

Rev. 08/25/99 (Green)
Rev. 09/18/99 (Goldenrod)
Rev. 09/27/99 (Buff)
Rev. 09/30/99 (Salmon)

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REVISED FINAL DRAFT

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FADE IN:

1 EXT. MARINA - DAY 1

The water around the moored boats looks dirty and cold. ROLL CREDITS as we PICK UP a sad excuse for a boat sitting in an end slip -- a seagull-shit-covered, thirty-foot cabin cruiser that hasn't cruised in a long, long time. An unpainted plywood addition has been nailed to the top of the cabin, partially covered with a blue plastic tarp.

SUPERIMPOSE: ANACOSTIA MARINA - WASHINGTON D.C. - FALL

The tarp moves and SHANE FALCO's half-naked torso emerges from under it. Shane is late twenties, golden boy handsome, but quickly going to seed. He looks hung over.

MUSIC UP: "My Own Worst Enemy" by LIT.

Shane glances up at the clouds. He pulls on the top part of an old patched wet suit and zips it up, shivering.

2 EXT. MARINA - ON SHANE 2

in an old Zodiac inflatable dinghy. He's pulled up the attached rubber hood to his wet suit so that only the white of his face is visible. He pulls up to the yacht across the way from his boat, ties the dinghy to the rear rail and clips a bill for services rendered on the stern line.

He slips on a weight belt, puts on a pair of old gaffer-taped goggles, jams the end of an air hose in his mouth, and falls backward into the water.

3 EXT. UNDERWATER - DAY 3

It's dark and murky as Shane descends dreamlike INTO FRAME. All that we hear is the shooting sound of his AIR HOSE echoing across the river bottom as we --

SMASH CUT TO:

3A QUARTERBACK 3A

getting decimated by a defensive lineman. The lineman drives the quarterback to the turf in an ugly and violent collision.

BACK TO:

3B EXT. UNDERWATER - DAY 3B

Shane uses a long spatula to slowly and methodically attack the underside of the sailboat. The spatula scrapes away the green algae muck revealing the pure white underside of the boat as we --

SMASH CUT TO:

3C QUARTERBACK 3C

getting hit high and low in a vicious pass rush as the air is blasted from his lungs.

BACK TO:

3D EXT. UNDERWATER - DAY 3D

Amidst the beer cans and other trash something golden is sitting on the river bottom. Shane takes a deep pull on his hose and drifts down...

A shaft of sunlight penetrates the murky water and reveals a broken trophy half-buried in the mud. Shane kneels over and picks it up. The trophy is almost a full-sized football rendered in bronze and attached to a broken base. He wipes away mud from the plate with his thumb.

CLOSEUP - INSCRIPTION

SHANE FALCO - 1995 ALL-AMERICAN TEAM.

SMASH CUT TO:

3E QUARTERBACK 3E

getting speared by a lineman's helmet. The CRACK of his RIBS is all that we hear as he turns his head to us, revealing the anguished face of Shane Falco five years earlier.

BACK TO:

3F EXT. UNDERWATER - DAY 3F

Shane bends down as if behind an imaginary center. He barks garbled signals as he cocks his left leg, takes the snap, and drops back. But there's a blitz! He steps up in the pocket, bobbing and weaving in a kind of delicate ballet.

(CONTINUED)

3F

CONTINUED:

3F

Suddenly he points down field, pulls up and cocks his arm. The trophy comes behind his ear and snaps forward in a perfect release.

The football spins OUT OF FRAME, but we HOLD ON Shane as he watches his pass. Suddenly, he throws both arms up in a touchdown signal.

We STAY ON Shane in this victory pose, fifteen feet underwater on the muddy bottom of the Potomac River, as we --

END CREDITS.

CUT TO:

4

EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - FIELD - DAY

4

Bam! A Miami Barracuda linebacker crushes a Washington Sentinel running back and lands on his throat, elbow first.

MADDEN (V.O.)

Boom! You could feel that one all the way up here in the booth, Pat!

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

4

SUMMERALL (V.O.)

That pretty much sums up
Washington's running game all day
long. They've had a miserable 42
yards on the ground...

O'NEIL (V.O.)

Damnit!

5 INT. NEXTEL STADIUM - O'NEIL'S LUXURY BOX - SAME TIME 5

Where we find EDWARD O'NEIL, the red-faced, 75-year-old
owner of the Washington Sentinels.

Sitting obliviously at his side is his wife; a once-upon-
a-time blonde bombshell now held together by collagen and
silicone. She's busy at work on a Post crossword puzzle.

MRS. O'NEIL

What's a six letter word for
'exuberant'?

O'NEIL

'Divorced.'
(through the
binoculars)
Tildon, you moron!

MRS. O'NEIL

'Divorced' is eight letters...

6 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - FIELD - DAY 6

We see quarterback EDDIE MARTEL running for the end zone
when he is confronted by a safety smaller than he is.
Martel goes down in one of those wimpy quarterback slides
before the safety can even hit him.

7 INT. NEXTEL STADIUM - O'NEIL'S LUXURY BOX - DAY 7

O'Neil throws down his binoculars.

O'NEIL

Martel, you wimp!

He begins to cough hoarsely before taking deep breaths,
dramatically, as if Martel's play was the one that was
actually going to send him to his grave.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

7

O'NEIL

I got one foot in the grave and I
could have scored!

An assistant steps over with two blue pills and a glass of water. O'Neil grabs the pills but pushes the water away, chasing them with his martini instead.

O'NEIL

Get me Jimmy McGinty. Get him
here. Tonight.

CUT TO:

8 INT. CONTROL BOOTH - DAY

8

JOHN MADDEN and PAT SUMMERALL wrapping up the game.

MADDEN

And that play may very well be the
last play of the season...

SUMMERALL

If you haven't heard, the players'
strike became official at nine
p.m. eastern time. We go live
now to Dwight Edwards in the
Washington locker room for a
reaction from the players. Dwight?

INTERCUT:

9 INT. LOCKER ROOM - DAY

9

A handsome former wide receiver and now TBS Sports reporter, DWIGHT EDWARDS, stands before quarterback Eddie Martel.

DWIGHT EDWARDS

Eddie, there's a lot of angry fans
out there tonight who feel that
the players are being too greedy
in their demands. Anything you'd
like to say to that?

MARTEL

Look, I know that five million a
year sounds like a lot of money.
But I gotta pay ten percent to my
agent, five percent to my lawyer,
plus alimony, child support --

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED:

9

A huge defensive end, WILSON, sticks his head in as he walks by.

WILSON

You got any idea what insurance on a Ferrari costs, motherfu -- !

The CAMERA wisely CUTS BACK TO our announcers.

SUMMERALL

Okay! That was Washington defensive end Wilson Carr, obviously distraught at this turn of events.

MADDEN

It's all about money, folks. And ain't it always?

SUMMERALL

This is Pat Summerall for John Madden saying so long from Nextel Stadium...

DISSOLVE TO:

9A EXT. STADIUM PARKING LOT - NIGHT

9A

Several of the cheerleaders walk out of the stadium, laughing and making plans for the evening, completely unaffected by today's events. Until we see ANNABELLE FARRELL step out. She looks pissed enough for all of them.

MARTEL (O.S.)

Annabelle!

She looks over to see Martel grinning as he leans against the hood of his Porsche.

MARTEL

I thought we could have a drink.

ANNABELLE

I thought you could have scored...

She walks past him as he follows...

MARTEL

I hear most of the cheerleaders are gonna walk out in a show of solidarity.

(CONTINUED)

9A CONTINUED:

9A

ANNABELLE

Most are.

MARTEL

But you're staying? Who are you gonna cheer for? The peanut guy?

He laughs. She doesn't.

MARTEL

Aw, c'mon, 'Belle. Lighten up...

ANNABELLE

I'll lighten up in the off-season.

She gets into her car as Martel grins and shakes his head.

MARTEL

Listen to you. Maybe you should be team captain instead of me.

ANNABELLE

At least then they'd have a leader with some balls.

Martel's smile fades as he watches her drive off...

CUT BACK TO:

10 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - NIGHT

10

An empty stadium.

Quiet as a church, it sits in contrast to the din of spectacle only hours ago. We SINGLE OUT O'Neil's private box high above the stadium as we hear a quiet SNORING...

11 INT. NEXTEL STADIUM - O'NEIL'S LUXURY BOX - SAME TIME

11

The old man sleeps soundly, peacefully. And then we hear ICE CUBES SLOSHING IN a GLASS. He blinks his eyes open to see:

JIMMY MCGINTY

A handsome devil in his late fifties, wearing golf clothes and sipping the last dregs of a Scotch rocks.

(CONTINUED)

McGINTY

How's the wife?

O'NEIL

She got her lips done. I didn't even know you could get your lips done.

(shudders)

Looks like a large-mouthed bass.

McGinty laughs.

O'NEIL

Look, I'm too old and too impatient to screw around so let me put it to you straight: I want you back.

McGINTY

You already have a coach.

O'NEIL

I'll take care of that...

McGINTY

Like you took care of me?

O'NEIL

Now, Jimmy --

McGINTY

You don't even have any players. They all flew home on their jets to their castles, remember?

O'NEIL

We're gonna finish the season anyway. We're gonna use replacement players.

McGinty laughs as they reach the field...

McGINTY

Jesus, what a business.

O'NEIL

Look, we got four games left. If we win three we're in the playoffs.

McGINTY

Gee, win three out of four? With replacements? That's not much to ask...

(CONTINUED)

O'NEIL

You won for me once. You can do it again.

O'Neil starts out across the grass to the middle of the 50 yard line where we see the logo for the Washington Sentinels. McGinty pauses at the edge of the field, as if it were the deep end of a pool. O'Neil gives a sly smile.

O'NEIL

S'matter, Jimmy?

Jimmy shoots him a look before stepping onto the field and walking out after him. It's been a long time...

O'NEIL

Look, nobody is gonna give you another chance like this after that Dallas mess...

McGINTY

(getting hot)

I was right.

O'NEIL

It's not about being right! You went head-to-head with an eight-million-dollar quarterback! Who did you think was gonna win? But that's not gonna happen here. I'm talking about a team of poor nobodies who play to win. Not a bunch of bitchy millionaires.

McGinty looks downfield for a beat.

O'NEIL

Jimmy...

McGINTY

Shut up, I'm thinking...

(then)

Total control of my team? You let me recruit who I want, with no interference.

O'NEIL

My word is my bond.

McGINTY

I want it in writing.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED: (3)

12

O'Neil chuckles. Suddenly from behind them we see the enormous JUMBO-TRON DIAMOND VISION screen suddenly flicker to life. At first it seems like a malfunction... but then we see the face of a younger Jimmy McGinty come into focus.

O'NEIL

Hmm... gotta get that thing fixed...

O'Neil smiles and walks up the steps for his box.

McGINTY

You old bastard...

But he can't turn away. It's his life up there. A montage of photographs of his past triumphs as coach... a famous last-minute touchdown catch... players dousing him in All-Sport... the team holding him up on their shoulders... McGinty holding a trophy over his head in celebration...

CLOSE ON McGINTY

as the glow of the enormous screen reflects in his eyes, sealing the deal as we hear...

McGINTY (V.O.)

Let's get to work!

13 INT. HEAD COACH'S OFFICE - DAY

13

McGinty is sitting behind his new desk. The logo for the Washington Sentinels hangs proudly on the wall.

McGINTY

Whataya got for me?

Standing before him are the offensive coordinator, LEO PILACHOWSKI, an asthmatic who regularly takes hits from an industrial-size inhaler, and CHRISTOPHER BANES, an ex-player and defensive coordinator.

BANES

Well, we thought we would skip special teams for the moment. It's gonna be tough enough just putting an offense and a defense together in seven days.

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED:

13

PILACHOWSKI

But we definitely need a kicker.
A placekicker over a punter.

BANES

Thinking being that if we lose the
toss, we have to be able to at
least kick off.

Both coaches laugh nervously. McGinty doesn't say anything.

PILACHOWSKI

Okay. Here's a list of every
player cut this past season. What
we'd like to --

MCGINTY

(pointing at the list)

Those people? Those people were
cut for a reason.

(hands the list back)

We're gonna go another way here...

McGinty takes out a list of his own.

MCGINTY

This is a list of people I've kept
an eye on over the years. They've
all played football somewhere, but
only a few in the pros. And
they've all got something...
unique to bring to the game.
We're gonna take these people and
try to put together a winning
team. And if nothing else, they
should be fun to watch...

Pilachowski and Banes look at McGinty's list, then back to him, hoping that this is a joke. But McGinty only smiles.

MUSIC UP: "ROCK AND ROLL (Part 2)." A Hip Hop version of the Gary Glitter sports anthem plays on, as we...

CUT TO:

14 INT. METHAMPHETAMINE LAB - DAY

14

A bunch of BIKERS are cooking up a vat of speed. These guys are big and bad ass-looking. One of the bikers looks up.

(CONTINUED)

BIKER

Did you hear something?

The other biker shakes his head, no. They go back to work. Suddenly, the door disintegrates in front of a charging man wearing a police windbreaker. This is DANIEL BATEMAN, a big, young, psychotic cop, who immediately knocks one of the bikers down and kicks the guy in the head.

McGINTY (V.O.)

Daniel Bateman, L.A.P.D. and ex-Navy SEAL. Awarded a Purple Heart for losing a kidney during combat in the Gulf War. He was a walk-on at Michigan State before giving up football and sneaking back into the service for one more tour of duty.

BANES (V.O.)

But... you said he lost a kidney there.

Bateman viciously head-butts one of the bikers before stuffing the other's head into the meth mixture.

McGINTY

I guess he went back to find it.

He pulls him out and clubs him with a big police blackjack, whap! Bateman looks around and spots a big Biker cowering in a corner. The guy is terrified. Bateman gives him a sick smile. But then three more POLICEMAN run in, out of breath. They look around at the unconscious Bikers.

POLICEMAN #1

Jesus, Bateman! Why don't you ever wait for us?!

BEEP! BEEP! Someone's BEEPER is going off. The three cops look at theirs. Nothing. The cowering Biker looks at his.

BIKER #2

Not me.

Bateman pulls his beeper, studies it and looks puzzled.

BATEMAN

What area code is 202?

POLICEMAN #1

Washington, D.C.

CUT TO:

15 EXT. MINI-MART - DAY

15

A man dutifully sweeps up outside the rundown mini-mart with his back TO us. CLIFFORD FRANKLIN. All is calm until... wham! the door bursts open and a TEN-YEAR-OLD BOY runs out of the door. The KOREAN STORE OWNER steps outside as he screams:

KOREAN STORE OWNER

Clee-Ford!

ON CLIFFORD FRANKLIN

as he drops his broom and spins around to reveal he's wearing one of those Breathe-Rite bandages over his nose.

KOREAN STORE OWNER

(pointing excitedly)

Tween-kee!

Franklin gets into a track set position before springing up and down the street like Carl Lewis on crack.

16 DOWN STREET

16

The Little Boy has a long lead on Franklin. But Franklin kicks it into hyper-drive and begins to close the gap...

MCGINTY (V.O.)

Clifford Franklin, he was a 100 meter qualifier in the Olympics before he pulled a hamstring in the final trials. Great attitude. Great desire. And the fastest son of a bitch I've ever seen...

The Little Kid can't believe that Clifford is catching up.

LITTLE KID

Here! Take it! Take it!

The Kid tosses the Twinkie back over his shoulder...

PILACHOWSKI (V.O.)

But can he catch?

SLOW MOTION as the Twinkie spins end over end through the air. Franklin holds up his hands, sucking the air through his Breathe-Rite nose and exhaling through his cheeks as the Twinkie hits his hands... and falls to the street. He steps on it as cream filling squishes from beneath his track shoes.

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED:

16

McGINTY (V.O.)
That's why I have you, Leo...

We hear the WHOOSH WHOOSH of Pilachowski's INHALER, as we...

CUT TO:

17 INT. BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

17

We hear SCREAMS and APPLAUSE as we HOLD ON two huge bodyguards dressed in identical black suits. ANDRE and JAMAL JACKSON. Suddenly, the off-stage door opens and the BACK-DOOR BOYS step out. They're a spoiled, young, preening white pop group (think Backstreet Boys -- but with even less soul.)

BACK DOOR BOY #1
Yo, homes! We kicked it old school!

BACK DOOR BOY #2
We're keeping it real!

They high-five each other as Jamal rolls his eyes.

JAMAL
(under his breath)
Keepin' it real my ass...

ANDRE
Be cool...

Andre and Jamal fall in front of the group, leading them to the backstage door.

McGINTY (V.O.)
Andre and Jamal Jackson. Together they were the best tandem team of guards in the game. But then Andre got traded. And they both fell apart...

Andre's cell PHONE suddenly goes off.

ANDRE
Hold on...
(into phone)
Yes?
(stops)
You kiddin' me?

(CONTINUED)

17

CONTINUED:

17

JAMAL

Who is it?

ANDRE

Shhh!

Jamal edges his way in to listen. And now they're both getting excited. We reach the exit doors as they swing open.

BACK-DOOR BOY #3

Where's the limo?

BACK-DOOR BOY #4

This is, like, whack!

We hear the fans SCREAMING for them. But the teen idols are used to this.

BACK-DOOR BOY #5

Andre... keep them away.

(then)

Andre!

(panicking)

Andre? Jamal?!

But Andre and Jamal are on the telephone. The girls attack the pretty boys who shriek in horror! Andre and Jamal freeze before looking over. A long beat.

ANDRE

Damnit, Jamal! You were s'posed to be watching those Back-Door Boys!

JAMAL

(a little smile)

They ain't keepin' it real no more...

Andre sighs before he shrugs and gives in.

JAMAL

Aw shit, let's play some football.

ANDRE

Right on...

CUT TO:

17A

OMITTED

17A

18

EXT. HELL'S KITCHEN (NEW YORK) - DAY

18

We see a street full of garbage and graffiti as we CLOSE
ON an authentic Welsh pub by the name of "GRUFF'S."

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED:

18

A little sign in the window proclaims, "Today's Special: Boiled Rabbit!"

McGINTY (V.O.)

Nigel Gruff, striker out of Cardiff now residing in Hell's Kitchen. They called him 'The Leg' because he could kick a soccer ball the entire length of the field -- and score.

PILACHOWSKI (V.O.)

Has he kept in shape?

McGINTY (V.O.)

Yeah. By Welsh standards.

18A INT. GRUFF'S PUB - SAME TIME

18A

As we see what has become of The Leg. Nigel Gruff is standing on top of the bar, holding a Guinness as he sings "Better to be a Welshman" to his drunken friends.

He wears an old T-shirt two sizes too small and sweat pants that have been cut into shorts which show off his now spindly legs. A cigarette dangles from the corner of his mouth and we get the feeling that the only weights he lifts are the pints of beer he puts away. He finishes the ditty as his friends cheer.

NIGEL

Drinks are on the house, mates!

Everyone bum-rushes the bar. But as he hops down off of the counter he finds himself face to face with three shady-looking mobsters from the neighborhood.

NIGEL

Bullocks.

The BIG GANGSTER grabs him and throws him up against the wall as the SMALLEST GANGSTER, and the one in charge, steps up.

SMALL GANGSTER

Pissing away our money again, Nigel?

NIGEL

Oh no, sir! The money's on its way!

(CONTINUED)

18A CONTINUED:

18A

GANGSTER #2 (BIG GANGSTER)
Yeah, to the O.T.B.!

NIGEL
I'm tellin' ya I got a line on a
horse! Swear on my mum's grave!

Suddenly the TELEPHONE RINGS.

NIGEL
There! That's probably them now
tellin' me I'm in the money!
(picks up phone)
Gruff's Pub!
(pauses)
What? Are you daft?
(but then)
How much?

Nigel's eyes go wide as he hears the amount. Then:

NIGEL
(quietly, into phone)
Could I get that in cash?
Preferably tens and twenties...?

CUT TO:

19 EXT. MARINA - DUSK

19

A cold and tired Shane Falco, wearing his patched wet
suit, climbs out of his inflatable dinghy...

PILACHOWSKI (V.O.)
Shane Falco? You don't mean
Footsteps Falco from Ohio State?

McGINTY (V.O.)
The same.

PILACHOWSKI (V.O.)
He hasn't played in years!

McGINTY (V.O.)
Then he should be well-rested,
shouldn't he?

Shane flops onto the deck of his boat, exhausted, when...

McGINTY (O.S.)
You look like a swordfish I caught
once.

(CONTINUED)

19

CONTINUED:

19

Shane jumps. McGinty is sitting on Shane's old chair on the stern of the boat.

McGINTY

He hit the deck just like that.

Shane studies his visitor for a beat before taking a beer out of a cooler and cracking it open.

McGINTY

You know who I am?

SHANE

(nodding)

We met right before the Sugar Bowl.

McGINTY

Hell of a game, that Sugar Bowl. What'd you lose it by? Forty points?

SHANE

Forty-five.

McGINTY

Jesus. Sometimes a game can stick with you so that you can never shake it off.

SHANE

So it seems.

McGINTY

You had a lot of tools. Fast. Quick release. Great downfield vision. You just never had good protection.

SHANE

I've got three concussions to prove it.

(CONTINUED)

McGINTY

That's why girls don't play the game.

Shane gives him a look as McGinty grins.

SHANE

What do you want, Coach?

McGINTY

I'm back with the Sentinels. And I want you to quarterback 'em.

Shane just looks at him. Waiting for the punchline.

McGINTY

A scrambling quarterback is gonna do real well in this replacement environment. I've found the best guards available to protect you. And a wide receiver that even you can't overthrow.

SHANE

I'm retired.

McGINTY

Yeah. And it looks like things have gone real well for you since.

SHANE

I got no complaints. It's quiet here. Nobody bothers me.

McGINTY

That's the great thing about plankton. Pretty much keeps to itself.

He grins as Shane slips off his dive booties.

McGINTY

You know what separates the winners from the losers, kid?

SHANE

The score?

McGINTY

Getting back on the horse after you've been kicked in the teeth.

(a beat)

I've watched film on your games since the Sugar Bowl.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

19

CONTINUED:

19

MCGINTY (CONT'D)

I saw you get thrown to the wolves in Seattle. You're supposed to be carrying a clipboard your first year -- not a whole team.

(as Shane looks up)

Your team leaned on you and you crumbled. Is that how you want to be remembered?

Shane shrugs and stares out to the water.

SHANE

I don't wanna be remembered at all.

He pulls a ratty old sweatshirt over his head and walks over to the door to his tiny cabin as McGinty stands up.

MCGINTY

You're still young. You still got bags of talent. If you do well, who knows what will happen when the strike ends?

Shane looks up...

MCGINTY

I can't make you any promises, Shane.

McGinty points to the boats in the harbor.

MCGINTY

But wouldn't you rather take a chance than scrape shit off of other guys' toys?

McGinty nods as he looks him in the eye.

MCGINTY

Think it over.

He turns and walks off the boat as Shane watches him go...

DISSOLVE TO:

20

EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - RAMP - MORNING

20

A ramp at the rear of the stadium gives vehicle access to the interior. The bottom of this ramp is now a maelstrom of activity.

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED:

20

The regular Washington Sentinels are in a picket line walking in circles. The players are dressed in everything from fur coats to expensive leather jackets and leather pants. Most of them are on cell phones talking to their agents. Suddenly, the picketers start shouting and pointing as we see a bus slowly makes its way to the stadium.

21 INT. BUS - SAME TIME

21

We PAN ALONG the bus to find, among others, Daniel Bateman (psychotic cop), Clifford Franklin (can't catch a Twinkie), Andre and Jamal Jackson (ex-bodyguards), and Nigel Gruff.

Bang! Eggs start hitting the bus windows as we hear the striking players yell at the bus as it passes.

ON CLIFFORD FRANKLIN

looking like a little kid as he waves to the players.

FRANKLIN

Oh God, there's Eddie Martel! And there's Malcolm Lamont! I love Malcolm Lamont! Yo, Malcolm! Yo, player! You're the man!

ON MALCOLM

A monster of a man, his big face pressed outside the window. He throws a forearm against Franklin's WINDOW, CRACKING it.

ON JAMAL

He's looking out the window when an egg splats against it. He turns to his brother Jamal:

JAMAL

You know I don't take that shit...

He reaches into his jacket for his gun, but Jamal stops him.

ANDRE

Be cool...

The eggs fly furiously! Nigel gives them the finger.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

21

NIGEL

Piss off!

The striking players are screaming and rocking their bus back and forth. We see the wide eyes of our players as we PAN OVER TO baby-faced WALTER COCHRAN, the born-again running back for the team, reading from the Bible...

COCHRAN

'Though I walk through the shadow
of the valley of darkness, I will
fear no evil...'

22 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - DAY

22

The replacements are getting off the bus as the pro players jeer them. Franklin gets off and waves excitedly at his heroes -- they throw rotten fruit at him in return. Nigel gets off and yells:

NIGEL

Get a job, ya wankers!

The striking players explode at this and surge forward. The security guards try to hold them back, but they can't and the replacements start running for their lives up the ramp with the strikers in pursuit!

NEW ANGLE

The replacements get to the top of the ramp before more security guards slam a chain-link gate shut. Nigel gives them the international "suck my dick" sign, and the strikers rattle the gate in a collective rage.

CUT TO:

23 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - FIELD - DAY

23

Jamal and Andre are hitting the blocking sled. They drive it OUT OF FRAME, revealing Pilachowski talking to a big, good-looking kid, BRIAN MURPHY. Pilachowski smiles and nods.

PILACHOWSKI

Lookin' good out there, kid!

Murphy smiles and nods back.

PILACHOWSKI

Where'd you learn to catch like that?

(CONTINUED)

23

CONTINUED:

23

Murphy suddenly signs to him, rapidly and earnestly as Pilachowski continues smiling like an idiot.

PILACHOWSKI

Well, okay then!

Pilachowski turns and walks right over to McGinty.

PILACHOWSKI

My tight end is deaf.

MCGINTY

(nodding)

That's right.

PILACHOWSKI

How am I gonna coach a deaf man?

MCGINTY

You won't need to.

They look across the field at a big, good-looking kid named BRIAN MURPHY who is in the middle of a pass-rushing drill. Murphy looks really fast, especially for his size.

MCGINTY

Brian Murphy would have gone in the first round five years back if he hadn't been born deaf. I saw him play right here in D.C. for Galludet University.

PILACHOWSKI

I gotta be able to communicate with him.

MCGINTY

Then learn to sign. Hey, look at it this way: He'll never get pulled offsidés on an audible.

McGinty thinks this is funny as hell. Pilachowski does not.

NIGEL (O.S.)

Hello, Coach!

Pilachowski and McGinty turn to see Nigel strolling over.

MCGINTY

Good to see ya, Nigel.

They shake hands as Pilachowski just stares.

(CONTINUED)

23

CONTINUED: (2)

23

PILACHOWSKI

You're 'The Leg'?

(to McGinty)

You said he was solid muscle.

McGINTY

He's stronger than he looks.

Nigel nods in agreement as he lights up a cigarette.

NIGEL

I'm wiry.

Pilachowski buries his face in his hands, as we --

CUT TO:

24 INT. BOWELS OF STADIUM - SAME TIME

24

A nondescript van pulls up and EARL WILKINSON steps out in handcuffs and blue jail issue clothes. A Maryland State TROOPER unlocks the cuffs as Banes uneasily awaits his new safety to be freed. The Trooper hands him paperwork.

TROOPER

Initial here, please... and here... and here... thank you. Have a nice day.

The Trooper gets into the van and it pulls away, leaving Wilkinson and Banes alone. Banes fidgets uneasily.

BANES

Well! I'm sure that you've been briefed as to your situation here. Coach McGinty has requested that you be turned over to us for the next five weeks and the Governor has been kind enough to comply.

Wilkinson just stares at him. He looks... hungry.

BANES

I'm sure we'll have a successful and productive relationship once you get familiar with our system--

WILKINSON

That's a nice watch.

BANES

W-what?

Banes touches his watch uneasily.

BANES

This? Uh, it's a... it's a fake. Damn thing's always broken.
(forced laugh)
It's only right twice a day!

Wilkinson nods, not taking his eyes off the Rolex.

BANES

Well! Let's go join the others, shall we? No sense being down here. By ourselves. Out of screaming distance...

CUT BACK TO:

25

EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - DAY

25

Pilachowski sucks on his inhaler as he paces back and forth while McGinty looks on with amusement.

PILACHOWSKI

It's gonna be fine, right? Tell me it's gonna be fine. Because so far the best thing I can say about our one offensive weapon is that it's 'wiry.'

McGINTY

It's gonna be fine.

NEW ANGLE

as we discover JUMBO FUMIKO, a four hundred pound ex-Sumo wrestler crammed into a Sentinel uniform. Fumiko steps over to McGinty, who bows and says something in Japanese. Fumiko bows and answers back before shaking hands.

McGINTY

Choshiwa doda?
(How you doin', Jumbo?)

FUMIKO

Yoroshiku onegai, shimasu.
(Not bad, Coach.)

McGINTY

Have you lost weight?

FUMIKO

(face falling)
Don't say that...

McGINTY

No, no, you look great. Why don't you work out at left tackle?

Fumiko puts on his helmet, pulls his ponytail out the back and rumbles away, fretting as he goes...

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED:

25

FUMIKO

I eat and I eat and I still can't
keep on the weight...

PILACHOWSKI

He's lost weight?

MCGINTY

I met Fumiko a few years back in
Tokyo. He's a champion sumo
wrestler. That means he's an
expert at pushing people around.
That's what pass blocking is,
remember?

They look over to see Jumbo attack the blocking sled as
an assistant coach stands on it. He roars as he turns it
over and traps the coach underneath like a rat. Nigel
stops by to admire his handiwork.

NIGEL

(a la Babe)

That'll do, pig. That'll do.

26 OMITTED
thru
28

26
thru
28

29 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - SAME TIME

29

The striking players are still marching out front. A
beat. And then we slowly PULL BACK and SWING AROUND to
reveal --

SHANE

sitting in his beaten-up old Chevy pickup out in the
parking lot. He takes a deep breath and hops out.

MARTEL (O.S.)

Hey, scab!

Shane looks over to see Eddie Martel along with Wilson
and three other Sentinel players smiling wickedly.

SHANE

I don't want trouble.

MARTEL

You guys hear that? He's taking
away my job but he doesn't want
trouble.

(CONTINUED)

WILSON

Not only is he taking your job,
he's taking your parking space,
too!

MARTEL

Is that right, Falco?

SHANE

I didn't know it was yours. I'll
move it.

MARTEL

No, let us do that for you. Guys?
Move the new boy's ride for him.

Four of the players get shit-eating grins on their faces
as they get to Shane's car and roll it over on its side.

ON SHANE

as he looks at them for a beat before holding out his key
chain and hitting his remote. The car ALARM CHIRPS
before he turns and walks toward the stadium.

WIDER

The players stop laughing -- annoyed at Shane's offhanded
reaction.

MARTEL

Asshole...

WILSON

Jesus, 'Footsteps Falco.' They
must really be getting desperate...

MARTEL

(calling after him)
You're not even a 'has been,'
Falco! You're a 'never was'!

Pilachowski is trying to keep his head together while
Banes tries to keep Bateman docile between drills.

NEW ANGLE

as we see Shane step up on the field.

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED:

30

A few of the other players stop and watch, curious as to who the new guy is. Pilachowski looks like he's going to cry in relief.

PILACHOWSKI

Thank God...

McGinty steps over. A beat as they look each other over.

McGINTY

You're late.

SHANE

I had car trouble.

McGinty tosses him the football.

McGINTY

Still got an arm?

We see Cochran move across the field, opening his hands for the ball. Instead, Shane launches the ball 70 yards downfield to where Franklin is running a separate pass play. Franklin gets confused as to what ball to go for and collides at full speed with Andre. Franklin hits the ground with a thump and lays very still. Andre scratches himself.

SHANE

That's gonna leave a mark...

McGINTY

(to Pilachowski)

Leo! Franklin's down again!

WHOOSH! WHOOSH! We hear Pilachowski's inhaler from O.S. before McGinty turns to Shane, smiling.

McGINTY

Let's play some football.

SMASH CUT TO:

31 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - FIELD - DAY

31

Shane taking a five-step drop on a pass play. He's looking downfield when he sees something scary.

SHANE

Oh shit!

He tries to run out of the way but is nailed and taken down by Bateman.

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED:

31

Shane groans with Bateman lying on top of him.

BATEMAN

Hi. I'm Danny.

SHANE

(gasping)

Shane...

McGinty walks over.

McGINTY

Nice pop, Danny.

BATEMAN

Thanks, Coach!

McGINTY

But he's got a red shirt on. In practice we don't hit the guys with red shirts on.

BATEMAN

I thought you hit anybody with red on. You know, like bulls do.

Danny runs off as McGinty helps Shane up.

McGINTY

I want you to get used to setting up on the run. Move fast and think faster and you'll live a lot longer.

SHANE

I'm very interested in that...

32 ON FRANKLIN

32

running a pattern as Shane zips him the ball. Unfortunately, it hits him right in the hands and Franklin drops it.

McGINTY

(groaning)

Franklin, catching the ball is exactly one half of the whole passing game!

McGinty picks up a ball and hands it to Franklin.

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED:

32

MCGINTY

From here on out, you never put this ball down. Hold onto it. Get to know it. Is that clear?

FRANKLIN

Never put it down?

MCGINTY

Never. You eat, sleep and bathe with the football. Understand?

FRANKLIN

What about when I'm with my girlfriend? You know, in a romantic way?

McGinty thinks about that for a beat.

MCGINTY

Pretend it's a threesome.

32A ON SHANE

32A

taking snaps from center. Over and over. It's been a long time since he had to get into a rhythm with another person. Nigel steps by Shane, then stops as he recognizes him.

NIGEL

Hey! Shane Falco!

SHANE

Yeah.

NIGEL

I lost a ton of money on that Sugar Bowl disaster of yours. What a piece of work that was! You could smell the stink all the way back in Wales!

Nigel walks off as Shane sighs.

SHANE

Nice meeting you...

And then he glances over to see...

33 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - SIDELINES - ANNABELLE FARRELL - DAY

33

watching him from the sidelines.

(CONTINUED)

33

CONTINUED:

33

They share a look between them just as -- wham! He finds himself on the ground looking up at the maniacal smile of Bateman once again. But Bateman winces as he remembers:

BATEMAN

Shit! I forgot about the red shirt thing. This game is confusing, man...

SHANE

(weakly)

... remember... red means... stop.

BATEMAN

Like a street light! Right!

Bateman stands up and holds out his hand to Shane.

SHANE

Go ahead... I'm just gonna lay here a moment... and collect my thoughts...

Bateman runs off as McGinty steps over and grins down at Shane.

McGINTY

Just be glad he's on your side.

CUT TO:

34

EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - FIELD - CLOSEUP - SIGN - LATER

34

that states: "SENTRIES TRY-OUTS!" We PULL BACK to reveal Annabelle sitting behind a cardboard table with clipboard and a boom box before her. She starts the MUSIC as we see:

-- A rhythmless white girl. What she lacks in coordination, she makes up for in enthusiasm. But the effect is unnerving, like watching Chelsea Clinton on "Soul Train."

-- A short fireplug. Looks like a military girl. Her routine comes off more like a threat than a cheer.

-- A skittish Chinese girl who smiles gamely. But the stress builds up before our eyes until she bursts into tears.

-- A thick female bodybuilder who has choreographed poses into her routine. Forget cheerleading. She could make the team.

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED:

34

Annabelle's head is buried in her hands, as we hear:

DAWN (O.S.)
Um... hello? Cheerleading lady?

Annabelle slowly looks up to see...

HEATHER AND DAWN.

Two adorable girls dressed in sheer-fitting uniforms.

ANNABELLE
Oh... hey... hi.... Hi! Welcome!
(checking her
clipboard)
You must be... Heather and Dawn?

The girls giggle idiotically and point at each other as if this somehow clarified things. Annabelle reads their bios.

ANNABELLE
You both danced in Cats? Hey,
that's terrific!

HEATHER
No, we danced at 'Pussy Cats.'
You know that club next to the
airport?

ANNABELLE
Oh. So your style of dance would
be...

DAWN
Is lap-dancing a style?

Suddenly we see the Chinese girl get catapulted by the other cheerleaders into the air -- before coming down several feet away with a thud! Annabelle calmly turns back to the girls.

ANNABELLE
Well, I've seen enough. Suit up!

HEATHER AND DAWN
Yaaaay!

ANNABELLE
And if you have any friends at the
club who might be interested...
send 'em over.

35

ON SHANE

35

laughing as he sees Annabelle trying to put together this ridiculous group. She turns and sees him watching her. She has to laugh too as we...

CUT TO:

35A

INT. CAFETERIA - LATER

35A

An exhausted team of players walk through the lunch line. Andrea has a virtual mountain of food on his plate and we FOLLOW him as he sits down next to his "little" brother.

JAMAL

What the hell is this?

He holds up a tiny Chinese spare-rib with disgust.

NIGEL

Chinese spare ribs.

JAMAL

They're spare all right.

(to Fumiko)

Yo, Buddha! This is some kinda moo goo gai pan bullshit or what?

FUMIKO

I'm Japanese, not Chinese.

JAMAL

Same difference.

FUMIKO

What?

JAMAL

It's all Asian, man.

FUMIKO

You do know that Japan and China are two different countries, right?

JAMAL

Hey, I got an atlas, bitch.

NIGEL

Be cool, mates, we're all on the same team here.

(CONTINUED)

35A CONTINUED:

35A

FRANKLIN
(passing by with his tray)
The Mick is right.

NIGEL
I'm Welsh.

JAMAL
(getting annoyed)
Oh, Jesus Christ...

COCHRAN
(chiming in)
Praise his glory, Jamal!

JAMAL
That's it! I'm eatin' with the
deaf kid!

Jamal takes his tray and leaves.

DISSOLVE TO:

35B NEW ANGLE

35B

as we see Bateman sitting across from Wilkinson. They're both eating and staring each other down. Neither one speaks. Like two big dogs sniffing each other out. Franklin sits next to them, carrying his football as always.

FRANKLIN
Yo, Wilkinson, I remember when you played for Minnesota. You were the mack, man. If you hadn't beaten up that cop and gone to jail you woulda been All Pro for sure.

Wilkinson glares at him as Franklin's smile falls.

FRANKLIN
I -- I mean allegedly beaten up that cop. Way I hear it, the only crime you were guilty of is being a black man in a fancy car, right? Cop started pushing you around so you put the smack down on his candy ass real good. Serves 'im right?

A long beat.

BATEMAN
I'm a cop.

(CONTINUED)

35B CONTINUED:

35B

Franklin nods as he takes this in for a moment. Then:

FRANKLIN

Look! Bundt cake!

Franklin runs to the dessert table leaving Bateman and Wilkinson back to their stare down.

35C NEW ANGLE

35C

as we join Cochran eating across from Shane.

COCHRAN

... never missed a game in college... I was an iron man, you hear what I'm saying? Then I played one game in the pros and blew out my knee. And that was it.

(smiles)

But the Lord blessed me with another chance. All I want to do is score a touchdown before I hang up my pads. Just one more chance to prove I can do it.

(a beat)

You know what I'm saying?

A beat as we CLOSE ON Shane.

SHANE

Yeah...

DISSOLVE TO:

36 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - LATER

36

All is quiet as Shane walks to his overturned truck. The word "SCAB" has been spray-painted in red across the door.

ANNABELLE (O.S.)

Hey...

Shane turns around to find Annabelle unlocking her car.

SHANE

Hi...

ANNABELLE

I was watching you. You've got a good release. Strong arm. You'll do fine.

(CONTINUED)

36

CONTINUED:

36

SHANE

Thanks.

ANNABELLE

Annabelle Farrell.

SHANE

Shane Falco.

ANNABELLE

I know. I remember you from the
'96 Sugar Bowl.

SHANE

(muttering)

Didn't anybody have anything
better to do that day...?

She smiles and nods towards the truck.

ANNABELLE

You should get your teammates to
help you turn it over.

SHANE

I'll call Triple A later.

ANNABELLE

(shrugs)

C'mon. I'll give you a lift...

NEW ANGLE

Annabelle drives Shane past the strikers as Martel's
smirk falls to a look of disbelief.

MARTEL

Son of a bitch...

36A

EXT./INT. ANNABELLE'S CAR - AFTERNOON

36A

Annabelle drives like she approaches everything else in
her life: Aggressively. Shane holds onto the door
handle while trying not to look terrified.

ANNABELLE

Do you mind if I ask you a
personal question?

SHANE

Do I have a choice?

(CONTINUED)

36A CONTINUED:

36A

ANNABELLE

Why were you staying in the pocket today?

SHANE

That's a personal question?

ANNABELLE

It is for me. Normally I would never make a comment to a quarterback about his style, but I couldn't help noticing that you've abandoned yours. You'll need to keep scrambling against Miami with Prescott back in the lineup.

SHANE

Prescott hasn't crossed.

ANNABELLE

He will on Sunday. They're keeping it quiet so you won't have time to prepare.

SHANE

How do you -- ?

ANNABELLE

A friend of mine is a cheerleader for Detroit. She tipped me off.

SHANE

But why would -- ?

ANNABELLE

She's Prescott's ex-wife. That's why he's crossing. To keep up with the alimony payments.

SHANE

So what should I -- ?

ANNABELLE

Well, since Prescott is a left-side linebacker I thought, naturally, shotgun formation and roll right, right?

SHANE

But Van Gundy's on the right side --

(CONTINUED)

36A CONTINUED: (2)

36A

ANNABELLE

-- and he's been all-pro two years in a row. I know, but one of my cheerleaders is friends with the sister of the girl who just broke up with Van Gundy and she says that he's been on a drinking binge ever since she left him.

SHANE

Meaning --

ANNABELLE

He's been hung over and a good second slower off the snap than usual.

SHANE

(head reeling)

So... I should stick with the right side?

ANNABELLE

Exactly.

(a beat)

Unless what I hear about Martinez is true...

We STAY ON Shane's reaction before we --

CUT TO:

37 EXT. HARBOR - AFTERNOON

37

Annabelle pulls up into the parking lot...

ANNABELLE

Which one's yours?

SHANE

See that new cabin cruiser? The big one with the satellite dish?

ANNABELLE

Yeah?

SHANE

I'm the old houseboat next to it covered in sea gull shit.

ANNABELLE

Well, it's what's on the inside that counts, right?

(CONTINUED)

37

CONTINUED:

37

SHANE

You've haven't seen the inside.

ANNABELLE

Good point.

She laughs as he climbs out with his duffel bag.

SHANE

Would you like to?

Her laugh stops short.

ANNABELLE

I'd better not.

SHANE

You don't sound too sure.

ANNABELLE

(grinning)

Oh, I'm sure. Nothing personal, Shane. I just don't date football players.

SHANE

Including quarterbacks?

ANNABELLE

Especially quarterbacks. They're the biggest babies of all.

She gets into her CAR and STARTS it up before looking back one last time.

ANNABELLE

Shane?

SHANE

Yeah?

ANNABELLE

Good luck tomorrow.

She pulls away as he watches her go, not quite sure what to make of Miss Annabelle Farrell...

DISSOLVE TO:

37A

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. - WIDE SHOT - SUNSET

37A

as the sun sets over the Potomac, reflecting off the water.

(CONTINUED)

37A CONTINUED:

37A

Darkness falls over the nation's capital as we hear:

RADIO HOST (V.O.)
This is K.F.A.N., the sports
fan's show for Greater D.C.
You're on the line.

CALLER #1 (V.O.)
I'm on the line?

RADIO HOST (V.O.)
Am I talking in a cave? I just
said you're on the line, Einstein.

37B EXT. LINCOLN MEMORIAL - SAME TIME

37B

As the lights come up to illuminate the grounds...

CALLER #1 (V.O.)
Okay, like, I just wanted to say
that this sucks. This whole
strike sucks! We're finally gonna
make a run at the playoffs and
they go on strike? That...

RADIO HOST (V.O.)
Sucks?

CALLER #1 (V.O.)
SUCKS!

RADIO HOST (V.O.)
Well put. Next caller, welcome to
K.F.A.N. How do you feel about
the strike?

CALLER #2 (V.O.)
I'm sick of the owners and the
players arguing over who's gettin'
screwed. The only ones gettin'
screwed are the fans. I got
season tickets to the Sents that I
can't give away.

38 OMITTED
thru
45B38
thru
45B

46 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - FIELD - LATER

46

Shane is all alone on the empty practice field.

(CONTINUED)

46

CONTINUED:

46

He stands holding the football, staring down the field...

RADIO HOST (V.O.)
So you won't be going to check out
the replacement players tomorrow?

CALLER #2 (V.O.)
What for? They're a bunch of
nobodies.

CLOSE ON SHANE

as we see a faraway look in his eyes...

McGINTY (O.S.)
Shane?

Shane stops and turns to see McGinty watching him.

SHANE
Huh? Oh. Hi, Coach...

Shane looks back down to the empty field.

McGINTY
What are you doing?

SHANE
(shrugs)
Just... watching the game...

McGinty looks down to the empty field with him.

McGINTY
Your next game or your last?

McGinty holds up his hands and Shane throws him the
football. They play a game of "catch" as they speak:

McGINTY
Nervous?

SHANE
I'm fine...

McGINTY
(laughs)
Kid, you're like a duck on a pond.
On the surface everything looks
calm, but beneath the water those
feet are kicking a mile a minute.

Shane gives a little smile. He can't fool McGinty.

(CONTINUED)

46

CONTINUED: (2)

46

SHANE
Coach?

McGINTY
Yeah?

SHANE
Why me?

A beat as McGinty looks him over. And then:

McGINTY
I look at you and I see two men:
the man you are and the man you
ought to be. One day the two of
you will meet...
(nods)
And that should make for one hell
of a football player.

McGinty tosses him the ball for the last time.

McGINTY
Now get some sleep, kid. You're
playing professional football
tomorrow.

We STAY ON Shane's reaction as it really begins to
sink in...

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

47 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - PARKING LOT - DAY 47

It's another beautiful fall afternoon as cars are entering the stadium parking lot. At one of the entrances, the striking Sentinels are picketing.

48 INT. NEXTEL STADIUM - LOCKER ROOM - DAY 48

Everyone is extremely tense, thinking private thoughts as they try to keep down the butterflies of actually playing professional football again. And then, suddenly, from out of the silence, Nigel begins to sing an old Welsh folk song. Franklin smiles and nods to the lovely lilt of Nigel's voice.

(CONTINUED)

48

CONTINUED:

48

NIGEL

'It was war that came calling,
It was war that was heard,
We shall march on to victory,
I gave them my word.'

Franklin's smile begins to fade as the song darkens...

NIGEL

'But we lost more than blood,
At the gates of St. Winifred,
Even worse was the gore,
That was spilled at Bangor.'

Shane glances over too...

NIGEL

'But my heart stopped at Swansea,
For what did I there see?
Severed heads hung from trees
Full of maggots and fleas --'

SHANE

That's enough singing for now!
Nigel. Thank you.

Nigel shrugs and goes back to smoking.

ON FUMIKO

sitting in front of a bowl of hard-boiled eggs. He's methodically popping them into his mouth. He eats four as we watch. Pilachowski steps in and watches him eat.

PILACHOWSKI

Are you crazy? Nobody eats right
before a game!

FUMIKO

I need to bulk up.

WIDER

McGinty comes strolling through the locker room, the picture of calm. He walks by tight end Brian Murphy and signs to him to have a good game. Murphy signs back, "Thanks, Coach." McGinty bums an egg from Fumiko before walking to the middle of the locker room. He eats the egg as he turns slowly and takes in the frightened looks of his players...

(CONTINUED)

48

CONTINUED: (2)

48

MCGINTY

Welcome to professional football.

We SLOWLY PAN ACROSS the faces of the replacement players as McGinty continues:

MCGINTY

There are some who will say that your accomplishments today will soon be forgotten. That you're not 'real' players and that this isn't a 'real' team. Well I say that's bullshit. Because as of today you are professional football players. And the difference between professional and amateur, between playing for the Washington Sentinels and Michigan State, is that this is your job. Just like you worked at the mini-mart, and you worked in the shipping yard, and you worked at the auto plant, and you...

(stops on Wilkinson)

... well, you were in jail, but the point is you are now being paid to play. And that's a privilege few athletes will ever know. I want you to remember that. Because the men whose place you're taking forgot it a long time ago.

(pauses)

Now let's play some football!

The guys erupt in cheers as we:

SMASH CUT TO:

49

EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - DAY

49

We're FOCUSED ON an enormous, plastic blow-up Washington Sentinel helmet that bobs on the ground in front of the exit. The idea is, the players will run into and then out of the helmet as they are introduced. Annabelle and her replacement cheerleaders are lined up on either side of the bobbing helmet, waiting for the players.

50 INT. CONTROL BOOTH - DAY

50

Madden and Summerall are vamping on camera:

MADDEN

... and Detroit went out and bought an entire semi-pro team once the strike happened. Washington management, on the other hand, is going with a bunch of unknowns, although we'll see one or two familiar faces out there today.

SUMMERALL

Like Shane Falco, the talented college quarterback who fell out of sight after a disastrous showing in the Sugar Bowl a few years back.

(to Madden)

Remember that beating he took from Florida State, John?

MADDEN

Oh, yeah, Falco was decimated! But that's nothing compared to some of those thrashings he got down in San Diego.

SUMMERALL

One thing we do know, is that Falco can take a hit.

MADDEN

He's sure had enough practice, Pat.

SUMMERALL

For some of these players this is another shot, a last shot for a guy like Falco...

51 INT. NEXTEL STADIUM - TUNNEL - DAY

51

Shane is looking out at the field through the blow-up helmet. Suddenly, a CANNON goes off with a BOOM! as Shane jumps.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Ladies and gentlemen, your
Washington Sentinels!

52 INT. NEXTEL STADIUM - DAY 52

In the stands we see a sparse crowd is in attendance, mostly diehard fans who are already drunk. Amongst them we find BOB, ROB, and TODD. You know those idiots you see on TV? The ones who shave their heads and paint their faces to look like football helmets? These guys are those idiots. Each one has painted his face in the team's red and white colors while dressing up as a different founding father.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
Here's the starting defense for
today...

53 INT. NEXTEL STADIUM - TUNNEL - DAY 53

Bateman is first in line, looking like a racehorse on cocaine.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
At middle linebacker, number 56,
Daniel Bateman!

Bateman roars as he takes off at a dead run out of the tunnel and into the helmet.

ON HIS FOOT

It hits a wire stretched across the ground inside the helmet.

ON BATEMAN

He trips into the side of the helmet. He bounces to the other side, bounces again and is shot out like a cannonball!

54 OMITTED 54

& &

55 55

56 ON CHEERLEADERS 56

Bateman is catapulted out of the helmet and takes out four cheerleaders who go down shrieking in pain.

57 INT. CONTROL BOOTH - DAY 57

Madden covers his face. Summerall winces.

(CONTINUED)

57 CONTINUED: 57

SUMMERALL

Oh my...

58 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - PARKING LOT - DAY 58

A contingent of strike players, led by Martel and Wilson, huddle around a personal TV laughing their asses off.

59 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - FIELD - DAY 59

Cheerleaders are down and screaming in pain. Annabelle is running from girl to girl, doing triage.

ON BATEMAN

sheepishly standing to one side as trainers come to assist.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

And now... uh, the rest of the Washington Sentinels...

The rest of the team walks unceremoniously out of the helmet and onto the field, as we --

CUT TO:

60 OMITTED 60

61 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - FIELD - DAY 61

Boom! The Detroit kicker puts one in the end zone for a touchback. The Sentinel offense walks out onto the field. Shane snaps his chin strap as he and McGinty share a look.

McGINTY

There can be only one leader out there on the field.

(pauses)

Go be it.

Shane takes a deep breath and runs out onto the field...

62 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - FIELD - ANOTHER ANGLE - DAY 62

The Washington offense walks out onto the field with Shane bringing up the rear.

(CONTINUED)

62 CONTINUED:

62

IN HUDDLE

Jamal and Fumiko are arguing.

JAMAL
That's where I stand!

FUMIKO
No it's not!

JAMAL
C'mon, man, that's my spot in the
huddle!

Jamal shoves Fumiko over.

FUMIKO
It's my spot now!

Fumiko shoves him back.

JAMAL
Not for long, you tub of rice!

Jamal shoves him again.

62A ON SHANE

62A

As he walks we hear McGinty's voice in Shane's helmet,
delivered by one-way radio coming from McGinty's headset.

McGINTY (V.O.)
Nice and easy now. Let's run the
ten plays and get a feel for the
land...

Shane walks into the huddle and the chaos.

SHANE
Hold on! What's the problem here?

FUMIKO
I'm gonna kick your black ass!

JAMAL
You ain't kickin' jack shit, China
man!

FUMIKO
I'm Japanese not Chinese!

Andre gets involved as Shane gets between them.

(CONTINUED)

62A CONTINUED:

62A

ANDRE
(to Fumiko)
Don't be messing with my brother!

SHANE
Hold on...

63 ON REF

63

He's watching the play clock, and when it gets to zero, he pulls his penalty flag and throws it.

REF
Delay of game! Five yards!

64 IN HUDDLE

64

Fumiko suddenly punches Andre through his face guard. Andre knocks into Shane and spins him around. Jamal goes to punch Fumiko, misses and nails Shane in the back of the helmet. Shane goes down. Hard.

65 INT. CONTROL BOOTH - DAY

65

Madden and Summerall look confused.

SUMMERALL
... I don't know. Something seems to be going on in the huddle. It looks like... yes, Shane Falco is on his back. They haven't run a play yet but Falco is down!

MADDEN
This is not a good sign.

66 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - FIELD - DAY

66

Trainers race out to Shane, who is lying face-up with the huddle standing over him.

SHANE
(clearing the cobwebs)
What happened? Am I hurt already?

Shane sits up. And then he remembers what happened.

(CONTINUED)

SHANE

Damn it! I am the quarterback! I am the only one supposed to talk in the huddle!

JAMAL

But he took my place...

SHANE

I don't give a shit! Now huddle up!

Everybody gets back into the huddle.

SHANE

If you've got something to say, raise your hand! Is that understood?!

Fumiko raises his hand. Shane grits his teeth and nods.

FUMIKO

Suppose like, you don't feel good? Or you're hurt or something? Then what?

SHANE

(gritting his teeth)
Then you tell me before the huddle starts! Okay, listen up: D.C. right switch 25 blast. On two.

Andre raises his hand.

SHANE

What!

ANDRE

That's to the right... right?

JAMAL

No, it's to the left.

SHANE

It's to the right!

ANDRE

You better be quiet, Shane, or they'll hear you...

We hear another WHISTLE as a penalty flag flies by.

REF

Delay of game! Five yards!

Shane throws up his hands in despair.

67 INT. CONTROL BOOTH - ON MADDEN AND SUMMERALL - DAY 67

MADDEN

Well, Pat, so far the Sentinels
have minus ten yards offensively.

68 INT. NEXTEL STADIUM - O'NEIL'S LUXURY BOX - ON O'NEIL - DAY 68

Up in his box, his head in his hands as his idiot wife
continues working on her ever-present crossword puzzle.

O'NEIL

I've seen monkey shit fights at
the zoo that were more organized
than this!

69 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - FIELD - SHANE - DAY 69

as he finally gets an opportunity to run a play.

SHANE

Ready! Blue 68! Blue 68! Hut!
Hut!

On the snap, Shane turns to hand off to Cochran but
instead runs right into Andre who knocks him down. Shane
looks up.

SHANE

Have you suddenly decided you
don't like me, Andre?

ANDRE

(wincing)
You said it was to the right,
didn't you?

COCHRAN

You see? We should have prayed.

SHANE

Shut up!

70 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - FIELD - DAY 70

Everybody gets back into the huddle.

SHANE

Okay, pass. D.C. right pro 424
tomahawk. On one.

71 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - FIELD - ANOTHER ANGLE - DAY 71

They break and come to the line of scrimmage.

SHANE

Ready! Green 22!

A LINEMAN points at Shane and calls out:

LINEMAN

I'm comin' for you, Footsteps!

Shane loses himself for a moment in the Lineman's eyes before snapping back:

SHANE

Green 22! Hut! Hut!

Shane does a play-action fake to Cochran and then turns downfield. Wham! He's hit by the taunting Lineman, then sandwiched by two more defenders. The ball squirts loose and Detroit recovers.

MADDEN (V.O.)

Wow! You could hear Falco's fillings drop all the way up here, Pat!

71A EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - SIDELINE - ON CHEERLEADERS - DAY 71A

Heather and Dawn cheer.

HEATHER

Go, Sents! Go, Sents!

DAWN

Yaaaay!

Annabelle stops both of them.

ANNABELLE

Girls. This is not a good time for cheering...

72 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - FIELD - DAY 72

The defense takes it place on the field, led by Bateman.

SUMMERALL (V.O.)

And Detroit will take over the football with excellent field position...

73 ON DETROIT

73

They break their huddle and come to the line of scrimmage. Bateman is snorting fire. Earl Wilkinson (with "SMITH" on the back of his jersey) patrols the secondary and calls out the formation. He's wearing one of those Darth Vader-like face shields so we can't see his face.

WILKINSON

Wide right! Check on the wing!

The DETROIT QUARTERBACK sets up over center.

DETROIT QB

Cadillac 55. Cadillac 55. Hut!

74 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - FIELD - DAY

74

Bam! Bateman runs offside and flattens the quarterback! He's out of his mind, foaming at the mouth as he screams:

BATEMAN

I'm gonna bury you up, man! I'm gonna bury YOUR FAMILY! And bury your DOG! And bury your DOG'S FAMILY!

Penalty flags fly as a Detroit lineman makes the mistake of pushing Bateman away. Bateman promptly jumps on his head as even more flags fly.

SUMMERALL (V.O.)

I think the Sentinels just set a record for penalties in the first three minutes. We're waiting for the stats on that...

CUT TO:

74A DETROIT RUNNING BACK

74A

slicing through the field and into the end zone to score.

MADDEN (V.O.)

Touchdown Detroit!

74B EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - SIDELINE - DAY

74B

Bob, Rob and Todd howling in pain. Some fans around them are already heading for the exit.

75 OMITTED

75

76 SCOREBOARD 76

Detroit 7, Washington 0.

77 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - FIELD - HUDDLE - DAY (LATER) 77

Everyone is dirty, sweating bullets and breathing very hard. Fumiko suddenly raises his hand.

SHANE

What?

FUMIKO

I don't feel good...

SHANE

Suck it up!

Fumiko tries to suck it up -- and promptly vomits!

JAMAL

Oh, God!

COCHRAN

Ooooooh... eggs!

ANDRE

Man, that's ripe!

FUMIKO

I'm sorry!

Everyone is reacting. Some players gag.

FRANKLIN

Shane, we got to move, man! If we don't move I'm gonna blow chow too!

SHANE

We're in a huddle here!

Franklin stops -- then lurches all over Shane's shoes!

ANDRE

Fuck me!

FRANKLIN

I tried to tell you! I can't be around someone puking or I start puking...

We hear two sharp claps as they turn to see Murphy making sign language for "Me, too."

(CONTINUED)

77 CONTINUED: 77

SHANE
 Okay! Okay! On the count of
 three. Everyone move left. Hut!
 Hut! Hut!

ON HUDDLE

Eleven bent-over guys move in unison with tiny steps to
 the left.

78 ON DETROIT'S LINEBACKER 78

watching the bizarre spectacle take place.

DETROIT LB
 What the hell is this?

79 INT. CONTROL BOOTH - DAY 79

Summerall has his binoculars on the moving huddle.

SUMMERALL
 John, how many years have we been
 calling games together?

MADDEN
 Seventeen, I think...

Pat just hands John the binoculars.

80 OMITTED 80

81 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - SIDELINE - MCGINTY - DAY 81

alongside a very pale-looking Pilachowski on the
 sidelines.

MCGINTY
 Hey... this is the first thing
 we've done together as a team...

Pilachowski just looks at him.

82 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - FIELD - LINE OF SCRIMMAGE - DAY 82

SHANE
 Ready! Blue 42! Blue 42! Hut!

(CONTINUED)

82 CONTINUED: 82

Shane rolls to his right but the blitz is on and he reverses and rolls left. He throws the ball to Cochran over the middle who runs ahead for 15 yards!

ANDRE

Yeah yeah yeah!

JAMAL

Here we go, baby! Now we're moving!

CUT TO:

82A OMITTED 82A

82B SHANE 82B

faking a handoff to Cochran before rolling out and throwing to Murphy along the sidelines. He pulls it in for another pick-up of 35 yards...

SUMMERALL (V.O.)

Signs of life from Washington here...

MADDEN (V.O.)

That completion by Falco puts them back in field goal range...

82C OMITTED 82C

83 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - SIDELINE - ON NIGEL - DAY 83

He flicks his cigarette away as he walks out onto the field. We STAY ON McGinty and Pilachowski.

PILACHOWSKI

Don't you think it's a mistake to give him a 40 yarder on his first shot?

McGINTY

Only if he misses.

Pilachowski shakes his inhaler, as we...

CUT TO:

A83A EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - FIELD - ON SHANE - DAY A83A

crouching down for the snap from Cochran.

(CONTINUED)

A83A CONTINUED:

A83A

SHANE

Hut!

It's a perfect snap. Shane spots it, Nigel belts it. And it goes through for three! Nigel gets high-fives all around. Bateman runs up and in his ecstasy, slaps Nigel in the head. Nigel goes down hard.

MADDEN (V.O.)

Whoa!

SUMMERALL (V.O.)

That's the second time tonight a Washington player has been knocked out by his own teammate!

A83B EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM/SIDELINE - ON CHEERLEADERS - DAY

A83B

They cheer awkwardly together as one of them accidentally steps on another's foot... who angrily pushes her back... who claws at her eyes. We see the replacement cheerleaders begin a full on cat fight as Annabelle tries to separate them...

SMASH CUT TO:

83A OMITTED
thru
84A83A
thru
84A

85 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - FIELD - DAY (LATER)

85

The Detroit quarterback drops back and throws a pass. But at the last minute -- Wilkinson steps in front of the receiver and makes a shoestring catch! He flashes downfield and scores!

SUMMERALL (V.O.)

Touchdown Smith! That one gets the Sentinels back into the ball game!

85A IN STANDS

85A

We see Bob, Rob, and Todd standing on their seats doing a drunken victory dance. But then Rob/Lincoln falls off and tumbles down the steps, BLARING his AIR HORN as he goes.

86

INT. CONTROL BOOTH - DAY

86

Madden starts shuffling through pages.

(CONTINUED)

86 CONTINUED:

86

MADDEN

This guy is a player, Pat...

He finds the paper he's looking for...

MADDEN

According to the Sentinels, Ray Smith is... that's weird. No college given, no high school... it just says he's been a resident of the state of Maryland for the last four years and five months...likes to embroider...

87 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - FIELD - ON CLOCK - LATE AFTERNOON

87

which shows one minute ten seconds left in the fourth quarter.

Scoreboard: Detroit 14, Washington 10.

87A LINE OF SCRIMMAGE

87A

Shane takes the snap and drops back just as two linemen blow past Jamal and Fumiko, crunching Shane. The football pops loose and one of them falls on it!

SUMMERALL (V.O.)

Falco is sacked and the ball comes loose! It's Detroit's ball with only a minute remaining in the game!

88 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - SIDELINE - LATE AFTERNOON

88

McGinty grabs Bateman before he can run out onto the field.

MCGINTY

Danny.
(very slowly)
Get me the ball.

BATEMAN

The ball. Okay, Coach.

89 ON DETROIT

89

as they line up.

(CONTINUED)

89 CONTINUED: 89

DETROIT QB
Ready! Set! Gator 20! Gator 20!
Hut!

The quarterback hands off to the running back right up the middle in a typical "run out the clock" play. Bam! Bateman comes out of nowhere, decks the runner and literally rips the ball out of his hands as he goes down. The crowd cheers!

MADDEN (V.O.)
Now that's All-Madden Team!

90 OMITTED 90

90A ON BATEMAN 90A

as he runs over to McGinty on the sidelines. He holds out the football like a golden retriever. McGinty takes it.

MCGINTY
Thank you, Danny.

BATEMAN
Sure, Coach!

Bateman runs off as McGinty shakes his head and flips the ball to a referee.

91 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - SIDELINE - HUDDLE - LATE AFTERNOON 91

They're all turned and watching as Shane makes his way slowly out onto the field. Annabelle watches him closely.

SUMMERALL (V.O.)
Here comes Falco with eighteen
seconds left on the clock...

91A OMITTED 91A

92 LINE OF SCRIMMAGE 92

Shane looks out at the defense. The nasty-looking Linebacker stares back at him...

DETROIT LB
HERE COMES THE PAIN, BABY!

(CONTINUED)

92 CONTINUED:

92

SHANE

... 22 green!

His voice cracks and several defensive players openly laugh at him. And then...

SHANE

Check! Check! Black 32! Black 32!

ON JAMAL

He's down in his three-point stance. He whispers to Cochran:

JAMAL

What's that mean?

FUMIKO

(whispering back)
He's changing the play. Listen!

SHANE

Black 32!

He shifts position in the backfield.

COCHRAN

(to Shane)
Is this right?

SHANE

(shaking his head)
Black 32 left!

Cochran shifts again. Franklin goes in motion from his flanker position, but then changes his mind and goes back the other way. Cochran and Franklin bump into each other.

93 ON DETROIT DEFENSE

93

They are totally confused now as they try to adjust to the equally-confused Sentinels.

93A ON MCGINTY

93A

watching with Pilachowski.

MCGINTY

What the hell is he doing?

(CONTINUED)

93A CONTINUED:

93A

PILACHOWSKI

Calling an audible.

MCGINTY

I can see that!

94 ON SHANE

94

SHANE

Hut! Hut!

He turns to hand the ball off to Cochran but Cochran is not there. Shane turns the other way and sees Franklin alone in the end zone, waving his hands. Shane considers it for a beat but instead pitches the ball to Cochran.

Meanwhile, the Detroit defense is going the other way and Cochran takes off. But two players are not taken in. The first guy dives for Cochran's legs. We hear a clank as his helmet hits the industrial knee brace. The guy bounces off and Cochran lunges for the end zone just as-- Wham! He's stuffed at the line... just shy of a touchdown.

BOOM! The game ends.

MADDEN (V.O.)

Falco calls an audible at the line of scrimmage and Cochran nearly takes it in! What a heartbreaker for Washington!

95 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - FIELD - LATE AFTERNOON

95

Shane looks downfield as the other players silently walk off the field. He turns and slowly walks back to the bench, where we see McGinty staring daggers at him.

MCGINTY

If I wanted you to hand off to Cochran I would have called it that way!

SHANE

I read blitz.

MCGINTY

Bullshit. I put the game in your hands and you got scared.

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

95 CONTINUED:

95

SHANE

(weakly)

I read blitz...

MCGINTY

Winners always want the ball with
the game on the line.

McGinty walks off as we STAY ON Shane for a beat. He turns to see Annabelle watching him. She gives him a supportive nod but he looks away, ashamed, and walks into the tunnel.

DISSOLVE TO:

96 OMITTED

96

96A INT. SHOOTERS - LATER THAT NIGHT

96A

A sports bar near the stadium where all the jocks hang out. Usually, this place would be hopping after a game. But right now it's barely limping. We PAN OVER a nearly empty bar before FINDING our guys. They're drowning their sorrows at a big table near the billiard room. Shane does a shot followed by a beer chaser -- clearly it's not the first of the evening.

The JUKEBOX PLAYS the '70s cheese classic "I Will Survive" by GLORIA GAYNOR. The bouncy tune plays in contrast to the dismal setting. But Franklin can't resist quietly singing along until Wilkinson gives him a deadly glare and he stops.

JAMAL

Can't somebody turn that shit off?

NIGEL

We're being punished...

FRANKLIN

I wonder if anybody stole anything
at the mini-mart today...

JAMAL

You'll know soon enough...

FRANKLIN

We tried our best...

NIGEL

They don't give points for trying.
Face it, we screwed the pooch
tonight.

(CONTINUED)

96A CONTINUED:

96A

They all sigh in unison. Shane looks down into his beer, feeling guilty as hell.

COCHRAN

This is an excellent time to look to scripture for inspiration...

Everybody gives him a death stare.

COCHRAN

Then again maybe not.

ANDRE

Hey, where's Bateman?

FRANKLIN

He said he was going to get something pierced. Thought it might cheer him up.

Suddenly, we hear a commotion of LAUGHTER as they look over to see... the strikers. Martel, Wilson, and the other pros are coming in for a drunken celebration.

SHANE

(sighs)

Perfect...

Our replacements sink down into their chairs like Slinkies. But Martel spots them anyway.

MARTEL

Hey! There they are! Ladies and gentlemen -- your Washington Sentinels!

They all crack up as our players look to each other to see if anyone is going to stand up to them. But nobody is.

NEW ANGLE

Murphy, our deaf player, is at the counter writing down his drink order for the bartender as Martel laughs.

MARTEL

Hell, he's the luckiest guy here. At least he couldn't hear the booing.

They laugh as Murphy hands the bartender his handwritten order, unaware that he's being ridiculed.

(CONTINUED)

96A CONTINUED: (2)

96A

ON SHANE

as he watches this from across the bar.

And as he does he slowly stands up...

FRANKLIN

Shane?

BACK AT BAR

Martel continues to have fun at Murphy's expense until:

SHANE (O.S.)

Hey.

The strikers look over to see Shane standing before them.

SHANE

Lay off.

MARTEL

Lighten up, Falco. It's not like he knows what we're saying.

SHANE

I know. Lay off.

BACK AT TABLE

the replacements all look to each other... they haven't seen Shane like this before. Murphy grabs a pen off of the bar and begins writing down a note on a napkin. He hands it to Shane. Shane reads it and as he does... he begins to smile.

MARTEL

(smile fading)

Hey... what's it say?

SHANE

(reading)

'There's one good thing about being deaf: it makes it easy to ignore the assholes.'

Shane holds up his hand and Murphy high-fives him. Martel steps up just as Murphy looks over to see what's happening. He signs quickly.

(CONTINUED)

96A CONTINUED: (3)

96A

SHANE
(still looking to
Murphy)
It's okay, Brian --

Wham! Martel cold-cocks Shane with a sucker punch and Shane hits the ground hard. The replacements step toward the strikers but Shane holds up his hand to stop them.

SHANE
No.

They wait uneasily as Shane struggles drunkenly to his feet, his nose bleeding. He smiles and nods at Martel. And then Shane suddenly swings. But Martel easily ducks it and Shane connects instead with the huge striker standing at Martel's side. The huge striker only smiles.

SHANE
Fuck.

Wham! The huge striker decks Shane. The replacements move in but Shane holds out his hand a second time.

SHANE
No...

Shane struggles to get to his feet and leans on the bar counter to steady himself before he grins drunkenly.

SHANE
You guys had enough?

MARTEL
(laughing)
I gotta hand it to ya, Falco --
you got balls. You got shit for
brains but you got balls.

Martel and the huge striker start toward Shane when --
Wham! The door suddenly bursts open and Bateman steps in!

BATEMAN
Dude, I got my sack pierced!

He stops as he surveys the situation. And then he smiles like a child on Christmas morning. Shane looks over to the strikers and grins as we notice the huge striker's shirt.

It's red.

(CONTINUED)

96A CONTINUED: (4)

96A

SHANE

Danny, remember what I told you
about red shirts in practice?

BATEMAN

Yeah?

SHANE

Forget it.

BATEMAN

COOL!

Bateman suddenly screams like a berserker and charges into Martel, tackling him into the bar as a full-scale bar brawl breaks out! Wilson jumps onto Bateman and pulls him off as they start trading punches! The other players jump into the fray as bodies begin to fly! The sounds of a POLICE SIREN WAIL IN the DISTANCE as we --

SMASH CUT TO:

96B OMITTED 96B
& 96C 96C

96D INT. HOLDING TANK - LATE NIGHT 96D

Our guys are all waiting to get picked up. They're all beaten up and hurting...

WILKINSON

This is bullshit.

BATEMAN

Should be like homecoming for you.

WILKINSON

Screw you, Bateman.

BATEMAN

You're in the right place.

SHANE

Cool it. There's been enough fighting for one night.

ANDRE

I just wanna know why we're the only ones in jail.

COCHRAN

Simple. They're winners.

FUMIKO

Not tonight.

JAMAL

(nodding)

That was pretty sweet when you sat on Wilson's head, Jumbo.

FUMIKO

Thank you, Jamal.

FRANKLIN

What about me? I lost count of how many guys I knocked out!

The guys jeer incredulously.

FRANKLIN

What?

NIGEL

You were hiding behind the jukebox!

(CONTINUED)

96D CONTINUED:

96D

FRANKLIN

At first I was afraid, I was
petrified...

Everyone stops as Franklin begins to sing like Gloria
Gaynor:

FRANKLIN

Thinking I could never live
without you by my side...

Shane covers his face with his hands and groans. Jamal
grabs the bars as he calls out to the guard:

JAMAL

Electric chair? Please?

Franklin steps up and puts his hands on Jamal's
shoulders.

FRANKLIN

I stayed up so many nights
thinking how you did me wrong,
but I grew strong... And I
learned how to get along!

Jamal can't help smiling. And soon everyone is laughing
as Franklin steps up to each one of them as he sings on...

CUT TO:

96E MCGINTY

96E

walking down the hall. But as he gets closer he hears
Franklin singing "I Will Survive" at the top of his lungs.
McGinty can't help smiling and shaking his head.

MCGINTY

Jesus...

But it's a good sound. The sound of camaraderie.

ON GUYS

laughing their asses off as Franklin reaches the end,
some of them clapping and hooting while others are
dancing and singing along. And then they look up to see
McGinty standing in the doorway. They stop.

(CONTINUED)

96E CONTINUED:

96E

MCGINTY

If anything like this happens again there will be no place for you on this football team. Am I making myself clear?

They look down and nod. A beat.

MCGINTY

But just for the record... I would have loved to have been there to see Martel get his ass kicked.

They look up and smile.

MCGINTY

Let's get out of here.

FADE OUT.

97 OMITTED

97

&
98

&
98

FADE IN:

99 EXT. MARINA PARKING LOT - NEXT MORNING

99

Annabelle steps out of her car and starts toward the water. But then she stops at what she sees.

NEW ANGLE

to reveal Shane on his boat. His shirt is off and he's trying to get a wet suit on but the pain makes it difficult.

ANNABELLE

Shane?

He looks up, surprised to see her walking down the dock...

SHANE

Hey...

ANNABELLE

What are you doing?

SHANE

My job.

(CONTINUED)

99

CONTINUED:

99

ANNABELLE

You're a professional football player.

SHANE

This week. But when that's all over I'll be back here.

(shrugs)

I don't wanna lose my customers...

She watches him as she steps closer... so unlike the spoiled players she's used to.

ANNABELLE

I was passing by on my way to work. Thought you might need a ride.

SHANE

I'm good. I got my truck back.

ANNABELLE

How is it?

SHANE

Flatter. But it runs.

ANNABELLE

(laughs)

And how about you? How are you running after last night?

SHANE

You heard about that?

ANNABELLE

The whole town heard about that.

(gesturing to his
bruised face)

Is that from the game or the fight?

SHANE

I'm not sure. It's all kind of blurred into one big beating.

ANNABELLE

That was a good thing you did.

SHANE

(waving it away)

It was stupid.

(CONTINUED)

ANNABELLE

Maybe. But you're the first player I can remember who seems to care more about his teammates than he does himself. And that's something this team has been missing for a long time...

He nods his thanks. An awkward beat.

ANNABELLE

Well... I should go...

SHANE

Excuse me for not getting up...
it's just that...
(shrugs)
I can't get up.

ANNABELLE

What?

She steps over onto the boat. And as she does we SWING AROUND to reveal his back is a mass of ugly bruises.

ANNABELLE

Oh, Jesus!

SHANE

It looks worse than it feels.

ANNABELLE

It looks like hell.

SHANE

Oh... then it looks exactly like it feels.

ANNABELLE

Here...

She digs through her shoulder bag before pulling out a tube of cream...

SHANE

(reading the label)
'Wild yam'?

ANNABELLE

Don't laugh, it works great for sore muscles...

She opens it and rubs it between her hands...

(CONTINUED)

SHANE

You don't have to do that...

ANNABELLE

Shane, you can't even turn around.
Now this might be a little --

SHANE

(jumping at her touch)

Cold!

ANNABELLE

Sit still...

She rubs it across his back... over his bruised ribs and shoulders... there's definitely something happening... she finally finishes as he turns around best he can to face her. Annabelle looks a little flustered herself...

SHANE

Thank you.

She's lost in his eyes for a beat before she remembers:

ANNABELLE

Shit!

(checks her watch)

I'm gonna be late for work...

She picks up her bag...

SHANE

You've got practice?

ANNABELLE

I've got work. We only make fifty bucks a game. Gotta pay the bills, right?

She throws her bag over her shoulder and starts for the dock.

ANNABELLE

I work at Mac's down on A Street.
Stop in sometime. I'll buy you a beer.

SHANE

I'll do that...

She stops and looks back with a smile before walking back toward the parking lot. We STAY ON Shane's smile as we --

DISSOLVE TO:

99A OMITTED

99A

100 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - PARKING LOT - MORNING

100

Shane pulls up to the lot and parks his car. He looks over to see Martel, Wilson, and the other strikers glaring at him.

SHANE

Come on, Martel. I didn't park in your space...

MARTEL

No, but unfortunately you parked in Lamont's space. And he's not nearly as lenient as I am.

Wilson laughs as he and the players grab Shane's car and flip it over onto its side. But this time...

JAMAL (O.S.)

You all put that car back.

Everybody turns to see Jamal and Andre standing there.

MARTEL

This is none of your business...

ANDRE

Shane's our business. We're the guards.

JAMAL

And we protect our quarterback.

Wilson, Martel, and the others all laugh at this. Jamal points to Martel's gorgeous Porsche.

JAMAL

(to Martel)

That's your ride, ain't it?

Before Martel can even answer, Jamal pulls his NINE MILLIMETER. BOOM! BOOM! No more Porsche windshield. All the regular Sentinels dive for cover.

MARTEL

My windshield! You crazy motherfu□--

JAMAL

Now put my man's car back.

LAMONT

You sonofa --

(CONTINUED)

100

CONTINUED:

100

Andre raises his GUN again. POW! No Porsche driver's side window. Martel screams.

MARTEL

Stop!!

He turns to his cowering teammates.

MARTEL

Come on, help me, Godamnit!

The guys quickly pick up the car right side up again.

LAMONT

(to Andre)

You are gonna pay for this...

JAMAL

No I'm not. And quit messing with my man here. That includes his ride.

Jamal spins the nine and holsters it. Jamal and Andre get on either side of Shane. They look at each other and then quickly switch sides.

JAMAL

Let's go to practice, Shane.

SHANE

Let's do that.

Shane grins to his guards before nodding to the still-shocked strikers as they walk off. Jamal looks to Shane and sniffs.

JAMAL

What's that smell?

SHANE

Wild Yam.

ANDRE

It's nice!

They head into the stadium as we hear:

PILACHOWSKI (V.O.)

... so if anyone does have any firearms, we need to turn those in as soon as possible, no questions asked...

100A INT. LOCKER ROOM - SAME TIME

100A

The guys are sitting around for "chalk talk" as we FIND Pilachowski waiting for a response. Nobody moves.

PILACHOWSKI

Okay then! Coach?

McGinty walks back and forth before them as he speaks...

McGINTY

Last Sunday I saw 11 men on the field playing as hard as they could to win a football game. We lost, not because of effort or desire, but because of a lack of leadership and a lack of trust.

They all look to each other...

McGINTY

One of those issues has been resolved...

Shane shoots him a look before McGinty continues:

McGINTY

But leadership means nothing if a team doesn't believe in each other. Players spend years together before they develop trust in one another. And I'm asking you to do it in one week. That's not a reasonable request but these are not reasonable times.

(pauses, sizing them up)

Now, I know you all have concerns about this Sunday. And it takes a real man to admit to his fears. But that's what I'm asking you to be here tonight...

FRANKLIN

(waving his hand)

I'm afraid of spiders!

McGINTY

Well, that's not exactly --

JAMAL

Me too! I'm afraid of spiders, too!

ANDRE

Goddamn spiders creep me out, bro.

(CONTINUED)

100A CONTINUED:

100A

MCGINTY

I didn't mean --

FUMIKO

Especially in your bed! Ever get a spider in your bed? Shit, man!

NIGEL

Thanks a lot. You can just rock me to sleep tonight --

MCGINTY

Okay! That's great, but that's not what I'm talking about. I'm talking about what scares us on the field.

They look at each other, unsure, before...

FRANKLIN

Like spiders on the field?

MCGINTY

Let's try and get beyond spiders...

JAMAL

Bees?

MCGINTY

Jesus Christ! Is anybody here afraid of anything other than bugs?

A long beat before...

SHANE

Quicksand.

They all turn to Shane. Franklin nods in agreement.

FRANKLIN

Shit, yeah, quicksand is a scary mother! Suck you right in and if you scream you get all that muck in your --

MCGINTY

(cutting him off)

I don't think that's what Shane meant, Franklin.

FRANKLIN

Oh... then what'd he mean?

(CONTINUED)

100A CONTINUED: (2)

100A

MCGINTY

You'd have to ask Shane that.

They all turn to Shane. A long beat before he relents:

SHANE

... you're playing... you think everything is going fine... but then one thing goes wrong... and then another... and another... and you try to fight back... but the harder you fight, the deeper you sink... until you can't move... you can't breathe.. because you're in over your head...

(shrugs)

Like quicksand.

McGinty nods.

MCGINTY

Now... what else are we afraid of?

FRANKLIN

(quietly)

Going back to the mini-mart.

FUMIKO

... the shipping yard...

COCHRAN

... the auto plant.

WILKINSON

... prison.

McGinty takes Franklin's football and spins it in his hands as he walks across the room.

MCGINTY

The truth is you've been given something that every athlete dreams of: a second chance. And you're afraid of blowing it. We all are. But now our fear is shared. And we can overcome it... together.

He tosses the ball back to Franklin. He drops it.

(CONTINUED)

100A CONTINUED: (3)

100A

MCGINTY

Let's lose that fear next Sunday...

(nods)

And put it into San Diego.

SMASH CUT TO:

101 OMITTED
thru
109101
thru
109

110 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - FIELD - DAY

110

WHAM! A San Diego defensive tackle, MORRIS, decks Shane with a vicious late hit.

MORRIS

(to Shane)

It's just me, dickhead!

Morris puts one hand on Shane's helmet and pushes himself up. Shane moans as his face guard digs a huge chunk in the turf.

SUMMERALL (V.O.)

And another late hit by all-pro Hank Morris. His third of the game.

MADDEN (V.O.)

He's really putting a hurt on Falco, Pat. I'm not sure how much more of this abuse he can take...

Shane finally gets up. He's got a huge piece of turf stuck in his face guard so that we can't even see his face. Then he pulls out the dirt and grass. He's had enough.

SHANE

Huddle up!

IN HUDDLE

SHANE

Same play. Except let Morris by. Don't anybody touch him.

COCHRAN

What? Shane, wait...

(CONTINUED)

SHANE

I said let him through! On two!

They break the huddle. Shane goes into a shotgun.

SHANE

Red fifteen. Hut! Hut!

Shane does a three-step drop from the shotgun. Andre and Jamal hit out on either side of Morris, giving him a clear shot at Shane. Morris comes hard and fast. Shane looks downfield, winds up, and fires the ball at Morris's head.

The ball goes like a bullet for five feet and then blasts Morris in the face-- blowing off his helmet! He stands dazed for a beat before falling to the ground with a thump!

ON BALL

as it flies through the air and-- PLOP! Lands right into the chunky hands of Fumiko.

FUMIKO

Holy shit!

JAMAL

Haul ass, round boy!

Fumiko begins thundering down the field with, of all people, Jamal leading the way. Jamal blasts a couple would-be tacklers out of the way as Fumiko runs, hyperventilating:

FUMIKO

Holy shit holy shit holy shit...

Jamal gets knocked to the ground as he calls after him:

JAMAL

Go on! Puke on 'em if you have to!

San Diego players catch him pretty easily at the twenty, but Fumiko represents a lot of weight. Fumiko carries several guys over the ten before falling into the end zone.

MADDEN (V.O.)

Fumiko scores! Fumiko scores! I love to see a fat guy score!

ON SHANE

as he steps over to McGinty.

(CONTINUED)

122B CONTINUED: (A1)

122B

-- Bob, Rob and Todd waving dollar bills.

-- A mother covering her young son's eyes. The boy pulls her hand away for a better look.

-- Even Pilachowski is wiping the sweat from his forehead.

ON ANNABELLE

as she sees the reaction of the men in the stands. She smiles as she gets an idea...

(CONTINUED)

122B CONTINUED:

122B

ANNABELLE

Hey, girls! Let's show 'em how
you do it down at the club!

The girls all smile as we...

CUT TO:

123 OMITTED
thru
124A

123
thru
124A

124B LINE OF SCRIMMAGE

124B

as the San Diego quarterback stops mid-count as he
hears a SQUEAL. PAN OVER to reveal our new cheerleaders
doing a girl/girl bump and grind. One licks her fingers
and slaps the other's girl's ass. Three linemen jump.
The WHISTLE BLOWS.

REFEREE

False start. Number 65, 68 and
71 on the offense. Ten yard
penalty.

ON ANNABELLE

as she nods approvingly to her girls.

BACK ON LINE

The San Diego quarterback tries not to look at the
girls as he throws a horrible pass which Wilkinson
snatches! He runs it back for a twenty yard pick-up!

SMASH CUT TO:

124BA ON LINE

124BA

Shane snaps the ball and throws a pass to Franklin. The
ball bounces off of Franklin's hands and hits the ground.

SHANE

It's okay, Franklin! Next time!

Franklin shakes his head, angry at himself.

(CONTINUED)

124BA CONTINUED: 124BA
 ON MCGINTY
 as he throws down his headphones in frustration.

CUT TO:

A124C SHANE A124C
 snapping the ball again as he gets rushed in a big way. He rolls right as he is pursued. But just as he's about to step out of bounds he zips the ball back across the field to where Murphy has gotten open. Murphy runs it in for a touchdown! Shane's momentum carries him over the sidelines, he leaps over a bench of All-Sport and lands right before Annabelle.

ANNABELLE

Not bad, Falco.

He grins before running back onto the field as Annabelle watches him go.

124C OMITTED 124C

124D ON SCOREBOARD 124D
 San Diego 16 Washington 14

124E EXT. FIELD - CLOSE ON BATEMAN - DAY 124E
 as he lines up for the kick-off.

SUMMERALL (V.O.)

It's safe to say that everyone in the stadium knows that an onside kick is coming with 55 seconds on the clock.

Shane and everyone with decent hands is on the field. Nigel lines it up and boots it ten yards. The ball takes a crazy hop, hits an opposing player, and ricochets off him.

Bateman runs over two guys and grabs the ball on a bounce. He's got it! But Bateman doesn't go down. He turns and starts running across the field.

SHANE

No! Danny, go down! You're using up the clock!

(CONTINUED)

124E CONTINUED:

124E

But Bateman likes this new job: kickoff returner! Bateman is finally trapped on the far sideline. So he turns and starts running back the other way. Shane has no choice but to throw himself in front of Bateman's legs. Bateman goes down and Shane jumps up:

SHANE

(to ref)

Time out!

Bateman looks up at Shane.

BATEMAN

Beautiful tackle, Shane!

MADDEN (V.O.)

Now there's something you don't see every day!

125 OMITTED

125

126 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - SIDELINE - DAY

126

Shane looks up to the clock. Bateman has burned up most of it. Only eighteen seconds remain.

SHANE

Whataya think, Coach?

MCGINTY

We got time for one play, but if we don't get it out of bounds, it's over.

NIGEL

(smoking a cigarette)

Let's have a go. I'm bloody bored.

MCGINTY

You're looking at a sixty-five yard kick from here, Nigel.

NIGEL

(to Shane)

You hold it, Shane. And I'll kick the piss out of it...

McGinty looks at Shane and they both shrug.

MCGINTY

What the hell...

(CONTINUED)

126 CONTINUED:

126

Shane and Nigel both shrug and put on their helmets before starting out for the field...

MADDEN (V.O.)
McGinty is gonna let Nigel try
the field goal from sixty-five
yards out!

ON SHANE

He's set up to receive the snap. Nigel takes a drag on his smoke, and flicks it away.

MADDEN (V.O.)
Pat... did he just... I think
that guy is smoking on the field.

SUMMERALL (V.O.)
I'm sure you imagined it, John...

127 OMITTED

127

&

&

128

128

129 INT. BAR (HELL'S KITCHEN, NEW YORK)

129

A gang of mobsters sit watching the game at the bar. One of them stops as he recognizes...

GANGSTER #2
Son of a bitch. Hey, Joey!

NEW ANGLE

to reveal the shortest of the three Gangsters that shook Nigel down for money.

GANGSTER #2
Look who's on TV!

130 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - FIELD - DAY

130

SHANE

Set!

The snap is perfect. True to his word, Nigel boots the shit out of it.

131 ON BALL 131

End over end, yard after yard, it flies straight and true.

MADDEN (V.O.)
It's straight enough! If it's got
the distance, it's...

The ball hits the crossbar and goes over.

MADDEN (V.O.)
It's good! Washington wins!

132 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - FIELD - DAY 132

Everybody goes crazy! Players are all over Nigel. But Nigel is desperately looking around for someone. He spots him: it's Bateman. He's running flat-out across the field to congratulate him. Nigel runs for his life.

ON SHANE

as his teammates pound him on the back, slap high fives, but he's looking for someone special.

ANNABELLE

stops cheering when she sees him watching her. They smile at each other, as we --

CUT TO:

132A EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - PARKING LOT - SAME TIME 132A

Martel, Wilson and other players watch on their portable TV in silence. They aren't laughing now.

WILSON
Those guys are pretty good...

Martel stares daggers at him, as we...

CUT TO:

133 CLOSEUP - TELEVISION 133

We see two Eyewitness News anchors from D.C. wrapping up their segment:

(CONTINUED)

133 CONTINUED:

133

EYEWITNESS NEWS ANCHOR #1 (V.O.)

How do you feel about the new
Washington Sentinels? We went to
the streets of D.C. to find out...

The camera cuts to a blue-collar man in the street.

BLUE-COLLAR MAN (V.O.)

What do I think? I think it's
great. They're one of us, ya know?

EYEWITNESS NEWS REPORTER (V.O.)

But you're a union worker. How do
you feel about them breaking a picket
line?

BLUE-COLLAR MAN (V.O.)

This strike ain't about guys like
me. It's about some superstar
wanting eight million a year instead
of seven. I say the hell with 'em.
This is the most fun football's been
in years!

PULL BACK --

to reveal that the television is playing --

INT. MAC'S BAR

a very cool and very old bar in D.C. Sports memorabilia
line the walls with autographed photos. Two DRUNKS watch
from the counter when the TV suddenly TURNS OFF.

DRUNK #1

Hey!

NEW ANGLE

Annabelle takes their glasses and pours the remainder of
their beer into the sink.

ANNABELLE

Go home, boys.

DRUNK #2

I love you, Annabelle.

ANNABELLE

I know you do, Alan... don't you
guys have wives to go home to?

(CONTINUED)

133 CONTINUED: (1A)

133

DRUNK #2

Why do you think we're here?

The door opens across the room...

ANNABELLE

We're closed!

But then she turns to see Shane standing in the doorway.

SHANE

Uh... okay...

He turns to leave.

ANNABELLE

No, you can come in.

DRUNK #1

Yeah, come on in, buddy!

ANNABELLE

(to the Drunks)

You go.

She ushers them outside as they pass by Shane...

DRUNK #2

Hey! You're Shane Falco! Way to go, Falco! You guys kick ass!

SHANE

Uh, thanks...

Annabelle shoves them outside as we hear:

DRUNK #1 (O.S.)

That wasn't him!

DRUNK #2 (O.S.)

Yeah it was!

DRUNK #1 (O.S.)

Falco's a lot taller than that!

(CONTINUED)

133 CONTINUED: (2)

133

She slams the door and sighs before they laugh.

SHANE

Sure it's okay? I don't want to get you in trouble with your boss...

ANNABELLE

(smiling)

She won't mind. Come on...

MUSIC UP: "CRASH INTO ME."

DISSOLVE TO:

134 SAME SCENE - LATER

134

As we discover Shane and Annabelle having a drink at the bar.

ANNABELLE

... so after he died I took over.

Amongst the pictures of old football greats we see a smiling old man with his arm around Annabelle.

SHANE

Is that him?

ANNABELLE

(smiling)

Yeah. He was the biggest Washington fan you've ever seen. Other kids got bedtime stories. I got football stories.

He smiles as he watches her remember.

ANNABELLE

He used to talk all the time about the glory days of football. Said that they were gone forever...

(looks up)

Wish he was here to see you guys play.

A beat as they look into each other's eyes.

ANNABELLE

Well... it's late...

SHANE

We babies need our rest...

(CONTINUED)

134 CONTINUED:

134

She laughs and blushes at that one.

ANNABELLE

Sorry about that. But between the guys on the field and they guys in the bar a girl's gotta keep her guard up.

Shane stands and grabs his coat.

SHANE

Are you coming to the game on Sunday?

ANNABELLE

We don't travel with the team.

SHANE

Can I see you when I get back?

ANNABELLE

(gesturing to the bar)
I'll be here.

They smile at each other for a beat before Shane leans over and gently kisses her on the cheek.

SHANE

Good night, Annabelle.

He turns and walks to the door.

ANNABELLE

Shane...?

He turns back. They look at each other for a long beat. And as they do we begin to hear the sounds of the CROWD. Quietly at first, gradually RISING... its pitch matching the intensity of the feeling between them... and then...

SUMMERALL (V.O.)

What do you do here, John?

MADDEN (V.O.)

You go for it, Pat. You have to.

SUMMERALL (V.O.)

But Falco's been shut down by this defense all afternoon.

MADDEN (V.O.)

Yeah, but all it takes is one big play to get back in this ball game.

(CONTINUED)

134 CONTINUED: (2)

134

Shane marches back over to Annabelle...

SUMMERALL (V.O.)

And here goes Falco!

Annabelle swings her legs over the bar as Shane walks into her arms, their mouths kissing hungrily as the CROWD CHEERS!

MADDEN (V.O.)

Falco scores! Falco scores!

SMASH CUT TO:

134A OMITTED
thru
135

134A
thru
135

135A INT. PHOENIX STADIUM - FIELD - DAY

135A

Shane's team piles on top of him in the endzone as time expires on the game clock!

CUT TO:

136 INT. CONTROL BOOTH - DAY

136

Madden doing his pen-on-the-screen thing to try to explain a play that just occurred. There are lines everywhere.

MADDEN

It started with an end around, but Jackson, the pulling tackle ran into Falco's pitchout... see? Right here, it bounced off his helmet. Boom! Then it was kicked by Landon and then Hayes touched it, I think, and then Clifford Franklin had it, but quickly lost it, and finally the ball took a crazy bounce right back into Falco's hands -- look at his face here. He can't believe it either! Falco then ran it all the way back to just about the line of scrimmage, executed the same play, an end around to Murphy, and the Sentinels scored. Welcome to strike football!

SMASH CUT TO:

137 EXT. PHOENIX STADIUM - DAY 137

Shane is on the line.

SHANE

Deuce Left, Pro Zig 90 Jag.

They break and as they walk up to the line of scrimmage we CLOSE ON Franklin.

SHANE

Blue 36! Blue 36! Hut hut!

He hikes the ball as we see Franklin sprint down the field, totally burning his man-on-man coverage. Shane launches the ball a country mile but, unfortunately, it hits Franklin right in the hands and he drops it.

138 EXT. PHOENIX STADIUM - SIDELINE 138

ON McGinty.

McGINTY

Time out! Call a time out!

Shane calls time out as Franklin jogs over to the sidelines.

McGINTY

Come here!

Franklin puts his head down as McGinty and Pilachowski surround him.

FRANKLIN

I'm sorry, Coach, I --

McGINTY

Shut up!

(to Pilachowski)

Gimme the Stick 'em!

Pilachowski hands McGinty a container of Stick 'em which many wide receivers use for a better grip.

FRANKLIN

Isn't that illegal, Coach?

McGINTY

What are they gonna do? Put you in football jail?

McGinty rubs it all over Franklin's hands, front and back...

(CONTINUED)

138 CONTINUED:

138

FRANKLIN

I can't feel my fingers...

McGINTY

Don't talk!

(CONTINUED)

138 CONTINUED:

138

... rubbing and rubbing until the entire stick has been used. Franklin's hands look like they just jerked off an elephant.

McGINTY

We're gonna run the same play, do you hear me? And you're gonna catch that ball, Franklin! Say you understand!

FRANKLIN

But --

McGINTY

Say you understand!

FRANKLIN

I understand!

McGINTY

(totally losing it)

Now get out there and catch the goddamn ball for a change!

A waterboy gives Franklin a cup of All-Sport which he downs and tosses aside before running on the field. Except he can't toss it aside. It's stuck to his right hand. He tries to peel it off with his left but then it sticks to that hand. He goes back and forth with the cup, trying desperately to get rid of it as he gets into the huddle.

138A IN HUDDLE

138A

as Shane leans in...

SHANE

Same play, Franklin...

Franklin is obsessed with his All-Sport cup. Shane snatches it away.

SHANE

Look at me.

Franklin stops and sees Shane's eyes burning into his.

SHANE

You can do this.

Franklin smiles and nods before they break.

138B ON LINE

138B

as Shane barks out the orders:

SHANE

Blue 36! Blue 36! Hut hut!

Franklin again takes off like a rocket. But this time the Buffalo defense is onto him and he's double-teamed. Shane throws a bomb into the end zone as Franklin leaps awkwardly up into the air without looking, raising his hands up high just as -- the football comes down in his hands! He comes down with both feet in the end zone for his touchdown!

MADDEN (V.O.)

And Franklin catches the ball!
Holy cow! Franklin catches
the ball!

Franklin does a lame victory dance in the end zone before his teammates mob him.

SUMMERALL (V.O.)

That makes the score 21 to 20.
Conventional wisdom says kick the
extra point, tie the game and go
into overtime. Especially with the
playoffs on the line.

MADDEN (V.O.)

But Jimmy McGinty is anything but a
conventional guy, Pat...

We see McGinty make a motion towards the field. He and Shane share a look between them. Shane takes a deep breath.

SUMMERALL (V.O.)

And McGinty says 'go for it'!

139 ON LINE

139

as we see Shane step up behind the center. Then he looks up to the scoreboard and sees the time on the clock.

SUMMERALL (V.O.)

And this kind of situation has not
been Falco's strong point in the
past...

He wipes the nervous perspiration from his hands...

(CONTINUED)

139 CONTINUED:

139

SHANE

Hut hut!

He snaps the ball. And as he does everything seems to happen at once. There's a blitz. Two big fast guys are almost upon him instantaneously. He instinctively runs backwards, trying to evade them. He runs right but he's cut off. He runs left but there are two coming from that way as well. He's trapped! Shane throws the ball into the end zone. It wobbles through the air right into the hands of a safety.

Shane screams as he puts his head in his hands. But back in the end zone we see the safety hit before he can take a knee. The ball goes flying out of his hands and into the waiting (and still sticky) hands of Franklin.

MADDEN (V.O.)

And Franklin ends up with the ball!
Washington wins! Washington wins!

The players celebrate before running towards the tunnel together... revealing Shane still standing on the field.

139A OMITTED

139A

ON MCGINTY

as he sees him, walks over...

MCGINTY

It's over. We won.

Shane shakes his head.

MCGINTY

Hey...

Shane looks up.

MCGINTY

We won.

McGinty pats him on the shoulder before turning and joining his players for the tunnel. CLOSE ON Shane before we --

CUT TO:

139B INT. LOCKER ROOM - LATER

139B

As we see Shane's teammates celebrating. A FEMALE REPORTER steps into the locker room for an interview. Franklin stands in the b.g. waving and mouthing "Hi Mom!"

(CONTINUED)

139B CONTINUED:

139B

FEMALE REPORTER

Shane Falco, great game out there today. What do you attribute this team's sudden rise over these past few weeks?

SHANE

Talk to Franklin. He's the hero today.

Shane walks out abruptly leaving the Reporter alone. The Reporter is momentarily flustered until Franklin steps in.

FEMALE REPORTER

Clifford Franklin, terrific day today --

FRANKLIN

You've barely scratched the surface to the talents of Clifford Franklin. Clifford Franklin's got moves that even Clifford Franklin hasn't seen yet.

FEMALE REPORTER

Uh, right, well, you showed us a few of those moves today against Phoenix. But it could be a different story against Dallas next week --

FRANKLIN

Same story, different chapter. See, a wise man once said 'Don't just go to a man. Go to the 'go to' man.' And that wise man was ... me. Clifford Franklin.

He's suddenly shoved out of the way by Bateman as he crosses over to his locker. The Female Reporter turns to see...

NIGEL

smoking a cigarette in his underwear and scratching himself in a grotesque fashion. She looks horrified. He grins.

NIGEL

Cheers.

CUT TO:

EXT. O'NEIL'S MANSION - NIGHT

MUSIC OUT as we see a light on in the den...

O'NEIL (V.O.)
Feels good, doesn't it, Jimmy?

140 OMITTED
thru
148

140
thru
148

149 INT. O'NEIL'S MANSION - SAME TIME

149

A dark wood study dripping with red leather and decorated with stuffed animal heads. O'Neil raises a glass to their success as McGinty eyes him suspiciously.

O'NEIL
To be one game away from the
playoffs, in the hunt, that ring
so close you can already feel it
on your finger!

(CONTINUED)

McGINTY

What are you up to?

O'NEIL

What? I can't be excited about the future of my team?

(off McGinty's look)

Okay okay! I've got great news. Martel and Wilson have crossed the picket line. I made them sweat for a while but with the deal I made them swallow I can't afford not to take them back!

McGINTY

(dryly)

Congratulations.

O'NEIL

And Martel's backup has agreed to cross with him so we've got depth in the quarterback position for Dallas --

McGINTY

No.

O'NEIL

(stopping)

What?

McGINTY

I'm sticking with Falco.

O'NEIL

Have you seen the news today?

O'Neil grabs his morning Post and throws it down onto the table. The headline reads "STRIKE ALMOST OVER" and below that in smaller letters "DALLAS RETURNS!"

O'NEIL

The entire Dallas Cowboy team has crossed the line! On Thanksgiving night we're playing the world champions! Not some rag tag group of replacement players!

McGINTY

I don't care. I can't give up on these boys now. Not after all they've done.

(CONTINUED)

O'NEIL

They're scabs. They served a purpose. Falco has done a great job, nobody's taking that away from him --

McGINTY

We made a deal! No interference with my coaching! As long as the strike is on Shane Falco is my quarterback!

O'NEIL

We need to beat Dallas to get to the playoffs! We can't do it with Falco! You saw what happened out there today --

McGINTY

Oh for Christ's sake!

O'NEIL

Think he's gonna get lucky like that against Dallas? They'll murder him.

McGINTY

He's just getting his game back --

O'NEIL

He falls apart when the game is on the line! That's been his rap ever since the Sugar Bowl and if it hasn't changed by now it never will!

McGinty looks away. O'Neil takes a breath before:

O'NEIL

I'm sorry, Jimmy. He's played some really good strike ball. But I know, and you know, that isn't enough now.

McGinty turns to leave when:

O'NEIL

Before you go doing anything stupid, remember this: there are 21 other guys who put their faith in you to lead them. They would be heartbroken if you abandoned them before the biggest game of their lives...

(CONTINUED)

149 CONTINUED:

149

O'Neil knows that he's got him. McGinty knows it too.

McGINTY

You really are a son of a bitch...

McGinty storms out of the room as O'Neil watches him go...

DISSOLVE TO:

150 EXT. PRACTICE FIELD - NIGHT

150

Shane is set up in position for that two-point conversion. He snaps the ball and drops back before firing it over the middle in a quick release. It hits the base of the goal post with pin-point accuracy. He gets back into position and does it again, determined not to make the same mistake twice...

McGINTY (O.S.)

Hey.

Shane turns to see McGinty watching him.

McGINTY

What are you still doing here? You should be soaking your arm in ice.

SHANE

I'm not gonna make the same mistake...

McGINTY

Look, kid...

SHANE

We might end up in the same situation with Dallas and --

McGINTY

Shane...

SHANE

They like to send the safeties in on --

McGINTY

Shane.

Shane stops as he notices the look on McGinty's face.

McGINTY

It's over.

(CONTINUED)

150

CONTINUED:

150

They look at each other for a long beat.

McGINTY

Martel crossed.

Shane nods as it begins to sink in...

SHANE

Oh...

McGINTY

I'm sorry...

Shane looks across the field...

SHANE

'Chokes with the game on the line,'
is that what O'Neil said?

McGinty can't lie to him. Shane nods.

SHANE

(waving it off)

It's okay. It's okay. It's
better for the team, right? I
mean, Martel is the best there is
... he's got it all...

McGINTY

No...

McGinty steps up to Shane.

McGINTY

He doesn't have heart. And that's
how you're going to be remembered
now.

They look at each other for a beat before McGinty holds
out his hand. Shane takes it and they shake.

McGINTY

It's been a privilege.

There's so much Shane would like to thank him for. So
much he would like to say. But in the end... what can
you say?

SHANE

Thanks for believing.

And with that he turns and walks off the field alone...

150A EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

150A

Shane is walking over to his car. But he slows when he sees another car parked next to his. A Porsche. Martel is sitting on the hood smoking a cigarette. He nods.

SHANE

What are you doing here?

MARTEL

(shrugs)

I stopped by to put my stuff back in my locker and I saw your car. I just wanted to tell you before you left... I'm sorry.

SHANE

Yeah. Right.

MARTEL

No. Really. I think it's terrible what they do to you guys.

Shane just shoots him a look.

MARTEL

You know... build you up... make you believe you're something you're not... and then pull the rug out from under you.

(shakes his head)

The cruelest thing to give guys like you, Shane... is hope.

Shane turns to get into his car -- angry at himself for letting Martel's words get to him...

MARTEL

You're a sinking ship, Shane.
Don't drag her down with you.

A long beat before Shane gets into his car and drives off...

DISSOLVE TO:

150B INT. MAC'S BAR - NIGHT

150B

Annabelle turns the sign that hangs in the window from open to closed before grabbing a bottle of wine and two glasses from behind the bar. She sets them on a small table and lights two white candles as she smiles to herself...

CUT TO:

151 OMITTED 151

152 INT. HOTEL - NIGHT 152

where we find a post-game party in full swing. Nigel is working the bar. Franklin is dancing with two ladies while still holding onto his football.

(CONTINUED)

152 CONTINUED:

152

Andre and Jamal are rapping from the living room over a RECORD SPINNING on the turntable. Murphy is signing to one of the stripper cheerleaders who signs something very sexually explicit right back to him. Murphy blushes three shades of red.

ON WILKINSON

as he dances with a sexy CHEERLEADER...

CHEERLEADER

... oh c'mon. I bet you have a different lady every weekend.

WILKINSON

It's been a while...

CHEERLEADER

(coily)

What's a while?

A beat.

WILKINSON

Two years three months and 18 days.

We STAY ON her reaction before we:

CUT TO:

152A INT. HOTEL BAR - SHANE

152A

stepping inside. He gives a sad smile at all of their celebration, not wanting to bring everybody down. Nigel is pouring drinks from across the room and he spots him.

NIGEL

There he is! Ladies and gentlemen,
number 16 in your programs but
number one in your hearts -- Shane
Falco!

They cheer and laugh as Shane makes his way across the room. Andre and Jamal begin rapping for Shane with a "GO FALCO! GO FALCO!" as everybody laughs. Shane tries to laugh -- but we know that inside he's dying. He sits at the bar where Nigel makes him a stiff drink.

NIGEL

Cheers, mate!

(CONTINUED)

152A CONTINUED:

152A

SHANE

Yeah...

Shane slams it and puts the glass back up on the counter.

SHANE

Again.

Nigel's smile falters a bit. He can sense something's wrong. He makes Shane another and Shane slams that one as well.

NIGEL

Everything all right, boss?

SHANE

I'm done, Nigel.

NIGEL

What?

SHANE

Martel's back.

Nigel slowly shakes his head.

NIGEL

Bloody hell... when are you going to tell the guys?

SHANE

I don't wanna ruin their night.

NIGEL

Bullocks. If you're leaving us you'll get a proper send-off.

Nigel stands atop the bar and whistles for attention.

NIGEL

Attention! Everybody listen up!

The music stops as everyone turns to Nigel.

NIGEL

Shane has something to say!

Shane sighs before standing up to address everyone.

SHANE

I've got good news.

But the players can tell that something's not right. Their smiles begin to fade...

(CONTINUED)

152A CONTINUED: (2)

152A

SHANE

This Sunday you're going to be playing with the best quarterback in the league.

(pauses)

Martel crossed.

It's dead quiet as we see their shocked faces.

SHANE

So when you guys are getting pounded by Dallas on Sunday I'll be out in the sun sipping a beer on my boat.

But they know better. Cochran lifts up his glass.

COCHRAN

Everybody raise your glass!

Everybody does.

COCHRAN

To Shane Falco! Our quarterback. Our leader. Our friend.

EVERYONE

To Falco!

They all drink their shots as we --

CUT TO:

152B BATEMAN

152B

stepping over to Shane. He claps him painfully on the shoulder. Shane winces.

SHANE

Hey, Danny...

BATEMAN

I just wanted to say... Shit!
(erupting with passion)
Shit! Shit! Goddamn son of a bitch!

SHANE

(understanding)

Thanks, Danny.

(CONTINUED)

152B CONTINUED:

152B

BATEMAN

(calm again)

Okay, man...

Danny nods and walks by. Wilkinson stops over.

WILKINSON

Shane, I was just thinking that if Martel was to get into some kind of accident this would all go away.

SHANE

Thanks, Earl. But --

WILKINSON

There'd be no permanent damage. Understand? Just takes a phone call --

SHANE

Thanks, but no. Really.

They shake hands before Wilkinson passes by.

FRANKLIN

Shane...?

Shane turns to see Franklin holding his football.

FRANKLIN

I can't do it without you...

Shane claps him on the shoulder.

SHANE

Of course you can. You're 'Clifford Franklin,' remember?

Franklin blushes at the memory of his "third person phase." They shake hands before Franklin gives Shane a hug. Shane pats him on the shoulder before stepping toward the door. He stops and looks back one last time. And then he gives a little wave and disappears into the night as we --

CUT TO:

153 OMITTED
thru
154B

153
thru
154B

154C INT. MAC'S BAR - LATE NIGHT 154C

The wine is nearly empty now and the candles have melted down to half their size. The look on Annabelle's face tells us all we need to know. She finally leans in and blows out the candles, enveloping us in darkness as we...

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

154D EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - MORNING 154D

The tailgate parties are already underway for today's pivotal game against Dallas. The news crews are out in full effect as they prepare to cover this improbable David and Goliath story...

CUT TO:

154E EXT. MARINA - SAME TIME 154E

Where we find Shane on his boat doing something we haven't seen him do before: packing up. He's busy tying down some air tanks when we hear:

ANNABELLE (O.S.)

Hey...

He stops and looks up to see Annabelle on the dock.

ANNABELLE

I missed you last night.

SHANE

Plans changed.

ANNABELLE

Yeah. I heard.

Shane shows a sad little smile.

SHANE

Of course you did.

She steps out onto the boat as she watches him.

ANNABELLE

Going somewhere?

SHANE

South.

(CONTINUED)

154E CONTINUED:

154E

ANNABELLE

Just south?

SHANE

(shrugs)

Boating season's almost over here.
There's more work down south.

She steps up closer to him.

ANNABELLE

So I guess this is good-bye.

SHANE

I guess so...

She steps even closer. And for a moment we're not sure if she's going to kiss Shane or punch him. But the smart money's on the latter. She suddenly shoves him backward.

ANNABELLE

Asshole!

SHANE

Hey!

She shoves him again.

ANNABELLE

I was ready to give up hope.
And then you had to come along.

SHANE

Don't put your hopes on me --

ANNABELLE

It's too late for that.

SHANE

I'm not who you think I am.

ANNABELLE

No. You're not who you think you are!

She stops him and looks into his eyes.

ANNABELLE

Everyone believes in you, Shane.
(shakes her head)
Everybody but you.

(CONTINUED)

154E CONTINUED: (2)

154E

SHANE

It's over for me. Can't you see that?

ANNABELLE

You don't get it do you?

Annabelle shakes her head as tears come to her eyes.

ANNABELLE

I fell for the guy on the boat.
Not just the guy on the field...

She turns and walks off as Shane watches her go...

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

155 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - NIGHT

155

The stands are filling up. Among the usual banners and rabid fans we see a host of signs regarding our players, including several "BRING BACK FALCO!" and "MARTEL SUCKS!" signs.

SUMMERALL (V.O.)

Welcome back to Nextel Stadium in our nation's capital!

156 INT. CONTROL BOOTH - ON MADDEN AND SUMMERALL - NIGHT

156

as our announcers prepare to cover the final game to an amazing story.

SUMMERALL

I'm Pat Summerall and with me as always is John Madden. John, it appears that the strike is coming to a close. Eddie Martel will be resuming the starting quarterback position tonight.

MADDEN

Yeah, but I gotta admit I was looking forward to seeing what Falco could do with one more game. He made amazing progress in the past few weeks under the tutelage of Head Coach Jimmy McGinty.

(CONTINUED)

156 CONTINUED:

156

SUMMERALL

So it'll be Martel leading
Washington today against Dallas.

MADDEN

I never thought I'd say this, Pat,
but I'm going to miss strike
football...

CUT TO:

156A OMITTED

156A

&
157&
157

158 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - FIELD - DAY

158

As the players get ready to make their appearance.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Ladies and gentlemen, leading the
Washington Sentinels today,
welcome back number seven, Eddie
Martel!

It's a mixture of boos and cheers that greet Martel as he
jogs out onto the field.

CUT TO:

158A MCGINTY

158A

standing alone in the tunnel... looking for all the world
like a man in way over his head. He takes a deep breath
... and then he follows his players out onto the field...

CUT TO:

159 OMITTED

159

160 LINE OF SCRIMMAGE 160

The Sentinels line up. Franklin is opposite a mean-looking veteran named BUTLER. Franklin smiles sweetly.

FRANKLIN

(to Butler)

I would just like to say what an honor it is to play opposite you. And if it's not too much trouble, I would love to have your autograph after the game.

BUTLER

No problem.

MARTEL (O.S.)

Hut!

The ball is snapped and Butler bashes Franklin over the head and knocks him to the ground. Then he runs over him.

161 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - FIELD - ON MARTEL - NIGHT 161

as he throws a pass to nobody. Murphy turns and holds up his hands, confused, as Martel screams.

MARTEL

You idiot! I said Blue 36 Left.
Left!

Murphy tries to sign him but Martel turns away.

MARTEL

Forget it! Christ!

CUT TO:

162 OMITTED 162
thru thru
164 164

165 ONE DALLAS PLAYER 165

hits Cochran high while a second hits him low in a vicious tackle. The ball pops loose and a Dallas safety runs it back for a touchdown.

165A FRANKLIN 165A

drops one of Martel's passes but gets decimated on a late hit from a Dallas safety.

166 MURPHY 166

gets his head taken off by a vicious elbow swing, knocking him to the ground and causing him to fumble. Martel screams at him as he lies on the ground in pain...

167 OMITTED 167

168 EXT. MARINA - NIGHT 168

Shane is on his boat, watching on a tiny TELEVISION. It's too much, too hard to watch. He paces back and forth in his boat before we --

CUT TO:

169 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - FIELD - NIGHT 169

Nigel smokes and stalks the sidelines. He looks up into the stands where we see the three Gangsters who Nigel owes money. They give him a wicked smile and a nod.

170 OMITTED 170

171 MARTEL 171

throws the ball away to prevent getting sacked. He jogs over to the sideline where McGinty confronts him.

MCGINTY

What the hell was that?!

Martel pushes past him and grabs a cup of All-Sport.

MCGINTY

I'm talking to you! Hey!

He grabs his jersey as Martel rips his arm away.

MARTEL

I make the call out there on the field, not you!

MCGINTY

That's not the way I coach!

MARTEL

I don't give a shit because that's the way I play!

(CONTINUED)

171 CONTINUED: 171

Martel throws down his All-Sport cup and walks off for the locker room. We CLOSE ON McGinty's expression as we hear the GUN GO OFF for the end of the first half.

172 ON SCOREBOARD 172

Dallas 17, Washington 0.

CUT TO:

172A SIDELINES 172A

as a REPORTER stops McGinty on his way to the locker room.

REPORTER
Coach McGinty, what will
Washington need to get back into
this ballgame?

McGinty stops and looks at the Reporter for a beat.

McGINTY
Heart.

REPORTER
I'm... I'm sorry?

McGinty looks to the Reporter. Then to the camera.

McGINTY
We're gonna need heart.

He turns and walks off into the tunnel as the Reporter turns to the camera, not knowing what to say as we --

CUT TO:

172B EXT. MARINA - SAME TIME 172B

Shane turns OFF the TELEVISION before turning and looking out. He sees his reflection in the window of the boat -- his features superimposed like a ghost over the blue water...

CUT TO:

173 INT. LOCKER ROOM - LATER 173

Our guys have never looked worse.

(CONTINUED)

173 CONTINUED: (A1)

173

Bleeding, tired, and completely dejected. Martel screams at Franklin as they wait for McGinty to arrive for the half-time meeting...

FRANKLIN

... but I ran it like you said,
you just under-threw me.

MARTEL

This isn't a track meet, asshole!
You have to look for the ball!

WILSON

Hey, Martel, ease up --

MARTEL

Shut up, Wilson!

McGinty steps in. And he is furious.

McGINTY

I'll yank you off this field, you
spoiled little prick!

MARTEL

Who do you think O'Neil's gonna
side with? Some burned-out old
coach or the guy who puts the fans
in the stands?

That's it! McGinty charges Martel before the guys jump
in between them and hold them back...

MARTEL

Easy now, Coach! Remember what
happened last time you went up
against a quarterback like me?

(CONTINUED)

173 CONTINUED:

173

WILSON

Eddie! Come on, man! We got a game to play!

MARTEL

(pulls his arm away)
Some game. Nobody can beat Dallas with these losers.

SHANE (O.S.)

I can.

NEW ANGLE

to reveal Shane standing at the end of the locker. McGinty gives him a little smile as Martel's face goes red.

MCGINTY

The hell took you so long?

Shane grins as McGinty nods:

MCGINTY

Suit up.

The other players break into huge smiles.

MARTEL

O'Neil will fire your ass!

MCGINTY

Won't be the first time.

MARTEL

This is bullshit! I'm putting an end to this right now...

Martel turns to go but stops when he sees:

(CONTINUED)

173 CONTINUED: (2)

173

HIS POV - NIGEL

standing before the door. He flexes his wiry muscles.

NIGEL

Come get some, ya fairy!

BACK TO SCENE

Martel laughs. But then Andre and Jamal step in front of Nigel. Followed by Fumiko. Bateman. Wilkinson. Martel is trapped. He turns to Shane...

MARTEL

This doesn't change anything,
Falco. I'm a Pro Bowl
quarterback. I've got two Super
Bowl rings. But you'll never be
more than a replacement player.

Shane looks to his teammates, then back to Martel.

SHANE

I can live with that.

He gives a nod as the others grab Martel. McGinty opens the door to the equipment room and they toss him inside. He slaps on the lock and leans back against it, grinning. Everyone is smiling. Even Wilson.

MCGINTY

Excuse me, gentlemen...
(grinning)
I've got a phone call to make...

SMASH CUT TO:

174 INT. NEXTEL STADIUM - O'NEIL'S LUXURY BOX - NIGHT

174

O'Neil picks up his RINGING TELEPHONE...

O'NEIL

(into phone)

What!

(then)

What?

INTERCUT WITH:

175 MCGINTY

175

on the other end.

(CONTINUED)

177 ON FIELD

177

as our guys finish warming up for the third quarter...

P.A. ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Ladies and gentlemen...
substituting at quarterback for
Eddie Martel will be number 16...
Shane Falco!

Shane runs out of the tunnel as the CROWD EXPLODES!

ON O'NEIL

as he growls into the telephone.

O'NEIL

You'd better win this goddamn
game!

He slams the telephone down.

MADDEN (V.O.)

Falco's back! Falco's back!

SUMMERALL (V.O.)

But what happened to Martel?

CUT TO:

178 INT. EQUIPMENT ROOM

178

Martel watches the game on a tiny TV. We see a fan hold
up a "MARTEL SUCKS!" sign on screen before we...

CUT BACK TO:

179 FIELD

179

as Shane spots Annabelle on the sidelines. He stops
before her and looks into her eyes, not knowing what to
say...

ANNABELLE

(excitedly, as always)
They're playing zone out there and
I think you can pick 'em apart if
you keep your eyes open for your
secondary receiv--

He stops her with a kiss. A deep, passionate kiss. The
cameras are on them and we hear the entire stadium react
to the kiss with a "Woooooo!"

(CONTINUED)

179 CONTINUED:

179

NEW ANGLE

as we see the kiss is being shown 50 feet high on the stadium's giant Diamond Vision screen!

SUMMERALL (V.O.)

Shane Falco seems to be...

MADDEN (V.O.)

Hell, he's necking with a cheerleader! That's what he's doing!

SUMMERALL (V.O.)

The players are not supposed to fraternize with the cheerleaders.

MADDEN (V.O.)

Yeah, but what are they gonna do, Pat? Fire him?

CUT TO:

179A INT. EQUIPMENT ROOM - MARTEL - NIGHT

179A

watching them kiss on the television.

MARTEL

You son of a bitch...

CUT BACK TO:

179B EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - SIDELINE - SHANE AND ANNABELLE - NIGHT

179B

as he slowly pulls back...

SHANE

I'm sorry --

She puts her hand over his mouth.

ANNABELLE

You're late for work.

He smiles before running over to join his teammates, as we...

CUT TO:

180 ON SIDELINES

180

Shane joins his teammates. They all jump on him, slapping his helmet, high-fiving, etc. They're back!

McGINTY

What the hell are you all smiling about? You're down 17 to zero!

But McGinty is smiling too. He nods to Shane.

McGINTY

Sure you want in? Nasty out there...

SHANE

That's why girls don't play the game.

McGinty grins as everyone huddles around them.

McGINTY

Everybody, listen up! By this time tomorrow the strike will be officially over. Which means this will be the last half of football that many of you will ever play. Dallas has made a big mistake tonight -- they haven't been afraid of you. But they should be. Because you have a very powerful weapon on your side now: there is no tomorrow for you. And that makes you all very dangerous people!

The team roars as we...

SMASH CUT TO:

181 IN HUDDLE

181

as Shane takes control of his team.

SHANE

Let's take a moment and remember what each of us were doing four weeks ago...

They do. Everybody nods, understanding what he's saying...

SHANE

Now it's time to make a stand.

(CONTINUED)

181 CONTINUED:

181

WILKINSON

I don't know what you all are
doin' tomorrow, but my ass is
goin' back to jail. I'm
homicidal!

BATEMAN

Now you're talkin' my language!

COCHRAN

Lord, help me, but I want to hurt
someone!

ANDRE AND JAMAL

Let's get it on!

CUT TO:

182 LINE OF SCRIMMAGE

182

We can see that Wilkinson and Bateman are now part of the offense. They line up as receivers opposite defensive halfbacks. In fact everyone but Shane is on the line of scrimmage, paired up across from a Dallas player. The DALLAS MIDDLE LINEBACKER yells at Shane.

DALLAS LINEBACKER

Are you ready for some pain,
Footsteps?

Shane just smiles.

SHANE

Blue thirteen! Blue thirteen!
Hut! Hut! Hut!

183 SERIES OF SHOTS

183

On the snap, many things happen at once:

A) SHANE

throws the ball as hard as he can at the Middle Linebacker and hits him in the crotch. The guy grabs himself and collapses.

B) CLIFFORD FRANKLIN

kicks his defender in the shins as the big man drops, screaming.

(CONTINUED)

183 CONTINUED:

183

C) BATEMAN

gets a cornerback across from him in a choke hold.

D) COCHRAN

sticks his fingers inside Butler's face mask and pokes both eyes as Butler screams!

E) JAMAL

pulls a knife from his sock and waves it before a DEFENDER's eyes.

DALLAS DEFENDER

He's got a knife!

Jamal deftly slips it away in the ensuing chaos.

ALL ACROSS LINE OF SCRIMMAGE

Sentinels are punching, kicking and gouging the Dallas defense as WHISTLES BLOW and flags fly!

MADDEN (V.O.)

I've never seen anything like this!

SUMMERALL (V.O.)

Unbelievable!

MADDEN (V.O.)

I see at least five flags... no, six!

The officials are going crazy trying to figure out the penalties as the Dallas medical staff comes running out.

MIDDLE LINEBACKER

(pointing to Shane)

He hit me on purpose!

184 ON REF

184

He faces the cameras, turns on his mike and sums up the penalties.

REF

Unsportsmanlike conduct, number 72, number 81 and number 87 on the offense, fifteen yards...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

184 CONTINUED:

184

REF (CONT'D)

(to himself)

... times three... that's forty-five yards. Illegal use of hands, number 48 on the offense, fifteen yards. That makes it sixty yards. Unnecessary roughness number 65 and number 32, fifteen yards... that's wait... forty-five... no, thirty...

(turns to another ref)

... how many yards so far?

185 ON BALL

185

A ref is taking a very long walk with it. He stops at the Sentinel two yard line and puts it down.

CUT TO:

186 LINE OF SCRIMMAGE

186

They line up with their backs to their goal line...

SHANE

Ready! Green 98! Green 98! Hut!

Shane flicks the ball over to Cochran who charges up the field in a long, inspired run. He's heading for the end zone. But then we see...

187 BUTLER

187

waiting for him. Cochran gets a determined look on his face as he lowers his helmet and dives for the end zone. Butler flies towards Cochran and spears him in midair with an ugly crack right at his knee cap. Cochran screams as he lands on the ground... just over the goal line. Touchdown!

SHANE

Cochran!

Shane motions over to the sidelines for the trainers before bending over his fallen teammate. Cochran's leg is bending at an unnatural angle. It's ugly.

SHANE

Cochran...

(CONTINUED)

187 CONTINUED:

187

COCHRAN
Did I do it? Did I score?

SHANE
Yeah. You did it...

They lift him up onto a stretcher.

SHANE
I'm sorry...

COCHRAN
Don't be sorry...
(grins)
Now I got something to tell my
grandkids about...

Cochran holds up his hand as Shane grasps it.

COCHRAN
Now go finish what you started.

They carry him off as Shane watches him go... a look of
steely determination in his eyes.

SMASH CUT TO:

A187A ON SCOREBOARD

A187A

Dallas 17 -- Washington 7. And only four minutes six
seconds remain.

187A SHANE

187A

at the line. He looks like a man possessed.

SHANE
Ready! White 24, White 24! Hut!

188 OMITTED

188

189 SHANE

189

hits Murphy with a short flick pass.

190 OMITTED

190

191 SHANE

191

rolls right and keeps running for a twenty yard gain.

- 192 SHANE 192
hits Franklin for twenty yards.
- 193 OMITTED 193
- 193A IN HUDDLE 193A
Shane looks across at Bateman and Wilkinson.
- SHANE
Feel like running the ball, Danny?
- BATEMAN
Hell, yeah.
(pauses)
But give it to Wilkinson. He's
got the sure hands.
- Wilkinson looks at him, surprised. Bateman nods.
- BATEMAN
I'll clear the way.
- WILKINSON
I got your back.
- 193B ON LINE 193B
Shane snaps the ball, he fakes the handoff to Bateman,
then snaps off to Wilkinson who follows his partner up
the field.
- Bateman clears the way as Wilkinson runs for another
twenty yards upfield! They high-five -- the most unlikely
team.
- CUT TO:
- 194 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - FIELD - DAY 194
The Sentinel huddle breaks as the guys come to the line
of scrimmage.
- SUMMERALL (V.O.)
First and ten at the Dallas twenty
and I'm telling you, we are
looking at a different team here
in the second half.

(CONTINUED)

194 CONTINUED:

194

MADDEN (V.O.)

Absolutely, Pat. Washington is playing like there's no tomorrow because, hey! There isn't!

ON SHANE

He's in the huddle. He looks at his fellow teammates... they're bloody and winded... and smiling.

SHANE

I know you're tired. I know you're hurting. And I wish I could think of something classy and inspirational to say. But that just wouldn't be our style.

They all grin as Shane gives his own motivational speech.

SHANE

Pain heals. Chicks dig scars. Glory lasts forever.

ANDRE

Right on.

SHANE

Shotgun. D.C. Right, flip 90 dig. On two.

195 WIDER

195

They break as they head for the line. Shane gets down behind center as he starts to call:

SHANE

Ready! White 62! White 62! Hut hut!

196 OMITTED

196

197 NEW ANGLE

197

as Shane snaps the ball and drops back into the pocket. But there's a blitz! But Shane, very calmly and with great confidence, waits until the last possible moment for Franklin to get open before he launches the ball downfield. Franklin leaps up and catches it just as Shane gets crushed.

198 ON FRANKLIN 198
as he runs into the end zone. His teammates mob him!

MADDEN (V.O.)
Touchdown, Sentinels!

SUMMERALL (V.O.)
What a pass by Shane Falco!

MADDEN (V.O.)
Did you see Falco hold onto the ball until the last moment, Pat? Falco's shown us his arm in the past. But he's never shown courage like this before!

199 ON SCOREBOARD 199
Dallas 17, Washington 14.

DISSOLVE TO:

200 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - SIDELINE - DAY 200
where Shane is sitting on the bench, holding his head and his side. He's talking quietly to McGinty.

201 ON WILKINSON 201
He's on the field calling for a fair catch. He makes it.

MADDEN (V.O.)
And with twelve seconds remaining, the Sentinels will try a forty-eight yard field goal to send this game into overtime...

SUMMERALL (V.O.)
Forty-eight yards is a chip shot for Nigel.

202 ON SHANE 202
He follows Nigel out onto the field.

SHANE
It's yours, Nigel. All the way...
But Nigel doesn't answer.

(CONTINUED)

202 CONTINUED:

202

ON BALL

Fumiko leans over it.

ON SHANE

kneeling in the middle of the field, waiting for the snap. But something is bothering him.

SHANE

(to Nigel)

Nigel, are you all right?

Nigel looks up from where he is set up for the kick. There are tears in his eyes.

NIGEL

I'm sorry. I had the money but I pissed it all away at the track again...

SHANE

What are you talking about?

NIGEL

They said they'll take away my pub. It's all I've got, Shane...

Shane tries to digest what he just heard.

SHANE

What?!

FUMIKO

(through his legs)

Come on, Shane!

Shane looks back at Nigel and makes a decision.

SHANE

Set!

The ball is snapped perfectly. Shane catches it and spots it perfectly. Nigel moves to kick it. And Shane pulls the ball away. Nigel flies through the air like Charlie Brown as he kicks nothing but air. He lands hard. Shane jumps to his feet and starts running.

MADDEN (V.O.)

It's a fake! Falco has it!

203 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - SIDELINE - ON MCGINTY - DAY 203

He's in shock.

204 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - FIELD - ON SHANE - DAY 204

He has totally caught Dallas by surprise. He sweeps around the right side. The Dallas middle linebacker and cornerback have recovered and are moving quickly to cut Shane off.

But Murphy throws an incredible block and takes out the linebacker. Shane blows by the cornerback. He cuts downfield and heads for the end zone with nobody near him, except for -- Butler, the same safety from the first half that terrorized our team.

Shane heads right for the guy. He puts his head down and smacks helmets with the safety. The guy does down and Shane runs over him and into the end zone.

MADDEN (V.O.)

Falco scores!

205 OMITTED 205
thru thru
208 208

209 ON SHANE 209

He spikes the shit out of the ball. But then he goes numb as he sees something upfield.

MADDEN (V.O.)

Wait a minute. Wait a minute.
We've got a flag down.

Shane stands stock still in the end zone watching the Ref call the penalty. You can hear a pin drop in the stadium.

REF

Holding, number 68, offense.

Fumiko's wearing number 68 and he collapses in tears.

210 ON SHANE 210

He's walking slowly back to the line of scrimmage. He passes Nigel, who is being helped off the field.

(CONTINUED)

210 CONTINUED:

210

NIGEL

I broke my arm.
(big smile)
Thank you. You saved my arse.

Shane calls time out before running over to McGinty.

MCGINTY

Someday, you can explain what that
was all about.

They look into each other's eyes for a moment.

MCGINTY

What's it gonna be, Shane?

SHANE

I want the ball.

McGinty grins.

MCGINTY

Winners always do.

Shane smiles and runs back onto the field.

211 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - FIELD - NEW ANGLE - DAY

211

as Shane leans into the huddle.

FUMIKO

I'm sorry, Shane. I'm sorry,
everybody.

SHANE

No problem, Jumbo. Just
decapitate somebody on this next
play.

FUMIKO

Consider it done.

SHANE

So, besides me, who really wants
the ball?

He looks around the huddle. He studies each face. And
then he comes to rest on Brian Murphy. Brian's eyes are
shining. He doesn't need words here.

(CONTINUED)

211 CONTINUED: 211

SHANE

(to Murphy)

Yeah. You want it, Brian. Let's hook up.

(signs as he says it)

Blue left slot open 'A' right.

Two Jet 'X' drive. On three.

Murphy smiles and signs him back. "Perfect." Shane nods.

SHANE

Gentlemen, it's been an honor sharing the field of battle.

Everybody puts their hands into the middle. They break the huddle with a roar.

212 ON CLOCK 212

Three seconds are showing.

213 ON LINE OF SCRIMMAGE 213

Shane leans over Cochran and calls it.

SHANE

Ready! Green 86, Green 86! Hut!

Hut!

214 SHANE 214

nods. On the snap, Shane rolls left. Fumiko destroys his man as promised. Murphy cuts deep on a post.

NEW ANGLE

as Shane steps up and throws a clean bullet downfield. The pass is perfect. Murphy pulls it in and runs into the end zone. The crowd roars.

215 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - O'NEIL'S LUXURY BOX - DAY 215

O'Neil cheers! Jumping up and down! He even kisses his wife, who looks up from her crossword puzzle.

O'NEIL

I knew it! I knew it all along!

- 216 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - FIELD - DAY 216
Wilson looks down to Franklin on the ground. Then he holds out his hand as Franklin smiles and takes it. He pulls him up to his feet as they shake hands.
- 217 OMITTED 217
- 218 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - SIDELINE - DAY 218
Wilkinson and Bateman sneak up behind McGinty with the All-Sport cooler. McGinty turns to catch them and gives them a look that says "Don't even think about it." They wisely put it down.
Pilachowski and Banes hug. Pilachowski's crying.
- 219 EXT. NEXTEL STADIUM - FIELD - DAY 219
Cochran is on his knees, giving thanks to God.
Andre and Jamal are hugging.
Bateman and Wilkinson take turns hitting each other in celebration.
Nigel lifts his arms in victory on the sidelines.
- 220 ON BRIAN MURPHY 220
He's still in the end zone, holding the ball up to the CROWD. The ROAR is deafening.
BRIAN'S POV
We hear nothing, but somehow the pure energy of the moment still comes through.
- 221 ON SHANE 221
In the silence, he's walking in SLOW MOTION toward Annabelle. He takes her in his arms as they kiss.
- 222 ON MCGINTY 222
as he smiles out at the team he put together...

(CONTINUED)

222 CONTINUED:

222

McGINTY (V.O.)

When the replacement players for the Washington Sentinels left the stadium that day there was no ticker tape parade. No endorsement deals for sneakers or soda pop or breakfast cereal. Just a locker to be cleaned out and a ride home to catch.

223 ON REPLACEMENTS

223

as they celebrate in SLOW MOTION, hugging, crying and cheering in the last game that most of them will ever play.

McGINTY (V.O.)

But what they didn't know was that their lives would be changed forever. Because they had been a part of something great. And greatness, no matter how brief, stays with a man.

(pauses)

Every athlete dreams of a second chance. These men lived it.

224 OVER CREDITS

224

we see what has happened to our players in a collection of snapshots from their lives...

FADE OUT.

THE END