

THE RIGHT REASON

EXT. RELIANT STADIUM - NIGHT

The stadium is filled with fans as the Carroll Dragons play the Smithson Panthers in the 5A Texas State Championship game.

The scoreboard reads the fourth quarter, eight seconds left, Panthers leading the Dragons 27-24. Dragon's ball on their own 45.

The teams are huddled on the field. TANNER WILSON, junior quarterback for the Dragons, six foot five, 220 pounds, looks around the huddle at the scared faces staring back at him, and smiles.

TANNER

Listen up. Wing left, dive right  
on two, on two, ready, break.

TEAM

Break.

The players burst from the huddle and hustle up to the line of scrimmage. Tanner walks confidently up to the line scanning the opposing defensive formation, looking for weakness.

He pauses as something catches his eye. A grin curls his lips exposing his mouthguard as he crouches, sliding his hands under the center.

TANNER

Blue 18, Blue 18...

A hat flies up from the Dragon's sideline exposing the COACH's bald head as he tosses his hat in frustration at Tanner changing the play.

TANNER (CONT'D)

Hut, hut.

The ball smacks Tanner's hand and he deftly steps back as a pocket forms around him, his line pushing the rushing defensive lineman out to the sides.

Tanner looks away from his intended receiver, getting the linebacker and safety to ease to the other side of the field. Tanner turns back to the receiver, racing down the sideline, the defenders trying to recover, but to no avail.

The receiver is two, then three strides ahead of the closest defender as the safety comes into view, trying to reach the receiver.

Tanner heaves the ball as a defensive lineman hits him, driving him to the turf.

The ball sails through the air, landing softly in the outstretched arms of the receiver as he strides into the endzone for a touchdown, the safety and linebacker diving after him in vain.

The crowd goes crazy as cheers of celebration erupts.

The lineman rolls off Tanner in despair. Tanner's teammates lift him from the ground and pat him on the back, shoulder pads, and helmet as he smiles victoriously.

A NEWS REPORTER, tall man, 40 something, once athletic, still showing the muscular build under his suit coat, approaches Tanner with his CAMERA MAN, large black man carrying the camera, close behind.

NEWS REPORTER

(shouting)

Tanner, Tanner, can I get a word with you?

Tanner stops, taking off his helmet, as the rest of the players continue celebrating. Tanner gives the man a resigned nod.

The reporter motions to his camera man to get rolling as he straightens his coat and slicks back his hair with a hand. He looks expectantly to his camera man who nods he is ready.

NEWS REPORTER (CONT'D)

(serious voice)

We are here with the winning quarterback for the Dragons, Tanner Wilson. Tanner, what can you tell us about the last play?

TANNER

It was a deep goalpost route. I looked off the safety and then turned back and let it fly.

NEWS REPORTER

It was a wonderful throw and catch.

TANNER

I've been putting the ball there all night and thankfully he held on this time.

The reporter looks shocked at Tanner's candor and hesitates uncomfortably for a moment.

NEWS REPORTER

(changing subject)

What about your offensive line?  
They gave you protection so you  
could get the pass off.

TANNER

I still got hit pretty hard at the  
end. Luckily I was quick enough  
before the blocking broke down  
completely.

The reporter hesitates with his mouth gaping open, but then  
gathers himself.

NEWS REPORTER

Thank you for your time and  
congratulations.

Tanner nods, turns, and walks towards the locker rooms.

NEWS REPORTER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Tanner Wilson, selected Sports  
Illustrated top high school  
quarterback in the country this  
year and from that performance, we  
can see why.

INT. TUNNEL UNDER THE STANDS - NIGHT

Tanner walks into the tunnel leading to the locker rooms. He  
is greeted by his father, MITCH WILSON, 40 something, tall  
and muscular, his mother, LIZ WILCOX, attractive 40  
something, and her husband, TOM WILCOX, 50 something, average  
build and height, slightly overweight.

Mitch gives Tanner a fist bump as he walks up and Liz comes  
over and wraps her arms around her son. Tanner reaches  
around and shakes Tom's hand as his mother squeezes him.

MITCH

Great game son. We heard your  
interview. You should give more  
credit to your teammates. It isn't  
all about you.

Tanner rolls his eyes and scowls.

TANNER

(defensive)

I carried them all the way to the  
championship. They wouldn't have  
made it out of sections without me.

Mitch looks around, afraid someone might overhear.

Liz steps back as Tom puts an arm around her shoulders.

MITCH

You need to realize the hype around  
you right now shouldn't diminish  
the value of the team.

TANNER

I'm the quarterback of the year. I  
got us the championship. I'm Notre  
Dame's top recruiting prospect next  
year. Not them, me.

Tanner throws his arms up in disgust, turns and walks towards  
the locker room.

SHAWNA (O.S.)

Tanner.

SHAWNA HANSEN, eighteen, long blond hair, shapely in her  
cheerleader outfit, runs and hurtles herself into Tanner's  
arms. She gives him a deep and passionate kiss as he twirls  
them around, her skirt flying up.

Mitch, Liz, and Tom are noticeably uncomfortable about the  
public display of affection and look away.

Tanner bends over, setting Shawna to the floor, their lips  
still locked in a kiss. He finally pries himself free, aware  
of the eyes upon them.

SHAWNA (CONT'D)

(sotto)

You were awesome darlin'.

Tanner turns, his arm around Shawna, to face his parents.

TANNER

Mom, Tom, I don't think you've met  
my girlfriend Shawna Hansen.  
Shawna, this is my mom, Liz, and  
her husband Tom Wilcox.

SHAWNA

(syrup like)

It is so nice to finally meet you.

LIZ

It's nice to meet you.

TOM

Nice to meet you.

Shawna glances over at Mitch and smiles.

MITCH

Hey Shawna.

SHAWNA

Mr. Wilson.

Shawna takes hold of Tanner's arm, pulling him aside as she glances to the adults.

SHAWNA (CONT'D)

Excuse us.

Shawna takes a few steps with Tanner in tow and then stops, looking up at him.

SHAWNA (CONT'D)

There's a big party at Sullivan's field. Hurry up and get showered.

TANNER

(explaining)

Mom and Tom flew in from Minnesota. I was planning on getting something to eat with them. You want to come?

SHAWNA

(aghast)

And miss the biggest party of our junior year?

TANNER

(firmer)

I haven't seen my mom since summer. They're flying back tomorrow. Come with us.

Shawna spins and walks away looking back at Tanner over her shoulder.

SHAWNA

Do what you want. I'm going to the party.

Tanner, Mitch, Liz, and Tom watch in silence as Shawna disappears out the end of the tunnel. Mitch, Liz and Tom turn to look at Tanner.

TANNER

(embarrassed)

I'll be right out.

LIZ  
If you want to go with your  
friends, I'll understand.

TANNER  
I want to go with you. I'll be  
right out.

Tanner walks down the tunnel to the locker rooms.

INT. MITCH TANNER'S FORD PICKUP - DAY

Mitch and Tanner drive down a two lane highway. Mitch  
glances over as Tanner stares out the window. There is  
concern in Mitch's eyes.

Tanner looks over and his expression turns curious.

TANNER  
What?

MITCH  
(shaking his head)  
Nothing.

TANNER  
I know that look. What's up?

MITCH  
Are you nervous? For the  
unveiling?

TANNER  
A little. It isn't everyday you're  
named top high school quarterback  
in the country by Sports  
Illustrated.

There is a long pause as they drive.

MITCH  
Do you know what you're going to  
say?

TANNER  
Why, you afraid of what I might  
say? You want to write a script  
for me to follow?

Mitch sighs and stares out at the road.

Tanner glares at him, not looking away.

Mitch looks back and gives a nod.

MITCH

Okay, sure. I'd love for you to give the coaches and your teammates their due.

TANNER

Why do you always minimize my success? Why should I acknowledge them for my work?

MITCH

Even professionals need to keep a balance to function with the hype. You're just a kid, you have a lot to learn.

Tanner turns away, staring out the window, his leg shakes with agitation, the anger boiling under the surface.

TANNER

You hate that I succeeded where you failed. You couldn't get a scholarship to Notre Dame, but I will. You're jealous of my success like everyone else.

MITCH

You know that isn't true. I'm proud of you, but going to Notre Dame should be your dream, not mine.

Mitch reaches over and places a hand on Tanner's leg.

Tanner looks at him, unmoved.

MITCH (CONT'D)

Please, Tanner, you need to realize that football is a way you can become a better person and man. You have to remember to play for the right reason.

TANNER

(frustrated)  
And what is that?

EXT. A SHORT DISTANCE DOWN THE COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

A large commercial truck passes a car on a curve, moving right into Mitch and Tanner's path.



INT. MITCH TANNER'S FORD PICKUP - DAY

Mitch looks up from his argument with Tanner to see the truck directly in front of them. Mitch cranks the wheel sharply to the right.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

The truck slams into the driver's side of Mitch's pickup. The pickup flips over again and again, coming to rest on roof in the ditch.

INT. MITCH TANNER'S FORD PICKUP - DAY

Tanner and Mitch hang upside down from their seatbelts. Tanner looks over to Mitch. That side of the truck is either gone, or smashed into Mitch pinning him in his seat. Blood is running from Mitch's neck and head, puddling on the truck's roof.

Tanner releases his seatbelt, ignoring his left arm hanging useless over his head. He lands in a heap on the roof, crying out in pain. He rights himself and reaches with his good hand to feel for a pulse on his father's wrist dangling near his face.

TANNER  
(shouting, panicked)  
Help. Help us. Someone help us.

MAN 1, bald man, late 50's, heavysset, sticks his head into the truck window.

MAN 1  
(out of breath)  
How bad is it?

TANNER  
(shaky)  
My dad is really bad. I think my arm is broke. Help him, please.

(O.S.) Sirens.

MAN 1  
An ambulance is on the way. Let's get you out of there so I can take a closer look at your dad.

The man extends a hand to Tanner and helps him ease out of the truck and then crawls in.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Tanner lies in a hospital bed, a cast on his left arm from his wrist to over his shoulder. The sounds of monitors fill the room as he opens his eyes.

Liz is sitting next to the bed. Leaning close, she places her head next to his.

LIZ  
(whispers wavering)  
Everything is going to be okay.

TANNER  
(re: his arm)  
How bad is it?

LIZ  
Pretty bad, but nothing that can't heal. The doctor said it is a clean break, and the ligaments aren't torn, just stretched.

TANNER  
(fearful)  
Where's dad? Is he alright?

Liz pulls back and her eyes fill with tears.

LIZ  
He isn't doing well, Tanner. He has a lot of internal injuries.

TANNER  
I need to see him. It's my fault. If I hadn't been arguing with him, he would have seen the truck...

Tears run down Tanner's cheeks as he tries to sit up, his mother holds him back.

LIZ  
It isn't your fault. It's nobody's fault.

TANNER  
Take me to him, please. I have to see him. I need to see him.

Liz pauses a minute, stands, and leaves the room. She returns with Tom and a NURSE 1 pushing a wheelchair.

LIZ  
We'll take you to him.

Liz steps back with Tom as the nurse unhooks his electronic monitors and IV, and then helps Tanner into the wheelchair,. She turns and wheels him out of the room as Tom and Liz follow.

INT. HOSPITAL INTENSIVE CARE UNIT - DAY

Mitch is lying unconscious in bed, monitors beeping, IV in his arm, oxygen on his face. His head is bandaged and his face is swollen and battered.

Tanner wheeled into the room by the nurse with Tom and Liz following.

Liz stops just inside the door as Tom places a supportive hand on her shoulder. She reaches up and puts her hand on his.

The nurse rolls Tanner's wheelchair next to the bed.

Tanner takes his father's hand in his own. Mitch doesn't respond.

TANNER

Dad, I need you. Don't go. I love you.

There is no reaction from Mitch.

Liz walks over and places a hand on Tanner's back, rubbing it, trying to comfort him.

Tears roll down Tanner's face as he leans closer, setting his cheek on Mitch's hand.

The heart monitor beeping turns to a solid long tone.

(O.S) An a alarm sounds at the nurse's station.

Tanner lifts his head, fear consuming his features.

TANNER (CONT'D)

(panicked)

Dad, no, stay with me. I need you to help me understand. I don't know the reason.

The nurse pulls Tanner back as Liz moves away, horrified by the scene in front of her.

Tanner pushes against the nurse's restraint in an effort to reach Mitch as a DOCTOR and NURSE 2 hurry in.

TANNER (CONT'D)  
(with terror)  
No, no, I don't know, you need to  
stay and teach me. Dad, dad.

Liz and Tom pull Tanner's wheelchair back and he slumps  
against Liz, his emotions come rushing out.

INT. HOSPITAL INTENSIVE CARE UNIT - DAY

Tanner sits staring at Mitch's motionless body. He looks at  
the switched off heart monitor showing only a black screen.

The tears have run dry as pain is the only thing coming out  
of Tanner's red eyes as he sits in his wheelchair and holds  
Mitch's hand.

TANNER  
(sotto)  
What am I supposed to do now? How  
can I go on without you cheering me  
on?

Tanner lays his head on top of Mitch's arm. He closes his  
eyes, exhausted in every way imaginable.

Liz sits a short distance behind Tanner, Tom holding her  
hand.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Tanner stares blankly out his hospital room window. Liz and  
Tom are visible through the wall of windows and the open  
doorway, having a discussion.

Shawna comes up to Liz and Tom, stops for a moment to speak  
with them out of Tanner's hearing, and then walks into the  
room.

Shawna's face is filled with concern as she comes over to  
pull Tanner into a hug.

Tanner cringes as his shoulder gives him some pain from the  
movement.

Shawna leans back to look at Tanner.

SHAWNA  
Sorry to hear about your daddy.

Tanner stares blankly, unable to think of a response.

SHAWNA (CONT'D)  
You're going to be okay, right?

Tanner nods.

SHAWNA (CONT'D)  
I mean, you're going to be able to  
play again, aren't you?

Tanner looks at Shawna with disbelief.

SHAWNA (CONT'D)  
Honey, we need to keep our sight on  
the prize. Football is our only  
way out of this god forsaken town.

Tanner turns away, the anger welling up in his eyes.

TANNER  
(low, shaky, threatening)  
Is that what matters to you? My  
dad dies and all you care about is  
football?

Shawna steps back, shocked.

SHAWNA  
(stammering)  
Uh, no. Of course I'm sad about  
your daddy. But we need to keep  
our focus.

Tanner's lips thin as he restrains his fury.

TANNER  
The guys warned me about you being  
a user. Get out.

SHAWNA  
(incredulous)  
What are you saying?

TANNER  
I'm telling you to get out.

Shawna stares at him for a moment and then spins, storming  
from the room. She pushes between Liz and Tom as they stand  
talking just outside the door.

Liz and Tom watch her leave, confused by her sudden  
departure.

Liz comes into the room followed by Tom.

LIZ  
What's the matter with Shawna?

TANNER  
I told her to leave.

LIZ  
Why would you do that? You need her support now more than ever.

TANNER  
I should have cut her loose a long time ago.

LIZ  
You shouldn't make any sudden life changes right now. You already have enough to deal with, you don't want to do something when you're so emotional. You might regret it later.

TANNER  
(sarcastic laugh)  
I'd get rid of a thousand girls like Shawna if it meant getting Dad back.

Liz moves over and sits on the edge of Tanner's bed. She reaches up and pulls him into a hug, laying his head against her chest.

LIZ  
(sotto)  
I know honey, I know. We all feel that way.

INT. CARROLL HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Tanner stands in front of his open locker, staring at it blankly. His arm is in a sling to support his shoulder and arm injury.

JAKE THOMPSON, 18 year old male, muscular, athletic build leans on the locker next to Tanner, watching him with concern on his face.

BLAINE KENNEDY, 17 year old male, large offensive lineman stands on Tanner's other side, looking from Tanner over at Jake, urging Jake to do something.

JAKE

(with a sigh)

Man, I can't tell you that I know what you're feelin', but we have to do something to help you snap out of this.

Blaine nods in agreement until Tanner looks at him and he stops instantly.

TANNER

I don't feel like going out.

JAKE

You've been sitting in that stinkin' apartment alone every night since your mom went back to Minnesota. It ain't right.

TANNER

She's only gone for a week or two. I'll be fine. Besides, the neighbors told her they'd keep an eye on things until she gets back.

JAKE

But that doesn't mean you can't go out, does it?

TANNER

No, I guess not.

BLAINE

Cool. We'll take you to the party tonight and get your mind off things for a while.

Tanner looks over his shoulder at his large friend.

TANNER

I'm not going to be any fun.

JAKE

We'll deal with it. Pick you up at nine.

Jake gives Tanner a slap on the back and walks away.

Blaine smiles as he walks away, his mission accomplished.

INT. UPSCALE HOUSE - NIGHT

Blaine and Jake walk in the door, smiles of anticipation on their faces as they see a crowd of people having a good time.

Tanner follows after looking around warily.

Jake and Blaine notice Tanner's hesitation at the door and each takes hold of an arm and pull him into the room.

JAKE

Relax, everyone here is alright.

TANNER

(uncomfortable)

I've never partied much. Too much to lose, Dad always said.

BLAINE

That's cool. You don't need to drink, just hang out and chill for a while.

The three move to the kitchen where bottles of booze line the table and a keg is set up in a wash tub filled with ice.

Blaine fills a glass with beer from the tap and hands it to Tanner before filling one for Jake and then one for himself.

TANNER

I thought you said I didn't have to drink.

BLAINE

You don't. Just carry it around so it looks like you're having a good time.

Tanner raises an eyebrow and then gives a nod.

They begin to wander around the house, nodding at people they recognize every now and then.

BECKY, petite brunette, cute and bubbly, moves over to the three boys as they walk through the living room. She comes right up to Tanner and stands in front of him, forcing him to stop.

Tanner looks down at the girl and then back at his friends.

Blaine and Jake grin and keep walking, leaving Tanner standing with the Becky.



BECKY  
Hey, I'm Becky.

TANNER  
Tanner.

BECKY  
Yeah, I know. Shit, everyone  
knows.

Tanner is embarrassed.

BECKY (CONT'D)  
(looking around)  
Where's your girlfriend?

TANNER  
(shrugs)  
Don't have one.

BECKY  
Really? Where's that little  
cheerleader...

TANNER  
(irritated)  
Don't know, don't care.

Becky smiles and leans in, pressing up against him.

BECKY  
In that case, we need to have some  
fun. You game?

Becky looks hopefully at Tanner as he shrugs his  
indifference.

BECKY (CONT'D)  
First, you need to ditch the beer.  
It's a good way to get full, but  
not a good way to get a buzz.

Becky leads him by the hand to the kitchen. She takes a  
glass, fills it with ice, and adds some liquor along with a  
splash of coke.

She takes the beer from his hand, replacing it with the mixed  
drink.

BECKY (CONT'D)  
This is much more fun and quicker.  
You're okay with quicker, aren't  
you?

Tanner looks at the drink in his hand and then back at Becky. With a shrug, he takes a big swallow. With a look of pleasant surprise he smiles at Becky.

INT. BEDROOM OF SUBURBAN HOUSE - NIGHT

Tanner and Becky lay on the bed, a dim light slivers into the room through the ajar door. Tanner's shirt is unbuttoned and Becky is pressed close to him.

TANNER  
(intoxicated)  
I'm not sure about this.

Becky runs her hand down his bare chest, a seductive smile on her face.

BECKY  
Come on honey. You know I can make you forget that bitch of an ex-girlfriend.

TANNER  
I'm sure you can, but she isn't what I need to forget.

The door swings open with a bang. Blaine and Jake come rushing in, scoop Tanner off the bed and half carry, half walk him from the room.

Becky's mouth is open in shock.

Jake looks at her over his shoulder.

JAKE  
I'm sure he would be a great addition to your conquests, but you're the last thing he needs right now.

BECKY  
Screw you.

JAKE  
I'll have to pass. My boy Tanner needs me to take him home and sober him up.

The boys exit the room leaving a pissed off Becky behind.

INT. TANNER WILSON'S APARTMENT - EARLY MORNING

Tanner lays in his own bed as his eyes slowly open. He sits up, holding his head as the effects of his drinking make their presence known.

TANNER

Oh shit.

Blaine looks at him from a chair by a window.

BLAINE

I didn't know you could drink like that.

TANNER

First time.

Tanner holds his hand against his forehead. He gets a panicked look on his face.

TANNER (CONT'D)

Did I... I mean did we... Me and Becky, you know, did we?

BLAINE

The evidence doesn't support that, but Jake and I got you out of there just in time.

Tanner lays back with a sigh of relief. His face shows dismay as he jumps out of bed and races to the next room.

(O.S.) The sound of Tanner throwing up in the bathroom.

Blaine shakes his head in sympathy.

INT. UPSCALE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Tanner is supported by two attractive girls as they stagger towards another room.

Jake enters the house, spots Tanner and deftly extracts him from the girl's clutches, much to their dismay.

Tanner waves at the girls as he leaves with Jake, obviously inebriated.

JAKE

This is the third party this week, pal. Maybe you should slow it down a bit.

TANNER  
 (oblivious)  
 Just having a good time.

INT. TANNER WILSON'S APARTMENT - DAY

Tanner lays on the living room couch, empty beer cans and liquor bottles are strewn across the floor and tables, covering every visible surface.

(O.S) Pounding on the door and then a sound of the door opening only to be stopped by the security chain.

Tanner doesn't move, passed out to the world.

LIZ  
 (O.S.) Break it down.

(O.S.) There is a loud bang as the door is broken in.

Liz, Jake, and Blaine hurry in. Liz goes over and kneels next to Tanner. She leans close, listening for his breathe.

LIZ (CONT'D)  
 (urgent)  
 Call 911.

Jake and Blaine stare at each other, stunned.

LIZ (CONT'D)  
 (louder)  
 Now!

Jake races to the phone on the kitchen counter and dials.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Tanner lays unconscious in bed as Liz, Blaine, and Jake wait for him to wake up.

TANNER  
 Ah. Humph.

The three move closer as Tanner opens his puffy, swollen eyes.

Tanner looks at his friend's concerned faces and then turns to make eye contact with his furious, but worried, mother.

TANNER (CONT'D)  
 Mom? What are you doing here?

LIZ

(angry)

Saving your life. Are you really that stupid? Medicating yourself do avoid dealing with everything?

Tanner turns away, his face a mix of hurt and anger.

TANNER

What would you know about it? You already moved on without him. No big deal.

Liz reaches over and pulls Tanner's chin towards her, forcing him to look at her. Her eyes are hard as stone, but glisten with tears.

LIZ

Damn you. You think Mitch didn't matter to me? He was my first love, the father of my child. Damn you and your pity party.

Liz releases Tanner's chin and storms out.

Tanner looks to his friends awkwardly.

TANNER

When did she get here?

JAKE

Today.

TANNER

Why would she fly down for no reason? Just to check on me?

BLAINE

Dude, you missed a week of school and wouldn't open the door when Jake and I came over.

JAKE

Your mom couldn't get a hold of you so came down and called us. We found you passed out and your place trashed.

Tanner tries to recall where his time went.

Liz comes into the room with regained composure.

LIZ  
(calmly)  
The doctor says you're free to  
leave. We can stop by the  
apartment and pack some things.  
I'll get the tickets.

TANNER  
(frowning)  
Where am I going?

LIZ  
Minnesota.

TANNER  
(agitated)  
No, I'm not going.

LIZ  
We said if it worked out, you could  
stay. This isn't working out.

TANNER  
I'll do better, I promise. I'll  
stop the drinking. Really.

LIZ  
(doubtful)  
I don't feel right about it. We  
can't do this for two years.

TANNER  
Just this year then. Please. Let  
me finish this year and move in the  
summer.

Blaine and Jake look to each other, noticeably upset by the  
notion.

JAKE  
Dude, your senior year?

BLAINE  
Three-peat?

Tanner looks to his friends, sympathy in his eyes.

TANNER  
I haven't told you guys, but I'm  
quitting football.

BLAINE  
No way dude.

JAKE  
You live for football.

TANNER  
That's the problem. I lived for a  
game and arguing about why I play  
cost me my dad. I don't have the  
heart for it anymore.

Jake and Blaine look sadly to each other and then to Tanner.

TANNER (CONT'D)  
Come on, you'll always be my boys.  
You can visit in the summer.

Jake and Blaine aren't convinced.

Tanner turns to Liz.

LIZ  
(wary)  
I don't know. It's nearly  
Christmas. Are you sure you can  
behave the last half of the year?

TANNER  
(sotto)  
I'll go to counseling.

LIZ  
What?

TANNER  
I'll go to counseling for the  
drinking and talk about losing dad.

Liz stares at him for a moment and then nods.

LIZ  
Okay. If you do that, then I'll  
give you another chance. But  
you're moving this summer.

TANNER  
I promise. I won't let you down.

Liz hugs Tanner as Jake and Blaine look sadly at each other  
over their heads.

INT. LIZ'S CAR - DAY

It is a beautiful early summer day and Liz and Tanner have their windows down. Tanner's hair is considerably longer and he is almost unrecognizable.

TANNER  
How much further?

LIZ  
A few more hours.

TANNER  
I feel claustrophobic. The trees are right on the edge of the road.

LIZ  
Seems that way, doesn't it? It took me a while to get used to it too.

TANNER  
Everything is so green.

EXT. BLUEWATER RESORT - DAY

Liz and Tanner pull in front of a log lodge and house. A gravel parking lot separates the resort store and the house. Many cabins and out buildings can be seen. The lake is shimmering in the distance.

Liz stops the car and they get out and stretch.

Tom comes out of the house followed by SANDY WILCOX, average height and build, tom-boyish look, early twenties.

Tom and Liz embrace as Sandy greets Tanner.

SANDY  
Welcome bro. What's the hair about?

TANNER  
(uncomfortably)  
Uh, I thought I'd let it go.

SANDY  
(laughing)  
I guess.

Tom shakes Tanner's hand. Liz and Sandy embrace.



LIZ  
He figured he might be harder to  
recognize if he let it grow.

TOM  
(doubtful)  
You really think this is a good  
idea? Changing his name so no one  
knows he's the top quarterback in  
the country.

TANNER  
Ex, top quarterback in the country.  
I'm done with football.

Tom begins to say something, but Liz puts a restraining hand  
on his arm and then a curt nod when he looks at her.

TOM  
Okay. But I feel Mitch would have  
wanted you to keep playing.

TANNER  
(angry)  
It's going to start right away?  
You're not my dad. Don't pretend  
that you knew him, and don't assume  
you and I have a relationship,  
cause we don't.

Tanner storms off, following a path leading down towards the  
lake.

Liz, Tom, and Sandy look at each other, at a loss, and Liz  
starts to go after him, but Tom stops her.

TOM  
Let him be. He needs time to  
think.

SANDY  
I'll go. Maybe he'll open up to  
me.

Sandy hesitates, looking at Liz who nods her agreement.  
Sandy follows after Tanner.

EXT. BLUEWATER RESORT - DAY

Sandy walks down a path leading to a dock jutting out into  
the water. It is a distance away from the main recreation  
area and isolated by a bend in the shoreline.

Tanner sits cross-legged on the dock, staring at the aqua-blue water. The dock moves as Sandy approaches and he bristles.

Sandy stops and sits down next to Tanner.

TANNER

You don't need to come baby-sit me.  
I won't fall in and I can swim.

SANDY

Or I could push you in.

TANNER

Yeah, good luck with that.

SANDY

I'm not here to lecture you or say  
you were wrong to talk to my dad  
like that.

TANNER

Good, because I don't care.

SANDY

The tough guy act isn't very  
convincing.

Tanner looks over at Sandy with a raised eyebrow.

SANDY (CONT'D)

I can't claim to know what you're  
feeling, but I'm here for you. I  
want us to be friends.

Tanner nods and looks at the water in silence for a moment.

TANNER

We had such a connection. Dad, me,  
football. It was who I was. Now  
he's gone, and I don't think I can  
do it anymore without him.

SANDY

That's the point. No one is asking  
you to.

Tanner stares at Sandy thoughtfully.

TANNER

Even the thought of playing without  
him there hurts.

Sandy nods.

SANDY

Only you can decide, but we'll be here for you, no matter what you decide. So for now, it'll be Tanner Schmidt.

Sandy gets to her feet.

TANNER

Yeah, for now.

Tanner stands and smiles at his step-sister.

SANDY

What ya say we head up to the store and get something to eat, I'm starving.

Tanner grins.

TANNER

I could eat.

SANDY

Why doesn't that surprise me.

They walk off the dock towards the store.

INT. RESORT STORE - DAY

The resort store is a rustic log building, well-kept, but obviously very old.

Sandy walks in with Tanner as Liz, Tom, and BO JOHNSON, large build, mid twenties, crewcut, stand at the store counter visiting. Bo's athletic build is apparent.

Bo's eyes widen and a smile spreads across his face as Tanner and Sandy walk up.

BO

(re: Liz)

So this is your boy?

Bo extends a hand to Tanner who takes it in his and shakes it.

BO (CONT'D)

Man, what I could do with you on the line.

Tanner looks nervously to Sandy, Liz, and Tom.

LIZ

Bo is an assistant football coach  
for the high school team.

BO

Yeah and we're always looking for  
players, especially one's as big as  
you.

TOM

(emphasizing)

But Bo knows you're taking a break  
from football. Isn't that right,  
Bo?

BO

(resigned)

A guy can hope, can't he?

There is an awkward moment of silence.

SANDY

Bo promises not to say anything  
about you playing in Texas so your  
secret is safe.

Tanner smiles with relief.

SANDY (CONT'D)

How about some food? Fire up that  
grill and cook us some burgers.

Sandy motions to Bo who nods and jumps into action.

INT. RESORT STORE - DAY

Sandy, Tanner, Bo, Tom, and Liz sit around a table to one  
side of the store, finishing their lunch.

Tanner takes a bite of french fry and tosses the last piece  
on his plate and leans back, wiping his mouth with a napkin.

LIZ

Get enough?

TANNER

I'm stuffed.

TOM

Bo makes the best burger this side  
of the Mississippi.

Bo puffs up with pride.

Sandy leans over and takes hold of Bo's hand as it rests on the table.

SANDY

That's my man.

LIZ

You should meet the rest of the staff. They go to Grand Rapids High and will be classmates of yours.

Tanner nods as he reaches over and takes the can of coke off the table and drains the last bit.

TOM

These kids have been with us the last three years. I hate the thought of them leaving.

SANDY

I can take him around and introduce him.

Tanner raises a hand and stops the conversation.

They look at him, questioning.

TANNER

I've got to get used to meeting new people. Might as well start now. Which way should I head.

TOM

Our grounds keeper is probably in the equipment shed. I think he needed to fix a mower. It's just off to the north.

Tom points in the direction of the shed and Tanner nods as he stands, all eyes on him as he stretches to his full height, forcing them to tilt their heads up at him.

TANNER

I'll catch you later.

Tanner turns and walks out the door.

Tom stands and everyone looks questioningly at him.

TOM

I'll make sure he's headed in the right direction.

Tom hurries out the door.

EXT. RESORT PARKING LOT - DAY

Tom comes out the door as Tanner is walking past the car. He looks back when the screen door slams behind Tom.

TOM  
Tanner, hold up a minute.

Tanner rolls his eyes, but stops and waits for Tom to come up to him.

TOM (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry about earlier. I was out of line.

Tanner is surprised.

TOM (CONT'D)  
I want you to be happy here, but I understand you have a lot to deal with.

Tanner looks away as his eyes water.

TOM (CONT'D)  
Mitch was a great father to you, and I would never assume to take his place, but I want to be there for you in whatever way you need.

Tanner stares at Tom and nods.

TANNER  
I know you mean well, but I need space.

TOM  
(extending his arms)  
There's plenty of that here.

TANNER  
I appreciate you letting me come here and how good you treat Mom.

TOM  
I love her.

TANNER  
(nodding)  
I know, and if you keep her happy, we'll be good.

Tom extends a hand to Tanner who takes hold of it firmly.

TOM  
You have my word.

Tanner nods and lets go of Tom's hand. He turns and walks off towards the maintenance shed.

INT. MAINTENANCE SHED - DAY

RON CARPENTER, eighteen, large football lineman build, leans over a lawn mower tipped on it's side, his face is covered with grease and sweat as he cranks a wrench to loosen the nut holding the blade.

The crow bar jammed in to hold the blade falls out with a loud clang as Tanner walks into the shop.

RON  
Damn.

Tanner hurries over, takes the crow bar and slides it back in place, holding it firmly.

Ron looks up in surprise, but nods with a smile and cranks on the nut again. This time the nut comes loose and he takes the blade off.

RON (CONT'D)  
(re: Tanner)  
Thanks.

TANNER  
No problem. I'm Tanner.

RON  
Ron Carpenter. Tom said you'd be getting here today. Long way from Texas.

TANNER  
(shrugging)  
Yeah. Needed a change and couldn't think of a bigger one than coming to Minnesota.

They laugh.

RON  
Tom mentioned you played some football in Texas, but he didn't say how huge you were. What position.

Tanner hesitates.

TANNER  
(tentatively)  
Quarterback.

Ron stares in shock.

RON  
Seriously? All our backs are tiny  
compared to you. What do you run  
the forty in?

TANNER  
Four point five five.

RON  
(stunned)  
You're kidding, right?

Tanner shakes his head.

Ron whistles.

RON (CONT'D)  
Is coach gonna scratch his head  
about you.

TANNER  
Who, Bo?

RON  
No, Coach Olson, the head coach.

TANNER  
I'm not playing this year.

RON  
(disappointment mixed with  
disbelief)  
Seriously? What we could do with  
you.

Tanner fidgets uncomfortably.

TANNER  
I better head out. Where can I  
find another of the staff?

Ron thinks for a moment and then smiles.

RON  
Angela is on the lifeguard chair.



Ron points in the direction.

TANNER

Thanks, catch up with you later.

Ron moves over to the grinder with the mower blade and stops, looking at Tanner as he walks to the door.

RON

You'll be at the fire tonight,  
right.

Tanner stops, looking back questioningly.

RON (CONT'D)

Staff tradition, talk to Sandy.

Tanner nods and walks off.

EXT. BEACH AT BLUEWATER RESORT - DAY

ANGELA CRAWFORD, eighteen, perky cheerleader, killer body and jaw-dropping good looks sits on a white lifeguard chair watching as kids splash and swim in the water. White rimmed sunglasses obscure her eyes.

Other people lay sunning on the beach as the sun begins to get lower in the afternoon sky.

Tanner walks up beside the chair, pausing to watch the people enjoying the water.

ANGELA

You must me Tanner?

Tanner looks up as Angela studies him from her perch.

TANNER

You Angela?

Angela nods, turns her attention back to the swimmers, and studies him out of the corner of her eye.

ANGELA

(confidently)

Sure am. Welcome to nowhere  
Minnesota.

TANNER

Thanks.

ANGELA  
Why would anyone *choose* to come  
here?

Tanner shrugs.

ANGELA (CONT'D)  
Crazy, just crazy.

Tanner opens his mouth to respond, but a loud tweet of  
Angela's lifeguard whistle stops him.

ANGELA (CONT'D)  
(re: swimmer)  
Hey, no dunking. Do it again and  
you're out for five.

Angela continues without missing a beat.

ANGELA (CONT'D)  
You should hang with me, if you  
want to fit in at school. The rest  
of the staff are kind of losers.

TANNER  
Ron seems nice.

ANGELA  
He is, but that's the problem.  
He's boring. Have you met Cali  
yet?

Tanner shakes his head.

ANGELA (CONT'D)  
You'll be begging me to hang out  
after you meet that one.

TANNER  
Speaking of meeting her, where  
would I find her?

Angela motions nonchalantly towards a group of cabins on a  
little hill overlooking the beach.

ANGELA  
(disgusted)  
She's cleaning today's checkouts.

Tanner turns and heads for the cabins.

ANGELA (CONT'D)  
See you at the fire.

Tanner looks over his shoulder.

TANNER

Yeah.

EXT. BLUEWATER RESORT - DAY

A neat row of cabins face the water, each with a nice covered porch. Steps lead up one side of each porch and then down the other, making a walkway through the entire grouping.

Tanner walks through one porch and then onto the next, noticing a four wheeler attached to a cart filled with linens parked in front of the porch.

As Tanner passes the open door, a pile of dirty linens hit him and topple him into the railing.

CALI OLSON, eighteen, cute, shapely, fresh, comes rushing out, aghast.

CALI

Oh my god, I'm so sorry. Are you alright?

Cali digs Tanner out of the pile of sheets as his arms flail to get free.

TANNER

Yeah, fine.

Tanner looks up at her as he sits on the porch floor.

Cali is nervously trying to pull the sheet from him.

TANNER (CONT'D)

I said, I'm fine.

Cali takes the sheets in her arms and tosses them into the bin. She turns back to Tanner as he gets to his feet.

CALI

Cali Olson.

Cali extends her hand formally.

Tanner takes hold of her hand and shakes it.

TANNER

Tanner.

CALI

Yeah, I know. Liz showed me your picture. Wasn't your hair short?

Tanner selfconsciously pushes the hair back from his face.

TANNER

Yeah, thought I'd try something new.

CALI

(nodding)

Moving to Minnesota from Texas, that's different.

TANNER

Sure is.

CALI

Sorry about that.

Cali motions to the laundry bin.

TANNER

No problem.

They stand and stare at each other in a moment of awkward silence.

CALI

I better get these cabins done before it gets too late.

TANNER

Yeah, I better go get unpacked.

CALI

See you at the fire later?

TANNER

Sounds that way.

They smile and Cali enters the cabin as Tanner stares after her, intrigue apparent on his face. He grins and walks off the porch.

EXT. BLUEWATER RESORT BEACH - NIGHT

A large campfire is burning on the beach, the flames reflecting off the calm lake. Ron, Angela, Cali, and Bo sit around the fire on log placed around the firepit, their features lit up by the flickering fire light.

Sandy and Tanner walk up.

Sandy sits next to Bo and Tanner hesitates, looking for a spot.

Angela slides over to make room between her and Ron.

Tanner sits down, smiling at the others around the fire.

TANNER

You do this every night?

ANGELA

Only when there's a break in guests and we have a little down time.

RON

Hasn't been much of that this year.

SANDY

No, it's been a good year and we're only getting busier.

The three teenagers moan.

BO

Job security, job security.

The teens nod their agreement.

SANDY

Tom's considering cleaning up the island lodge.

RON

That creepy place?

ANGELA

Who'd want to use that?

CALI

I think it's neat.

SANDY

And so do some guests who come here year after year. They're pressuring Tom to use the lodge for an anniversary party this month.

TANNER

(curious)

What's the lodge on the island?

BO  
See that island?

Bo points into the darkness. The sun has set, but the lake is backlit by the lighter horizon. The silhouette of an island can be seen in the distance.

Tanner turns to the lake and nods.

TANNER  
Yeah.

BO  
Years ago, when Tom's parents were kids, people from all over came to use the lodge and the cabins on the island.

SANDY  
Over time, the cabins either burnt down or fell down, but the lodge still stands. Tom fixed it up a few years back, but mothballed it due to a lack of interest.

BO  
And now there's interest again, so we'll be cleaning it up.

CALI  
I like it. It's kinda cool.

ANGELA  
You can be the one to do it. I'm not going. That place creeps me out.

Tanner stares at Angela who looks at him with a shrug.

ANGELA (CONT'D)  
It's old and depressing, that's all.

SANDY  
No big deal, we can all go over and have a look sometime.

TANNER  
Cool.

ANGELA  
(re: Tanner)  
So, what's your story?

TANNER  
(taken aback)  
Excuse me?

SANDY  
(embarrassed)  
Angela, leave him be. He just got here.

BO  
Yeah, give the guy a break.

Tanner collects himself, shakes his head and raises a hand stopping Bo's and Sandy's defense.

TANNER  
There are going to be questions, I might as well start now.

Tanner turns to his fellow teens and takes a deep breath.

TANNER (CONT'D)  
What do you want to know?

ANGELA  
Why would you come to Northern Minnesota from Texas your senior year?

Tanner presses his lips together in thought.

TANNER  
Life was going great for me in Texas until...

Tanner pauses as his eyes glisten in the firelight and they lose their focus.

SANDY  
(protectively)  
Angela, that's enough. Tanner, you don't need to do this right now.

Tanner shakes his head and looks to Angela.

TANNER  
My dad died in a car accident last fall. My whole world changed and what I thought was important, isn't anymore.

ANGELA  
(ashamed)  
Oh, I'm sorry. I didn't realize.

TANNER

I'm okay. I came up here to be  
with my mom and try and get my life  
back on track.

Sandy reaches over and takes a hold of Tanner's hand. He  
smiles at her thoughtfully.

RON

(softly, hesitant)  
What isn't important to you  
anymore?

Ron cringes as the words come out.

Sandy glares at him.

TANNER

Football. I used to think the most  
important thing in my life was  
football. But now I see it for  
what it is, just a game.

Everyone around the campfire is quiet as Tanner stares into  
the flames. He is unaware of their sympathetic looks.

CALI

(comforting)  
We're sorry for your loss, but if  
you loved football and shared that  
with you dad, why would you stop?

Tanner snaps out of his daze coming to his feet and spins on  
Cali, anger flaring in his eyes.

TANNER

Because if it weren't for football,  
my father wouldn't have been on  
that road when the truck hit us  
head-on.

Tanner walks into the darkness.

Sandy starts to go after him, but Bo takes hold of her hand  
to stop her.

She stares down at Bo, angry.

BO

Let him go.

Cali gets to her feet and rushes after Tanner.



EXT. BLUEWATER RESORT - TRAIL - NIGHT

Cali moves along the dark trail with the experience of walking it many times, both during the day and at night. She comes to a side trail heading away from the house when she hears brush and branches crunching and cracking. She turns to the side trail and hurries in the direction of the sound.

TANNER - O.S.

Ow, shit. Damn it.

Cali follows the sound and stops at a sharp bend in the path when she hears movement and Tanner cussing coming from a small ravine.

Cali reaches in her sweatshirt pocket and pulls out a small flashlight. Clicking it on, she shines it into the brush until the light falls upon Tanner, thrashing in a patch of wild raspberry bushes.

Tanner stops long enough to look up at the shining light and gives a resigned sigh.

TANNER

Whoever you are, are you going to help me out?

CALI

It's Cali. I'll be right down.

Cali inches her way down and stops next to Tanner, careful not to become entangled in the raspberries's stickers. She stops and extends a hand to Tanner.

Tanner reaches up and pulls himself free with Cali's help. He sits down on the hillside with a sigh, pulling his sleeve across his face, wiping away sweat mixed with tears.

CALI (CONT'D)

Can we talk a minute?

Tanner motions for Cali to sit.

Cali eases next to him and turns the flashlight off.

The two sit silently in the dark for a moment, the moonlight shining through the trees, illuminating them in a pale glow.

CALI (CONT'D)

I'm sorry about what I said. I don't know anything about you.

Tanner doesn't respond.

CALI (CONT'D)

I know when my mom died, I would have freaked if I didn't have my music. Even when the music reminded me of her, I felt empty without it.

Tanner nods in the darkness.

TANNER

I'm sorry about your mom, and I understand what you're saying, but you don't know everything about it.

CALI

Then tell me, I want to understand.

Tanner stiffens.

TANNER

(firmly)  
I'm not ready.

CALI

When you are, I'm here.

Cali reaches over and touches Tanner's arm. Tanner slides his hand up his arm and places his it over hers.

TANNER

Thanks.

Cali clicks the flashlight on and stands and extends her hand to him.

CALI

Let's get you back to the house and clean you up. Some of those scratches look deep.

Tanner puts his hand in hers and comes to his feet. The slope of the hill causes Cali to stagger and press close to him.

Cali hesitates for a moment and then spins, pulling Tanner after her as she climbs the hill out of the ravine back to the trail.

INT. BLUEWATER RESORT MAIN HOUSE - DAY

Tanner comes down the stairs to the kitchen with shorts and a T-shirt on. His encounter with the raspberry bushes apparent from the band-aids scattered over his body.

He carries his tennis shoes under his arm as he strides over to the refrigerator, opens the door, and pulls out some orange juice in a pitcher. He opens a nearby cabinet, but closes it when he doesn't find what he is looking for.

Liz sits at the table with a cup of coffee, observing Tanner with a curious stare.

LIZ

Glasses are the next door over.

Tanner jumps at Liz's voice, nearly dropping the pitcher of juice in his hand.

TANNER

Mom, you scared the crap out of me.

LIZ

Sorry. You're up kind of early, aren't you?

Tanner reaches over to the cabinet Liz indicated, pulls a glass out, and fills it with juice. He takes a big swig as he nods.

TANNER

Thought I would go for a run this morning.

Liz raises an eyebrow.

TANNER (CONT'D)

(sighing)

Can't a guy stay in shape without everyone assuming things?

LIZ

I didn't say a thing.

TANNER

(rolling his eyes)

You don't have to.

LIZ

But you do know...

TANNER

(cutting Liz short)

Gotta go.

Tanner slides the pitcher of juice back into the refrigerator and bolts out the door.

EXT. BLUEWATER RESORT - DAY

Tanner jogs up to the porch of the main house from one of the trails. His shirt is drenched in sweat and he leans forward on the porch rail catching his breath.

Bo sits on the porch, drinking his morning coffee. He looks questioningly at Tanner.

BO  
How was your run?

TANNER  
(jumps)  
Shit, do all of you lurk around waiting to scare me?

BO  
I was here first. Besides, you don't need to pretend with me. I know who you are and what happened.

Tanner stares shocked at Bo.

BO (CONT'D)  
I'm practically family. I followed your career with Liz.

TANNER  
(uncomfortable)  
So you know how the accident happened?

Bo nods.

TANNER (CONT'D)  
Then you understand why I can't play football anymore.

BO  
No, that's still a mystery to me.

TANNER  
(defensively)  
If we didn't have to go to the Sports Illustrated unveiling, we would never have run head-on into that truck.

BO  
We can say that about any accident. You shouldn't second guess fate.

TANNER

(angry)

Fate? How is this for fate? I was arguing with him, distracting him. We were arguing about how I was buying into the hype around me and football.

Bo looks with empathy to Tanner, but says nothing.

Bo's reaction only angers Tanner more.

TANNER (CONT'D)

(shouting)

Didn't you hear what I said. It was my fault, not fate. If I hadn't been so wrapped up in my ego he could have gotten out of the way.

BO

There are always many factors in accidents.

TANNER

You been talkin to my shrink? I won't let a game hurt anyone else I care about.

BO

Liz said your dad urged you to play for the right reason. He didn't tell you to stop playing.

Tanner spins away from Bo, angry and frustrated. He turns back, throwing his arms up in exasperation.

TANNER

Don't you get it? I don't know what the reason is. How can I play for the right reason when I don't have a clue what he meant?

Tanner strides into the house, slamming the door.

EXT. BLUEWATER RESORT - DAY

Ron and Tanner mow the grass at the resort. Show different settings to give the resort a large but rustic feel. Show Tanner mowing a large field as kids play frisbee and catch.

EXT. BLUEWATER RESORT - DAY

Ron and Tanner sit outside the shop, lawn mowers close by as they drink glasses of lemonade.

Liz stands holding a pitcher ready to refill their glasses.

Tanner downs his glass and holds it up so Liz can fill it.

Ron finishes his and waits until Liz is done with Tanner's glass before raising his own to be filled.

LIZ

You two made quick work of the mowing today.

RON

(grinning)

Nice to have some help.

TANNER

No problem. What do we have to do next?

RON

I need to tune up the mowers, change the oil, and sharpen the blades. Kind of a one man job.

Tanner looks up questioningly at Liz.

LIZ

It's too early to sit on lifeguard duty at the beach and Angela can handle the beach preparations.

Liz looks off towards the cabins as she thinks.

LIZ (CONT'D)

You could help Cali get the cabins ready for today's check-ins.

Tanner nods, getting to his feet.

TANNER

No problem. Where is she?

LIZ

Cabin 12.

Liz points at a nearby cabin. The four wheeler and linen cart can be seen outside the cabin door.

Tanner walks towards the cabin.

RON  
Catch up with you at the campfire  
tonight.

Tanner waves over his shoulder as he continues walking.

EXT. BLUEWATER RESORT - GUEST CABINS - DAY

Tanner climbs the steps to the covered deck and cautiously looks into the room. He leans back quickly, avoiding a hail of linen and towels flying through the door and into the linen cart.

TANNER  
(grinning)  
Sure is dangerous around here.

Cali rushes out to the rail, looking down at the linen cart in surprise.

Tanner leans against the cabin, chuckling.

Cali turns and gives him a shove.

CALI  
You scared me. I thought I hit you  
again.

TANNER  
You would have if I didn't look  
first.

CALI  
What are you doing here? I thought  
you and Ron were mowing today.

TANNER  
All done. Mom asked me to help you  
out.

Cali looks at Tanner doubtfully.

CALI  
You ever clean a room before?

TANNER  
(shaking his head)  
Nope.

CALI  
I'll show you how to make the beds  
and you can do those while I do the  
rest.

INT. BLUEWATER RESORT - GUEST CABIN - DAY

Cali walks into the bedroom motioning for Tanner to follow. She moves over to the bed and scoops up some sheets sitting on a nearby dresser.

CALI

This is how you make-up the bed.

Cali shakes the sheet out, smoothly brings it down on the mattress, and pulls the wrinkles out. She moves around the bed tucking in the edges all the way around. She grabs the top sheet and repeats the process.

CALI (CONT'D)

You do the same thing with the blankets and then finish it off with the bed spread.

She puts the blanket on and then the bedspread, placing the pillows neatly at the top against the headboard.

CALI (CONT'D)

There you have it.

Tanner watches in silence, nodding, impressed, as she turns to him.

TANNER

Okay. I think I can do that.

CALI

Good.

Cali takes Tanner by the arm to the back of the cabin. She motions to two more rooms, each with two beds in them.

CALI (CONT'D)

Strip the beds and make them while I finish dusting and vacuuming.

Cali walks off, leaving Tanner to the beds.

Tanner pulls the linens off, tossing them into the dirty linen cart. Some of his throws fall short and he hurries down the steps to scoop the linen from the ground and drop them in the cart.

Cali watches, holding back chuckles and smiles whenever Tanner looks at her.



Tanner struggles to get the sheets to drop neatly onto the bed as he shakes them out, often times the sheet drifts to one side and misses the bed completely, but eventually, he has the other beds made and smoothed neatly.

Cali stands in the doorway smiling approvingly as Tanner finishes the last one in the cabin.

CALI (CONT'D)

Not too bad. You catch on pretty quick.

TANNER

See, I can be trained. I'll see you later.

Tanner begins to leave, but Cali puts a hand to his chest. He looks questioningly at her as she motions down the row of cabins to her left.

Tanner leans forward to stare at the three cabins and back to Cali curiously.

CALI

We have three more before we're finished.

TANNER

(groaning)  
You serious?

Cali pushes Tanner ahead of her towards the next cabin.

CALI

The sooner we get started, the sooner we finish.

EXT. BLUEWATER RESORT - MAIN HOUSE - DAY

The sun is setting as Cali pulls the four wheeler with the cart behind up to the main house.

Tanner rides on the back, swaying behind her as she comes to a stop. Tanner gets off, noticeably stiff.

CALI

See you at the fire.

Cali doesn't wait for Tanner's response, but pulls away on the four wheeler.

Tanner walks slowly into the house.

EXT. BLUEWATER RESORT - BEACH - NIGHT

Ron, Cali, and Angela sit around the fire as Tanner walks into the light.

TANNER  
(looking around)  
Where's Sandy and Bo?

ANGELA  
They went to town tonight.  
Something about their anniversary.

RON  
So we decided to celebrate too.

Ron reaches behind him and pulls a bottle out from under a jacket laying on the ground. He removes the top, takes a swig, and passes it to Angela.

Angela takes a drink and hands it to Cali.

CALI  
What is it?

RON  
A little Jack Daniels.

Cali smells it and wrinkles up her nose.

ANGELA  
Come on, try it, it won't kill you.

Cali shrugs and takes a sip, instantly putting a hand to her mouth as if she will throw up.

Cali passes it to Tanner.

Tanner stares at the bottle, flicks his tongue over his lips, but then shakes his head, extending the bottle back to Ron.

RON  
What's the matter?

TANNER  
I don't do that anymore.

ANGELA  
We're not good enough to drink  
with?

TANNER

It's not that. I had a problem with alcohol after my dad died. I promised Mom I'd stay away from it.

RON

That's cool. You don't mind if we do though, do you?

TANNER

(shrugging)

My problem isn't your problem. Go for it.

Ron raises the bottle in salute to Tanner with a nod and takes another swig. He gives it to Angela who takes a shot and passes it back to Cali.

Cali looks at it a moment then over to Tanner thoughtfully. Cali shakes her head and hands it back to Angela.

CALI

No, I'll pass too.

ANGELA

(rolling her eyes)

You too? Well, Ronnie, it's just you, me, and Jack.

Angela takes a drink and hands it back to Ron.

EXT. BLUEWATER RESORT - BEACH - NIGHT

The campfire is burning lower, more glowing embers than flames as Cali and Tanner visit quietly. Angela and Ron are enthralled with the glowing embers, lost in their own world.

A rustling noise from someone approaching -(O.S.)

Tanner quickly scoops up the empty bottle laying next to Ron and tosses it into the woods as Bo and Sandy appear in the dim light.

BO

What was that?

Bo looks around for the source of the sound in the woods.

Sandy looks curiously at Angela and Ron.

SANDY

What are you guys doing?

TANNER  
(feigned innocence)  
Hanging out, why?

Sandy leans down next to Ron and takes a deep whiff. She stands waving her hand in front of her face as she wrinkles her nose.

SANDY  
(hurt, angry)  
Have you been drinking?

ANGELA  
(noticeably intoxicated)  
Noooo, why do you say that?

BO  
(scolding)  
What's wrong with you guys? I'm a teacher. If I catch you drinking, I'm obligated to report it.

CALI  
Come on, Bo. Give us a break.

Bo turns to Cali, holding back his anger.

BO  
If I suspect any of our students of underage drinking, I need to report it.

Sandy turns to Bo, leaning closer.

SANDY  
(sotto)  
Can't you give them a break. Turn in the one who brought the alcohol.

Bo looks at Sandy hard for a minute, then softens under Sandy's pleading eyes.

BO  
(resigned)  
Okay, fine. Who brought the alcohol? I'll only report them.

Tanner raises his hand before Ron can put his alcohol heavy arm up.

TANNER  
I did. I brought the bottle.

CALI  
Tanner, don't.

Tanner gives Cali a sharp look, cutting her off.

TANNER  
And since I'm not 'technically' a student at your school, yet, you have no one to report.

SANDY  
Are you sure about this?

TANNER  
I did it.

SANDY  
You promised Liz. You promised.

TANNER  
I did it. I'll take the consequences.

Sandy nods sadly.

BO  
The rest of you get to your cabins and sleep it off. Come on Tanner, we need to let Tom and Liz know about this.

Tanner gets to his feet and walks beside Bo as they head for the trail.

Sandy watches as the other teens get to their feet. Cali begins to put out the fire, but Sandy stops her.

SANDY  
(disappointed)  
You go, I'll take care of it.

INT. BLUEWATER RESORT - MAIN HOUSE - NIGHT

Liz, Tom, Bo, and Tanner sit at the kitchen table. Liz and Tom are in their pajamas as they listen to Bo finish his explanation.

BO  
... and Tanner says he supplied the alcohol.

Liz and Tom look to Tanner with a mix of shock and anger.

LIZ  
 (shaking)  
 You said you wouldn't touch the  
 stuff again. And now you get these  
 good kids in trouble with you?

Bo raises a hand to calm her.

BO  
 I think Tanner is lying. It  
 doesn't seem like he and Cali were  
 drinking.

Liz spins her head to Tanner.

LIZ  
 Let me smell your breath.

Liz moves over to Tanner, but he stands and backs away.

TANNER  
 What difference does it make. I'm  
 telling you I did it. Just leave  
 it at that.

Tanner turns and strides up the stairs, taking them two at a  
 time.

TOM  
 (re: Bo)  
 Why would he cover for them?

BO  
 (smiling)  
 Because that's what friends do.

LIZ  
 (incredulous)  
 Even if they're wrong?

BO  
 Especially if they're wrong.  
 Tanner put them first, taking the  
 punishment because he knew he had  
 less to lose than they did.

TOM  
 (nodding)  
 Pretty smart.

BO  
 Pretty unselfish. Didn't you say  
 he was selfish down in Texas?

LIZ  
 (realization)  
 Yes, yes I did. What does this mean?

BO  
 I think he is learning to put his friend's first.

The three stare at each other, wondering where this change in Tanner would lead.

EXT. BLUEWATER RESORT - MAIN HOUSE - DAY

The resort staff sits on the porch as Liz and Tom lean against the railing facing them with displeasure.

Bo and Sandy sit stoically off to one side, their arms crossed in front of them.

TOM  
 We feel you all had a hand in what happened at the campfire last night. And we're very disappointed.

The teens fidget in their chairs as their eyes lock on the porch floor, everyone, except Tanner, who looks straight at Tom as he speaks.

LIZ  
 Tom and I have decided to punish all of you. You will be expected to do more chores around here this next week.

TOM  
 We feel if you are kept busy, you will have less time to get into trouble.

LIZ  
 And no more campfires until further notice.

TANNER  
 Punish me. It's my fault.

TOM  
 You didn't pour alcohol down their throats. They drank of their own free will. They can pay the price.

Ron, Cali, and Angela look to Tanner with respect as he pleads their case.

TOM (CONT'D)

Ron, you'll clear the brush from the north entrance.

Ron moans, and nods.

TOM (CONT'D)

Angela, the beach will be raked clean and the weeds within four feet of shore pulled.

Angela looks at Tom in shock, then turns away with a nod.

TOM (CONT'D)

Cali, you and Tanner are going to the island lodge to get it ready for use.

Cali looks to Tanner with a shrug.

LIZ

I expect everything done by the end of the week, is that clear?

The teens moan their reluctant acceptance as they stand and head out to do their added duties.

EXT. BLUEWATER RESORT - BOAT DOCK - DAY

Tanner and Cali are on the pontoon boat wearing life jackets as Tom and Liz stand on the dock. Tom has the boat's line in his hand as he steadies it away from the dock.

TOM

You should have everything you need to get the job done. Be sure you secure the boat before heading to the lodge.

Tanner and Cali nod.

LIZ

If you have any questions, give us a call.

TANNER

We got it.

LIZ

Okay, see you before dinner.



Tom pushes the bow of the boat out towards the middle of lake and tosses the rope to Tanner.

Cali steers the boat away from the dock as Tanner sits down. She punches the throttle and the motor roars as the boat races out into the lake towards the island in the distance.

EXT. BOAT DOCK ON ISLAND - DAY

The pontoon boat eases in next to the dock as Cali maneuvers it perfectly.

Tanner stands at the bow and takes hold of the dock post and stops the boat as Cali cuts the motor.

Tanner ties the boat securely and they unload their supplies and begin to lug them up to the lodge.

The boat rocks in the light chop of the waves.

INT. ISLAND LODGE - DAY

The door swings inward and Cali walks in carrying a box of supplies with Tanner right behind her. She drops the box and begins to open curtains covering floor to ceiling windows all around the large open space of the lodge.

The high open beam ceilings are filled with cobwebs and dust, only made more apparent by the flood of sunlight now streaming into the space.

A large bolder fireplace takes up the entire end wall while tables and chairs are pushed into the kitchen area. A spiral stair leads up to the loft and bedrooms which overlook the main area. An old upright piano is tucked into one corner under the loft.

TANNER

(amazed)

This is cool.

CALI

(smiling)

I told you. This is a pretty neat place. Think of the history.

Tanner smiles warmly at Cali as she takes in the old lodge, excitement on her face.

CALI (CONT'D)

We better get at it if we want to be back before dark.

INT. ISLAND LODGE - DAY

Tanner is standing on an old aluminum ladder wiping down the high beams in the ceiling as Cali cleans the windows on a step ladder.

INT. ISLAND LODGE - DAY

Tanner is cleaning the main area floor while Cali cleans the loft. She looks over the edge at him as he works shirtless on his hands and knees.

EXT. ISLAND LODGE - DAY

Tanner rakes debris from around the lodge and Cali cleans the outside of the windows.

Tanner looks up at the sky beginning to cloud over with dark storm clouds. The wind is noticeably stronger blowing leaves and sticks out of the pile he created.

TANNER

(concerned)

Is this weather normal?

CALI

Kind of. We better finish up and head back before it hits.

INT. ISLAND LODGE - DAY

Cali's cell phone sits ringing on the lodge's counter, Liz's name lighting the caller id.

INT. BLUEWATER RESORT - MAIN HOUSE - DAY

Liz listens as Cali's cell phone rings. She looks to Tom with a shake of her head as she hangs up. Her and Tom's faces are creased with worry.

EXT. ISLAND LODGE - BOAT DOCK - DAY

The waves are pulling heavily on the boat's line. A large wave comes and pushes the boat towards the shore, breaking the pole just below the rope. The boat drifts along the shoreline until it floats clear of the island and is taken away by the wind and the waves.

INT. ISLAND LODGE - DAY

The wind is whipping rain against the windows of the lodge as Cali and Tanner gather their supplies and run out the door.

EXT. ISLAND BOAT DOCK - DAY

The sky is black with clouds as the day feels more like night. Cali and Tanner rush to the dock. The heavy rain is driven by the strong winds and whitecaps are breaking on the lake.

Tanner and Cali stare at the broken post where the pontoon was once secured.

TANNER  
(shouting over the wind)  
What now?

CALI  
Let's get back to the lodge and  
call Tom and Liz.

Tanner nods as they rush back towards the lodge.

INT. ISLAND LODGE - NIGHT

Cali sits in a chair, her hair and clothing soaking wet, dripping on the floor. She holds her cell phone to her ear, listening.

Tanner stands by a window watching the lightning light up the sky and brighten the dark lodge. Thunder follows close behind, shaking the windows of the old lodge.

CALI  
(into the phone)  
Okay, I'll call if anything  
happens. Bye.

Tanner looks over as she hangs up the phone.

CALI (CONT'D)  
Tom said the generator hasn't run  
in years so we'll have to rough it.

TANNER  
How long before they can come out  
and get us?

CALI

The storm is supposed to last all night. They can't come until morning.

TANNER

What do we do until then?

CALI

Stay inside, start a fire in the fireplace, and wait.

Tanner nods and walks outside without a word, closing the door behind him.

Cali moves to look out the window and then hurries to the door, opening it as Tanner strides in, soaking wet, carrying an armful of firewood.

CALI (CONT'D)

Is it dry?

TANNER

This was stacked in the shed around back.

Tanner sets the wood down and begins to stack it into the fireplace.

Cali moves over and hands Tanner her phone after turning on it's flashlight feature.

CALI

(softly)

Here, let me show you.

Tanner grins as he steps back and watches.

TANNER

I haven't learned so much from one person before.

CALI

(embarrassed)

I'm sorry, I didn't mean to...

Tanner places a reassuring hand on Cali's shoulder.

TANNER

I meant that as a compliment. You know a lot of stuff.

Cali blushes.

CALI

Thanks.

INT. ISLAND LODGE - NIGHT

Cali and Tanner's clothes hang over chairs, dripping onto the floor.

The storm rages outside as Tanner and Cali sit in front of the fire, each wrapped in a blanket.

They stare at the flames in silence, lost in thought.

Tanner sneaks a glance at Cali and she catches him.

CALI

What?

TANNER

Nothing.

CALI

What is it?

TANNER

How did you lose your mom?

Cali's back straightens as she lets out a sigh.

TANNER (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. You mentioned it the other night and I was wondering.

CALI

Three years ago. Pancreatic cancer. We only had six months to say goodbye to her.

Cali turns back to the flames.

TANNER

That's rough.

CALI

No rougher than not really getting to say goodbye to your dad.

She looks at Tanner to see his pained expression.

TANNER

You said your music helped?

Cali nods.

CALI  
The music is a way we stay  
connected...

Cali looks over her shoulder towards the loft and gets up. She turns on the flashlight on her phone and walks into the darkness, moving in a bubble of light in the black room.

Rumbling noise - (O.S.)

CALI (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Help me with this.

Tanner gets up and moves across the room where Cali is pushing the upright piano towards the fireplace.

TANNER  
What are you doing?

CALI  
It's easier to show you.

Cali arranges the piano with Tanner's help and then flips the bench down from on top of the piano. She brushes the dust off, sits down on the bench, and opens the cover over the keys.

Tanner sits down in front of the fire, facing her.

Cali plunks on a few keys and then nods, satisfied. She turns to Tanner.

CALI (CONT'D)  
I wrote this for my mom. It's how  
I know we're always connected.

Insert an original song that displays Cali's talents and connection with her feelings for her mother.

Tanner is moved by Cali's performance.

Cali stands and comes over to sit next to Tanner, giving a little shiver.

TANNER  
That was incredible. You wrote  
that?

CALI  
(modestly)  
Yeah. But I feel my mom helped me.

They sit in silence, watching the flames dance in the fireplace.

Cali glances over at Tanner, but then turns back to the flames. She takes a deep breath and stares at him meaningfully.

Tanner looks over and frowns.

TANNER

What?

CALI

(chickens out)

Nothing.

TANNER

Come on, ask.

CALI

(sighing)

What happened with you and your dad?

Tanner noticeably bristles at the question.

CALI (CONT'D)

I shouldn't have, I'm sorry.

TANNER

(firmly)

No, you shared with me.

Tanner turns to Cali, her face lit by the flickering firelight, her eyes glistening as she concentrates on him.

TANNER (CONT'D)

You already know we were in a head-on collision with a truck.

Cali nods.

TANNER (CONT'D)

The truck was passing on a curve and my dad didn't see it until it was too late.

Sadness fills Cali's eyes.

CALI

I am so sorry.

TANNER

But what you don't know is the reason he didn't see the truck coming until it was too late.

CALI  
You said it was on a curve. How  
could he see it on a curve?

TANNER  
He could have if he hadn't been  
distracted.

CALI  
What distracted him?

TANNER  
Me.

Cali stares speechless at Tanner.

TANNER (CONT'D)  
My dad and I were arguing about  
football. He hated how I was  
caught up in the hype surrounding  
me. He felt I was letting it go to  
my head.

CALI  
(reasoning)  
But you can't blame yourself for  
that.

TANNER  
(resigned)  
I played it over and over in my  
mind. If we hadn't been arguing,  
my dad would still be alive.

Tanner turns away, trying to hide the tears.

Cali moves closer, putting her arm across his hunched  
shoulders. She pulls him close as he lays his head on her  
shoulder, his body shakes with grief.

Tanner leans back, wiping his eyes as he looks embarrassed at  
Cali.

TANNER (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry about that.

CALI  
It's okay.

Tanner looks down at his hands in his lap.

Cali leans closer, lowering her head so she can look up at  
his face.



As he lifts his head, she leans in and presses her lips to his. They kiss gently, each closing their eyes and savoring the moment.

They reluctantly pull back and look at each other for a hesitant moment and then lean in for another kiss, this time more passionate.

When they finally move apart, they are out of breath.

Cali looks nervously back to the fire as Tanner stares at her.

CALI (CONT'D)  
You won't play football anymore  
because you feel it's responsible  
for your dad's death?

TANNER  
Yes.

CALI  
I thought your dad loved to come  
and support you at your games?

TANNER  
He did.

CALI  
Would you say it was something you  
shared and enjoyed together?

Tanner looks curiously at Cali.

TANNER  
You could say that.

CALI  
So it was part of your closeness  
with your father?

TANNER  
I know what you're doing, but I  
don't...

CALI  
Did he tell you to stop playing?

Tanner pauses, thinking.

TANNER  
(shaking his head)  
(MORE)

TANNER (CONT'D)

No, he said I needed to play for the right reason. But I don't know what that reason is.

CALI

And how will you find out if you stop playing?

Tanner has no response for Cali's logic. He stares at her and then leans in, giving her a long kiss.

CALI (CONT'D)

What was that for?

TANNER

For making me realize I was looking at this all wrong.

CALI

Not wrong, just a little off course.

TANNER

Thanks.

CALI

You're welcome. Thank you.

TANNER

(confused)  
For what?

CALI

(deviously)  
For this.

Cali takes a hold of Tanner's blanket and pulls him close to her as they slide down on the floor, kissing again.

INT. ISLAND LODGE - DAY

The sunlight shines through the windows onto Tanner and Cali laying in each other's arms in front of the fireplace filled with black ashes.

O.S. - the sound of a boat motor can be heard.

Cali wakes up, disoriented by her surroundings at first, but then realizes what the noise is. She jumps to her feet and races over to her clothes on the chair and begins to dress under the blanket.

CALI

Tanner, wake up, they're here.

Tanner wakes up, confused by Cali's urgency and then realizes what this will look like. He jumps to his feet, letting the blanket drop to the floor exposing his boxers. He rushes to his clothes and is pulling his shirt down as the door to the lodge opens.

Tom and Liz hurry in, stopping to see the awkward expressions on Cali and Tanner's faces. They see the ashes in the fireplace and the blankets on the floor.

Liz moves over and hugs Cali.

LIZ

Are you alright?

Tom walks over to Tanner and places a comforting hand across the back of his neck.

CALI

Yeah, fine. Did you find the pontoon?

TOM

Bo and Ron are pulling it back to the resort as we speak.

LIZ

Let's get back, you two must be starving.

TANNER

Yeah, I guess I am.

Liz and Cali walk out but Tom stops Tanner before he can leave.

Tanner looks to Tom questioningly.

TOM

I thought I should let you know you your shirt is inside out.

Tom lifts his hand exposing the tag on the outside of Tanner's shirt.

TANNER

Right, thanks.

Tom smiles and walks out as Tanner flips his shirt around and hurries after.

INT. BLUEWATER RESORT - RESORT STORE - DAY

Tanner is helping Sandy stock the shelves when Bo enters the store, his hands behind his back, a grin on his face.

Tanner looks over his shoulder as Bo comes in, but turns to watch what he is doing as he stacks cans over his head.

SANDY  
(re: Bo)  
What are you up to?

BO  
(sheepishly)  
Nothing.

SANDY  
You have that look.

BO  
What look?

SANDY  
The I'm going to do something  
stupid look.

BO  
Hey, I resent that. I just wanted  
to see if Tanner could come out and  
play.

Bo pulls a football from behind his back, grinning as Tanner turns to him with a smirk.

BO (CONT'D)  
(re: Tanner)  
So, do you?

SANDY  
Bo, you promised.

Tanner raises a hand to calm Sandy.

TANNER  
That's okay. I want to.

Sandy stares after Bo and Tanner with disbelief as they walk out.

SANDY  
Anything to get out of work.

EXT. BLUEWATER RESORT - DAY

Bo and Tanner stand in the softball field, tossing the football back and forth. Tanner throws the ball effortlessly, hitting his mark time after time. Bo's throws send Tanner scurrying side to side, back and forth.

BO  
How does it feel?

TANNER  
(grinning)  
Good.

BO  
You have a gift.

TANNER  
I don't know about that.

BO  
Really, you do.

TANNER  
I'm going to play.

BO  
It would be a shame not to use this gift.

TANNER  
(louder)  
I'll play.

BO  
Someone as natural as you shouldn't sit out. You really need to play.

TANNER  
(shouting)  
When is the first practice?

BO  
(excited)  
You're going to play?

Tanner laughs as he tosses another pass and nods.

BO (CONT'D)  
A few weeks.

TANNER  
Then I'd better start training.

Bo beams at Tanner, sure that it was his persuasion that convinced the boy to play.

INT. BLUEWATER RESORT - KITCHEN - DAY

Tanner sits eating lunch with Liz at the kitchen table. Tom walks in, standing in the doorway until Liz and Tanner notices.

TOM

If you have time, I would like to show you something.

Liz and Tanner exchange wondering looks and get up to follow Tom out the door.

INT. BLUEWATER RESORT - STORAGE SHED - DAY

Tom swings the doors open, letting the light shine into the space, outlining large items scattered around. Tom reaches around the corner and flicks on a light.

The room is filled with weight machines and free weights.

Liz laughs and claps her hands.

Tanner is in shock as he walks over and touches the barbell and weights on the racks. He looks back to Tom.

TOM

I thought you needed something to help get up to speed again.

TANNER

Thanks.

Liz moves over and wraps her arms around Tom. Tom leans down and they kiss. They look back at Tanner who is engrossed in checking out the equipment.

INT. BLUEWATER RESORT - STORAGE SHED - NIGHT

The doors are swung open and the lights illuminate the shed converted to a weight room. Ron, Bo, and Tanner are hitting the weights as Angela, Sandy, and Cali visit at a table set off to one side.

Tanner is bench pressing while Bo spots him.

Ron is doing curls close by.

Tanner grunts out his last rep and then slams the weights back onto the rack.

BO  
Pretty impressive. Are you up to your previous max yet?

TANNER  
(out of breath)  
Close, maybe a few pounds short, but it feels good.

Tanner rotates his shoulders, cringing and reaching up to rub his left shoulder.

SANDY  
Still hurts?

TANNER  
Not really, just a catch once in a while.

CALI  
(concerned)  
You were hurt?

TANNER  
In the accident, I messed up my shoulder, but it's fine.

Cali can't hide the worry in her eyes, but turns back to her conversation with Sandy and Angela.

BO  
You guys feel ready for tomorrow?

Ron drops the weight he is curling and stretches as he walks over to them.

RON  
I haven't felt stronger. It helps to have someone as driven as Tanner to keep pushing me.

TANNER  
It works both ways, pal.

Tanner slaps Ron on the back.

RON  
So what position do you think you'll play this year?

Tanner looks confused by Ron's statement.

TANNER  
Quarterback.

Ron stares at Bo, shocked.

RON  
You didn't tell him?

Bo looks sheepishly at Ron and Tanner.

TANNER  
Didn't tell me what?

BO  
(hesitantly)  
The team has a senior quarterback.

TANNER  
Okay, but the coach might think I'm  
better than him, right?

RON  
Not likely.

Tanner gets a hurt look on his face.

RON (CONT'D)  
No, not that you aren't better than  
him, you are. But...

TANNER  
But what?

Ron turns to Bo.

BO  
Our quarterback is the coach's son.

Tanner throws his hands up in disgust and walks out.

EXT. BLUEWATER RESORT - NIGHT

Cali rushes after Tanner, catching up with him a short  
distance from the workout shed.

CALI  
What's wrong?

TANNER  
Do you know what position I played  
in Texas?



CALI  
No. What does it matter?

TANNER  
It matters. Especially when the  
coach's son plays it too.

CALI  
(shocked)  
You're a quarterback?

TANNER  
Yeah.

CALI  
Oh shit.

TANNER  
Yeah, oh shit.

CALI  
No, I really mean, oh shit.

Tanner frowns, not understanding Cali's distress fully.

CALI (CONT'D)  
(sighing)  
That quarterback is my...

TANNER  
Let me guess, your old boyfriend?

CALI  
(laughing)  
Oh, god no.

TANNER  
That's good. I would hate to date  
you and have you torn between me  
and the other quarterback.

Cali looks sheepishly up at him.

TANNER (CONT'D)  
(exasperated)  
What? How are you connected?

CALI  
(sotto)  
He's my twin brother.

TANNER  
(shocked)  
That means your dad is the...

CALI

The coach.

TANNER

Why wouldn't you tell me?

CALI

It never came up.

TANNER

Ugh.

Tanner flails his arms over his head and storms off into the darkness.

EXT. GRAND RAPIDS HIGH SCHOOL - FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

MACK OLSON, late forties, head football coach of the Grand Rapids Thunderhawks stands in front of the bleachers filled with players.

Bo stands off to one side along with several other coaches.

Tanner sits next to Ron in the middle of the group. The players are dressed in a variety of shorts, shirts, and sweat pants combinations. Tanner's size stands out in the group as he is one of the largest players on the team.

MACK

(raised voice)

Welcome back to all the returning players and welcome to our newcomers.

Several eyes turn to stare at Tanner who lowers his eyes self-consciously.

MACK (CONT'D)

We have our core back from last year's conference champs and are optimistic the addition of a few players in key positions will push us into contention for the state championship.

The players nod their agreement.

MACK (CONT'D)

However, we need to work our asses off to be sure we're ready when our opportunities present themselves. So let's hit the field.

The players stand and file from the stands.

Mack turns to Bo, waiting for the players file by.

MACK (CONT'D)

What's the lowdown on the Schmidt kid?

BO

Played quarterback in Texas until his dad died in a car accident. He moved here this summer to live with his mom.

Mack's lips press together in thought.

MACK

Big for QB. And besides Kyle has the starting spot.

BO

But he's the entire package. Speed, arm, size.

MACK

It's foolish to have him sit behind Kyle without the chance of playing.

Mack stares at Bo for a moment as Bo nods hopefully.

MACK (CONT'D)

Put him at tight end. He should solidify our run game and if he's as fast as you say, he might be a good receiver.

Mack turns without waiting for Ron to respond and walks towards the players gathered on the field.

Bo follows after. He gestures to Tanner until the boy notices and runs over to him.

BO

(sotto)

Your our number two QB...

Tanner opens his mouth to object but Bo doesn't give him time.

BO (CONT'D)

...for now. You'll start at tight end.

Tanner stares hard at Bo, then nods, disappointed, accepting the decision, reluctantly.

EXT. GRAND RAPIDS HIGH SCHOOL - FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

Ron and Tanner go through the drills together. Ron prods Tanner until he comes out of his mood. Ron introduces Tanner to the other lineman on a water break and they welcome him to their rank.

By the end of the first week of practice, Tanner is smiling and joking with his new teammates, fitting in as one of the linemen.

EXT. GRAND RAPIDS HIGH SCHOOL - FOOTBALL FIELD

Tanner is picking up footballs and tossing them to the team managers after practice as the others file off the field.

A YOUNG RUNNING BACK looks over his shoulder at Tanner, drops his helmet on the ground and breaks for the endzone at the other end of the field. He raises his hand, gesturing for the ball.

YOUNG RUNNING BACK  
Schmidt, hit me.

Tanner spins the ball in his hands, getting the seams just right, and flings the ball effortlessly down the field.

The ball spirals, arching through the air, hitting the boy in the hands, still in full stride.

The running back trots to a stop, looking in shock at Tanner some seventy yards down the field.

Some of the other players notice as well, including KYLE OLSON, the senior QB. Worry spreads across his face as the realization of this new threat registers.

INT. GRAND RAPIDS HIGH SCHOOL - LOCKER ROOM - DAY

Tanner sits on a bench wearing jeans with no shirt. He slips on his socks as other players move past or dress nearby. The young running back stops in front him, smiling as Tanner looks up.

YOUNG RUNNING BACK  
That was awesome.

TANNER  
(shrugging)  
No big deal.

YOUNG RUNNING BACK  
Why are you playing tight end? You  
should be QB.

Tanner shakes his head and opens his mouth to respond.

KYLE  
(angry)  
That would be impossible, now  
wouldn't it? I'm the QB and Coach  
isn't going to replace me.

The young running back steps back, mouth open, unable to respond.

KYLE (CONT'D)  
Freshman should keep their mouth's  
shut until they have at least  
played a down. Get out of here.

Kyle gestures with his hand to the boy who scurries away.

Kyle stares at Tanner who is concentrating too much on putting his other sock on.

Kyle crouches down so he is eye-to-eye with Tanner, forcing Tanner to look at him.

KYLE (CONT'D)  
(sotto)  
I've lead this team for three year.  
Don't think you're coming in here  
and taking over, Texas.

TANNER  
(stammering)  
I, I, never thought...

KYLE  
So I've heard about you southern  
football players. You never think.  
Well, keep it that way.

Kyle gives Tanner a shove to emphasize his point and walks away.

Tanner watches after him, narrowing his eyes and setting his jaw.

EXT. GRAND RAPIDS HIGH SCHOOL - FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

Tanner is going through the lineman drills with the other players, showing that he can hold his own, and then some, with his teammates.

Tanner's success does not go unnoticed as Mack observes the drills. Kyle is also aware of Tanner's abilities and concern is evident on his face.

EXT. BLUEWATER RESORT - BEACH DOCK - DAY

Tanner and Cali sit on the dock looking at the lake as the sun moves towards the horizon.

CALI

How are things going with practice?

TANNER

Fine.

Cali isn't convinced.

Tanner sees her studying him.

TANNER (CONT'D)

What?

Cali raises an eyebrow.

TANNER (CONT'D)

It isn't the easiest going to a position you've never played before, but I think I'm getting the hang of it.

CALI

I never doubted you would, but I meant with Kyle and my dad.

Tanner looks out at the lake, choosing his words.

TANNER

Your dad is a good coach and your brother is...

Tanner glances at Cali as he pauses.

CALI

A pain in the ass?

Tanner nods slowly, uncertain he should agree.

TANNER  
Something like that.

CALI  
You scare him.

Tanner frowns.

TANNER  
Yeah, right. Why would I scare  
him? He's the starting QB and your  
dad won't change that.

CALI  
He knows how good you are, and that  
scares him.

TANNER  
Tell him not to worry. I'm a tight  
end, not a QB anymore.

Cali leans close and Tanner puts an arm around her, pulling  
her nearer.

CALI  
You'll always be a QB. It's in  
your blood. Kyle can see it as  
well as me. He just doesn't know  
what to do about it.

Tanner's eyes glisten as the sunlight reflects off the water.  
She was right. He would always be a quarterback.

INT. GRAND RAPIDS HIGH SCHOOL - CAFETERIA - DAY

The first day of school and Tanner sits with Ron and some  
other linemen at a table having lunch.

Angela walks by, nodding to Tanner, but continues on and sits  
at a table filled with girls dressed in the latest fashions  
with their hair styled just right.

Cali comes up and bumps Tanner with her hip. He looks at her  
as she smiles.

CALI  
Got some room for me?

TANNER  
Sure.

Tanner slides over, making room for Cali.

Cali sits down and smiles at the others at the table.

Ron leans forward so he can see Cali around Tanner.

RON  
You think this is a good move?

Tanner is confused by Ron's statement and turns to Cali questioningly.

CALI  
I can sit where I like.

RON  
But coach don't like you dating  
players.

CALI  
That's too bad.

RON  
Kyle don't like it either.

CALI  
He'll have to deal with it.

Tanner now understands and looks around nervously. Standing in the doorway is Coach Olson, staring at them, his expression not too pleased.

Tanner nudges Cali and motions with his head to the coach. She see him in the doorway and gives a shrug, going back to her lunch.

Before Tanner can say anything, Kyle bumps up against him, leaning Tanner into his lunch tray, smearing his food against the front of his shirt.

Tanner spins, angry, but stops before he gets up.

KYLE  
(snide)  
Oh, did I make you get you shirt  
dirty? I'm so sorry.

Tanner takes a napkin and wipes at his shirt.

TANNER  
No problem. Accidents happen.

KYLE  
Yeah, they do.



CALI  
Kyle, cut it out. Leave him alone.

Kyle glares down at Cali.

KYLE  
What are you doing?

CALI  
Having lunch with some friends.

KYLE  
You know the rules. No players.

CALI  
(angry)  
It's bullshit and you know it. I'm  
old enough to make my own choice.

KYLE  
And this is who you decided on?  
This steroid juiced wanna be?

Tanner stands so quickly, Kyle stumbles backwards into the next table. He looms over the smaller Kyle, anger filling every pore of his body.

Kyle rights himself, refusing to back down, he steps close to Tanner, glaring up at the much taller boy.

Coach Olson is suddenly there, pushing the boys apart.

MACK  
Knock it off, both of you. This is  
no way to act, especially in  
public.

Mack looks around disgustedly.

MACK (CONT'D)  
Meet me in my office after school.  
We'll deal with this then.

Tanner steps back from Mack's hand on his chest and sits down next to Cali.

Kyle glares at his father for a moment, then nods and walks away.

Mack pauses to look with disappointment at Cali and then walks off.

Cali watches her father leave, her hard determination faltering now.

CALI  
I'm so sorry.

TANNER  
Don't worry about it. We can't  
choose our family.

CALI  
(rolls her eyes)  
Tell me about it.

INT. GRAND RAPIDS HIGH SCHOOL - COACH'S OFFICE - DAY

Tanner and Kyle sit exchanging angry glances as Mack reads over some papers on his desk with his back to them.

Mack spins in his chair and the boys look blankly at their coach.

MACK  
You two should know better.

KYLE  
But he...

TANNER  
He...

MACK  
I don't want to hear it. You're  
teammates, first and foremost.  
Everything else is second during  
the season. After the season,  
that's different, but for now, you  
need to work together.

Mack looks hard at the boys. Tanner nods and Kyle ads his acceptance as well.

MACK (CONT'D)  
Good. Now get ready for practice.

Kyle and Tanner stand.

MACK (CONT'D)  
Tanner, stay a minute.

Tanner pauses as Kyle smirks and leaves the room, closing the door behind him.

MACK (CONT'D)  
Take a seat.

Tanner hesitates a moment and then sits down.

MACK (CONT'D)

I understand you and Cali became  
close this summer.

Tanner nods.

MACK (CONT'D)

What Cali didn't tell you, is I  
have a rule about her dating  
players.

Tanner opens his mouth to protest, but Mack raises a hand to  
stop him.

MACK (CONT'D)

I have nothing against you,  
personally, but if you date my  
daughter during the season, others  
may think I'm giving you special  
treatment as your football coach  
because of it.

TANNER

I would never expect...

MACK

I know, but it doesn't matter to  
other people.

Tanner nods.

MACK (CONT'D)

I'm sure you're a fine young man.  
All I ask is you and Cali keep it  
casual during the season.

TANNER

(resigned)

I guess we can do that.

MACK

Good. That's all. Get ready for  
practice.

Tanner leaves the room.

EXT. BLUEWATER RESORT - MAIN HOUSE PORCH - NIGHT

Tanner and Cali sit on the porch, bundled in warm clothes and  
a blanket. Cali's jaw is set as she stares at the lake in  
the distance.

TANNER  
(comforting)  
It's only until the season is over.

CALI  
(angry)  
He's winning. They're both  
winning. Can't you see that?

TANNER  
I don't see it as winning or  
losing. He's asking us to keep it  
cool until after the season.  
That's all.

CALI  
Damn football. I shouldn't have  
encouraged you to play again.

Tanner leans down so he can see Cali's face.

TANNER  
You don't mean that. I know you  
don't mean that. You were right  
all along. Football is a part of  
me and I need to play to really be  
me.

Cali nods, resigned to the reality.

CALI  
I hate them dictating my life.

TANNER  
They aren't, we're choosing to keep  
the peace.

Cali wraps her arms around Tanner.

CALI  
What did I do to deserve you?

TANNER  
Not sure. Just lucky I guess.

Tanner grins and kisses her.

EXT. GRAND RAPIDS HIGH SCHOOL - FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

The players are running through drills. Tanner and the  
lineman in one area, Kyle and the backs in another. Kyle is  
throwing passes as the backs run routes.

Kyle drops back to pass and rolls his ankle, sending him to the ground. Mack and Bo gather around him, taking a closer look at his ankle.

BO  
I think it just needs to be re-taped.

MACK  
(re: Kyle)  
What do you think?

Kyle nods.

KYLE  
That should do it.

Bo helps Kyle up and the quarterback heads to the locker room.

Bo pauses, looking at the players standing around, waiting on Kyle to come back and continue the drill.

Bo watches Mack walk over to the lineman drills and brightens.

BO  
(shouting)  
Tanner, run this until Kyle gets back.

Mack spins in shock to Bo, but the assistant coach is already heading to the locker room.

Tanner is standing with the backs gathered around him. He explains his routes as they nod and form two lines.

TANNER  
(ball in hand)  
Set, hut, hut.

The receiver breaks off the line and does a quick out pattern. Tanner drops three steps and fires a strike into the player's chest.

Mack watches the results repeat time and time again in stunned silence. He finally shakes himself out of his stupor and walks over to Tanner.

MACK  
Receivers, run a goalpost. Ten yards and break for the endzone.

Tanner looks at the coach and gives a nod.

TANNER  
(ball in hand)  
Set, hut, hut.

The receiver sprints down ten yards and breaks for the endzone. Tanner takes a five step drop and snaps the ball forty-five yards to the receiver, hitting him in stride.

MACK  
Let's put in some coverage.

Mack motions for the receiver in the front of the line to spin and become the defender.

Tanner nods and gets into position.

TANNER  
(ball in hand)  
Set, hut, hut.

The receiver takes off, cuts, and sprints for the endzone. The defender is stride for stride with him, perfect coverage.

Tanner drops back, pauses for a second, and then heaves the ball down field. The pass spirals tightly as it seeks it's target.

The receiver turns to look over his shoulder and the defender glances back to pick up the ball, but instead of falling within reach of the defender, the ball lands softly over the outside shoulder of the receiver, nestling into his arms as he strides into the endzone.

Several receivers in line cheer and high five Tanner.

Kyle and Bo are now standing, stunned, behind Tanner.

Tanner turns smiling and sees them, the smile slips from his face.

Bo is smiling, but Kyle is far from happy.

Kyle strides up to Tanner, gives him a push out of the way.

KYLE  
The starter is back. Time for  
second string to get back to the  
line where he belongs.

Tanner glances to Bo, then turns and trots back to the linemen drills without a word.

Mack walks to the group, ignoring Bo as he approaches.

MACK

Go back to the short out patterns  
and no defender.

Mack glances to Bo who is following close with a pleading look on his face.

MACK (CONT'D)

I don't want to hear it.

BO

Come on. You can't ignore the kid  
is good.

MACK

I need to go with what we know  
works. Drills are one thing. Kyle  
is game proven.

BO

So is Tanner.

MACK

But not here, not on our team.

BO

Mack.

MACK

Enough said. My minds made up.  
Kyle is our QB.

Bo looks at Tanner who stares across the field at him. Bo can only shrug.

Tanner nods and goes back to his drills.

EXT. OUT OF TOWN FOOTBALL FIELD - NIGHT

The Thunderhawks have their first game. Only a handful of Thunderhawk faithful are there in support of the visiting team. They concentrate on a running game, very little passing.

Tanner does a strong job on the line, even helping out when he takes his man down and another is slipping by one of his teammates.

Grand Rapids wins 7-3.

EXT. OUT OF TOWN FOOTBALL FIELD - NIGHT

The night is cold and rainy. At halftime, game is tied 14-14.

The first play of the second half, Kyle slips in the mud and sprains his ankle. Mack has no choice but to put Tanner in.

Mack keeps the ball on the ground and they are getting nowhere.

Tanner takes the offense up to the line and sees the defense playing eleven in the box. He audibles, changing the play to a pass.

Mack spins on Bo in anger.

MACK

What the hell is he doing? I never said he can audible.

BO

I never told him to.

MACK

I never knew he could.

The men turn and watch as Tanner takes the snap and strides back, nearly losing his footing on the muddy field.

A receiver breaks free of the defender after ten yards and Tanner connects with a pass and the receiver runs untouched for a touchdown.

Tanner races to the endzone to congratulate his receiver and they run to the bench, excited.

Tanner and the receiver sit on the bench reliving the play when Coach Olson stomps up.

Tanner and the receiver lose their smiles as they look at the coach's expression.

MACK (CONT'D)

(shouting)

You do not change plays I call.

You hear me?

Mack is right in Tanner's face now. He turns to the receiver, grabbing him by the jersey and yanking him to his feet.



MACK (CONT'D)  
 Throw the ball around and get  
 loose. You're in at QB the next  
 series.

RECEIVER  
 (in shock)  
 I don't know the plays.

MACK  
 Nothing to it. An idiot can do it.  
 Just hand off the ball.

Mack levels one more glare at Tanner and storms off.

Ron walks over and flops down next to a dejected Tanner.

RON  
 Nice pass.

Tanner nods.

TANNER  
 Thanks, but it may be my last.

Final score on the scoreboard shows visitors 21, home 14.

EXT. OUT OF TOWN FOOTBALL FIELD - NIGHT

The scoreboard shows home 16, visitors 0.

Kyle is on the sidelines on crutches staring out at the  
 field.

Tanner is under center, calling out signals.

TANNER  
 Red 23, red 23, hut, hut.

The ball is snapped and Tanner strides back, hands off to the  
 running back who is stopped before he can reach the line of  
 scrimmage by a wall of defenders.

Mack throws his hat to the ground in disgust.

MACK  
 Punt team.

The offense jogs off the field as the kicking team heads on.  
 Tanner pauses next to Mack and they make eye contact. Tanner  
 continues on without a word.

Mack turns away coming face to face with Bo, staring expectantly at him.

MACK (CONT'D)

What?

BO

Let him loose. Give him a chance to air it out.

MACK

That's not our game. We rely on the run.

BO

That was with Kyle. We have a different weapon with Tanner. We need to use him.

Mack meets Bo's stare and the resolve washes from his face.

MACK

(reluctant)

Okay.

BO

(excited)

Alright then.

The opponents punt the ball back to the Thunderhawks and Tanner stands and heads back onto the field.

Mack grabs Tanner's jersey as he moves past, stopping him in front of him.

Tanner looks at Mack questioningly.

MACK

Don't make me regret this.

Tanner doesn't get it.

MACK (CONT'D)

Air it out.

Tanner smiles excitedly and gives his coach a nod. He turns to the field and runs out to the huddle.

Tanner hits pass after pass, marching the offense down the field series after series. Some short passes, some long. He even scampers for yardage when the protection fails.

Scoreboard reads visitor 32, home 16.

INT. SCHOOL BUS - NIGHT

The players are on the bus, buzzing about the game. Kyle sits dejectedly in the front seat with his crutches.

Mack comes on, followed by the other coaches. He stops a few steps inside and looks at his happy team.

MACK  
(shouting)  
Listen up, listen up.

The players go silent.

MACK (CONT'D)  
You should be proud of yourselves tonight. That team was one of the preseason favorites to win this region.

The players cheer.

MACK (CONT'D)  
We need to keep doing the job and winning games until we get healthy again so Kyle can lead us to state.

Mack turns without hesitation and sits down as the coaches take their seats and the bus jerks into motion.

The bus is silent as all eyes are on Tanner. He nods, resigned to his role as a backup.

Kyle sits with a sheepish look on his face, not so comfortable with his role on the team.

INT. GRAND RAPIDS HIGH SCHOOL - CAFETERIA - DAY

Tanner sits next to Ron with his teammates at lunch, all wearing their uniforms. Signs in the cafeteria indicate the next game is homecoming.

Tanner looks across the room at Cali, staring at him from a table with her girlfriends. Tanner gives a shrug.

His teammates suddenly stop talking and Tanner realizes there is someone standing behind him. He turns to see Kyle looking down at him, his crutches are gone.

KYLE  
I wanted to let you know, I'm cleared to play and we don't need you at quarterback anymore.

Tanner looks around at the sad faces of his teammates, forces a smile and turns back to Kyle.

TANNER

Glad to hear it. We should kill those guys tonight with you back.

Kyle is shocked by Tanners reaction. He stares, at a loss for a moment.

KYLE

Uh, yeah, right. I wanted to say good job filling in while I was out.

Tanner nods.

TANNER

That's what teammates are for. We pick each other up.

A look of realization crosses Tanner's face as tears come to his eyes and he turns away, trying to hide his tears.

KYLE

Yeah, see you later.

TANNER

(head down)  
Later.

The bell rings and the cafeteria begins to clear. Tanner doesn't move as others stare at him curiously as they walk past.

Cali slides next to Tanner, concern across her face.

CALI

Are you alright?

Tanner looks at Cali, wet tracks from his tears mark his cheeks.

CALI (CONT'D)

What did he say to you?

Tanner shakes his head.

TANNER

It wasn't him. I think I realize what my dad meant.

CALI  
(surprised)  
You do?

TANNER  
He wanted me to play for the right reason. I think he meant to play for the good of the team and your teammates. Sacrifice your own goals for the goals of the team.

CALI  
He sounds like a good man.

TANNER  
He was the best.

CALI  
I bet you're a lot like him.

Cali wraps her arms around Tanner and pulls him into a hug.

INT. GRAND RAPIDS HIGH SCHOOL - LOCKER ROOM

Tanner walks past the coach's office as Kyle exits, nearly colliding with him.

Kyle looks at Tanner, surprised to see him there. He gives Tanner a slap on the shoulder pad and rushes out to the field.

Tanner turns to follow, but stops as Coach Olson calls to him.

MACK - O.S.  
Tanner, come in here a minute.

INT. GRAND RAPIDS HIGH SCHOOL - COACH'S OFFICE

Tanner walks in, his face betraying his curiosity.

MACK  
Close the door.

Tanner closes the door behind him and stands with his back to it.

MACK (CONT'D)  
Kyle has made a strange request.

Tanner stands silent, not sure where this was going.

MACK (CONT'D)

He asked to be put at running back  
and leave you at quarterback.

TANNER

(defensive)

I never asked him to do that.  
That's a coaching decision.

Mack raises a calming hand, stopping Tanner.

MACK

Kyle is a good kid, and a great  
player. He could see what was best  
for the team, even if I refused to  
accept it. He's right.

TANNER

I never expected...

MACK

I know, and so does Kyle. You put  
the team first even though you knew  
you were the best man for the job.  
We respect that.

TANNER

(humbly)

Thank you sir.

MACK

So how about it? Ready to lead us  
the rest of the season?

TANNER

If you feel I am.

MACK

I do, now get out there and stick  
it to them.

Tanner smiles and rushes out the door.

Bo sticks his face inside the door, with an "I told you so"  
smile.

Mack sighs.

MACK (CONT'D)

Nobody likes a know it all.

EXT. GRAND RAPIDS HIGH SCHOOL - FOOTBALL FIELD - NIGHT

Tanner throws for excellent yardage while Kyle rushes well and Grand Rapids overwhelms the visitors to win homecoming 42-7 with a balanced offensive attack.

Tanner smiles at Cali in the stands alongside his mother, Tom and Sandy.

INT. GRAND RAPIDS HIGH SCHOOL - GYMNASIUM - NIGHT

Tanner and Cali are dancing to a slow song, every now and then a teammate pats Tanner on the back, congratulating him on the game.

Kyle moves past with Angela, a grin upon his face as he looks at Tanner and Cali.

Tanner is confused by the reaction.

TANNER

What's up with that? I was afraid this would be too public for your dad and Kyle.

CALI

(happy)

They decided you were alright, so I can see you as much as I want without sneaking around.

Tanner raises a surprised eyebrow.

TANNER

Really?

Cali smiles.

CALI

Really.

They move closer as they continue to dance.

EXT. GRAND RAPIDS HIGH SCHOOL - FOOTBALL FIELD - NIGHT

Thunderhawks beat the next opponent 32-0. Tanner and Kyle shine as a tough tandem once again.

EXT. GRAND RAPIDS HIGH SCHOOL - FOOTBALL FIELD - NIGHT

Thunderhawks win again, 28-7. Kyle rushes for two touchdowns while Tanner throws for two.

EXT. OUT OF TOWN FOOTBALL FIELD - NIGHT

Muddy, rainy night, Tanner and Kyle both struggle to do anything, but they fight for a 16-14 victory.

More and more fans are beginning to travel with the team and follow them closely.

EXT. GRAND RAPIDS HIGH SCHOOL - FOOTBALL FIELD - NIGHT

Strong showing again. Thunderhawks win 35 - 7 with Tanner throwing for three touchdowns and Kyle running for the last one.

Cali, Sandy, Tom, and Liz are in the stands for support.

EXT. GRAND RAPIDS HIGH SCHOOL - FOOTBALL FIELD - NIGHT

Press and scouts from all over are at the game. Standing room only watches the home team pound the visitors 52 - 3. Tanner has a big night, hitting on four touchdown passes while Kyle runs for three more.

Tanner is worried about the press, but keeps his helmet on and doesn't give any interviews.

EXT. GRAND RAPIDS HIGH SCHOOL - FOOTBALL FIELD - NIGHT

Another chaotic night at the field with the news crews and media blitz.

Tanner and Kyle work together flawlessly and the Thunderhawks win 35-10.

INT. GRAND RAPIDS HIGH SCHOOL - LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

Coach Olson comes in, holding a paper. He stands quietly a moment and then whistles to get the player's attention.

All eyes turn to the coach.



MACK

I wanted to be the first to let you  
know what the headlines in  
tomorrow's paper will read.

He holds open a paper with bold letters across the top.  
**RAPIDS RANKED #1 HEADING INTO PLAYOFFS.**

The team bursts into cheers. Everyone, except for Tanner.  
The realization his secret will be hard to keep, evident to  
him.

INT. BLUEWATER RESORT - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Tanner sits with Liz, Tom, Bo, and Sandy at dinner when the  
phone rings - O.S.

Tom gets up and answers the phone.

TOM

Bluewater Resort, Tom speaking.

Tom hesitates for a moment, listening to the person on the  
other end of the phone. He glances at Tanner nervously.

TOM (CONT'D)

Just a minute.

Tom puts his hand over the mouthpiece as he lowers the  
handset.

TOM (CONT'D)

(re: Tanner)

It's Sports Illustrated. They  
wanted to speak with Tanner Wilson  
to see if he had any comment on an  
article they're running tomorrow  
about him.

Tanner's eyes fill with panic.

Liz comes to her feet, placing a comforting hand on Tanner's  
arm.

LIZ

(defiantly)

You tell them...

Liz stops when Tanner places his hand over hers as it rests  
on his arm. He slowly comes to his feet, shaking his head.

TANNER

I guess I always knew it would come to this. I'll talk with them.

He walks over and takes a hold of the phone. Tom pauses, still holding the handset, looking into Tanner's eyes.

TOM

You don't have to do this.

Tanner looks at Tom firmly.

TANNER

Yes I do.

Tom gives Tanner a nod and a pat on his back and sits down at the table. He motions for Liz to sit as well.

Liz hesitantly sits down, not taking her eyes from Tanner.

Tanner raises the phone to his ear.

TANNER (CONT'D)

This is Tanner Wilson.

Tanner listens to the person on the phone.

TANNER (CONT'D)

Yes sir. I'll read it over and write you back. Just a minute.

Tanner motions to Sandy for a pen and paper.

Sandy hurries to the counter and comes back with a tablet and pen.

Tanner listens and then writes down the information.

TANNER (CONT'D)

Yes sir. I appreciate you allowing me to respond. Thank you.

Tanner hangs up, letting his hand slide from his face like it's weight is too much to support.

He sets the phone down and turns to four expectant faces.

TANNER (CONT'D)

(sighing)

They put it all together when they saw the footage of the last game. They're giving me a chance to comment in the next edition.

BO

This isn't good. Depending on how they put it, it may look like you've been trying to dupe everyone.

TANNER

They gave me a web site and password to check it out. You want to come take a look with me?

Bo nods and follows Tanner out of the room.

INT. BLUEWATER RESORT - MAIN HOUSE - TANNER'S ROOM - NIGHT

Tanner sits in his computer chair, Bo reading the screen over his shoulder.

Tanner leans back with a moan as Bo steps back, running a hand through his hair.

Bo sits on the edge of Tanner's bed, looking at the boy with concern.

TANNER

They're going to kill me. Aren't they?

BO

They won't be happy. They make Coach out to be some hick, unable to see talent if it hits him in the face.

TANNER

How did they know I played tight end first?

BO

I'm not sure, they must have talked to someone. Hell, it could have been other teams.

TANNER

What am I going to do?

BO

Suck it up and take it, whatever it is. That's all you can do now.

TANNER

I suppose you're right.

Bo looks at the clock on Tanner's dresser.

BO

It's getting late. Try and get some sleep. No matter what you decide, do it from the heart and you can't go wrong.

Tanner forces a smile as he looks worried at Bo.

TANNER

Thanks.

Bo gives him a pat on the back and walks out.

Tanner looks as if he will be sick.

INT. GRAND RAPIDS HIGH SCHOOL - CAFETERIA - DAY

Tanner walks through the cafeteria on his way to his locker at the start of school. He is met by looks of hate and contempt from the other students.

Tanner frowns, wondering how people would know so soon, but he sees the reason instantly. Stacks of Sports Illustrated magazines are on every table in the cafeteria.

Tanner picks one up to see his face, a combination of what he looked like in Texas and now. On the Texas side it reads, "Texas Phenom Quarterback to Minnesota Tight End. Tale of Two Tanners".

Tanner grimaces as he reads. He looks up to see a crowd gathering around him.

Ron stands to one side, his arms crossed in front of him and anger seething from his eyes.

RON

(contemptuously)

Were we that stupid to you? Did you think it was funny to pretend and make us look like idiots?

TANNER

(pleading)

It's not like that. I would never do that to you.

RON

You did. Go to hell.

Ron storms off, leaving Tanner to face his classmates.

Tanner moves through the angry crowd of students only to run into Cali before he can break free of the mob.

Cali reaches up and slaps him full across the face before he can stop.

CALI

Why would you lie to me? The top  
quarterback in the country? Don't  
you think that's some information  
you should share?

TANNER

I was trying to forget that life.  
I had no intention of playing again  
until you convinced me.

CALI

My mistake. I won't make another.

Cali turns to leave, but Tanner takes hold of her arm. She spins on him, raising her fist to strike him again.

CALI (CONT'D)

Leave me alone.

Cali pulls free, storming off through the crowd.

Tanner watches after her, helpless.

INT. GRAND RAPIDS HIGH SCHOOL - GYMNASIUM - DAY

The school is gathered for a pep rally and much of the community fills the rest of the bleachers in support of their team.

The school song plays as the team marches in, minus Tanner. They sit on chairs in front of the crowd as the song comes to an end.

Coach Olson walks to a podium with a microphone as the crowd cheers again.

MACK

Before we get on with the  
festivities and praise for these  
young men up here, there is someone  
who has asked to speak to you.

Mack steps back and motions to the doors on the side of the gym.

Tanner strides through the doorway, walking steadily towards the podium, ignoring the boos as they rise up from the stand and even some from his teammates.

He stops at the podium, unable to bring his eyes to meet those of his teammates or coach. He sadly looks out at the crowd, making eye contact with Cali for a moment, but turning away from her stinging glare.

TANNER

(timidly)

Coach Olson has agreed to give me a chance to speak with you, and I ask you hear me out.

There are few more boos, but they quiet down quickly.

TANNER (CONT'D)

I don't ask you to forgive me for deceiving you. I never should have, and I'm sorry.

Tanner becomes more confident as he continues.

TANNER (CONT'D)

What I ask, is that you try to understand what I did.

The crowd rumbles at this suggestion.

TANNER (CONT'D)

Last year, I lost the most important man in my world. I lost him in an accident where I was arguing with him about football. That distraction caused the accident.

The gym is now silent.

TANNER (CONT'D)

What we were arguing about, was how I was so caught up in the hype surrounding me, that I didn't realize I was missing the true meaning of playing any team sport.

Tanner wipes a tear away from his eyes.

TANNER (CONT'D)

Play for the right reason, he said. Hell, I didn't know the reason, and with him gone, I felt I would never know.

The crowd is listening intently. Cali wipes a tear from here eyes, defiantly.

Bo stands off to one side, fighting back tears.

TANNER (CONT'D)

I changed my name to my mother's maiden name and moved up here, intent on leaving football and that life behind me.

People in the stands are starting to look more sympathetic than angry now.

TANNER (CONT'D)

Then, out of nowhere, I met someone. Someone special. She made me see that running away from football because I didn't know the answer to my father's question was going to leave that question unanswered the rest of my life.

Cali is now crying openly. Tears running down her cheeks.

TANNER (CONT'D)

This was never meant to deceive you or make you look bad. This was never about anything more than me learning that the love of the game, and putting the team ahead of any personal goals, was the reason to play. Nothing else.

Coach Olson grins, tears filling his eyes.

Tanner turns to Kyle sitting in the front row, his eyes red, fighting back the tears.

TANNER (CONT'D)

Thank you for showing me how to be unselfish. I'll always be grateful for that.

Tanner looks to the crowd.

TANNER (CONT'D)

I ask you and the coaches to give me a chance to continue to be your quarterback. Whatever your decision, I'll accept. Thank you for the opportunity to be a part of such a great team and community.

Tanner turns and walks out of the gym without looking back.  
Coach Olson comes to the microphone and clears his throat.

MACK

A brave young man, but I agree with him. This is a community decision since Sports Illustrated decided to lump us all together in this.

Mack looks at Bo who shrugs.

MACK (CONT'D)

All in favor of replacing Tanner as our quarterback, say aye.

INT. GRAND RAPIDS HIGH SCHOOL - COACH'S OFFICE

There is a knock on the door. Coach Olson sits studying notes on his desk.

MACK

Yeah.

Tanner sticks his head in the room.

MACK (CONT'D)

Come in, Tanner. Sit down.

Tanner sits down, apprehension on his face.

MACK (CONT'D)

The town and the coaching staff made their decision.

Tanner's face looks like he is going to throw up.

TANNER

(whisper)

And?

MACK

You're our guy.

Tanner slumps in his chair, exhaling with relief.

MACK (CONT'D)

Although I didn't like Sports Illustrated implying I couldn't tell a world class quarterback from a tight end.

Tanner grimaces.



TANNER  
Sorry about that.

MACK  
I'm not going to be so foolish as  
to not let that world class  
quarterback lead us to the state  
championship.

TANNER  
Thanks coach.

MACK  
Now go suit up, we have a state  
quarterfinal game to win.

Tanner jumps to his feet, grinning from ear to ear, and hurries out.

Mack smiles and turns back to his notes.

EXT. GRAND RAPIDS HIGH SCHOOL - FOOTBALL FIELD - NIGHT

Grand Rapids wins 21-6 to advance to the state semifinals. Tanner throws for two touchdowns while Kyle runs for the third.

EXT. BLUEWATER RESORT - MAIN PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Cali pulls up in her car, stopping outside the main entrance to Tanner's house, opposite the resort store.

She sits in her car, gathering her courage. Her car is illuminated from behind by another vehicle's headlights and she looks in her mirror.

The other car pulls up, stopping outside the resort store on the other side of the parking lot.

Shawna steps out, dressed in a trendy winter coat, more fashionable than practical, ear muffs, but none of it hides her model-like looks. She walks to the store front, the windows all dark, and tries the locked door. She then turns and moves towards the house.

Cali steps out of her car as Shawna comes closer.

CALI  
Can I help you?

SHAWNA  
(southern drawl)  
Do you work here honey?

CALI  
Yes. What are you looking for?

Shawna looks Cali up and down, measuring her.

SHAWNA  
Not what, but who. Tanner Wilson.

CALI  
He's inside.

Cali motions to the house behind her.

CALI (CONT'D)  
Why do you want to see Tanner?

SHAWNA  
(condescending)  
Because I'm his girlfriend from  
back home.

Cali looks as if she has just been slapped. She stares blankly at Shawna.

CALI  
(with effort)  
I didn't know Tanner had a  
girlfriend.

SHAWNA  
(snide)  
I'm sure. Well, I'm here to help  
get his career back on track.

Cali fights back the tears as she searches for words.

SHAWNA (CONT'D)  
You said he was in the house?

Shawna motions to the house.

Cali nods, turning away and getting into her car as Shawna walks past to the house.

Cali starts her car, pausing to watch Shawna knock on the door.

Shawna notices Cali watching and waves, smiling, pleased with herself.

Cali pulls out, wiping the tears from her cheeks with the back of her hand.

INT. BLUEWATER RESORT - MAIN HOUSE ENTRY - NIGHT

There is a knock on the door and Tanner answers it.

He is shocked to see Shawna standing there, smiling proudly. She opens her arms wide, hesitates at Tanner's lack of reaction, and then moves to embrace him.

SHAWNA

I knew you'd be speechless.

Tanner gently pushes her away from him, looking at her, confused.

TANNER

What? What are you doing here?

SHAWNA

You didn't think I'd make you face all this by yourself, did you?

TANNER

I'm not by myself. I have my family, and my friends.

SHAWNA

Oh, like the one I met outside? She didn't seem too friendly to me. She could hardly say two words.

Tanner moves past Shawna looking out the door in time to see Cali's taillights going down the driveway.

TANNER

What did you say to her?

SHAWNA

Nothing.

Tanner takes hold of Shawna by her shoulders.

TANNER

Tell me what you said. Exactly.

Shawna pushes his hands from her shoulders.

SHAWNA

(angry)  
What's the big deal?  
(MORE)

SHAWNA (CONT'D)

I told her I was looking for you  
because I was your girlfriend.

Tanner spins away from her in disgust, rushing to pick up his cell phone and dial.

TANNER

(under his breath)  
Right to voice mail.

Tanner hurries across the room, picks up his jacket and slips it on as he moves to the door.

Shawna is still in the open doorway, looking confused.

TANNER (CONT'D)

(shouting)  
Mom, Shawna is here. I gotta run  
and do something. I'll be right  
back.

Tanner pushes past Shawna.

Liz comes down the stairs, staring surprised at Shawna. Liz walks over, urges Shawna inside the house and closes the door.

EXT. BLUEWATER RESORT - NIGHT

Tanner runs into the garage. He soon pulls out in the resort's suburban and speeds down the driveway.

INT. SUBURBAN - NIGHT

Tanner races down the country road lined with dense forest. He speeds along until he sees taillights ahead as a car sits on the side of the road parked on an approach.

EXT. RURAL MN HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Tanner pulls the suburban alongside Cali's car.

Cali doesn't notice him at first, her head against the steering wheel crying. The interior dashboard lights illuminating her face.

Tanner gets out, walks to the car's driver's side window and taps on it. The lights of the suburban shine on the window.

Cali jumps in surprise, staring at him with red eyes. She rolls the window down, looking away.

CALI  
What do you want?

TANNER  
We need to talk.

CALI  
I think your *girlfriend* said it  
all.

TANNER  
She's not my girlfriend.

CALI  
She's convinced she is.

TANNER  
We broke up after my dad died. I  
haven't seen her or spoken to her  
since I left Texas.

CALI  
Then why would she...

TANNER  
She's all about riding my football  
career to the NFL. I don't want  
someone like that.

CALI  
She's beautiful.

Tanner crouches next to the car so he is eye level with Cali.  
He reaches over and takes a hold of her chin, turning her  
face to him.

TANNER  
Not as beautiful as you are, both  
inside and out.

Cali smiles, then turns away, embarrassed.

TANNER (CONT'D)  
What were you doing at the resort  
anyway? I thought you were mad at  
me?

CALI  
(shakes her head)  
I came to apologize and tell you I  
understand. But then I saw her  
and...

TANNER

And you thought I lied to you again.

CALI

Yes. How else would I see it?

TANNER

I know. But I didn't lie to you.

CALI

I know.

Tanner leans in hesitantly and Cali meets him halfway to kiss. They hold the kiss and then pull away.

TANNER

We okay?

CALI

Yeah.

Cali leans her head against his as he looks in the car window. Cali lifts her head as a sudden thought comes to her.

CALI (CONT'D)

What are you going to do about Shawna?

TANNER

(shrugging)

Tell her to go home.

Tanner reaches in and kisses Cali again.

TANNER (CONT'D)

I better run. You alright to drive home?

Cali rolls her eyes.

CALI

I'm fine.

EXT. BLUEWATER RESORT - MAIN PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Tanner pulls in as Shawna's car races out.

Shawna glares as she goes, but doesn't slow.

Tanner pulls the suburban in front of the house and gets out, staring curiously after Shawna.

INT. BLUEWATER RESORT - MAIN HOUSE ENTRY - NIGHT

Tanner walks in, closing the door behind him. He sees Sandy and Liz sitting at the kitchen table, arms folded and eyes still fuming.

Tanner takes off his coat and walks cautiously to the table.

Liz and Sandy are lost in their thoughts, not looking at Tanner, but staring off at nothing.

TANNER

Is everything okay?

Tanner's voice snaps the women out of their thoughts. They jump and look at him in surprise.

LIZ

Oh, yes, I think so.

SANDY

That girl is a piece of work.

TANNER

(confused)

How so?

SANDY

She told us how she was responsible for you being the football star you are and she was going to be the one with you when you make the NFL.

TANNER

(eyes wide)

Really?

LIZ

Oh yeah. She said I took you from Texas to control you and get your money when you go pro.

TANNER

No way.

SANDY

Way. She informed us that Cali was a gold digger looking for a way out of this piss ant town.

TANNER

Kind of hypocritical.

SANDY  
Totally. But your mom took care of  
her.

Tanner looks to Liz.

LIZ  
(sheepish)  
I told her to get her self-serving,  
manipulative ass out of here before  
I kicked her out of here.

SANDY  
(excitedly)  
And Cali is your girlfriend now and  
she had better head back to Texas  
if she knew what was good for her.

TANNER  
(amazed)  
And that worked?

SANDY  
It scared me, hell, I was ready to  
go to Texas.

Tanner laughs, walks over to Liz and gives her a hug.

TANNER  
Thanks for looking out for me.

LIZ  
(defiantly)  
It's my job.

They laugh.

INT. BLUEWATER RESORT - MAIN HOUSE - NIGHT

There is a knock on the door and Sandy opens it to find BRIAN  
KELLY, Notre Dame's head football coach, standing in the  
doorway.

SANDY  
Coach Kelly, come in.

BRIAN  
Thank you.

SANDY  
Tanner will be right down.

Tanner comes down the stairs.



BRIAN

Tanner, good to see you again.  
It's been a long time.

TANNER

Hello sir. It sure has.

Tanner shakes Brian's outstretched hand.

BRIAN

I appreciate you meeting with me.

TANNER

I'm glad you could come.

BRIAN

I wanted to speak with you in person since things have changed a little since we saw each other in Texas last season.

Tanner nods and motions Brian to take a seat at the kitchen table.

Sandy sets two cups of coffee down on the table and quietly leaves the room.

TANNER

They sure have.

BRIAN

First, let me say how sorry I am to hear about your father.

TANNER

Thank you.

BRIAN

The truth is, Tanner, we didn't know where you were and couldn't find you. That forced us to look at different quarterback prospects.

Tanner is disappointed by the news, but nods.

TANNER

I understand.

BRIAN

We've been pursuing LUKE CARLSON of Cretin Durham Hall as our top recruit this year.

TANNER

He's really good. We'll face them in the finals if we win our game tomorrow night and they win their game.

Brian smiles, impressed by Tanner's attitude.

BRIAN

That's why I'm here. I'll be at your game tomorrow, and Luke's game the next night. I need to see both of you in person again to help decide.

Tanner's eyes light up as he looks excitedly to Brian.

TANNER

You mean...

BRIAN

(nodding)

You're still in the running, if you're still interested.

Tanner can barely contain his excitement.

TANNER

(nodding passionately)

Yes sir, I am.

BRIAN

Good, good. I was hoping you'd say that.

Brian and Tanner stand.

TANNER

My mother wanted me to ask you to stay for supper.

BRIAN

(thankful)

That's very kind, but it's been a long day getting up here, and I have a lot of notes to go over before the game.

Brian extends his hand and Tanner shakes it firmly.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

I'm glad you came back to the game, son. You will be an asset to any program, no matter where you go.

TANNER

Thank you Coach. Have a good night.

BRIAN

Good night.

Tanner opens the door and lets Brian leave, closing the door behind him. He watches the Coach drive off in his rental car and then turns, leaning against the door with a sigh and a hopeful smile.

EXT. GRAND RAPIDS HIGH SCHOOL - FOOTBALL FIELD - NIGHT

The Minnesota State semifinals. Grand Rapids has home field advantage due to their undefeated record.

Brian Kelly is in the stands surrounded by other college coaches scouting Tanner.

The game starts off tough for the Thunderhawks as they quickly fall behind 14-0. The defensive is sluggish and the offense has a quick three and out on it's first drive. Tanner throws two incomplete passes way off the mark, showing his nervousness.

Mack pulls Tanner and Kyle aside before the next series.

MACK

What's up with you two? I thought we were past this? Tanner, you've played before larger crowds than this.

TANNER

Sorry coach. I was out of sync. I'll get it.

MACK

(re: Kyle)

And you. Run like you mean it. You were hesitant on the first drive and their defense took advantage of it.

Kyle and Tanner nod with determination.

MACK (CONT'D)

Now let's put together a good scoring drive and give the "D" some rest.

Kyle and Tanner race onto the field, joining the rest of the offense in the huddle.

Ron catch's Tanner's eye and gives him a confident nod.

The first play, Kyle sprints for a first down. The next, Tanner hits a receiver on a quick out for fifteen. Play after play, mixing pass and run, the Thunderhawks march down the field. The drive is capped with a 9 yard pass from Tanner to Kyle.

The kickoff has the Thunderhawks special teams stripping the ball and recovering the fumble on the 35.

A 20 yard pass from Tanner to a receiver and a fifteen yard scamper by Kyle along with the point after, knots the score at 14.

The rest of the game is all Thunderhawk as they blow out the visitors the rest of the way, 49-14. Tanner throws for four touchdowns and Kyle rushes for three more.

The teams leave the field and Brian Kelly is waiting for Tanner.

Brian shakes Tanner's hand.

BRIAN

Nice game. You certainly put yourself in a good position. I'll speak with you after Luke's game.

Tanner nods as the Coach pats him on the back and walks away.

Cali, Angela, Ron, and Kyle are waiting off to one side until Coach Kelly walks off. They come over to Tanner as he watches the Notre Dame coach walk away.

RON

Was that...?

KYLE

Brian Kelly from Notre Dame?

TANNER

Yeah.

CALI

You never told me you were being recruited by Notre Dame.

TANNER

I thought he gave up on me, but I guess he didn't.

ANGELA

Cool.

INT. BLUEWATER RESORT - FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT

Tanner, Cali, Ron, Angela, and Kyle are gathered in front of the TV watching Cretin Durham Hall destroy it's opponent. Luke Carlson throws for five touchdowns and over 300 yards.

KYLE

He's really good.

CALI

(dirty look)

Kyle!

TANNER

That's okay. He *is* really good.

RON

Our defense is going to have a heck of a time shutting them down.

ANGELA

Not if we blitz the corners from the outside. Their ends play too far in and can never block a blitzing "D" back. And besides, Carlson can't roll out very well. He has no mobility. Not like Tanner.

Tanner, Kyle, Cali, and Ron stare at Angela in shocked amazement.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

What?

CALI

I didn't know you knew so much about football.

ANGELA

Cheering for football since ninth grade, you pick up things.

KYLE

I'll make sure my dad talks to you if he has any questions.

They laugh.

TANNER

We have to keep pace with their offense, if our defense can't stop them. Hopefully they can slow them down a bit.

Tanner glances to Kyle as they share a worried look.

INT. HUBERT H. HUMPHREY METRODOME - NIGHT

Championship game pitting the Grand Rapids Thunderhawks against the Cretin Durham Hall Raiders. Both teams are undefeated with Cretin favored by a touchdown.

The teams take the field for warm-ups and Tanner spots Coach Kelly standing to the side of the tunnel entrance.

The coach sees Tanner and motions him over.

BRIAN

Good luck tonight Tanner.

TANNER

Thanks.

BRIAN

I don't want to put too much pressure on you, but you and Luke are neck and neck, as far as I'm concerned. It comes down to tonight's performance.

Tanner looks like he will be sick.

TANNER

I don't think that helped my nerves.

BRIAN

Sorry. Just wanted you to know that you have a very good chance of being Notre Dame's quarterback recruit this year.

TANNER

(unsure)

Thanks.

Tanner jogs onto the field, the roar of the crowd deafening and the sight of the stands packed with fans, invigorating. He smiles with familiarity.

Standing on the sidelines before the game, Tanner looks out at the field collecting his thoughts.

BLAINE - O.S.  
(shouting)  
Tanner, Tanner.

Tanner turns to see his old teammates Blaine and Jake in the stands.

Tanner walks over, grinning.

TANNER  
What are you guys doing here?

JAKE  
I've been with you for your first two championships, I wasn't going to miss your third.

TANNER  
You guys are awesome.

BLAINE  
Don't you know it. Now get out there and kick their ass.

TANNER  
I wish you were out there with me.

JAKE  
We are, pal, we always are.

Tanner reaches up and fist pumps Jake and then Blaine.

The whistle blows - O.S.

Tanner turns and heads into his team's huddle on the sideline.

MACK  
We worked hard to get here, and had a lot of distractions. The only thing that matters now, is to play together, help each other out, and stick it to these guys for four quarters.

Every player's eyes are filled with determination and intensity.

The game goes back and forth from the start. Luke throws for a touchdown on the first drive then Kyle answers with a 25 yard touchdown run on the Thunderhawks first drive.

The Raiders fumble and the Thunderhawks recover on the next drive and Tanner hits a receiver in the endzone for a 40 yard touchdown to take the lead.

The Raiders answer with a touchdown pass from Luke on the next drive. The score 14-14.

The game goes back and forth, finding the Raiders up 38-35 with 15 seconds in regulation remaining. The Thunderhawks have the ball on the Raider 45 yard line.

Tanner takes the snap from center, drops back and hits his receiver racing down the sideline for the touchdown. The team celebrates, but Tanner sees the yellow flag a few feet from him and his head drops in defeat.

The HEAD OFFICIAL walks over, retrieves his flag, and moves to the center of the field to address the cameras.

HEAD OFFICIAL  
Holding, number 68, offense. Ten  
yards, repeat second down.

Tanner looks up at the clock. 6 seconds remain.

The huddle is deathly silent as Tanner steps in. Ron, wearing number 68 looks around sullenly at his teammates.

RON  
Sorry.

TANNER  
Forget it. We have another chance.

Kyle runs in from the sidelines with the play. He leans close to Tanner and locks eyes with him.

KYLE  
Slot right, slant post fly.

Tanner looks questioningly to Kyle.

TANNER  
Did he sound firm with that play?

Kyle and the other players look curiously at Tanner.

KYLE  
What do you mean?

TANNER  
They've been jumping on the first  
movement all night. Maybe we  
should shake it up a bit.



KYLE

I don't know, Tanner.

Tanner looks around the huddle. He gives a curt nod.

TANNER

Slot right, slant post fly, on two.  
Keep your ears open for an audible.

Tanner holds his teammates attention for a split second more.

TANNER (CONT'D)

Ready, break.

THE HUDDLE

(in unison)

Break.

The offense breaks from the huddle, the linemen run up to the line, the backs hurry to their spots. Tanner walks purposefully to the line, watching the defense adjust to the offense's formation.

A smile spreads across Tanner's face as he crouches behind the center and slides his hands into position.

TANNER

Green 55, green, 55.

Tanner pauses as the backs move into a different alignment. The defense tries to adjust, but Tanner calls the snap before they can get set.

On the sideline, Mack and Bo look to each other in shock, but then Mack smiles as he hears Tanner's audible and nods with approval.

TANNER (CONT'D)

Hut, hut.

The receivers break, Tanner drops back three steps and then pitches the ball to Kyle, just as a blitzing defender pulls Tanner down.

Kyle races towards the sideline, then stops and looks down field.

On the sideline, Luke Carlson sees the play develop and screams out as he recognizes it.

LUKE

(frantic)

Pass, pass.

The cry comes too late as Kyle heaves the ball down field. The defensive backs are scrambling to recover from reacting to the fake sweep, but the Thunderhawk receiver is wide open as the ball falls into his hands and he runs across the goal line for a touchdown.

Tanner gets to his feet as the team surrounds Kyle, patting him on the back, shoulder pads, and helmet.

An arm wraps around Tanner's shoulders as Mack embraces his quarterback.

Tanner smiles.

MACK

That was the most selfless thing I have ever seen.

TANNER

It was the best play for the team.

MACK

Yeah, but you probably would have been able to complete it too.

TANNER

(shaking his head)  
They were expecting that.

Mack gives Tanner a shake.

MACK

Nice job.

Mack races to congratulate the rest of the team, lifting Kyle into a bear hug.

The teams line up on the sidelines to receive the trophy.

Tanner's teammates continue to congratulate him with pats on the back.

Tanner looks to Blaine and Jake, giving him a thumbs up.

Cali smiles at him with pride, standing next to Liz, Sandy, and Tom.

Angela cheers from her spot on the sideline with her cheerleader squad.

Brian Kelly applauds, leaning in to exchange a few unheard words with his assistants with a smile and a nod.

The PA ANNOUNCER clicks on the microphone.

## PA ANNOUNCER

We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate both teams for an exciting game tonight.

The crowd cheers.

## PA ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

We have the final statistics while we get organized for the presentation ceremony.

Tanner looks over his shoulder at Brian Kelly in the stands.

## PA ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

Cretin Durham Hall Raiders, 35 points, Luke Carlson, 33-45 345 yards passing, four touchdowns and one interception. 67 yards rushing with one rushing touchdown.

The fans applaud Cretin Durham Hall's efforts.

## PA ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

Grand Rapids Thunderhawks, 41 points, Tanner Wilson, 35-40 300 yards passing, three touchdowns and no interceptions. 128 yards rushing with Kyle Olson scoring two touchdowns and throwing for a third.

Tanner smiles, resigned to the fact Luke Olson's numbers were better than his. He looks down the line to exchange thumbs up with Kyle.

Brian Kelly checks his numbers on a sheet of paper with his assistants as the announcer gives the official statistics.

The presentation ceremony continues with the players receiving individual medals and then the runner-up trophy is presented to Cretin.

The Championship trophy is presented to Grand Rapids.

The field is flooded with fans and Cali embraces Tanner as they are surrounded by Blaine, Jake, Ron, Kyle, Angela, Sandy, Bo, Mack, Liz, and Tom.

Tanner smiles and looks up to the white roof of the Metrodome.

TANNER  
 (sotto)  
 I love you dad.

Flash Forward four years.

INT. BLUEWATER RESORT - FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT

Tanner, Cali, Bo, Ron, Kyle, Blaine, Jake, Sandy, Mack, Tom, Liz gather in front of the TV, the NFL draft is on the screen.

Tanner is on the phone off to one side. Kyle stands next to him and the others turn their attention back and forth between the screen and Tanner and Kyle. You can't see the front of the T-shirts either Kyle or Tanner are wearing.

TANNER  
 That's what I said. Together. I don't care which round, but I won't sign unless we're together.

All eyes are on the TV screen as the ANNOUNCER steps to the microphone.

ANNOUNCER  
 The number six pick is the Minnesota Vikings. They choose Tanner Wilson from Notre Dame.

Everyone in the room cheers as Tanner turns to them, his Notre Dame T-shirt now visible.

Kyle gives Tanner a high five and you can see that Kyle also wears a Notre Dame T-shirt.

TANNER  
 (re: Kyle)  
 You're next.

KYLE  
 I don't care where I go, as long as I can play.

TANNER  
 They said they're working with Oakland right now. It should be a done deal.

MACK  
 (excited)  
 Here he comes.

They focus on the screen again.

ANNOUNCER

The Minnesota Vikings have made a deal with the Oakland Raiders for their number seven pick.

Kyle looks to Tanner expectantly.

ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

And the Minnesota Vikings take Kyle Olson from Notre Dame.

The room erupts into cheers and Cali jumps to her feet, coming over to wrap an arm around Kyle's and Tanner's shoulders.

CALI

My guys are still together.

TANNER

And playing for the right reason.

Cali turns and kisses Tanner, the large engagement ring visible on her left hand.

FADE OUT

Mention can be made to Blaine's and Jake's draft. Possibly Ron too.

THE END