

CROSSING THE RED LINE

an original screenplay by

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FADE IN:

INT. FARM WORKSHOP - NIGHT

Tools cover the wall of the workshop – the instruments of a family farm. Ads for tomato seed varieties crowd the empty spaces on the rough wood, as do posters of hockey greats. Bobby Orr. Gordie Howe. Hockey teams smile from framed photographs. A handsome blond kid poses with a trophy in many others. The red maple leaf of Canada is omnipresent.

Beneath a hooded light, a fit YOUNG MAN (16) wrenches on a small pump on a workbench. Unruly blond hair. Solid frame beneath a work shirt and overalls.

This is YOUNG ADAM COOLEY – farm boy, teenager, hockey player. He focuses on his task like a dog with a bone.

Lightning flashes outside a grungy window.

PADDY (late 20s) – an Adonis in dungarees – saunters in. He watches Adam's progress a moment.

PADDY

Any luck?

YOUNG ADAM

We need this pump for the stem tomatoes. It's really bad, though.

Paddy's hand slides down Young Adam's back. Squeezes his ass. Adam smiles.

YOUNG ADAM

Paddy, I gotta finish this.

Paddy presses against Adam. His big hands unbutton Adam's work shirt. Explore his chest.

PADDY

Storm's coming. Work is done.

YOUNG ADAM

Wait -- tonight, upstairs, ohhh...

Adam doesn't want to wait. He gives in to Paddy's caresses. His probing and pulling. Paddy strips off Adam's shirt. Unbuckles the straps of his overalls. Whispers in his ear.

PADDY

We've never fucked in here.

The pump forgotten, Young Adam responds to Paddy's practiced hands on his bare skin.

Lightning flashes again, outlining a silhouette in the window. A big man. ELIJAH COOLEY (40s) storms into the room.

ELIJAH

You defiler!

He grabs a length of frayed Romex wire off the workbench and slashes at Paddy, ripping his face and tearing his eye open.

PADDY

Aaaugh!

Paddy covers his bleeding face and stumbles from the room. Young Adam struggles to pull on his clothes.

Elijah advances, cornering Adam. He slashes Young Adam across the chest.

ELIJAH

YOU FUCKING FAGGOT! I'll beat you
'til you can't move!

Elijah whips Adam's back, flaying it. Young Adam screams. His blood spatters the window and runs down the glass in gory lines.

Then he bolts toward his father, hip checks him to the floor and flees the workshop.

INT. BARN - MOMENTS LATER

Young Adam climbs between animal stalls. Stumbles over farm implements. Terrified.

ELIJAH (O.S.)

You filth whore. I'LL FIND YOU!

He peers from behind a stack of hay bales. Finds an old t-shirt and barely stifles his agony as he pulls it on — blood soaks it immediately.

Adam crawls to a late-model, turquoise-over-silver pickup truck. Pulls himself to his feet. Carefully opens the door.

EMMA (O.S.)

Adam, what's happened? Your father's
raging, looking for the shotgun.

Adam faces his mother — EMMA COOLEY (40s), a faded beauty, stern and concerned.

She sees the blood.

EMMA
What did you do?

ELIJAH (O.S.)
(distant)
You can't hide, boy...

Emma shoves Young Adam into the pick-up.

EMMA
You have to leave.

YOUNG ADAM
He'll kill you, Ma --

EMMA
-- Wait a minute, then go. To Aunt Jean's.

Emma shoves the pick-up's door closed. Dashes from the barn.

PICKUP TRUCK - LATER THAT NIGHT

Adam drives, his face blood-spattered and tear-stained but resolute in its purpose.

The pick-up truck races into the night. Its headlights flash on a sign as it passes: "SAULT STE. MARIE: 450 km."

SUPER: THREE YEARS LATER

INT. HOCKEY ARENA - SUNDAY AFTERNOON

The capacity crowd roars as the OHL's Soo Greyhounds ("Hounds") battle the Sarnia Sting on their home ice. Fans wave towels. Some pound on the glass, thirsting for action.

In the maintenance area near the locker room entrance, kids wait for autographs with their mothers. Young women on-the-make (the "Pucks") primp to flaunt their wares.

ROXIE (18) — a stunning First Nation woman in demure leather — files her nails indifferently.

On the Zamboni, JAYSON (30s) – a lanky hunk of hockey past – smokes a joint as he waits for intermission. He winks at one of the Pucks. She thrusts out her boobs and poses, thrilled to be noticed even by a rink rat.

ON THE ICE - CONTINUOUS

Adam (19) – older, bigger, harder – stares down an imposing OPPONENT (20) across a face-off circle.

OPPONENT

That puck's mine, candy-ass.

ADAM

That's what I told your whore girlfriend last night.

The REFEREE drops the puck. Adam expertly clears it to his teammate, then knocks the center on his ass.

Adam leaps over his fallen opponent. He receives the puck. Crosses the red line, his blades slashing the ice.

He spins around another Sting player. Plants a perfect pass on the stick of his team's captain. A quick slap shot. He SCORES!

INT. CORPORATE SUITE - CONTINUOUS

CLOSE ON TWO HANDS as they frame the retired number of Wayne Gretzky where it hangs from the rafters.

MR. MCINESS (O.S.)

He was our best player. Still is.

BEVERLY HAINES (late 40s), a tanned California blonde, lowers her hands and accepts a beer from MR. MCINESS (50s), the portly GM. A stylish blazer and scarf set her way apart from the sweatshirt and jeans crowd in the suite.

BEVERLY

Hot dogs following the filet mignon.
I've been there.

She grudgingly sips her beer.

MR. MCINESS

More like unfilled casings, just kids who left home to billet with strangers. Some with family, but --

BEVERLY

-- Billet? Like the army?

MR. MCINESS

Yeah, sorta. Billet families house and feed the players, get them to school, to the arena. Molding them into NHL pros ain't a walk in the park, ma'am. Kinda like that fairy tale, turning straw into gold..?

BEVERLY

Rumpelstiltskin.

MR. MCINESS

Yeah. Heck, they all say they wanna go pro but their focus is the next pizza slice and blow job -- sorry...

BEVERLY

I get it. Food and sex are motivation and influence. Teenagers understand that better than anyone.

MR. MCINESS

We have some billet families here.

The GM guides Beverly over to a group of adults who watch the game.

GALEN (mid 40s), bearded and amiable, shakes her hand warmly as does MRS. EAMES (70s), a spry sexagenarian with a sweater-vest festooned with Hound paraphernalia.

BEVERLY

(to Mrs. Eames)

Forgive me but, you house one of the players?

MRS. EAMES

Yes ma'am: the rookie Blake Santorini. He's a dear boy. I've housed 17.

GALEN

Adam Cooley's my nephew -- my wife's sister's son actually. We're lucky to have him. You got kids?

BEVERLY

Mr. Cooley's quite a firecracker. Nine assists already?

GALEN

He's a handful, as teenagers are.
Join us?

BEVERLY

I wish we could, but...

MR. MCINESS

What? Oh, right, we should -- things
to discuss.

They excuse themselves.

MR. MCINESS

It's a good, tight team, great
chemistry. Should make the finals
this year, and we'll send a couple
kids to the Entry Draft.

He fingers his tie absently. Notices a stain on it.

MR. MCINESS

This documentary thing. I know the
league wants to raise hockey's
profile, especially in the States.

BEVERLY

When I'm done, Wayne Gretzky will be
a distant memory. Don't worry.

She pats his arm reassuringly. Abandons the beer on a table.
Turns her attention to the players.

BEVERLY

What I need is a name.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - LATER

A clubhouse for young warriors. Player stalls surround the
perimeter, each personalized with photos and mementos.

A table filled with energy bars, fruit and Gatorade sits in
the center of the room.

The players pour in. They throw off their uniforms, revealing
18 young Caucasian men with hockey imprinted in their DNA.
Sweat and testosterone are the cologne of the hour.

Adam -- the only player still in full uniform and skates --
eats a protein bar as if reluctant to shed this skin.

Team captain KEITH "CRACKERS" McCRACKEN (20), a man mountain whose goatee barely hides his cherubic face, lets out a victorious whoop.

CRACKERS

Yeah! Suck it, Sarnia!

Adam gives Crackers a high five.

COACH BUNSON (38), a still-fit former player, and his staff work the room.

COACH BUNSON

Nice teamwork, men. Really stuck it to those pussies.

MATTY (18), freckled and bespectacled, nudges BLAKE "SANTE" SANTORINI (16), a burgeoning Italian beefcake.

MATTY

You want pizza?

SANTE

Mrs. Eames said I gotta study but screw it, I'll go with ya.

STEWIE (20) – bawdy, blue-collar and already down to his jock – turns on some hip hop and begins dancing on a bench.

CRACKERS

Give it a rest, Beyonce. I'm gonna lose my lunch.

STEWIE

More room for dinner, baby.

Mr. McIness enters the locker room followed by Beverly. She gets an eyeful of Stewie's ass.

MR. MCINESS

Gentlemen.

CRACKERS

(yelling)

Stewie, turn it off!

Stewie clicks off the music and plops onto a bench. Modesty is not in his play book.

MR. MCINESS

This is Beverly Haines, a filmmaker from Hollywood. The league has asked her to produce a documentary about...

He spreads his hands indicating the team.

SANTE

We're gonna be in a movie?

BEVERLY

You bet! A grand spectacle about your efforts to make the Entry Draft.

MATTY

Is it for CBC?

SANTE

I'll get laid every night.

CRACKERS

There better be extra dough in this.

STEWIE

Damn, you shootin' locker rooms and showers and shit?

BEVERLY

Think of it, boys! NHL scouts will see your best skills, playmaking --

ADAM

-- You mean you'll film every screw-up and piece it together for prime time. I'm not doing it.

MR. MCINESS

You don't have that option, Cooley.

ADAM

Ice dancing in some movie? We'll be the joke of the league.

COACH BUNSON

-- ADAM. Shut your hole.

Beverly holds Adam's icy stare.

BEVERLY

I'll keep your salchows and lutzes to a minimum mister, Cooley, is it?

CRACKERS

Questions over here, ma'am.

BEVERLY

Do your worst, boys.

EXT. ARENA - LATER

Adam crashes out of the arena, a backpack over his shoulder. He stalks past the Memorial Tower, its torch glowing in the orange autumn sunset.

Crackers follows Adam with his arm around Roxie. Roxie smokes a slim Vogue cigarette.

CRACKERS

Dude, where's the fire?

ADAM

We lifting or what?

CRACKERS

C'est dimanche, n'est-ce pas? You e-mail your mom?

ADAM

Dang it, no. I'm such an idiot.

Adam accesses his iPhone and begins to type. Nearby, Stewie shops Sante to the flock of young women as Matty paces.

CRACKERS

Pucks all gotta ride the rookie.

ROXIE

They should aim a little higher.

CRACKERS

Like you, Rox?

ROXIE

Caught me a film star. Suppose they need any extras?

Adam shoves his iPhone into a pocket.

ADAM

I'm gonna need a shave. C'mon!

PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

"WEEDS" WEIDERMANN (32), grungy with a shaggy goatee, leans against the broken grille of Adam's rusting pickup truck. He snaps a bracket of photos as Adam stomps toward him.

ADAM
That's my truck.

WEEDS
I'm with the documentary. Shooting
background? I'm Weeds --

ADAM
-- Move it, dandelion. Before you
make the grille worse.

Weeds steps away from Adam's vitriol and tumbles over his camera bag. Adam watches with dismay as he hits the pavement.

ADAM
Geez, I'm sorry. Are you hurt?
Your camera?

WEEDS
I'm okay. Ego's a bit bruised.

Adam extends a hand and pulls Weeds to his feet.

ADAM
I'm not usually such an ass -- it's
been a weird, crappy day and I'm --
I gotta go.

Weeds steps out of the way as Adam mounts his truck and roars out of the parking lot. Weeds snaps photos as he goes.

INT. CRACKER'S BASEMENT - LATER

A carpet remnant and yard furniture comprise the decor of this damp cellar. A simple weight bench sits beneath a single light bulb.

Adam struggles with bench presses as Crackers spots for him.

CRACKERS
Push it, champ. Kick its ass.

Adam succeeds. He stands and takes two big gulps from a carton of chocolate milk.

CRACKERS
You need a Roxie.

ADAM
Like an Inuit needs an ice tea.