

INTENTIONAL ICING

Puck Bunnies Beware...

A One-Act Play

by

C. S. Wyatt

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INTENTIONAL ICING

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Cast

(In Order of Appearance)

TIFFANY LEWIN	Reporter for <i>Fashionably Fit</i> magazine and fashionista.
JO BULLOCH	Female minor-league ice hockey player for the Yellowjackets, with dreams of making it (almost) to the NHL.
ROBBY ROWAN	Former NHL star, now in the minors, with dreams of a big comeback.
THEO PRZYBYLSKI	Old curmudgeonly coach, not pleased to have Jo on his squad.
ELAINE THORTON	Team owner, inherited the team from her husband Jack. She knows hockey, but Coach P and the players don't see that.

Cut from the play... sorry!

NICK THORTON	GM of the team, but only because his father insisted. Wants to pursue his own dreams.
KIM	Editor of <i>Fashionably Fit</i> .

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Acts and Scenes

Act 1

- Scene 1: Ice rink.
- Scene 2: Coach's office.
- Scene 3: Ice rink stands.
- Scene 4: Coach's office.
- Scene 5: Outside locker room.
- Scene 6: Owner's box.
- Scene 7: Ice rink.
- Scene 8: Owner's box.
- Scene 9: Outside locker room.
- Scene 10: Coach's office.

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Production Notes

Costume and Set Notes

Set Notes

Minor league ice hockey rink, with offices and locker rooms.

The stage layout: Stands, rink, locker door, and office.

Characters cross from fixed set to set.

Costumes

TIFFANY LEWIN	Stylish. Initially, inappropriate for ice rink. She supplements with a scarf, maybe a sweater.
JO BULLOCH	Yellowjackets hockey gear. Tomboy street clothes.
ROBBY ROWAN	Yellowjackets hockey gear. Nice, stylish street clothes, possibly a sport coat.
THEO PRZYBYLSKI	Sweats, workout clothes, to join team during practices. A rumpled suit for quick changes.
ELAINE THORTON	Business attire, at all times.

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Additional Notes

Playwright's Notes

“Icing” began as a random idea following the Carnegie Screenwriters “Third-on-Third” event for October 20, 2014. In December, following another CSW Third-on-Third, Minda Briley and Cindy Jackson tossed about ideas for low-budget screenplay projects with strong female characters, and soon we had a list of five or six possible script concepts, traded via email.

This script reflects a collaborative effort, led by director Bob Scott.

Director	Bob Scott
Playwright	C. S. Wyatt
Dramaturgy and Design	Stephanie Lemieux
Tiffany	Minda Briley
Jo	Cindy Jackson
Robby	Tyson Sears
Coach Przybylski	Michael Buzzelli
Elaine	Colette Freiwald

The screenplay will be completed shortly after *Fringe*, with the help of the original cast and crew. Production planning begins during the summer of 2015. The film will explore more of the transformation of Jo Bulloch into a confident, stylish, woman off the ice.

About the Playwright

C. S. Wyatt writes plays about people because it is easier than interacting with them. His works often address social issues through humor, allowing him to hide serious commentary behind laughter.

C. S. Wyatt is a member of the Dramatists Guild of America, Inc.

Script History

(Note: Remove this page when submitting)

We decided to test the concept as a play and submitted a synopsis to the 2015 Pittsburgh Fringe Festival in December 2014. The first draft was completed December 20, 2014, but major rewrites were made during February 2015.

2014-Nov-22 Outlined original concept and emailed idea to Carnegie Screenwriters members interested in collaborating.

2014-Dec-20 First draft of the script completed.

2015-Apr-19 Converted to Word production script template and made revisions suggested by director Bob Scott and Pittsburgh Fringe cast.

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ACT I

Scene 1

SETTING: Ice rink, along the boards (the wall).

AT RISE: TIFFANY LEWIN talks on her phone, watching a hockey practice.

SOUNDS of hockey practice.

TIFFANY

Kim, why couldn't you send me to interview a figure skater? A speed skater, even. I could handle that. When you said a former Olympic prospect, this is not—

Sounds of practice ending, the team heading to the lockers.

ROBBY ROWAN approaches, smiling, confident.

ROBBY

Oh, hello there. You know who I am, and I'd sure like to know who you are—

TIFFANY

I'll call you back.

TIFFANY ends the call and moves towards the wall.

JO BULLOCH walks by, wearing full hockey gear, including helmet.

TIFFANY

Jo Bulloch?

ROBBY

You want to meet The Bull? I could introduce you. Hey, Bull!

JO

(removing helmet)

Whacha want?

ROBBY

Jo, meet my new friend—

JO

Oh, a puck bunny. Now you won't have to play with your own stick.

TIFFANY

(extending hand)

Tiffany Lewin.

JO

(ignoring gesture, to Robby)

Tell Coach I'll hurry.

TIFFANY

Where are you going?

JO

I don't shower with those losers.

ROBBY

Bull gets her own locker room. Almost like she's not part of the team.

JO

Bad enough I have to skate with wannabes and a handful of has-beens. I see their faces, and they're plenty ugly.

ROBBY

Oh, you just haven't admired my—

TIFFANY

I'll wait, then.

ROBBY

(flirting)

You gonna wait for me?

TIFFANY

You're Robert Rowan, right? I am supposed to interview you—

JO continues, stopping abruptly.

JO

You the reporter Mrs. T said I had to meet?

ROBBY

A reporter? I look great on camera, Tiffany.

TIFFANY

Magazine reporter.

JO

You don't look good in print, Robby.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

(off stage)

Rowan. Bulloch. Ladies, get your asses to the showers.

TIFFANY

When can we talk, Jo?

JO

When Coach is done telling these benders how to follow a puck. Thirty minutes.

TIFFANY

I'll be here, then.

JO

Could be longer.

TIFFANY

Then I'll wait longer.

JO

Damn. Whatever. You're not even a sports reporter, are you? What a freakin' waste of my time.

JO exits.

ROBBY

Want me to tell you all about my big comeback? It's all coming together—

TIFFANY

I'm sure it is.

ROBBY

Come on, beautiful. I am Robby Rowan. The—

TIFFANY

I'm sure you're really a nice guy—

ROBBY

I am the real deal, not some minor-league stunt meant to sell tickets.

TIFFANY

You're suggesting Jo Bulloch is nothing but—

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

(off stage)

Rowan! Listen, princess, if you want to skate tonight, you'll be in the lockers by the time I finish—

ROBBY

I'm on my way, Coach. On my way.

(to Tiffany)

Seriously, I know you can't wait to talk to me.

ROBBY exits.

TIFFANY

You're right. I can't wait to talk to you.

TIFFANY takes out her cell phone and dials.

TIFFANY

Kim? Yeah, I'm still in this frozen hell hole. But, you were right. There's a story here.

(beat)

A woman in a man's league.

(CURTAIN)

Scene 2

SETTING: Coach's office.

AT RISE: TIFFANY crosses from stands to office and sits in a beaten metal chair, across from COACH PRZYBYLSKI'S desk.

TIFFANY studies the office, taking notes.
She lifts the nameplate from the desk.

TIFFANY

(reading)

What kind of name is Prizbixlie? Pritzybisky. Przbalski.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

(entering)

It's Sha-bill-skee. Who the hell are you? And who let you into my office?

TIFFANY

Tiffany Lewin. I'm with—

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

(approaching Tiffany, trying to intimidate her)

Again. Who are you?

(beat)

You're the one Rowan was talking to. I don't want no girlfriends — or whatever — hanging around the rink. It's a closed practice. Can't have no damn distractions.

TIFFANY stands, forcing COACH P to take a step back.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

(studying Tiffany, not looking into her eyes.)

And you're damned distracting, missy. Get out.

ELAINE THORTON enters, a 50-something woman with perfect style and a confident demeanor.

ELAINE

Good, the two of you have met.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

(distracted by Tiffany)

No, we haven't. And I was making sure... this... uh... That she understood we should never meet again.

(beat)

Wait. You know her? Who the hell's this creampuff?

COACH P sits and opens a cigar box.

TIFFANY

(to Elaine)

I've stepped back in time at least twenty years.

ELAINE

Forgive Coach Pryzbylski.

(considers sitting, decides to stand after studying chair.)

Theo, Ms. Lewin is here to write about Jo Bulloch.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

(laughs)

Right.

ELAINE looks down at her phone. Her other business dealings demand her attention.

TIFFANY

(sitting again)

As I tried to tell you, I'm Tiffany Lewin. I write for *Fashionably Fit*. The magazine.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

Never heard of it. Don't care. And unless you cover sports, Bull won't care, either.

TIFFANY

That's sort of what we do. Fashion and fitness. We profile women athletes.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

Oh, you do, do you? Lemme guess. Runners. Golfers. Maybe a figure skater or two. Freakin' models with a little athletic ability.

TIFFANY

And tennis players. We've also profiled basketball players. They are professional athletes.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

Ain't none of them hockey players. Tennis players in their little white skirts, grunting like—

(making grunting noises)

ELAINE

(looking up from phone screen)

Theo! Don't be a disgusting little troll.

COACH P lights a cigar and starts puffing clouds of smoke.

ELAINE

I called the editor, Theo. *I* suggested Kim might send Ms. Lewin to profile Jo. It's good for the team.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

Distractions, Mrs. Thorton. We don't need 'em. This team needs more focus.

ELAINE returns her attention to the phone and business matters.

TIFFANY

Would I be a distraction if I wrote for *Sports Illustrated*? Or *The Hockey News*?

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

You ever read *The Hockey News*? Hockey ain't figure skating. Hell, hockey ain't given any respect and now you're gonna make fun of us in some frilly girl's rag.

TIFFANY

I'm not here to mock anyone. I'm here to profile a brave, tough young woman in a man's world. It's a story about a woman finding herself up against—

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

(standing, puffing smoke)

Oh, hell no. Feminist bullshit.

TIFFANY

Isn't it tough for a woman in hockey?

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

Women play. *Sort of*. There's a women's league. College. The Olympics. Hell, there's plenty of women playing *something* like hockey. Go interview one of them. Leave my team—

ELAINE

(taking Coach P's seat)

My team.

COACH P nearly chokes.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

(to self, sort of)

Don't remind me.

TIFFANY

Jo Bullock plays professional hockey in a men's league. And it is because a female owner signed a promising free agent. That's a story.

(standing)

Can't wait to hear what Jo has to say.

ELAINE puts her phone away.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

I don't like this. Not one bit, Elaine.

TIFFANY

The story will bring hockey to a wider audience. I'm not here to get in the way or make fun of the sport. It's simply a good story.

ELAINE

Thank you, Tiffany. Coach Przybylski will tell everyone to cooperate. Won't you, Theo?

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

(snorts)

Whatever.

TIFFANY exits.

COACH P sits opposite ELAINE.

ELAINE

Don't be an idiot, Theo. We need this.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

No, we don't. We need five or six fresh players. Maybe two rehabs with some grit and experience. Have you watched our last three games? Hell, a bunch of girls probably could play better.

ELAINE

Unless you let Jo play, we won't know if that's true.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

We need to win. The league might be about developing talent, but losing game after game—

ELAINE

Theo, the Yellowjackets are a business. We have to sell tickets. Merchandise. Keep the teams above us interested. We need attention, because the Yellowjackets are nothing without a buzz.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

Winning. That's the buzz. Hell, I had to order damn pelvic protectors. Seriously? Real hockey players wear cups.

ELAINE

It doesn't matter what the team wears under the uniform. A Yellowjacket's a Yellowjacket, right?

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

I don't think you have a goddam clue what the Yellowjackets are. At least Jack understood the game—

(beat)

—and *the guys*.

ELAINE

Jack's dead.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

I miss him more than you do. He'd never sign a defenseman who wore a bra and panties.

ELAINE

We signed a good player with potential. We both see potential, don't we? And we want to fill the seats.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

(standing)

You want to sell the team. That's what you want.

ELAINE

I've never said that. The team is staying in the family.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

It sure as hell shouldn't be a playset for your spoiled-brat son. Nick's in over his head. Some general manager. Did he even watch film of Jo before signing her? Or did you—

ELAINE

(nodding)

She's a good player.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

(turning away, not listening)

Not like I had say in things, and I'm the coach. That twit son of yours ain't no real general manager. Just does what you want. Jack should've listened to me—

ELAINE

Jo's on the team. We signed her. You find a way to make this work.

(standing)

Or maybe I need to find another coach.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

Don't belong on our ice, Elaine. Defenseman. She's not a defense...**man**. And ain't no way she's gonna make it out of the league.

ELAINE

Isn't she good enough to be out there for a few minutes each night?

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

No one belongs on that ice who ain't gonna move up.

(beat)

But, dammed if she don't believe she can. Poor kid.

ELAINE

We need the fans to believe.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

All about the money, with you.

(beat)

If she ain't ready, she ain't gonna play.

ELAINE approaches COACH P, takes his cigar, and tosses it into a trashcan.

ELAINE

Getting her ready is your job.

ELAINE exits.

COACH P retrieves his cigar, wipes it, and puffs away.

(CURTAIN)

Scene 3

SETTING: *Ice rink stands.*

AT RISE: JO sits in the stands, in street clothes, watching a skater.

TIFFANY enters, reporter's notepad open
and ready.

TIFFANY

Thank you for meeting again.

(sitting, looking towards rink)

That's Robby Rowan, isn't it? Out there alone—

JO

He sometimes skates after practice. Just skates. The figure skaters don't care.

TIFFANY

You play tonight. You practiced all morning. Why skate more?

JO

He says it helps clear his mind.

TIFFANY

Why are you watching him? You don't like him, do you?

JO

Like him? I worshipped him. An unselfish winger, with a touch of goon in him.

TIFFANY

Unselfish? That man?

JO

He could set up a score like nobody. He was a great. Watched him when I was a kid. He went straight into the NHL at 19, right out of high school. Awesome. That bit of goon in him comes with a price.

TIFFANY

A goon? That I believe. More than just a bit of goon in that man.

JO

Defenseman. He could play defense, when he had to.

(beat)

Rowan could get the puck to the center and then slam a man into the boards. He was always about the team. Winning. But those hits—

TIFFANY

He was injured. I read some of the stories. I am a decent reporter.

JO

Revenge trip. On a breakout, he was going straight for the net. Slew footing, slammed into the ice. A two-minute penalty for a career.

TIFFANY

And yet here he is, skating in circles.

(watching)

I can see the grimace from here. He's in pain. Why skate at all?

(shaking head)

Male pride.

JO

Hockey pride.

(standing)

We all get hurt. You can stay in the game so long that you end up riding the pine.

TIFFANY

Do I detect pity?

JO

Most of us end up like that, don't we? Chasing memories. You wouldn't get it, though.

TIFFANY

(standing)

He loves the game. I get that. I love my job, too.

JO

You're comparing writing to hockey? Writers? You end up in a great job, right until the day you can't press a key. Oh, no! Carpal tunnel! Career ending injury!

(beat)

For a real athlete — someone not interested in anything else — it just ends.

TIFFANY

Plenty of athletes go on to other things.

JO

(shrugs)

Right. The good looking ones get to smile on camera and talk about the game. If they can string a sentence together. They're reliving the past.

(beat)

Said you wouldn't get it. You play until you can't.

TIFFANY

I do know something about sports. I was point guard until my sophomore year of college. That's like a wing.

JO

You weren't good enough?

TIFFANY

I planted, my knee twisted, and I tore the ACL. And then, I threw up in front of a thousand people.

An awkward silence passes as the women watch Robby skate.

JO

Least you had another skill. Some of us... This is all we got.

TIFFANY

He looks so sad, skating aimlessly. I almost feel sorry for him.

JO

Tonight, you won't. He'll be out there, playing harder than any of us. He has to. He's playing for one last chance.

TIFFANY

What are you playing for?

JO

To make it to the Big Show. Be a real pro.

TIFFANY

But you are in a pro league.

JO

This is the minors.

TIFFANY

But it's a step, right? Towards that dream of yours.

JO

Not just my dream. My father played. My brothers played. They didn't get this far, but they wanted to. Hell, to have our last name on a jersey, that's a family thing. Hockey's like that.

TIFFANY

Your brothers are—

(reading phone)

John and Paul? Seriously? And your name is Joan Teresa. Very Catholic.

JO

No. The boys are named for The Beatles. Dad was always glad there was no Ringo.

An awkward silence passes.

TIFFANY

Tell me more about your family and hockey.

JO

Dad was raised in Buffalo. Sabres fan. Talk about a lost cause. Buffalo loves hockey, but never had a real winner.

(beat)

Dad loved hockey.

TIFFANY

Do you wish he could see you play?

JO sits silently.

TIFFANY

Seems like you're doing this for your family more than yourself.

JO

Skates, pads, sticks, league fees, traveling. It adds up. Mom would add it up to the dollar, to remind Dad what he was spending. They'd argue sometimes, but Mom was always in the stands, and often the one driving us into up to Erie, down to Ohio, over to West Virginia. So, yeah, I owe my family a lot.

(beat)

But this is my thing.

TIFFANY

Did you play on girls' teams?

JO

(laughs)

Yeah, because those are worth a damn.

TIFFANY

What about high school? They didn't let you play—

JO

Field hockey, I played with the girls. Ice hockey? There was one team. The coach played me at wing for all of one game before realizing I didn't belong on the line. Look at me. Do I look like a finesse player? I'm not a delicate little flower. **I'm a defenseman.**

TIFFANY

Why didn't you join the women's league?

JO

Girls don't play hockey like it's supposed to be played. They don't body check. They don't take the gloves off. They're like... like figure skaters with sticks.

TIFFANY

How can you like the shoving and fighting and—

JO

Two brothers. And I'm better than they were. Ask Paulie about the first tooth he lost on the ice. That was me.

TIFFANY

Were you always as tough... and... as good as the men?

JO

Better. I was always serious about the game.

TIFFANY

Did you play in college?

JO

(snorts)

I wish.

(beat)

I'm not good at school. I'm good at hockey. Maybe it's my own fault. Too late for regrets, though. I'm here and now I have to learn from Coach P.

TIFFANY

What's your relationship with Coach Prizzie, Protzy...

JO

Przybylski? He's a legend.

TIFFANY

That's not what I asked. How does he treat you?

JO

I've got a lot to learn from him.

(beat)

I've learned to keep a bench warm, lately. There's a lesson in that. Get better or I won't play.

(beat)

Need some rest before tonight's game.

JO exits, leaving TIFFANY to watch Robby skate.

Scene 4

SETTING: Coach's office.

AT RISE: COACH P sits at his desk, reviewing notes.

TIFFANY crosses from stands to office and enters.

TIFFANY

(sitting)

Thank you for sitting down with me, Coach... Prissy, Pryzilbisky.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

Pryzbylski. It's a simple Polish name.

(grunts)

Anyway, it ain't like I had a choice. Takin' one for team.

COACH P retrieves a cigar.

TIFFANY

Does it really bother you that much that Jo Bulloch is being profiled in *Fashionably Fit*?

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

Bull ain't fashionable.

TIFFANY

She could be. Fashionable. A trendsetter.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

I don't need that. Bull don't need that. Why can't Mrs. T leave us alone?

TIFFANY

Do you feel like Jo is getting attention she doesn't deserve?

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

I can't tell the press what to cover.

TIFFANY

So... let's talk about Jo.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

She's on the team. There. We talked.

TIFFANY

You're not thrilled about her presence.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

I have a simple policy. Never talk to the press about nothing but hockey.

TIFFANY

Tell me about her as a hockey player, then.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

(sighs)

Bull is a defenseman, and they tend to play on emotion at this level. I don't care what sport it is — you get kids with talent, but they don't *think*. Raw talent has to be shaped. You might win a game or two with talent alone, but real winners think.

TIFFANY

So... nobody on your team is thinking? Because in three games there has been a lot of fighting, but no winning.

COACH P stands and leads TIFFANY out of the office, towards the ice.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

You and I don't see hockey the same way. You look across the ice, over the boards, and up to the fans, cheering on the fights, and you're disgusted. I watch the puck. The sticks. The blades. You see a spectacle. I see a sport.

TIFFANY

Jo has the talent, doesn't she?

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

Bull looks to the stands. And that's when I bench her ass.

TIFFANY

What do other teams see when Jo is playing?

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

Red meat. It's initiate, don't retaliate. They are suckering her into mistakes. You ain't good for the team if you sit in the penalty box when we need you on the ice.

TIFFANY

Isn't it her job to be tough?

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

Tough. Not stupid.

TIFFANY

She's trying to prove herself.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

I see it with most of these young kids. Especially on the back ice. They want to show they have fight in 'em.

TIFFANY

It's what the crowd seems to want. That is hockey.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

There's a right time to stand up for your team, and then there's when Bull does it.

TIFFANY

So... she's a goon?

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

Spittin' chiclets and spilling blood on the ice is part of hockey, but stick work wins games.

(beat)

The Yellowjackets ain't winning. I hate the idea of going out a loser. Hate it!

(shaking head)

If only Bull would think.

(CURTAIN)

Scene 5

SETTING: *Outside locker room.*

AT RISE: ROBBY enters wearing street clothes.

TIFFANY, moving from office to locker room door, stops to admire ROBBY, and then tries to appear disinterested.

ROBBY

I saw you up in the stands.

TIFFANY

You were searching for me?

ROBBY

Don't you know it.

TIFFANY

Isn't that a lousy pick-up line?

ROBBY

It's worked before.

(beat)

I scan the stands, the press box, anywhere I might find hope.

TIFFANY

Hope?

ROBBY

A scout. A reporter. I don't care. Someone to tell the league that I'm ready to return.

TIFFANY

Are you ready?

ROBBY

Of course. I just need the rest of the guys to get their game on. Without them, I could be Gretzky, Messier, and Yzerman, all in one, and I'd still be a loser. I need a line worth a shit to show what I can do. Mark Recchi, Luc Robitaille — they had lines and back ice that could dominate.

TIFFANY

I don't know any of those names.

ROBBY

(shaking head)

What a waste of my time. And here I thought you'd be worth the effort. Oh, well.

TIFFANY

You'd walk away from an interview? Because I don't know hockey? I thought you wanted to impress me?

ROBBY

(teasing)

Listen, Tiff, I impress plenty of women. But if you're playing sports reporter, you need to up your game. Never send a woman—

TIFFANY

To do a man's job?

ROBBY

Ah, you've heard it before.

TIFFANY

Teach me, teach my readers about the game, then. Why shouldn't we consider it just a brutish slog that has two halftimes instead of one?

ROBBY

I can't teach you about hockey in a single interview.

TIFFANY

It's merely testosterone on ice, right?

ROBBY

Sure, it's about force and strength and the occasional fight. But it's also about skill, discipline, and thinking at high speed.

TIFFANY

If I knew more about the game, what would your name mean to me?

ROBBY

What *do* you know?

TIFFANY

Three-time all-star. Twice married. Injured in your last NHL game—

ROBBY

(serious)

I don't want to talk about the past. Hell, I don't even want to discuss last night's game. Trying to look ahead.

TIFFANY

To the comeback you're planning?

ROBBY

Ain't gonna happen with this team. Not unless something changes. They don't want to learn how to win. Players with no game smarts just get in the way of the rest of the team.

TIFFANY

Is Jo Bulloch one of those players in your way?

ROBBY

Bull's okay... as a fan. Knows the game pretty well. But she's not the defenseman I need.

TIFFANY

Because she's a woman?

ROBBY

Because she doesn't drive the wings into the walls. I don't care about playing with a woman. The defenseman I care about are between me and the net, not the two behind me. My job, and it's a job, is to get the puck in the net. Period. If it means passing, I pass. If it means I have a shot, I take the shot. Assist or goal, scoring is everything.

TIFFANY

Doesn't defense matter?

ROBBY

Defense matters, sure, but if we don't score nothing else matters. One goal wins a hell of a lot of games. One sloppy goal, one beautiful corner shot, one lucky off the blade bounce. It doesn't matter. A goal is a goal. That's all I care about. The only way Jo helps? Get the damn puck away from the other team. Stop their sticks cold. Force sloppy shots. Until Bull does something useful, I don't give a damn about her. She belongs on the bench, where Coach has iced her ass.

TIFFANY

You were a star. Most assists at the all-star break, only four years ago.

ROBBY

You do know something.

TIFFANY

(sarcastic)

I read the Wikipedia entry on Robby Rowan.

(beat)

Does it bother you that it isn't up-to-date?

ROBBY

That's the game. I have to remind people I haven't retired. All I want is one more run at a cup. One more post season. One more....

TIFFANY

What if that one more leads to one more serious injury? Is it worth that price?

ROBBY

I don't have anything else.

TIFFANY

Tell me about your last NHL game.

ROBBY

I told you, I want to look ahead.

TIFFANY waits, sure ROBBY will talk.

ROBBY

(looking away)

He slid into me, stick out. You see it coming. You try to jump. The stick hooked me. I slammed down, knee into the post, ankle sideways. It was like slow motion.

(stands, paces)

I can't even watch the video.

(beat)

You get hurt. It's hockey. I have the scars.

TIFFANY

And you kept playing, even after finding yourself in the AHL and, now, here.

ROBBY

What else would I do?

TIFFANY

(standing)

Jo said the same thing. Hockey's who she is.

ROBBY

And I'm sure she's a real standout on a women's team.

TIFFANY

I thought you didn't care about Jo being a woman.

ROBBY

I care about hockey. Mrs. T didn't sign me. Coach did. And you know what, babe? I care about that equality stuff. But Jo? Mrs. T's playing you if you believe Jo's anything but a sideshow. Jo ain't here for hockey.

TIFFANY

You seem to have some issues with women.

ROBBY

I love women. Except for my two ex-wives. Them, I'm not so fond of.

(beat)

And Mrs. T. She shouldn't really be playing owner if she ain't serious.

TIFFANY

So you do have some issues.

ROBBY

A few.

(beat)

I'm starving. How about we continue this over dinner?

(beat)

Please?

TIFFANY

Only because I have to eat something....

ROBBY and TIFFANY exit.

(CURTAIN)

Scene 6

SETTING: *Owner's box.*

AT RISE: ELAINE watches the hockey game, studiously.

Sounds of a hockey game.

TIFFANY approaches and sits next to
ELAINE.

ELAINE

(Watching players)
Enjoying the game?

TIFFANY

Sure. It's like bumper cars, without the cars.

ELAINE

Follow the puck.

TIFFANY

I'm trying.

(beat)

There's Jo.

ELAINE

Finally, Theo.

SOUNDS of the hockey game.

ELAINE

No, Jo. Don't let him goad you... Dammit.

TIFFANY covers her eyes.

Crowd chants "Bull. Bull. Bull!"

ELAINE sighs, frustrated, and shakes her
head.

TIFFANY

What happened?

ELAINE

Maybe Theo was right. She didn't even stop to think about the consequences.

TIFFANY

Someone got sent to the naughty box.

ELAINE

Penalty box.

TIFFANY

I was kidding. I do know that.

ELAINE

And now we're short handed. Totally unnecessary. If you're going to take the two minutes, be sure the other guy sits down, too.

TIFFANY

Isn't being tough her job? The crowd—

ELAINE

Never let the crowd coach you. I hate to admit it, but Theo said she isn't ready. I didn't want to believe she's hard to coach.

TIFFANY

You seem to know as much about hockey as the coach.

ELAINE

Few know as much about the game as Theo does. But I do know more than... some people. What Theo doesn't seem to grasp — I love the game. I always have. And that means I want to win. Jo Bulloch is going to help us do that.

TIFFANY

You're very confident that she's a good player. What about Coach Pruzluski— Coach P?

ELAINE

Theo wants to believe we signed Jo as a publicity stunt. Every man on that ice believes she's nothing more than a gimmick to sell tickets.

TIFFANY

Are you saying it isn't about the publicity?

ELAINE

Of course it is. I am all about the business.

(beat)

Wish Nicky inherited his father's drive to win.

TIFFANY

Where is Nicholas Thorton? Isn't the General manager usually around for games?

SOUNDS of the game.

ELAINE

Thank goodness. They didn't score. Jo's out of the box.

SOUNDS of game continuing.

TIFFANY

Oh, my gosh. Did you see how hard she slammed into that poor guy—?

ELAINE

Come on, Jo, slow down and think. I'm going to let Theo know he was right.

TIFFANY

You run this team, don't you?

ELAINE

I take our businesses seriously.

TIFFANY

You're the story. A tough, stylish woman running the companies she inherited... and a minor league hockey team. You sign the first serious female professional player? That's good.

ELAINE

I appreciate that. But you don't quite have things right. Maybe I am why Jo is here. But someday, someone was going to find a good woman who could hold her own against the men.

TIFFANY

Can Jo hold her own? What if she fails? Would that set woman back?

ELAINE

Did you watch her play?

TIFFANY

When my eyes weren't closed.

ELAINE

She's good. Maybe great.

TIFFANY

For a—

ELAINE

Gut player. She's a gut player, and that's why she's in this league.

TIFFANY

I thought you wanted gutsy players?

ELAINE

Being fast, strong, aggressive? Those traits aren't enough for any woman to succeed. Not even close. I can't run a business on guts alone. You need to think. To plan. To anticipate what your opponent is about to do.

TIFFANY

See? You are the story.

ELAINE

Jo is the story, Ms. Lewin.

TIFFANY

Or you both are.

ELAINE

I could live with that. But you have to understand what I'm trying to accomplish here.

TIFFANY

What does Jo need to be a success? The support of the coach? Her teammates?

ELAINE

Discipline. She needs to learn discipline. Learning not to respond is hard for someone like Jo. She reached this level on emotion.

They watch the game, ELAINE with the intensity of a coach.

ELAINE

Come on, Jo. Watch the guy's skates. Follow him!

TIFFANY

I'm going to talk to some of the fans.

TIFFANY stands and exits.

ELAINE

Not many to choose from. Theo's right. If we'd play better, we'd fill more seats.

(beat)

Rowan! Pass the puck! Pass it!

(CURTAIN)

Scene 7

SETTING: *Ice rink.*

AT RISE: Morning practice is underway.

COACH P paces along the rink wall.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

Come on, ladies! Move it!

TIFFANY enters, approaches COACH P.

TIFFANY

May I talk to Jo? Elaine thought you might—

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

Distractions. During practice. Dammit.

(beat)

Bull! Get your ass over here.

JO approaches, removing her helmet.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

Deal with this. Answer the reporter's questions so Mrs. T will send her away. Far, far away.

JO

Yes, Coach.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

Rowan! How the hell do you miss every freakin' corner of the net?

COACH P exits.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

(off stage)

Stop skating like girls!

JO

We're tired. Four straight losses, the last two on home ice. Even Robby Rowan can't push through this kind of disappointment much longer.

TIFFANY

Do you listen to the coach? To what he says?

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

(off stage)

Come on, you little pussies. You all need pelvic protectors, 'cuz I don't see anyone with balls on the ice!

JO

(sitting)

That we're not tough enough? That we're not making plays? I hear it. And he's right.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

(off stage)

My granddaughter has a better wrist shot, Marc. That's a limp-wrist shot.

TIFFANY

How do you put up with that?

JO is puzzled, confused by TIFFANY'S anger.

TIFFANY

I was wrong about what the story is, here. It isn't just you and Elaine Thorton. Those men. The coach. Some of the fans. Nobody wants a woman on the ice. Nobody.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

(off stage)

What the hell? Girl scouts are tougher. Man up!

JO

I don't give a flying freak what it means to anyone else if I'm the only woman on the ice. Why does it matter to you? Get over it.

TIFFANY

You should care about what it means. The general manager is all "Mommy made me do it." Coach Prozy— Coach P doesn't want to give you playing time. Robby Rowan thinks you're hurting his comeback. The other players—

JO

I get the idea. Nobody thinks I belong here.

TIFFANY

The only person with any faith in your skills is Elaine Thorton, and she's more than happy to let people think you're just a stunt if it fills the stands and gets some press coverage.

JO

(standing)

What's it matter to you? You don't care about hockey. I can tell you hate the sport.

TIFFANY

There are young women out there, little girls and the players on those women's teams. You could prove something to them, and to everyone who dismisses them.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

(off stage)

I can't watch you piss on the game I love anymore! Hit the showers, ladies! Freakin' Ice Capades.

SOUNDS of practice ending.

ROBBY approaches, listening to TIFFANY and JO argue.

JO

What I need to do is earn my space. That's what I have to do. Prove I'm good enough to be on the ice.

TIFFANY

You need to stand up to these sexist pigs.

JO

That won't make things better. Beat 'em on the ice. That'll shut 'em up. Come on, you have to know that. Don't whine like a girl. That's a stupid idea.

TIFFANY

And how will you gain the skills you need if you let them push you around? The coach isn't eager to help you. He's going to keep screaming sexist insults.

JO

Coach is Coach. He isn't going to change.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

(wandering past)

Damn pansies out there today.

(pauses in front of Jo)

Hell, might as well give you more ice time. At least you think you have balls.

COACH P exits.

JO

There are other battles to fight.

TIFFANY

Like you fighting within seconds of coming off the bench? That's really productive.

ROBBY enjoys the argument.

JO

I have to prove that I'm not playing in a girl's league. Already explained that to you.

TIFFANY

So you go out there and punch someone for no good reason?

JO

There are plenty of good reasons. They hit our center, I go out and teach them what it costs. I'm here to stand up for the guys on the line. My job is to make the other team sorry—

TIFFANY

They want you to take a swing. Coach — P said so. They'll take the punches and let you take the penalty. What does that prove?

ROBBY

Ladies, ladies. Please.

JO

You should be hitting the showers.

ROBBY

When you might be hitting each other? I'm watching that cat fight.

TIFFANY

Tell Jo what you told me. Tell her the reason you don't treat her with respect—

JO

(mocking)

Because I'm like a little sister to him?

ROBBY

She won't listen to me.

TIFFANY

Tell her. Now.

ROBBY

Fine.

(beat)

Bull, I get it. You want to prove you're an enforcer. But that's not you. You're not a stay-at-home girl.

TIFFANY

Wow, is that insulting.

ROBBY

It mean's she shouldn't be staying in back ice, on the blue lines. She could be more like Coffey. Or Niedermayer. Learn to use that skating skill, instead of punching people.

TIFFANY

Jo, he has a point. You skate better than anyone out there.

ROBBY

Except me, of course. I'm really good.

JO

But I'm not Paul Coffey.

ROBBY

Fine. Give up. Why not? That's what everyone else has already done. To hell with your future. Screw any chance I had at a return—

JO

You're right. I need your help.

ROBBY

Why should I help you? You're a sloppy, careless, emotional goon.

JO

You sound like Coach.

ROBBY

That's because he's right.

JO

Please. I need this.

TIFFANY starts taking notes, observing the players.

ROBBY

I got my own issues, Bull. I can't be playing big brother to some silly—

JO

I need to learn how you think. I don't anticipate the puck. I watch body language, and still get it wrong. Coach said watch skates and eyes, but I keep screwing up.

ROBBY

Yes, you do.

JO

I want to prove I can play with the guys.

ROBBY

Do you know the history of icing?

JO

Come on, I know the rules of the game. That's not my problem.

ROBBY

In the old days, teams would use intentional icing to slow the game. Sometimes, it's still a good move. Intentional icing is all about giving your team time to think. To pause. Hell, used to be a great way to change lines.

JO

What's your point? I know penalties are part of the strategy.

ROBBY

No, Bull, you don't get it.

TIFFANY

Know which penalty to take when.

ROBBY

Absolutely. Reporter Edition Barbie gets it.

JO

She's just encouraging you.

ROBBY

Checking a wing who has the center nearby is just dumb hockey. You're giving the center the puck and taking yourself out of play.

JO

But it shows 'em that I can—

ROBBY

I don't give a damn how tough you are or what you want to prove. Your job is to make sure we get the puck. Dammit, Bull, we have to score to win.

JO

So what am I doing wrong?

ROBBY

Everything, as far as I can tell. I thought they didn't even have body checking in women's hockey. Doesn't that force you to—

JO

I'm supposed to play more like a girl? Hell no!

ROBBY

Call it whatever you want. Play more like you have a brain under that helmet.

(beat)

Come on. We've got work to do.

TIFFANY watches, as ROBBY leads JO
back to the ice.

(CURTAIN)

Scene 8

SETTING: *Owner's box.*

AT RISE: ELAINE sits, watching the game.

TIFFANY joins her.

ELAINE

What did the fans say?

TIFFANY

They love the Yellowjackets.

ELAINE

Fair-weather fans. That's why we need all the stunts and gimmicks. Theo hates the carnival between periods, but we need to fill the stands. The more unusual the promotion, the better.

TIFFANY and ELAINE watch the game.

ELAINE

Something's changed. You're paying attention.

TIFFANY

I've been learning more about the sport, from Jo and Mr. Rowan.

ELAINE

Mr. Rowan?

ELAINE watches TIFFANY, who is watching ROBBY and JO.

ELAINE

That's Robby Rowan at his best! What did you notice?

TIFFANY

Jo was in the... Slot? Stopped the... Breakout? Robby was able to race to the puck.

ELAINE

Yes, and Rowan took that puck— Mr. Rowan became Robby again? What's up with—

Sudden CROWD NOISES.

TIFFANY stands and rushes forward.

TIFFANY

Robby! No!

Oh, hell.

ELAINE

Crowd starts to chant, "Bull! Bull! Bull!"

What is she doing?

TIFFANY

Protecting her winger.

ELAINE

NOISES, cheers... silence.

What's wrong? Why's he holding his arm?

TIFFANY

Good girl, Jo. Good girl!

ELAINE

I thought you didn't want her to fight?

TIFFANY

She didn't start that. But she sure as hell ended it. And, we're not shorthanded.

ELAINE

(beat)

Sit down, Tiffany. There's nothing you can do for him. Five more minutes, and I think we'll want to see these.

SOUNDS of play.

TIFFANY watches nervously.

Good, she's back on the ice. Keep her out there, Theo.

ELAINE

(standing)

Yes! That's my girl!

(to Tiffany)

That was a perfect wheel. Perfect!

SOUNDS of scoring, a long horn.

We're ahead?

TIFFANY

Yes, we are.

ELAINE

SOUNDS of fans counting down. WILD
CHEERS.

ELAINE

That is why Jo Bulloch is your story.

TIFFANY

What about Robby?

ELAINE'S PHONE RINGS.

ELAINE

Head down to the lockers and check.

PHONE RINGS, again, as TIFFANY exits.

ELAINE

Yes?

(beat)

What about Jo?

(CURTAIN)

Scene 9

SETTING: *Outside locker room.*

AT RISE: JO paces outside.

ELAINE approaches.

ELAINE

How long do you have to wait?

JO

Depends.

ELAINE

This won't do. We can't have you waiting around like this. You're a star player, Jo.

JO

I am? What do you—?

COACH P enters.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

Okay, Bull. We cleared a path. I want you to be part of the team meeting.

JO nods, exits.

ELAINE

You gave Jo more playing time tonight.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

She's playing better.

ELAINE

Yes, she is. What have you been doing differently?

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

Me? I still scream at her for thinking reckless checking proves she's a defenseman. Maybe the screaming works.

ELAINE

Theo, we had a call about Jo.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

We did, huh?

ELAINE

The Hornets are considering her for the fifth defense slot. Would she be ready in a month?

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

With some coaching, yeah. She'll be ready. I saw her with Rowan. He's been a good influence. You don't think—?

ELAINE

Maybe it's time you moved to the front office.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

Nick isn't here, is he? He missed *that* game?

ELAINE

You should be the GM. We both know it.

ROBBY enters on crutches, leg in a boot,
arm in a sling, leaning on TIFFANY.

TIFFANY

Tell them what the doctors said.

ROBBY

Separated shoulder, sprained ankle. Nothing too serious.

TIFFANY

I am so sorry, Robby.

ROBBY

It's hockey. I've had worse.

TIFFANY

But you can't play, now. The comeback—

ROBBY

—Was an old man's fantasy, Tiff.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

You played damn great hockey, tonight, Robby. Best I've seen you play in a year or more.

ROBBY

Thanks, Coach.

ELAINE

I'd have to agree. That was a beautiful assist in the final minutes. Tied the game.

ROBBY

(nods)

Thanks, Mrs. T. But I suppose you're here to tell me what I already know. It's over. I'll get my gear and—

TIFFANY leans towards ROBBY, shoulder to shoulder.

ELAINE

What's over?

ROBBY

Thanks for letting me play, when I should have hung up the blades a long time—

ELAINE

(to Tiffany)

Not such a tough guy, is he?

(to Robby)

I don't want you to go anywhere. Not yet.

ROBBY

I appreciate that you're not tossing me out—

ELAINE

Rowan, I'm asking if you want to coach.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

Someone has to take my place. Might as well be you, Robby.

ROBBY

You're finally calling it quits? Never thought—

ELAINE

No. Nick is quitting. More like he quit some time ago.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

That makes me the GM. And it means we need a head coach.

ROBBY

You're serious?

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

As the incoming GM, I'd sure offer you the job.

ELAINE

When you went down, Jo was right there. After the drop, she drove the boards as good as any player I've watched. She didn't lose her cool, and she played a solid mental game.

ROBBY

Sorry I missed it.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

Rowan, Elaine got a call about Jo.

TIFFANY

Is that a good thing?

ROBBY

It means that a scout thinks she can learn the game.

ELAINE

Because of you, Robert.

(beat)

Do you want to coach a team or not?

TIFFANY

Of course he does!

(punches Robby's shoulder)

ROBBY

(wincing)

I guess I do.

TIFFANY

Let's get you back to your place.

ELAINE

We'll talk later.

ROBBY, assisted by TIFFANY, tries to hide his pain as they exit.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

Hate to see a great career end like that.

ELAINE

It's not ending. I'm betting he does make it back for another championship.

COACH PRZYBYLSKI

You know, Elaine, I think you're right.

(beat)

And maybe you do get the Yellowjackets.

ELAINE

Who do you think convinced Jack to buy the team?

COACH P and ELAINE exit.

(CURTAIN)

Scene 10

SETTING: Coach's office.

AT RISE: ROBBY limps about the office, taking in the new role.

TIFFANY enters.

TIFFANY

(reading nameplate)

Coach Rowan. At least I can say that name.

ROBBY

I hope to hear you say it a lot.

JO enters the office, carrying a duffle bag.

JO

You ready to go, Reporter Doll Barbie? Said your mushy goodbyes and all that shit, Hockey Cripple Ken?

ROBBY

Always classy. I see you made her fashionable.

TIFFANY

There's still work to be done.

JO

We have a flight to catch. Let's go.

TIFFANY

(to Robby)

There's more to this story. I can't wait to write the ending.

(LIGHTS.)