A great change will come.

It will come with the speed of lightning.

and it will scorch all of our lives.

This is what the horse said to me under that great bowl of sky.
I kept my discoveries to myself and I always made sure that I left the surface of the ice pristine. For the rest of the day, I'd walk through the dim hallways of the school warmed by my secret. I no longer felt the hopeless, chill air around me because I had Father Leboutilier, the ice, the mornings and the promise of a game I thought I would soon be old enough to play.

Father Leboutilier worked the boys hard. He pushed them to do the drills and then to transfer that discipline into the scrimmage. He outlined what he wanted to see in the scrum of snow on the ice. Circles. Arrows. The math and science of it all.
The white glory of a rink.

As I watched, it became the shining face of rink, where Indian boys in cast-off skates laughed in the thrill of the game, the smallest among them zooming in and out on cut-sized skates. I offered my tobacco to the lake where everything started and everything ended, to the cliff that had made this the place of my people, and I offered my thanks aloud in an Ojibway prayer. The moon hung in the sky like the face of a drum. As I watched, it became the shining face of rink, where Indian boys in cast-off skates laughed in the thrill of the game, the smallest among them zooming in and out on cut-sized skates. I offered my tobacco to the lake where everything started and everything ended, to the cliff that had made this the place of my people, and I offered my thanks aloud in an Ojibway prayer.