

CHRISTOPHER

Okay, Father. I will.

PRIEST

Good lad. For your act of contrition, say ten "Hail Marys" and ten "Our Fathers". Send in the next one, eh?

The boy makes the sign of the cross and rises to leave. He is halfway out the door when he turns and leans back down.

CHRISTOPHER

Oh, and Father?

PRIEST

Yes, what is it?

CHRISTOPHER

Good luck tonight.

The camera sweeps across the booth into the priest's chamber. We see Bill here, resplendent in his robes. Bible and prayer cloth in hand, gold crucifix around his neck.

And a nasty looking black eye.

A smile crosses Bill's face.

BILL

Thank you, my son.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. RECTORY - AFTERNOON

Bill paces nervously. He checks the clock on the wall.

BILL

Are you sure this thing is accurate.

COSTELLO

Since you checked six minutes ago?

BILL

Where is Sam, anyway? She's been gone a lot the last few days.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COSTELLO  
Said she had something to do.

BILL  
It's already eleven-fifteen!

A CAR HORN HONKS

Bill looks at Costello like a kid on Christmas day. He hustles to the window to look.

CUT TO:

EXT. CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

A parade of cars is approaching the church. As they get closer, all begin to HONK THEIR HORNS.

CUT TO:

INT. RECTORY - SAME

Bill looks genuinely relieved and exhales for the first time in a while. Costello pats him on the shoulder.

COSTELLO  
I knew it.

CUT TO:

INT. RECTORY - LATER

All the Fathers showed up for the tour. Every single one.

The rectory is jammed to the rafters with parishioners and their kids. We're in the midst of a farewell party. Father McKee is addressing the congregation.

FATHER MCKEE  
You Fathers never cease to amaze me with your generosity and your courage and I know that everyone here tonight wishes you the very best.

Huge applause from the crowd.

FATHER MCKEE (CONT'D)  
I know Samantha wanted to say something, so, Sam...the floor is yours.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAMANTHA

Thank you, Father McKee. I just wanted to take a moment to tell all the Fathers how much we appreciate what you're doing for us. For all of us.

The Napanee parishioners are beaming at the Fathers.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Your parishioners are as proud of you as we are and they all wanted to help. It really is wonderful to see what's possible when you fight for something you love. You've all given us so much already and...

(beat)

Well, we wanted to give something back.

She looks to the audience and finds the kids.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Okay, everyone. Now.

The children all leap up from their seats and run out of the room. Everyone is smiling except the Fathers who have been caught completely off guard.

The Children re-enter, each carrying a simple gear bag. Some of the smaller children have to team up to carry them.

Each child then takes their bag to a specific priest and hands it to them. Brendan walks to Bill.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Everyone's parish chipped in. We hope they'll bring you luck.

The priests open the bags and find all sorts of things. Some hold new pads and socks. Others, new goalie pads or a new stick. All of them contain something else besides.

Black wool sweaters have been made into hockey jerseys. The front has a white outline of a man's face with a halo over his head. "Flying Fathers" is written across the chest and numbers are sewn on the back.

BILL

How did you-

BRENDAN

It was Ms. Ryan's idea.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

He runs back and hugs Samantha's leg. She looks up and sees Bill smiling at her. He's blown away. She smiles back, touched that the gift was so well-received.

FADE TO:

INT. KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

Bill is pouring himself a cup of coffee. Samantha enters.

SAMANTHA

Ahh, there you are.

BILL

Thought I'd better fuel up. Got a long drive ahead of us tonight.

SAMANTHA

We need more serviettes [napkins] I know we have them somewhere...there they are.

Samantha sees them on the top shelf of the cupboard. She climbs up on one knee to try and get them. As she reaches, the counter top starts to come off it's mounting. It tilts, her knee slipping off the counter and she nearly falls, but

BILL

I've got you.

A coffee pot falls and hits the floor, SMASHING to pieces.

Samantha however falls right into Bill's arms, their faces inches apart. Neither is in a big hurry to let the other go. Bill looks into Samantha's eyes. She looks right back.

Suddenly though, Samantha breaks free of his grasp and smacks the counter top with her open hand.

SAMANTHA

This is impossible! You fix one thing and something else breaks down!

BILL

It's just a coffee pot, Sam.

SAMANTHA

You can't fix something halfway! Not for long, you can't. If you don't do it right it always comes back to get you.

He's never seen her this upset. Bill reaches up and grabs the serviettes from the shelf.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BILL  
Here, it's okay.

SAMANTHA  
(getting hysterical)  
It's no way to live, no way to live at  
all! I just can't do this!

Samantha snatches the serviettes out of Bill's hand and storms out of the kitchen.

Bill is left there to try and pick up the pieces.

CUT TO:

INT. RECTORY - SAME

Samantha dashes into her bedroom and slams the door behind her. She leans against the wall, using the serviettes to wipe her tears.

CUT TO:

EXT. SIDE OF CHURCH - LATER

The last of the luggage is put on board a brown school bus. Most of the Fathers are laughing and pointing at the bus.

FATHER MAHONEY  
Three to one this thing doesn't make it  
out of the county. Who wants in?

McKee walks up with an old barbecue and a few bags of wood.

FATHER BAIERS  
Make mine medium rare, eh? A little pink  
inside.

FATHER MCKEE  
I wish I could, lads. The heater on the  
bus doesn't work so well, I'm afraid.

Buntz, Baiers and Mahoney just look at each other and laugh. Some of the others are not taking it quite as well.

CUT TO:

INT. BUS - AFTERNOON

As the doors are closed, the great brown beast sputters to life and FATHER SMITH, the driver, calls to everyone to hold on to something.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FATHER SMITH

All right, Fathers, let's get this  
crusade on the road!

Bill takes one last glance out the window and sees Mckee and  
the kids waving good-bye.

Next to Bill, Costello is slipping his new sweater on.

COSTELLO

Great sweaters, eh, Murph?

Bill is still staring out the back window hoping to see  
Samantha. Some of the kids are doing their best to run  
alongside the bus as it pulls away.

COSTELLO (CONT'D)

Hello? Anybody home?

BILL

What? Oh, the sweaters! Yeah, they are.

Costello just chuckles as the bus pulls away.

CUT TO:

EXT. BUS - EVENING

We see the bus moving down the highway. As it passes we can  
make out a glow coming from the rear and several silhouettes  
gathered around the BBQ. A makeshift chimney carries the  
smoke out the window. It actually works pretty well.

The bus' headlights light up a road sign that says: Thunder  
Bay - 50 kilometers.

FADE TO:

MUSIC UP: (SONG TITLE T.B.D.)

FOLLOWING SHOTS TO BE ASSEMBLED INTO A MONTAGE.

The Fathers are on the ice and playing another game. Bill  
scores a beautiful goal.

The bus, campfire in the back, moving from town to town.

Mckee at the Rectory, filling in the thermometer that creeps  
a little higher with every dollar won.

A local newspaper, the Oshawa Sentinel spins in to the frame.  
The headline reads: PLAYING AND PRAYING - THE FLYING FATHERS  
WIN AGAIN.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Father McKee is in the office of Monsignor Kennedy. He is being yelled at.

The bus moving on again.

Father Buntz skates to the net at the start of another game. A group of guys dressed in nuns habits stand just behind it, cheering him and waving a sign reading "SISTER SLEDGE".

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

Bill is being interviewed by a local TV crew. The Fathers are in various states of dress around him.

REPORTER

We're here with, Father Bill Murphy, who led the way in tonight's victory with three goals and an assist.

(to Bill)

You also managed to pick up four penalty minutes, Father Murphy, can you tell us what those were for?

BILL

Acting like a protestant.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL LOBBY PHONE BOOTH - NIGHT

Bill is on the phone. It's ringing. As soon as it is picked up, he goes into his worst Frankie Valli impersonation.

BILL

"Oh what a night..."

FEMALE VOICE

Hello?

BILL

...The Flying Fa-thers won it six-to-three!

CUT TO:

INT. RECTORY - SAME

There is a woman on the phone. It is not Samantha.

WOMAN

Excuse me?

CONVERSATION IS INTERCUT BETWEEN THE PHONE BOOTH AND RECTORY.

BILL

Oh...sorry. Is Samantha there, please?

WOMAN

I'm afraid she's no longer working here.

BILL

What! What are you talking about? This is Father Murphy, who's this?

WOMAN

Hello Father, Murphy, I'm Kathy Colin, the new teacher.

BILL

But what happened to Sam?

KATHY

She took another job. Montreal I think.

Bill's head is spinning.

BILL

Are you sure? I mean...Did she leave a number where she could be reached?

KATHY

I'm afraid not, Father.

Bill almost drops the phone. He's speechless.

KATHY (CONT'D)

Father Murphy? Are you still there?

BILL

(weakly)

Thanks.

He hangs up the phone. As he exits the phone booth, he looks as if he's been kicked in the stomach.

CUT TO:

INT. POLAR BEAR CLUB - LATER

The local pub is jammed with residents of the small town. Bill enters. We follow him up to a table where Costello, Adams and Mahoney are in the middle of dinner.

COSTELLO

Well, look what the cat dragged in, eh?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FATHER MAHONEY

I think the only thing tougher than that game tonight is this steak.

BILL

Cos, can I talk to you for a minute?

COSTELLO

Yeah, okay. A little walk might do me good anyway, I'm starting to get bleacher butt here.

Fathers Mahoney and Adams look at each other.

FATHER ADAMS

He's a class, act isn't he?

FATHER MAHONEY

Oh-yeah. One in a million.

Bill and Costello start to walk to the bar. As soon as they are a few steps away..

BILL

Samantha's gone.

COSTELLO

(genuine surprise)  
What!? Where?

BILL

I called to tell her we won and someone else answered the phone. She said Sam left to take a job in Montreal and she was her replacement.

COSTELLO

Wow, that was quick.  
(beat)  
Good for her, I guess, eh? Probably a much more secure job. Still, I'm sorry to lose her.

Bill is visibly upset.

BILL

Tell me about it.

COSTELLO

You okay?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BILL  
(agitated)  
Why is it every time I start to get a  
hold of something I want...

He takes a breath to try and compose himself.

BILL (CONT'D)  
Let's have a drink, eh?

COSTELLO  
If you insist.

CUT TO:

INT. POLAR BEAR CLUB - CONTINUOUS

Bill and Costello walk up to the bar. Father Buntz is deep in conversation with KIM, the bartender at one end while Fathers Adams and Delord converse in French at the other.

Nearby, a drunken local logger, ANDREW BROUGHTON overhears them and starts to make fun of them to his fellow loggers.

He walks towards Adams and Delord and cuts right between them, making sure to throw a shoulder to both.

Adams and Delord have been spilled on. Just enough to piss them off.

FATHER DELORD  
Fait attention, eh? C'est tres impoli.

ANDREW  
Oh, sorry 'bout that, froggies.

FATHER DELORD  
Pardon?

ANDREW  
Here let me restate that. Parlez-vous  
kiss my ass, you french, frog pussies!

KIM  
Dammit, Andrew, you back off! These are  
the priests who played the Grizzlies  
tonight.

ANDREW  
I know, I know, they're a bunch of damn  
celebrities, aint they?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FATHER ADAMS

Walk it off, alchy, we're not looking for trouble.

ANDREW

I am.

Andrew rushes at Father Adams Just before he gets there, Bill comes from behind him and YANKS him hard by his collar. He lands back into his buddies. They all stand up.

BILL

Is there a problem here? Perhaps you'd like to discuss it...*avec moi?*

Costello puts his arm around Bill's shoulder and does his best to diffuse the situation.

COSTELLO

All right, lads, everything's O.K.

Andrew is corralled by his fellow loggers and they manage to get him to leave with them, cursing all the way out. Even the locals seem relieved to have him gone.

Bill, Adams, Delord and Costello come together as the crowd starts to get back into a rhythm.

COSTELLO (CONT'D)

(to Bill)

You alright tonight?

BILL

(really frustrated)

I gotta get some air.

Bill grabs a beer off the bar and walks toward the door.

CUT TO:

EXT. POLAR BEAR CLUB - MOMENTS LATER

Bill emerges from the polar bear club and almost walks into a couple embraced in a kiss. Not what he needed. He dodges around the corner and heads out back.

He stands there for a moment trying to calm down, but it's no use. He starts to take a sip of the beer and then just throws the bottle to the ground where it SMASHES beside him.

From behind him comes a voice.

ANDREW O.S.

Well, if isn't the bishop of Quebec?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Bill turns around to see the three drunk loggers from a few minutes ago leaning against their truck, drinking.

BILL  
You still here?

ANDREW  
Yeah, we're still here, frog lover.  
(beat)  
I hear you softies won a lot of money tonight.

BILL  
Did all right, yeah.

ANDREW  
Give it to us and maybe we'll let you walk away.

BILL  
Not mine to give.

ANDREW  
Maybe we'll just take it from you then, whaddya think of that, tough guy?

Wrong thing to say. Wrong guy to say it to. And definitely the wrong night.

Bill takes a step closer to them. His eyes blaze with anger and frustration, but his voice is steady and even.

BILL  
Well, let's just see here. There's three of you and, I've had a bit to drink already, so you may get the better of me eventually. But listen up and listen good.  
(beat)  
Two of you will not be getting up again. Your move. Who's it gonna be?

The loggers are stunned. Aside from the shock of hearing all this from a priest's mouth, everything about Bill tells them he isn't bluffing. They remain frozen in place.

BILL (CONT'D)  
I SAID, WHO THE HELL'S IT GONNA BE?!!!

They recoil from the shock. None of the them are willing to be the first one in and they all slowly turn around and begin to climb into their truck.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BILL (CONT'D)

You ladies be careful getting home, now.

CUT TO:

INT. WINNIPEG HOTEL - AFTERNOON

The Fathers are checking in. Bill and Cos are at the desk.

HOTEL CLERK

Enjoy your stay, Fathers. Oh, and there's a message for you, Father Murphy. It says, "We need to talk. I'll be there at 6:30. Signed, Father Mckee."

COSTELLO

Must be pretty serious for Brian to travel all this way.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL BAR - EVENING

Mckee arrives to find Cos and Bill chatting with a large crowd of guests. He calls to them.

FATHER MCKEE

It's nice to see you celebrities still mix with the common folk.

Bill and Costello excuse themselves and join Mckee.

FATHER MCKEE (CONT'D)

Can you believe all the press you've been getting?

BILL

Publicity, we've got. Now if we could just get a little cash together.

FATHER MCKEE

Enjoy it while you can, lads. One never knows what the Lord has waiting around the corner.

COSTELLO

You didn't come all this way just to play press agent, did you?

FATHER MCKEE

Listen, how many do you expect at the game tomorrow night?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BILL

I have no idea. Why?

FATHER MCKEE

Is it a big arena?

COSTELLO

What's going on, Brian?

FATHER MCKEE

The bank is going to foreclose.

COSTELLO

Yes, we're aware of that.

FATHER MCKEE

Now.

BILL

What?

FATHER MCKEE

They have to foreclose in 10 days and we're still over four thousand dollars short. This is the last game we have scheduled. Even if we win, it won't be enough.

Bill and Cos look at each other. What else could happen?

FATHER MCKEE (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, I know how hard you've been working. We've used up all the bank's goodwill.

Bill and Costello look at each other. *What next?*

FATHER MCKEE (CONT'D)

This is it I'm afraid. Short of a miracle.

FADE TO:

INT. WINNIPEG ARENA - NIGHT

The Fathers walk down the tunnel removing their gear and unwrapping athletic tape. From their appearance and the handshakes they share, two things are clear: They won the game. And their tour is over.

Standing next to the locker room door is Steve Franchetti, the scout who arranged the tryout with Montreal all those years ago.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

His suit is even more flamboyant these days and his comb over looks absurd.

Bill arrives at the door. A beat of total confusion and then...

BILL  
You're kidding? The scout, right?

STEVE FRANCHETTI  
I've been reading about you in the paper.  
You're "Father Bill Murphy". I can't  
believe I never made the connection.  
(beat)  
Looks like you still play a solid game.

Costello is right behind Bill.

COSTELLO  
As good as I've ever seen.

Bill turns to shake Costello's hand. *Thanks.*

STEVE FRANCHETTI  
How's your head?

BILL  
Seems to be working fine.

COSTELLO  
Depends on who you ask.

BILL  
What are you doing here?

STEVE FRANCHETTI  
Management at the Forum is always looking  
for ways to draw a crowd. They sent me  
here to check you guys out.  
(beat)  
How would you guys like to play a game  
against the Canadiens farm team?

BILL  
The Gulls? Are you kidding? Steve, I  
don't know how much you've read, but we  
could really use this. Our parish is in  
real financial trouble and we're playing  
for the money we need to survive.

STEVE FRANCHETTI  
I like what I saw out there, Bill.  
Always did. What do you say?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Bill throws his arms around Steve and musses his head, ruining his comb over.

BILL  
 (to Costello)  
 I gotta go call McKee, I think I just found our miracle!

FADE TO:

INT. LOCKER ROOM - LATER

Bill and Cos come storming through the door to find the Fathers getting ready to hit the showers.

BILL  
 We got a game at the Forum!

FATHER ADAMS  
 What?

BILL  
 We got a game at the MONTREAL FORUM!

The news is almost overwhelming. Except for Costello, not a one of them has ever set foot on the ice at the Forum.

FATHER BUNTZ  
 When?

BILL  
 Next Sunday!

The glory of the news sends the Fathers back into a roaring frenzy. They're not dead yet...

CUT TO:

INT. SMALL CHURCH - NIGHT

Father Mahoney is surrounded by a handful of elderly priests. He is proudly showing off his shiner.

FADE TO:

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Father Adams is at the altar. In the midst of his sermon.

FATHER ADAMS  
 For evil is all around us and Satan will look for a chance to exploit it.

CUT TO:

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

Father Delord is outside his church sweeping the snow off the walk. A chunk of snow falls onto the path and he starts to work it back and forth like a puck with the broom.

BACK TO:

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Father Adams in his sermon...

FATEHR ADAMS

Try as we might, the Devil will find a way to split our defense. But should we let him skate willy-nilly through the zone of our soul?

CUT TO:

INT. ERCOLE'S BAR - DAY

Costello is at the bar moving several bottle caps this way and that to try and show Terry the bartender how he scored some of his goals. Terry looks less than spellbound.

BACK TO:

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

Father Delord is into it now. Shuffling along as though he were on skates, he moves down the path and dodges around a nun who looks at him like he's crazy.

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Father Adams is really cooking...

FATHER ADAMS

Or do we reach deep down inside and say  
NO! Not on my shift!

The parishioners in his mass start to look at one another.

CUT TO:

INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

Sitting in a booth of some diner is Father Buntz. He is pointing to the newspaper, spread in front of him and talking to the waitress.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FATHER BUNTZ

What do you mean, I "don't look like an athlete?"

FADE TO:

INT. RECTORY - MORNING

Bill is in the small kitchen of the rectory. He is putting the kettle on the stove for some tea. Brendan comes in the kitchen in his pajamas.

BILL

Well, well, well there he is, I thought you were going to sleep so late you'd miss your train.

BRENDAN

I don't want to leave, Father Murph.

BILL

I know, Brendan. But I think you'll like Toronto if you give it a chance. Just think of all the new friends you're going to make and all the time you can spend with your cousins now.

BRENDAN

I'm going to miss you though.

BILL

I'll miss you too, Brendan. But we'll always be friends, okay?

BRENDAN

Okay.

(beat)

I had a nightmare again.

BILL

What about?

BRENDAN

The same. I was dreaming about my mum again. She was saying I love you when I left for school. Just like always. But I couldn't say it back. Do you think my mum knew I loved her?

Bill turns to face him and crouches down.

BILL

I know she did. You know what my mum always told me?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BILL (CONT'D)

(beat)

"Mothers know everything." They can see it in your eyes. And when she looked in yours, she could see your love.

BRENDAN

(hopeful)

Really?

BILL

Really.

The kettle starts to whistle and Bill turns around to take it of the stove.

BRENDAN

Did you ever tell Miss Ryan you love her?

BILL

(knocked the wind out of him)

What?

BRENDAN

Or did she just see it in your eyes?

God, is it that obvious? Bill doesn't know what to say. So he plays defense.

BILL

Go and wake up Father Costello and tell him the tea is ready.

BRENDAN

Okay.

Brendan leaves. Bill turns to the cupboard, eager to do anything but answer that question. He sees that there is only one cup left, on the very top shelf. When he pulls it down he finds four new sticks of chalk in it.

CUT TO:

EXT. DIVISION STREET - DAY

Bill is walking up the sidewalk. He is carrying a small bag over his shoulder and he turns to go up the walk to his parents' house back in Kingston.

CUT TO:

INT. MURPHY RESIDENCE - CONTINUOUS

Bill opens up the door to the house and walks in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BILL  
Anybody home?

From around the corner comes Alice. Like all parents after a certain age, she looks exactly the same.

ALICE  
Bill! Oh my God! What are you doing home?

The two meet and exchange a warm hug.

BILL  
I got a few days off, so I thought I'd surprise you and Dad.

ALICE  
That's wonderful, Bill. Oh look at you, you look so nice in your priest's collar.

BILL  
Thanks, Mum, you look nice too.

ALICE  
Come and sit down. Are you hungry? I have some apple pie.

BILL  
Don't tease me.

ALICE  
You get comfortable, I'll be right back.

Alice goes in the kitchen.

BILL  
(shouts)  
How's Dad doing? He's getting close to retiring, isn't he?

Alice returns to the room.

ALICE  
Can you believe it? It's a good thing as well.

BILL  
What do you mean?

ALICE  
Oh, it's nothing to worry about, dear, just little things here and there. He left the house without his lunch today.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BILL

Let me run it over to him, eh?

ALICE

That would be nice, Bill, he'd love that. When you get back I'll have that piece of pie waiting.

BILL

It's a date. See you later.

Bill grabs a lunch box off the mail table and heads out.

CUT TO:

EXT. KINGSTON GENERAL PSYCHIATRIC WARD - LATER

Bill is walking across the grounds. A patient, clad only in a loose fitting hospital gown and dripping wet comes running directly at him. When he gets within range he yells at Bill.

PATIENT

DIRTY BOY DOESN'T WANT A BATH! DIRTY BOY  
DOESN'T WANT A BATH!

The patient never breaks stride and continues to run across the snowy lawn. Two orderlies are in hot pursuit. Just another day at the looney bin.

CUT TO:

EXT. WARD NORTH END - MOMENTS LATER

Charlie is on his knees trimming a line of low hedges. Bill approaches his father from behind.

BILL (O.C.)

That's a wicked chop you've got there,  
old-timer.

Charlie turns to see Bill.

CHARLIE

What are you doing home?

BILL

Mum asked me the same question. Can't a  
guy just visit his parents anymore?

CHARLIE

Okay. Sure.

Bill holds up the lunch box

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Geez, did your mother send you? I can just hear her going on about how I'm forgetting things.

BILL

She was on a roll.

CHARLIE

(smiling)

There's a surprise. Sit down with me for a minute, eh?

The two of them go to a nearby bench and sit down.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Ahh, that's better.

BILL

One more month and you'll be living the good life eh, Dad?

CHARLIE

Hard to believe, isn't it? I've spent forty-two years of my life here. God, can you imagine how many stupid hedges I've trimmed?

BILL

You've done a lot of good, Dad, they were lucky to have you.

(beat)

Can I ask you something?

CHARLIE

Of course.

BILL

Did you ever regret it? You know, realize you had another calling?

Charlie hides a little smirk. *Just visiting, huh?*

CHARLIE

I never really had time to think about it. You make choices in your life that affect more than yourself and if you're any kind of man, you own up to them. Your mother and I wanted to have children, so we both had to take steps to ensure we could take care of those children. I ended up here. Did I regret it? I don't know. I guess sometimes I wished I could have done something else.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

(beat)

But I have five wonderful children, Bill.  
And I've never regretted that.

Bill puts his hand on his father's shoulder.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Besides it's not like I had a chance to  
play professional hockey.

BILL

(surprised)

What's that supposed to mean?

CHARLIE

You're my son, I know you loved the game.  
I know you still love it.

BILL

You never wanted me to play pro.

CHARLIE

I just didn't think you could make a  
career of it. Hell, pros got a great life  
nowadays.

If Bill wasn't already sitting down, he would have fallen.

BILL

But, Dad...What about the priesthood?

Charlie takes a moment to try and collect his thoughts.

CHARLIE

God makes us all for a purpose. I really  
believe that, but it's up to us to  
discover what that purpose is and how to  
best go about it. Being my kids'  
father...That was my purpose.

(beat)

Maybe I should have talked to you about  
this before, I don't know. Time has a  
way of changing the way you remember  
things. The bottom line is, it really  
doesn't matter what I think. Or your  
mother. Not anymore. You have to be  
honest with *yourself*, Bill. People should  
do what makes them happy.

(beat)

Or the next thing you know you wake up  
and realize you've spent forty-two years  
trimming hedges.

FADE TO:

INT. BILL AND DANNY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Bill lays in his boyhood bed, wide awake. His hands are folded behind his head. The posters and clippings that adorn his walls and ceiling may have faded, but the dream has not.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ARCHDIOCESE - DAY

Monsignor Kennedy sits in the waiting area of an office. A buzzer sounds and a secretarial priest picks up a phone.

SECRETARY

Bishop Logan will see you now, Monsignor.

Kennedy gets up and we...

CUT TO:

INT. BISHOP'S OFFICE

A very ornate office. Bishop Logan, a powerful looking man, is at his desk signing documents. He doesn't look up.

BISHOP LOGAN

What is it, Monsignor?

Kennedy sounds nothing like we have heard him in the past. If his tone were any sweeter, his nose might actually turn brown.

FATHER KENNEDY

I was wondering if you had a chance to look over the transfer requests I'd submitted.

Bishop Logan still doesn't look up.

BISHOP LOGAN

Ahh yes, the transfer requests. I have looked those over and I agree with you. It's time for a change.

Monsignor Kennedy smiles with satisfaction.

FATHER KENNEDY

I think we could better serve the territory if some changes were made. How many transfers are going through, sir?

BISHOP LOGAN

Just one.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Not as good as he had hoped, but still something.

FATHER KENNEDY

Whose?

BISHOP LOGAN

Yours.

That smile just disappeared.

FATHER KENNEDY

Mine!?

BISHOP LOGAN

A man with your knack for getting into other people's business should be out trying to expand our influences, not worrying about people who are already loyal Catholics. That's why I'm sending you to the Yukon Territory.

FATHER KENNEDY

The Yukon Territory?

BISHOP LOGAN

Thousands of people wandering around out there without a clue about the Catholic faith. I'm hoping you'll change that.

The Bishop's secretary enters the office.

SECRETARY

I'm sorry to interrupt, your Grace, but if you wish to make your train you should leave now.

BISHOP LOGAN

Sorry I can't talk now, Monsignor, I'm due in Montreal. Going to see a hockey game.

The Bishop grabs his cloak and briefcase and heads out the door with a smile. Monsignor Kennedy collapses into a chair.

CUT TO:

INT. FORUM LOCKER ROOM - DAY

The Fathers enter the locker room of the hallowed Montreal Forum. Though nobody wants to admit it, everyone here is on the verge of losing it. They are about to skate on the most famous ice in the world.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

For Bill, tonight is the close of a ten year circle. He walks to a stall in the far corner and begins to unbutton his coat. Though it is very warm in here, we see that his hands are shaking.

CUT TO:

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - SAME

A door marked #112. Samantha Ryan appears in the doorway and retrieves her newspaper. As she unfolds it to look at the front page we see that the Flying Fathers are big news. An article about their game that night catches her eye.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. FORUM LOCKER ROOM - LATER

Mckee enter the room. The Fathers are in the final stages of gearing up for the game.

FATHER MCKEE

They're just about ready for us, lads.  
Shouldn't be long now.

The Fathers jostle a bit at this. Getting more and more antsy now.

FATHER MCKEE (CONT'D)

Let's have a prayer, eh?

As Father McKee walks to the center of the room, all the Fathers cross themselves and bow their heads.

BILL (O.C.)

Wait a minute.

Bill is still sitting alone in the corner. He stands up and walks to the center of the team.

BILL (CONT'D)

I never felt comfortable doing this. But a man once told me there were some occasions that demand something be said.

From the start, Bill has led this team. Led it from the ice, where it counts. His play has always done his talking.

BILL (CONT'D)

You all signed on for this tour because you wanted to help people. You stayed on this tour because you wanted to help us. I'll never forget you for that.

(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BILL (CONT'D)

You hear a lot these days about how it doesn't matter if you win or you lose. Tonight it does matter. The clock has been ticking the whole way, boys and it's about to run out. If we don't win this game, we're not going to make it.

You could hear a pin drop in here.

BILL (CONT'D)

I've held back a little. Held back because I was afraid of what people would think of us. Of me. Not anymore. We all have to ask ourselves a question: How hard are we willing to fight for what we want?

(beat)

The answer is waiting out there. Tonight I'm leaving my collar on the bench. I'm asking each one of you to come with me. One more time.

Bill reaches down to Costello and takes his hand. Pulls him up. Does the same thing to the next man and so on. There's no need to say anything. The answer will come on the ice.

A security guard KNOCKS and enters.

SECURITY GUARD

It's time, Fathers.

BILL

Damn right it is.

CUT TO:

INT. MONTREAL FORUM - EVENING

The Fathers take the ice to huge applause. Over the past weeks they have gained a sort of celebrity and the giant crowd is anxious to see them play.

The arena is gorgeous, even better than on television. The Montreal Gulls are already warming up in their end. The Fathers start to get loose in theirs.

CUT TO:

INT. MONTREAL FORUM - MOMENTS LATER

The HORN SOUNDS and players line up for the opening face-off.

Bill skates into the circle to take it. Across from him, the Gulls center is all business.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BILL  
Good luck tonight.

Doesn't get so much as a peep back.

The puck is dropped and we're off. The Gulls quickly gain possession of the puck. Everything seems to be faster than it has been in earlier games. The Fathers scramble back to get into defensive position.

CUT TO:

INT. MONTREAL FORUM - CONTINUOUS

Samantha is walking down one of the aisles behind an usher. He guides her to her seat.

CUT TO:

INT. MONTREAL FORUM - CONTINUOUS

The Gulls skate to an early one goal lead. No real mistakes by the Fathers. Just great hockey by the Gulls. Finally, Father Adams intercepts a pass and the puck is cleared. Both teams go to the bench for a line change.

CUT TO:

INT. MONTREAL FORUM - CONTINUOUS

A Gulls slapshot is deflected up into the stands and the whistle stops play. Bill is back on the ice and skates over to Father Adams.

BILL  
Take off up the wing as soon as the puck  
is dropped.

ADAMS  
I'll be there.

This time, as soon as the puck is dropped, Bill smashes his stick across his opponents forearms, causing him to drop his stick.

Bill sends the puck up the wing where Adams collects it off the boards. Bill and the other forwards are streaking in towards the net and Adams lets a hard slap shot go just inside the blue line.

The Gulls goalie gets his pad on it, but can't control the rebound and the puck bounces out in front of the net. Baiers makes a move for it but is taken down by a Gulls defenseman.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Streaking in from the other wing is Bill, who chops the puck past the Gulls goalie and into the net. He celebrates as the horn sounds and the lamp is lit. All tied up now.

CUT TO:

INT. MONTREAL FORUM - CONTINUOUS

Father McKee is jumping up and down with other Fathers' fans. Next to him, loving every minute of it, is Bishop Logan.

CUT TO:

INT. MONTREAL FORUM - CONTINUOUS

The Gulls center gives Bill a hard shove after the goal. Priest or no priest, he just made the guy look silly.

GULLS PLAYER

What was that shit?

Bill returns his shove, and the referees quickly separate them.

Costello greets Bill as he arrives back at the bench.

COSTELLO

Hard to play this game when you keep dropping your stick, eh?

BILL

Clumsy of him wasn't it?

FADE TO:

INT. MONTREAL FORUM - LATER

THE GAME PROGRESSES THROUGH A SERIES OF SHOTS:

The Gulls are in the Fathers' zone. Father Buntz makes a nice save and holds on to the puck.

Costello is smashed into the boards head first. A bit if a cheap shot. He goes down momentarily, but regains his feet.

The Fathers are on the attack, but the pass is a little too long for Father Delord and the puck is intercepted.

The Fathers streak into the zone to forecheck and Father Mahoney finds the guy who nailed Costello. He is playing the puck in the corner and just bringing it out when Mahoney arrives and flattens him. As he is lying on the ice, Costello skates over, bloody lip and all and gives him the sign of the cross.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Back and forth goes the action with each team playing superb hockey until finally, there are less than 3 minutes left in the game.

FADE TO:

INT. MONTREAL FORUM - NIGHT

The puck is trapped along the boards and, in the process of chopping and slashing at it, Bill breaks the stick of one of the Gulls players.

Bill sends the puck up the wing and tries to get up ice. The Gulls player has no choice but to hold Bill and he tackles him. The referee's arm goes up so Father Mahoney takes a long shot on goal, forcing the Gulls to play the puck. As soon as the goalie touches it, the referee BLOWS HIS WHISTLE.

REFEREE

Ninety-four, white. Two minutes, obstruction.

Bill pushes his man off him and goes to the referee.

BILL

Time out.

REFEREE

Are you serious?

BILL

Yeah, time out!

The referee rolls his eyes at Bill, but blows his whistle again and signals that the Fathers have taken a time out. All the fathers skate to their bench. They are all just about exhausted.

COSTELLO

What are you doing?

BILL

I've got an idea.

CUT TO:

INT. MONTREAL FORUM - CONTINUOUS

After a few more seconds the horn blows and the Gulls retake the ice. Their penalty killing unit is on the ice and they are already in their positions when the Fathers skate away from the bench.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Incredibly, Father Buntz remains on the bench.

CUT TO:

INT. MONTREAL FORUM - SAME

Father McKee is watching this from the stands.

FATHER MCKEE  
(incredulous)  
They didn't?

CUT TO:

INT. MONTREAL FORUM - CONTINUOUS

By now the rest of the crowd has noticed that the Fathers have pulled their goalie and they start to cheer wildly. This is ridiculously dangerous.

The skaters all come and take their positions in the face-off circle. The crowd is already on its feet. Here we go.

Bill skates in to the center and prepares to take the face-off. It's against the same center he embarrassed earlier. The referee's hand goes up and the puck is dropped.

The Gulls center slams his stick down on Bill's and digs the puck back behind him. When Bill goes to pursue the puck, the Gulls player jabs the end of his stick in his ribs.

A Gulls player flips a high wrist shot over their heads that bounces behind them and is slowly moving towards the Fathers' net. Father Delord begins to race down the ice to try and stop it from going in.

Father Delord is giving it all he has as the rest of the players trail the action. He dives to catch the puck about two yards shy of the goal. The crowd roars. Ninety seconds left.

Delord turns around and fires the puck to Father Adams who quickly knocks it between his legs to Mahoney. The Fathers are back on the attack.

Mahoney is met by a Gulls defenseman. He passes the puck back to Delord who dumps it into the Gulls' zone. All the fathers fly in after it and manage to win control of the puck. Bill is in front of the net, hoping for a rebound or a chance at a deflection. The player who jabbed him in the face-off is digging into his back. Under a minute to go now.

Delord fires a one timer that misses the net. Bill skates over and manages to dig the puck back out to the point.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

When his defender comes to check him, Bill spins out of the way and the Gulls player hits nothing but the boards.

As Bill tries to get back into the play, the Gulls player hooks him. Bill lets his back foot drag along behind his defender's back skate and then pulls it hard forward, sweeping his feet out from under him. The Gulls player is now flat on his back and for a few seconds, it's six on three. Bill races back in front of the net and slams his stick on the ice calling for the puck. Thirty seconds to go.

Adams fires the puck into Bill who is all alone in front. Bill gets the puck on his stick and fakes a shot to the glove side that gets the goalie to flop. When he does, Bill draws the puck around and flips it up into the net off his backhand, knocking the water bottle off the net.

Bill is swarmed by his teammates. The Gulls players are breaking their sticks they're so mad and the crowd is loving every bit of it.

Father Buntz goes back in goal and the game is restarted amidst the deafening cheers of the crowd. The final seconds tick away and the HORN BLOWS.

Final score: Montreal Gulls - 1 Flying Fathers - 2

CUT TO:

INT. MONTREAL FORUM - CONTINUOUS

Father McKee screaming and high-fiving the other priests.

CUT TO:

INT. MONTREAL FORUM - SAME

Samantha hugging everyone and anyone within reach.

CUT TO:

INT. MONTREAL FORUM - MOMENTS LATER

A member of the Montreal Forum front office is walked out to center ice where he presents Bill, Costello and the rest of the Fathers with an oversize check for over fourteen thousand dollars. The crowd has not stopped cheering the whole time.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LOCKER ROOM - LATER

The Fathers are all going nuts. McKee comes in with several bottles, and before you know it, champagne is spraying everywhere.

He looks around for Bill and finally spots him sitting by himself in the trainers room watching the scene and smiling.

McKee manages to make through the celebration to him.

FATHER MCKEE

We did it!

BILL

They did it. I'm so proud of them all.

FATHER MCKEE

They couldn't have done it with you, Bill. Any of it.

The two exchange a sincere and warm handshake. *Thanks.*

FATHER MCKEE (CONT'D)

Look at them out there, they want to do it all over, can you imagine? I never thought they'd want to get on that darn bus again.

BILL

Actually Brian, I need to talk to you about something.

(beat)

I've made a decision, I won't be getting on the bus with the rest of the team tonight.

Father Mckee looks surprised.

FATHER MCKEE

What do you mean?

Bill gets up off the table he was sitting on and takes a deep breath.

BILL

When I was eighteen, I made a decision that changed the rest of my life. I made it because I thought that was what everybody wanted. And I wanted to make them happy.

(beat)

But I've learned something.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BILL (CONT'D)

I learned that if you don't make yourself happy, you can't do the same for anyone else.

FATHER MCKEE

Are you sure?

BILL

There are no guarantees, Brian. Not for any of us? But I'm beginning to feel like things are right where they belong. And I haven't felt that in a long time.

(beat)

I spent the first eighteen years of my life hearing people tell me I have a God given talent and the last eight trying to forget about it. I have to try this. For me.

Brian wears an understanding smile and nods his head.

FATHER MCKEE

God gives us some of the tools we need, that's true. But what we do with them is up to us. If there is something you love to do, you've got to go and do it. I think that's all God can ask of us.

Bill goes to shake Brian's hand and the two share a long and sincere moment.

As Bill leaves the office, Father Buntz rushes in and showers Mckee in champagne as the party continues.

CUT TO:

INT. FORUM - LATER

Bill exits the locker room with his bags and begins to walk down the tunnel. From behind him...

SAMANTHA (O.S.)

Excuse me, but aren't you Father Bill Murphy?

Bill stops dead in his tracks. Could it possibly be? He turns around.

From out of the shadows, comes Samantha. She looks beautiful. She is holding the newspaper we saw her with earlier.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Think maybe I could get your autograph?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Bill drops his bags and goes to her. Once we're up close we see that, although she sounds coy, she looks very nervous.

BILL

You know it's not polite to leave without saying goodbye.

SAMANTHA

I know. I'm sorry, I had to start this new job right away and with you on the road and all...

(dying to change the subject)

Congratulations, Bill. What a great win!

BILL

Thanks. We missed you back at Napanee. The new girl doesn't like to sing at all.

SAMANTHA

(struggling)

I miss you guys, too.

(beat)

I just...don't you have to go, I don't want you to miss your bus.

BILL

I'm done letting a bus decide where I go next. Besides, I'm not allowed.

SAMANTHA

What are you talking about?

BILL

It's for priests only.

SAMANTHA

What happened, is something wrong?

BILL

Yeah. Something is wrong.

Bill takes a step closer.

BILL (CONT'D)

I couldn't get this one thing off my mind. Ever since we left on the tour, I've found myself thinking about it every hour of every day.

(beat)

I never wanted to be a priest, Sam. I made myself forget that for a long time. And it might have worked. But then I found something I really did want.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Samantha starts to cry. Bill takes her face and holds it gently in his hands.

BILL (CONT'D)

I love you, Sam. I think I always have.

Through her tears she flashes one of those wonderful smiles.

SAMANTHA

Thank God.

(beat)

I love you too.

And at last, they kiss. And it's a kiss worth waiting for.

FADE TO:

INT. BATHROOM - AFTERNOON

Bill Murphy is standing in front of a mirror. His shirt is already off but we see him remove the crucifix from around his neck and kiss it.

CUT TO:

EXT. POND BEHIND CHURCH - DAY

Costello and McKee are playing hockey with the kids on the frozen pond. They are both wearing their Flying Fathers sweaters. There are two brand new nets on either end of the ice and several new sticks and pucks for the kids to use.

We see the Napanee church in the background in the midst of a long overdue renovation.

CUT TO:

INT. BATHROOM - AFTERNOON

Bill hangs his crucifix on a small hook.

TIGHT ON CRUCIFIX

Next to it, on a small shelf, there is a picture of him and Samantha on their wedding day.

CUT TO:

INT. TUNNEL - AFTERNOON

TIGHT ON BILL'S FACE. He is walking down the tunnel in a crowd. Crowd noise is getting louder and louder as they go on.

CUT TO:

INT. MONTREAL FORUM - AFTERNOON

The camera sweeps around the Forum. The Stanley Cup banners hang from the rafters. The stands jammed full of thousands of fans. The lucky few who tonight get to see their heroes in person.

The announcer goes into his regular pregame welcome. First in French, then English. The lights go out and a spotlight goes to the tunnel.

One by one, the Canadiens are introduced and take the ice to the rapture and applause of their loyal fans.

The announcer calls Bill's name and he skates out to the ice in his Montreal Canadiens uniform. He looks magnificent in it.

He joins his teammates at center ice and looks to the stands.

CUT TO:

INT. FORUM STANDS - SAME

Charlie, Alice, Danny and Brenda Murphy are all there, cheering loudly. Beside them, Samantha sits with a baby on her lap. Cheering and gently clapping the baby's hands.

FADE TO:

INT. MONTREAL FORUM - MOMENTS LATER

Bill and the rest of the starting line skates up to the face-off circle to begin the game.

Bill skates up. His opponent, a mean-looking guy from the Detroit Red Wings closes the other side.

BILL  
Good luck tonight.

Nothing but a sneer from the Red Wings player.

The referee skates up to the circle with the puck.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REFEREE

I want a good clean game here, boys, keep those sticks down and watch the elbows!

As the referee raises his hand with the puck, Bill and the opposite player ready themselves to battle for the face-off.

Time seems to slow down for a moment and Bill turns his head to look directly at us. A large grin spreads over his face.

Real speed again and the referee DROPS THE PUCK.

Bill slams his stick across the forearms of the opposite player. The referee's instructions are already a distant memory.

FADE OUT.

FROM THE EARLY SIXTIES TO THE PRESENT DAY, THE FLYING FATHERS HAVE PLAYED OVER NINE HUNDRED GAMES IN CANADA, THE UNITED STATES AND EUROPE. THEY HAVE RAISED OVER FOUR MILLION DOLLARS FOR CHARITY.

THEY HAVE LOST ONLY 12 OF THOSE GAMES.

ROLL END CREDITS.