

"FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS"

BY
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Film 44
Imagine Television
NBC Universal Television Studios

Writers's 1st Draft
11/18/05

1 EXT. WEST TEXAS - SUNRISE 1

Daniel Lanois' AMAZING GRACE.

SERIES OF WEST TEXAS BEAUTY SHOTS:

Yearbook style FOOTBALL STADIUMS, CHEERLEADERS, BAND MEMBERS, PARENTS hugging KIDS, KIDS making out, laughing, crying - LIFE. The power of blazing, furious Youth.

TITLE CARD: "MONDAY"

2 EXT. RATLIFF STADIUM - DAY 2

WORKERS change light bulbs. A lone car pulls into the massive parking lot. COACH ERIC LONG - gentle face, fierce eyes - gets out. Stares silently up at the workmen.

MOJO RADIO (V.O.)

So now Coach Long's got himself not only the number one ranked football team in Texas but he's got an ESPN news crew on his tail filming every second of the pre-season. That's just gonna add to the pressure. I tell you what, folks, this old boy better get her done. Big time. You hear me?

We're TIGHT ON those big, clear, blue coach eyes....

MOJO RADIO (CONT'D)

I mean, heck - this is a big deal. Long's first year head coach and he's got himself a big ole stud quarterback. This guy's got it made in the shade.

3 EXT. RIGGINS HOUSE - DAY 3

A decent, working class home.

Establish the "RIGGINS RUNNING BACK" sign in front of the house.

- 4 INT. RIGGINS HOUSE - SAME 4
- TIM RIGGINS AND A GIRL (TYRA) passed out on the living room floor. The room is trashed: food, Jack Daniels bottles, half-folded piles of laundry.
- The girl tries to wake up Riggins. Gives up.
- 5 EXT. JASON STREET'S HOUSE - SAME 5
- A decent working class home.
- Establish "STREET QB" sign in front of house.
- 6 INT. JASON STREET'S HOUSE - SAME 6
- JASON STREET wakes up in his bedroom. Michael Vick posters and trophies. He sits up and opens the blinds. His face bathed in west Texas orange.
- MOJO RADIO (V.O.)
- This kid has true, God-given talent. This is the kind of talent can't be taught. That arm's going to seriously spread out defenses and we gonna unload the Bomber. Look out!
- 7 EXT. BRIAN "BOMBER" WILLIAMS' HOUSE - SAME 7
- A run-down ghetto shack.
- ESTABLISH "WILLIAMS RUNNING BACK" sign in front of house.
- 8 INT. WILLIAMS' HOUSE - BRIAN'S BEDROOM - SAME 8
- BRIAN "BOMBER" WILLIAMS listening to an I-pod - one of many gifts from faceless Boosters. Ali, Emmitt Garrity, Earl Campbell posters.
- MOJO RADIO (V.O.)
- You get the Bomber fifteen, twenty yards a carry, force linebackers to start keying on that big strong son of a bitch. Then we start airing her out. WATCH OUT, TEXAS!

9 INT. WILLIAMS' HOUSE - KITCHEN - SAME 9

EARL WILLIAMS - BRIAN's fifty-five year old uncle -
cracking seven eggs into a frying pan.

EARL

Get up!

10 INT. SARACEN HOUSE - DAME 10

Back up QB MATT SARACEN - 16, shy and sweet - eats an egg
sandwich over the sink. His MOTHER watches TV in the
living room.

A "HONK" from outside.

Saracen finishes his sandwich. Walks over to his mom.

SARACEN

Gotta go, Mama.

MRS. SARACEN

Throw em' straight.

SARACEN

You bet I will.

Something appears to be a bit off with Mrs. Saracen. Matt
gently touches her face.

SARACEN (CONT'D)

I made you two tuna sandwiches and I put
your medicine in the green Gatorade. OK?

MRS. SARACEN

Green Gatorade.

SARACEN

Love you.

He kisses her on the forehead. Starts to leave. As he
heads for the door, we WIDEN OUT and get our first good
look at the Saracen house. Boxes and piles and stacks and
systems that speak of very strange forces.

11 EXT. SARACEN HOUSE - CONTINUOUS 11

A really run down house. Matt Saracen comes out of the
house. He stops on the front porch and looks down.

SARACEN'S POV:

His football sign. Smaller than the others, knocked over. Saracen slowly walks down to it, picks it up and tries standing it up.

A beat up station wagon waits. Saracen walks up to it, gets in.

12

INT STATION WAGON - LATER

12

Saracen sits next to LANDRY CLARKE: Sixteen, skinny and wired with a massive red and black zit on the right side of his nose.

Landry clearly doesn't play football.

LANDRY

I'm gonna get me a sign that says Landry Clarke "Utterly Useless" or maybe Landry Clarke "Defensive Masturbator." How'd that go over? All state jerk team.

SARACEN

I'd probably be on that team too.

Saracen picks up the local paper on the seat. Odessa football on the front page. Picture of Coach Long. Smaller pictures of Jason Street and Brian Williams.

Headline: "THE BEST EVER?"

Saracen stares at the picture.

LANDRY

You even gonna play at all?

SARACEN

Nope.

LANDRY

Then why can't we go back to bed?

13

INT. LYLA GARRITY'S HOUSE - DAY

13

A nice middle class home. LYLA GARRITY: Dark haired, seventeen and stunning, is in the kitchen dressed for cheerleader practice.

Lyla's making Rice Krispie snacks shaped like footballs with individual player numbers on them.

Her FATHER, BUDDY GARRITY, a full-bellied West Texas Car Man and Permian's head booster studies the sports page and eats waffles next to his similarly framed eleven year old son LITTLE BUDDY. Her MOTHER, TANYA'S getting ready for work eating an orange over the sink.

TANYA GARRITY

I want everybody home by seven. No questions.

LYLA GARRITY

Can't.

BUDDY GARRITY

No can do, baby.

LITTLE BUDDY

Can't.

TANYA GARRITY

So what part of "no questions" did you people not hear?

LYLA GARRITY

We're gonna have a rally rehearsal tonight.

TANYA GARRITY

We're having a family dinner tonight. That means the entire family. Dinner. Together. We're going to talk to each other. Listen to each other. Family experience. Tonight.

LYLA GARRITY

Can't do it, Mom.

TANYA GARRITY

Rally rehearsal?

LYLA GARRITY

That's right.

Lyla's little sister TABBY, twelve and cunning, enters.

TABBY

She's lying about several things.

LYLA GARRITY

I am not.

TANYA GARRITY

What's she lying about?

LYLA GARRITY

I'm not lying.

TABBY

She's lying about not being able to have dinner. She can have dinner. She's lying about rally rehearsal. There is no rally rehearsal.

Lyla's mother looks from Tabby to Lyla.

TANYA GARRITY

Is there rally rehearsal?

LYLA

Yes.

TABBY

Lie.

LYLA GARRITY

Shut up.

LITTLE BUDDY

She's going to be rehearsing how to get her tongue as far into Jason Street's mouth as she can.

LYLA GARRITY

Hey!

LITTLE BUDDY

I've seen it with my own eyes.

LYLA GARRITY

You're gross.

LITTLE BUDDY

No, you're gross.

BUDDY.GARRITY

What time you going to be home?

LYLA GARRITY

When do you want me home?

TANYA GARRITY

I want you home at seven for family dinner.

LYLA GARRITY

Not tonight.

TANYA GARRITY
Tonight, or else.

LYLA GARRITY
Or else what?

The following takes place over Mrs. Garrity making lunch for Lyla's little brother and Tabby. It is fast and clean and all rather matter of fact.

TANYA GARRITY
I'm not sure exactly "else what" But, it's been at least three weeks since this family has sat at the same table for dinner and that was part of the deal your father made when we decided to have three kids. We knew it would be hard, at times frustrating, painful, often expensive. We knew we'd have to make many sacrifices, but we told ourselves it would be worth it, that the good would out weigh the bad. One of the things that we both counted on as being good was "family meals." We had high expectations of sitting around the dinner table, talking and laughing with our children. This has not been happening and it is starting to seriously erode the amount of joy and happiness we are experiencing as parents. The "or else" will be brutal and punishing and will reflect this displeasure.

Silence. Mr. Garrity finishes his eggs.

BUDDY GARRITY
Alrighty then.

Silence.

LYLA GARRITY
Seven.

LITTLE BUDDY
Seven.

She moves to her dad, kisses him.

LYLA GARRITY
I love you.

BUDDY GARRITY
I love you too, baby.

Lyla kisses her brother.

LITTLE BUDDY

Try and keep your tongue in your mouth.

LYLA GARRITY

I'll try.

14

INT. RIGGINS HOUSE - LATER

14

Billy Riggins moves out of bedroom. Thick gutted and fisted. He chugs into the living room, looks down at his son passed out with the girl.

Billy gently, almost lovingly nudges Tim with his foot.

BILLY RIGGINS

Gotta get up.

Tim's out cold. The naked little honey starts stirring and purring. The blanket slides down low off her naked young back.

Billy digs his toe harder into Tim's back.

BILLY RIGGINS (CONT'D)

TIME to get up, people.

These kids are dead to the world.

Billy moves to the kitchen, scrapes up two bowls, Frosted Flakes and some milk. He walks back over to his passed out kid with a loaded bowl of Frosted Flakes.

BILLY RIGGINS (CONT'D)

Probably forty nine kids right now, this minute - up and at em', showering, getting dressed, in their cars. Forty nine kids on the move.

A deep hangover moan from Tim on the floor.

BILLY RIGGINS (CONT'D)

Everybody but you, Tim.

Billy slowly pours the bowl of Frosted Flakes down all over his son's face.

Tim Riggins jerks awake, smothered in cereal.

BILLY RIGGINS (CONT'D)

Most important meal of the day.

Tim staggers to his feet. Still drunk, he wobbles towards the bathroom.

TIM RIGGINS

You're an ass, Dad.

Tim slams the bathroom door and Billy looks down at the half-naked Tyra.

BILLY RIGGINS

And good morning to you there, Sunshine.

15

EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM - DAY

15

Coach Long slowly walks his field. An ESPN NEWS CREW enters the stadium. Coach Long looks up.

ESPN GUY

Morning, Coach.

COACH LONG

Morning.

ESPN GUY

How they looking?

COACH LONG

Not bad.

ESPN GUY

How does it feel to finally be head coach after how many years?

COACH LONG

Fifteen years.

ESPN GUY

Wow. Fifteen years. How does it feel to be head coach?

COACH LONG

Feels good.

ESPN GUY

You feel the responsibility?

COACH LONG

Little bit.

ESPN GUY

You got yourself a heck of a quarterback.

COACH LONG
He's a good boy.

ESPN GUY
Good luck, Coach.

COACH LONG
I appreciate it.

16

EXT. RATLIFF STADIUM - PRACTICE - LATER

16

PRACTICE MONTAGE:

Coach Long and Jason Street are being interviewed by ESPN. We hear pieces of the interview.

ESPN INTERVIEWER
So you guys have a special relationship -
is that true?

JASON STREET
Coach Long was my coach all through Pee
Wee. He's been QB coaching me through
freshman and JV.

ESPN INTERVIEWER
So Coach, how is it you finally got the
head coach job the year this superstar
takes over as quarterback?

COACH LONG
That's really just luck. I've been
working fifteen years to get here and I
feel blessed that I'm going to spend my
first year with a young man with the
talent and moral strength of this young
man right here.

QUICK CUT TO

The Bomber being interviewed. He makes T.O. and Randy
Moss look like cub scouts.

BRIAN
We going undefeated, shattering records,
takin' these high expectations to
unimaginable new highs. State champions.

ESPN INTERVIEWER
What's after high school, Brian?

BRIAN

(all smiles)

What you think's after high school? Me
and Mac Brown gonna get our win in
Pasadena on. Get my National Championship
on. My Heisman on.

BACK TO STREET:

JASON STREET

This is a very good football team. We
know each other very well. That's how we
play. With a real sense of each other.

Riggins - still a bit drunk - repeatedly blowing plays.

Billy Riggins watching in the stands, surrounded by OTHER
PARENTS AND BOOSTERS.

CHEERLEADERS practicing on the side of the field. Lyla
Garrity is the captain of the cheerleaders.

Street throws beautiful, tight, forty yard bullet
strikes. Coach Long stays close to Street. It's clear
that these two work very well with each other.

Matt Saracen watching the COACHES working with Jason
Street.

QB COACH

Shoot. Hey, Saracen?

SARACEN

Sir.

QB COACH

Check that can there for me for a yellow
play sheet...

Saracen looks over to a large garbage can by the base of
the stands.

QB COACH (CONT'D)

I think I accidentally threw it out. Go
take a look.

The QB coach turns back to Street and continues working
with him.

Matt turns for the garbage can and slowly walks over to
it. Starts digging through the garbage.

Riggins fucks up another play. He runs out of bounds and trips over a bench. Gets up. Falls down. Sits on his ass, looking like he's about to puke again.

An ASSISTANT COACH walks up to Coach Long. Whispers something about Riggins. Coach Long slowly nods...

BULL IN THE RING:

Riggins in the middle. Twenty PLAYERS surround him. As Coach Long talks, he calls out numbers. PLAYERS charge out of the circle, SMASHING RIGGINS with killdozer force. Ruthless, evil business.

COACH LONG

Five days, gentlemen. In five days, a group of men are going to travel a very long way to come here. TWENTY-FIVE.

Riggins LEVELED.

COACH LONG (CONT'D)

To your town where your families live and work and sleep. SIXTY EIGHT.

Riggins LEVELED.

COACH LONG (CONT'D)

These men are going to try with everything they have to hurt you. FORTY FOUR.

Riggins LEVELED.

COACH LONG (CONT'D)

To destroy you and take from you everything you hold dear to your heart. FIFTY

Riggins LEVELED.

COACH LONG (CONT'D)

They will attempt to do this to you right here in your house. TWENTY NINE. Will you let them? SEVENTY-SEVEN. In your house?

Riggins does not get up.

ACT ONE:

17

INT./EXT. SUBWAY SANDWICH SHOP - LUNCHTIME

17

Jammed with HIGH SCHOOL KIDS eating lunch. Jason Street and Lyla Garrity sitting side by side. The first couple. Surrounded by other students. Clearly the center of attention.

The ESPN news crew is filming them eat. The piece is becoming a profile on the Classic American Quarterback.

Jason talks with the interviewer. He comes off confident, but sincere. A good guy.

JASON STREET

This is where pretty much everyone eats. I always eat the Turkey Club everyday the week before a game.

ESPN INTERVIEWER

Is that an endorsement?

JASON STREET

Sir?

ESPN INTERVIEWER

Is that your first professional endorsement? Subway Turkey sandwiches?

Lyla Garrity looks a bit alarmed.

LYLA GARRITY

No. He doesn't have any endorsements. No way.

JASON STREET

No, I don't have any endorsements.

Brian is sitting at the next table with a couple of hot black GIRLS.

BRIAN

I do! I got it all cooking baby. Nike... Adidas.

ESPN INTERVIEWER

Really? Nike and Adidas? Isn't that a conflict of interest?

BRIAN

Not the way Bomber does it, baby. I got so much skills there's room for everybody. Reebok, too. I'm gonna do Big Macs and Whoppers. Coke and Pepsi. Gonna bring the world together, baby. Then I'm gonna bust up Paris Hilton's marriage.

ESPN INTERVIEWER

Really?

BRIAN

Bomber's gonna be running hotel chains.

Riggins sits silently, grease-eating his hangover away. Riggins is looking over at Tyra's table. She is completely ignoring him, her focus on Jason Street. A HOTTIE walks up.

HOTTIE

Hi, Tim.

TIM RIGGINS

Hi.

HOTTIE

Can I sit with you?

TIM RIGGINS

No.

HOTTIE

Please?

Riggins shoots Tyra another look. She continues to ignore Riggins.

RIGGINS

OK.

The little hottie almost explodes with excitement as she slides in next to Riggins.

Saracen and Landry exit the Subway doors, plastic trays in hand. TIGHT ON LANDRY as he spots JULIE LONG - Coach Long's 16 year old daughter - sitting by herself reading Melville,

LANDRY

You want to go for it?

SARACEN

No.

LANDRY

Let's go for it.

Landry heads for Julie. As he approaches, she looks up at him. An awkward pause. Standoff.

JULIE

Yes.

LANDRY

I'm in your English class.

JULIE

OK.

Saracen is half-lurking behind Landry.

LANDRY

So is he.

JULIE

Yeah.

LANDRY

You want to have lunch with us and talk some Dick.

She looks up at Landry.

LANDRY (CONT'D)

(flustered)

Moby Dick.

SARACEN

Great.

Julie smiles up at Saracen.

JULIE

You play football, right?

SARACEN

I'm on the team. Street plays. I don't play much.

JULIE

You're still on the team. I don't eat with football players.

Landry steps a touch closer.

LANDRY

I'm not on the football team.

JULIE

I don't eat with you either.

LANDRY

No problem.

Inside, the ESPN Interviewer is still on Lyla and Jason.

ESPN INTERVIEWER

What's it like for you Lyla? Dating the quarterback of the football team?

LYLA GARRITY

It's really great. Jason is really cool because when he's playing football, he's really focused and intense.

ESPN INTERVIEWER

How do you see him handling these enormous expectations? Sports Illustrated is calling this the best high school football team in the country.

LYLA GARRITY

I know. That's what I'm saying. He handles it really well. On the field, he's so competitive. But after, when were alone, he's not like that.

TWO TABLES AWAY: Tyra Collette, the naughtiest of the naughty. Blond and diabolical. She burns daggers at Lyla, sitting with her girl pack of ANGELINAWANNABES looking for something to destroy.

TYRA COLLETTE

"Oh, Really?" How interesting. That is so interesting... Really, I'm hard pressed to remember anything in my life that has ever been so goddamned interesting to me...

Tyra flicks a pickle. Staring at Lyla Garrity.

TYRA COLLETTE (CONT'D)

Whore.

Tyra gets up, boldly power struts over to Bomber's table. She blasts right past Riggins, straight for the Bomber. She injects herself into the Bombers's world.

TYRA COLLETTE (CONT'D)

Can I have a bite of your sandwich, Bomber?

Brian looks up at Tyra and smiles huge.

BRIAN

Baby, you can have a bite of anything you want to.

Riggins boils as this circus of high school continues. Eating and Flirting and Plotting and Fuming.

18

INT. COACH LONG'S OFFICE

18

Coach Long in his office reviewing game films. There's a soft knock at the door. His wife Tami LONG enters.

TAMI LONG

Hi, baby.

COACH LONG

Hi.

TAMI LONG

How they look?

COACH LONG

They're fast and they run a lot of counters.

She checks out the film for a bit. She can see the stress on his face. She moves behind him, starts rubbing his shoulders.

TAMI LONG

I heard this really ugly rumor.

COACH LONG

Really?

TAMI LONG

Has to do with you and me and a certain Ford dealership opening tomorrow night.

A beat. Then Coach remembers.

COACH LONG

Shoot.

TAMI LONG

Did you forget to tell me?

Coach looks up at his wife.

COACH LONG
I think I did forget to tell you.

TAMI LONG
Do we have to go?

COACH LONG
You tell me.

TAMI LONG
Alaska.

COACH LONG
I know.

TAMI LONG
I'm just saying.

COACH LONG
I know.

TAMI LONG
Much more relaxed life style.

COACH LONG
It's under advisement.

TAMI LONG
What time?

COACH LONG
Seven.

She bends down, resting her head on her husband's shoulder, looking at the game films. Silence for a couple of beats.

TAMI LONG
Fast little bastards.

Long slowly nods as the husband and wife watch the films in silence.

19

EXT. STREET HOUSE - NIGHT

19

Jason and Lyla pull up in front of the house. Getting out, laughing, he starts chasing her around the car. Catching her, they fall to the ground.

LYLA GARRITY

(fake ESPN voice)

Ah, Mr. Street is it true that you can throw a four hundred yard touchdown pass to three different receivers at the same time?

JASON STREET

That's true.

LYLA GARRITY

Then you must kiss me.

He does.

LYLA GARRITY (CONT'D)

Is it true that you have super human powers and can demolish buildings and hurl fire balls?

JASON STREET

That's also true.

LYLA GARRITY

Then you must kiss me.

He does.

LYLA GARRITY (CONT'D)

Is it true Mr. Street that...

JASON STREET

That I love Lyla Garrity?

LYLA GARRITY

Yes. Is that true, Mr. Street? That you love Lyla Garrity?

JASON STREET

More than anything in the world.

LYLA GARRITY

More than football?

JASON STREET

More than almost anything in the world.

She laughs. More kissing. Much more.

20 EXT. SARACEN HOUSE - SAME 20

Landry drops Saracen off in front of his house. Saracen walks up the short driveway, enters his house. Landry gets out, sits down on an old chair in the yard, starts reading an algebra book.

21 INT. SARACEN HOUSE - CONTINUOUS 21

Mrs. Saracen sitting in the exact same position as when he left her. TV still on. Saracen picks up an empty plate and glass takes them into the kitchen. Puts them in the sink.

MRS SARACEN

You throw 'em' straight?

SARACEN

Yes, Mama.

MRS SARACEN

Straight. Tight. Sharp passes.

SARACEN

I know.

Matt just stares at his mom as she watches TV, her right leg tapping ever so slightly.

22 EXT. SARACEN HOUSE - LATER 22

Matt walks outside. The yard looks like a junk yard. He pulls out an old bag of footballs. They've clearly done this before. Landry gets up, moving behind a hanging tire.

Saracen starts throwing passes to Landry. Tight little bullets - each one through the tire. Tight spirals. Matt starts throwing the ball harder. Stinging Landry..

Mrs Saracen, sipping blue Gatorade, quietly steps onto the porch. She watches the boys.

LANDRY CLARKE

I'm just saying that any religion that has as their image front man a cat named "L" rocking purple and shag blue, power sport coats with a sticky pompadour and a couple of power orbs, talking about getting "clear" and grabbing cash faster than Microsoft... Scientology? Please. Charles Manson - L Ron Hubbard. David Koresh - Tom Cruise. I'm working out the numerological commonalities.

Saracen throws tight bullets - each one smack through the tire.

SARACEN

The what?

LANDRY CLARKE

"Branch Dividian" 14 letters. "Charles Manson" 13 letters. "Scientologist" 13 letters.

SARACEN

So?

TIGHT ON PASS AFTER PASS: Saracen has a nice release.

LANDRY CLARKE

Don't defend the zombies, Matt. They are a rabid pack of manically litigious, blood suckers. They're worse than Moonies.

SARACEN

To each their own.

LANDRY CLARKE

No. See, that's the thing. To each their own - fine. Freedom to practice religion - fine. This is something else, Matt. Wake up. This is organized brain washing. This is grand theft. Left unchecked, very bad things can happen.

SARACEN

Like what?

Saracen stops throwing.

LANDRY CLARKE

It's just a matter of time before these bastards get their hands on a bomb.

(MORE)

LANDRY CLARKE (CONT'D)

Maybe even a dirty bomb. Tom Cruise and Katie Holmes tearing into New York City on tandem purple and blue choppers. Crazy eyed and fully "cleared" with matching North face blue and yellow back packs stuffed tight with high grade military grade plutonium. His and her Radio Shack detonators and blast caps.

Saracen stares at his friend.

LANDRY CLARKE (CONT'D)

Ka-boom, Matt. I'm talking about some serious Ka-boom.

SILENCE from Matt as he looks at Landry. Then to his mother. From the porch...

MRS. SARACEN

You need to get a new friend, Matthew.

23

INT. COACH LONG'S HOUSE - NIGHT

23

Coach Long sitting in his big brown easy chair. Julie and Tami are cuddled up on the couch. Tami is reading the real estate section of the local news paper.

TAMI

Here's a three bedroom with a pool. Cute.

She waves the paper in front of her husband.

TAMI (CONT'D)

(singing)

To dream the impossible dream...

COACH LONG

Relent.

TAMI

It would be so nice...

COACH LONG

I know.

Coach Long is studying the Abilene game tapes. Tami gets up, starts cutting the house photo out of the paper, taping it up on the fridge next to a couple of other real estate listings.

Julie is reading Melville.

JULIE

Moby Dick is actually the perfect metaphor for this town. The cold black sea representing the season with all of its uncertainty...

COACH LONG

Yeah...

JULIE

The magical white whale as the holy grail...state championship.

COACH LONG

Yeah.

JULIE

The boat, the whalers are the team. The players and the coaches. Brian Williams as Quee Queg, the hulking African Zulu harpoon hurling whale killer...

COACH LONG

And I'm Coach Ahab?

JULIE

Absolutely. Coach, captain - hunter and hunted... Driven near the point of utter insanity...driven to capture what may be uncapturable.....

Silence as Long studies his Abilene tapes.

COACH LONG

If we can see over this front line and not bite on the counters, we'll be on our way to capturing that fish.

TIGHT ON "THE FISH:" The real estate listing Tami has taped on the refrigerator.

24 EXT. ODESSA, WEST TEXAS - MORNING. 24

Beautiful west Texas sunrise over the endless oil fields.

"TUESDAY"

25 INT. PERMIAN WEIGHT ROOM - MORNING 25

A burst weight training session. The entire team in the room doing speed intervals.

We have never seen young men work out with this kind of intensity. The Bomber gets into a bench press competition with two 300 pound LINE MEN. He wins.

26

INT./EXT. PERMIAN HIGH SCHOOL - MORNING

26

TRACKING:

Coach Long out of his office to his car. As he's about to get in, he stops, looks across the parking lot. Smiles.

LONG'S POV:

A beat to shit pine green 1979 Oldsmobile.

Long slowly walks up to the car, looks down at the ancient white haired old man sitting behind the wheel.

This is COACH STEVE DEEKS. He's at least ninety-six, eight state championship rings. His car over flows with play sheets, stat charts, scouting reports, decades of football seasons.

Coach Deeks is old but solid, sharp, has the complete respect of LONG.

LONG

You get down there?

COACH DEEKS

Just got back.

LONG

What do you know?

COACH DEEKS

They run fastest son of a bitch counters I've seen in years. The front line is big, not particularly heavy, tall. Gonna be hard to follow the ball.

LONG

Yeah.

COACH DEEKS

I think you gotta find some height on defense. Maybe play Dillard and Oliver at defensive ends. Give some height so you can see down on them counters.

LONG

I like that.

COACH DEEKS

Hell with what you like. You got to win this football game. Coach, I'm dead serious. You got no excuses and that's a lonely place to be starting. Expectations like this...the only place to go is down. That's the problem with being this good.

LONG

I know.

COACH DEEKS

Drill 'em on counters.

LONG

I will.

COACH DEEKS

How's the family?

LONG

Everbody's feeling good.

COACH DEEKS

Then enjoy that now 'cause it won't last.

Long looks down at Deeks. Smiles.

LONG

Come on, Coach - it ain't that serious. It's just football.

Coach Deeks looks back up at Long. Blazing blue eyes. Deeks smiles, starts to laugh.

COACH DEEKS

Just football.

Deeks starting to crack up. Long laughing too.

LONG

Just football!

WIDE ON THE TWO MEN laughing alone in the parking lot.

ACT TWO:

27

INT. BUDDY GARRITY FORD DEALERSHIP - NIGHT

27

A big deal. Three hundred invited GUESTS. The entire FOOTBALL TEAM. MEDIA. The dealership opening is a major social, business, and political event.

We QUICK CUT around the event.

COACH LONG is cornered by three BOOSTERS putting the heat on him about the Abilene counters.

BOOSTER 1

Can we follow these counters, Coach? We got alert.

BOOSTER 2

Really alert, Coach. Triple counters. You up for this, Coach?

COACH LONG

I think we'll be OK.

BOOSTER 2

You understand this son of a bitch Hastings down there in Abilene? I hate that son of a bitch.

COACH LONG

I hear you.

BOOSTER 2

You shut that son of a bitch red neck hillbilly down. Coach, you shut him down.

COACH LONG

We'll do it.

BOOSTER 12

What about those crazy counters?

Long looks at the booster. Painful smile.

Like the President. Jason Street holds court with various CITY OFFICIALS, MORE BOOSTERS. Everyone wants a piece of the young quarterback.

MAYOR RODELL

If he let's you call anything. Throw the ball, son. Air it out. You got the skills. Just let her fly.

JASON STREET

Yes, Sir.

MAYOR RODELL

Carpet bomb 'em.

JASON STREET

Yes, Sir.

As the adults fawn, find Tyra Collette wearing something that would intimidate Jenna Jameson... she's been circling Jason.

TYRA COLLETTE

Hi Jason.

JASON STREET

Hi Tyra.

TYRA COLLETTE

Where's Lyla?

JASON STREET

She's meeting me here.

TYRA COLLETTE

That's too bad.

JASON STREET

Why's that?

TYRA COLLETTE

It's got to get a little old, Jason. Like drinking milk everyday, all day. You ought to think about a milk shake every once in a while.

JASON STREET

A milk shake?

There are photographers at this party. They have the Paparazzi vibe. Literally. Moving in on Jason and Tyra.

Jason reluctantly allows himself to be photographed with the relentless Tyra. As the cameras FLASH...

Lyla Garrity enters, sees the photo shoot. Jason locks eyes with her. She turns away. He follows after her.

(TBW: flesh out fight between Lyla, Jason and Tyra)

Tami and Julie Long taking in the spectacle, eating chesse puffs off to the side.

JULIE LONG

Freak show.

TAMI LONG

Stop it.

JULIE LONG

I'm serious, Mom. It just keeps getting worse. Distorted frenzy of humanity.

In the center of the dealership Buddy Garrity - the owner of the dealership - is standing by a new Ford pickup. Eight CONTESTANTS get ready to start a "Hands on a Hard Body" competition.

BUDDY GARRITY

I want to thank you so much for coming out. We're getting ready to start the "Hands on a Hard Body."

QUICK CUTS of the eight adult contestants: Nervous. Determined.

BUDDY GARRITY (CONT'D)

But first, we got some introductions. Starting with the man who's helping create a tax friendly environment here in Odessa like we have never seen. Helping the small business man. Mayor Chuck Rodell.

MAYOR RODELL - a small thick Texan - steps up. State Championship ring, big smile. As he talks, the football team fills in behind him.

Bomber dressed to the tens. Riggins looking nervous. DAVID MATTERS, an easy going Hispanic linebacker waves to his family.

MAYOR RODELL

Thanks, Buddy and welcome everybody to the grand opening of this beautiful, absolutely stunning automobile dealership. We want to extend a special welcome to Coach Long and what we know to be, and the entire state of Texas is about to experience as the best damn football team in Texas.

Coach Long tight smiles.

MAYOR RODELL (CONT'D)

And the man who's gonna bring home that State Championship. Bring home one of these.

The Mayor raises his ring finger up into the air. Hundreds of MEN in the room raise their ring fingers up, high war screaming.

MAYOR RODELL (CONT'D)

The big man on campus...Coach Eric Long!

The crowd cheers as Coach Long steps up to the stage.

IN THE BACK:

Julie and Tami - long, soft clap. Julie whistles loud for her dad.

JULIE LONG

Let's see where that love is if he loses a game.

TAMI LONG

I know.

JULIE LONG

I see snakes.

TAMI LONG

That's enough.

JULIE LONG

Lizards.

As Coach Long steps up to the mic.

ANGLE ON:

All of our main characters.

Matt Saracen.

Billy Riggins.

The entire team fills in behind Coach Long.

COACH LONG

I want to thank everybody for coming. I just want to say what a privilege it is for all of us to be up here in front of you representing the mighty Permian football tradition. We all, and I speak for each and every coach, trainer, and player on this football team - we all feel honored and thoroughly prepared to represent our beloved community this and every other Friday night until we bring home that State Championship.

The crowd ERUPTS.

Brian Williams starts Ali howling.

BRIAN

Mojo gonna play extreme. Abilene gonna cry and scream. Mojo gonna get diabolical like Tom Cruise gets Scientological.

Brian's got the mic and the place (already a little liquored up) is starting to chomp into it. Car dealership as pep rally.

Adults booze. Football players sneak booze.

Buddy Garrity is up on a three step ladder above the Hands on a Hard Body competition.

BUDDY GARRITY

So, to honor what we all know is going to be one hell of a season and to also celebrate the opening of this here little old car dealership, I'm slamming on a Hands on a Hard Body competition. We gonna see who wants one bad enough.

We get a good look at each contestant as Buddy introduces them:

ELI FURTHUR - 50 year old ex-Odessa cop.

GLENDA TAYLOR - 22 year old exotic dancer.

MIZZY CORTEZ - 21 year old exotic dancer.

STAN MEEKS - 80 year old retired Marine

MAGGIE CLEARY - 45 year old lesbian carpenter.

MOOSE HOLMES - Slightly retarded 30 year old house painter.

MARY HOLMES - Moose's 55 year old mother.

GLENN WILKES - 20 year old drummer in local band "ASSER"

These eight contestants will be constantly referred to during the first part of the season.

BUDDY GARRITY (CONT'D)

Ladies and gentlemen...start your engines.

Eight eager hands slap down on that pick up. Determined faces, hard eyes.

A DJ starts spinning and the whole thing starts turning into a party.

Jason Street finds Lyla Garrity.

JASON STREET

Sorry about that.

LYLA GARRITY

She's just diabolical, that girl.

28

INT. BUDDY GARRITY FORD - 2ND STORY

28

Coach Long's upstairs with Buddy. The two men look down at the party below.

BUDDY GARRITY

How you feeling, Coach?

COACH LONG

Feel pretty good, Buddy.

BUDDY GARRITY

You do feel good, don't you?

COACH LONG

I do.

Buddy looks at the Coach.

BUDDY GARRITY

Concentrate on that feeling, Coach. That good feeling. Warm. Peaceful. Content. Those are good things, Coach. Fiber of life.

COACH LONG

They are good things, Buddy.

BUDDY GARRITY

And they get better, Coach. That's the thing about good things. They can keep getting better and better.

Coach looks at Buddy, not liking where this seems to be going.

BUDDY GARRITY (CONT'D)

Or, you know... they can get not better. Good things can go bad.

Coach Long looks long and deep into Buddy's bourbon glazed eyes.

COACH LONG

I'm gonna do the best I can, Buddy.

BUDDY GARRITY

Do that, Coach.

29

EXT. DEALERSHIP - PARKING LOT - SAME

29

Riggins is holding court with half a dozen BALL PLAYERS. He's drinking Jack Daniels from a paper bag.

TIM RIGGINS

I got looks from East Kansas and Colorado Springs. I'd rather go to Colorado, but I don't know.

Brian's across the lot with a crew of BLACK PLAYERS.

BRIAN

Only two choices. They both in California and they both start with a U. I prefer SC cause I like the way they treated Reggie Bush. See, a team's gotta know how to treat a running back.

Tyra is crawling up on him.

TYRA COLLETTE

Hey, Bomber.

BRIAN

Hey there, angel eyes.

Tyra stops, turns, and faces this big monster stud.

TYRA COLLETTE

What's up?

BRIAN

Just chillin' out on top of the world. Picking diamonds off the clouds, Baby.

TYRA COLLETTE

Is that right?

BRIAN

Love to pick you one.

TYRA COLLETTE

You like sushi, Bomber?

BRIAN

You know I do if you do.

TYRA COLLETTE

Come on.

Tyra smiles, turns away and starts walking to her little CREW at the edge of the parking lot. Brian smiles back at Riggins who pretends that he's not paying any attention.

A red headed, broken nosed KID looks over to Tim.

BROKEN NOSE

Tyra's gonna ride the Bomboastacoasta.

Howls from the white boys.

WHITEBOYS

(chanting)

Bomboastacoasta!

Everyone's smiling except Riggins who's following Tyra and Brian as they get into her car and drive off.

Riggins takes a long pull off his Jack Daniels. Gets up. Heads for his car.

Trouble.

30

INT. ODESSA SUSHI RESTAURANT - LATER

30

Tyra and Brian in a little booth, eating Sushi. Tyra's showing Brian how to eat with chop sticks. She's feeding him.

It's all good, clean, flirtacious fun. From the back entrance, we spot Tim Riggins enter the restaurant. He moves past the HOSTESS, heading straight for Brian and Tyra.

He approaches their table.

TIM RIGGINS

What are you doing?

TYRA COLLETTE

What does it look like I'm doing?

TIM RIGGINS
What are doing with him?

TYRA COLLETTE
Get out of here, Tim.

TIM RIGGINS
Why are you doing this?

TYRA COLLETTE
Go away!

The Japanese SUSHI CHEFS are starting to pay attention.

TIM RIGGINS
What is your problem?

TYRA COLLETTE
My problem is that you don't know the
first thing about how to treat a woman.

TIM RIGGINS
Didn't sound that way to me last night
when you were grinding up on me like
Jenna Jameson on a fistful of Ecstasy.

TYRA COLLETTE
Shut up, Tim.

TIM RIGGINS
Give it all to me, Tim. All of it, Baby.
Yeah, that's it...All of it.

BRIAN
Must of been pretty forgettable if you
gave her all that big horse Riggins
loving and she's out here eating tuna
fish with Brian.

TIM RIGGINS
Shut your fucking mouth.

This goes STRAIGHT TO ELEVEN.

BRIAN
Say that again.

TIM RIGGINS
Why, you so dumb you didn't get it the
first time?

Brian's getting up fast. He and Riggins charge and are
BEATING THE SHIT put of each other in a flash.

Tables and sushi platters flying. Brian's smacking the
shit out of Riggins.

Tyra leaps up and, like any good domestic brawl, she
sides with Riggins. She starts screaming and smacking
Brian.

TYRA COLLETTE
GET OFF HIM!!!!

Riggins's getting rabbit punched in the face.

TIM RIGGINS
I love you, Tyra.

Tyra's clawing into Brian, trying to get him off Tim.

TYRA COLLETTE
I love you, Tim.

The Japanese move in to break it up but these are two
very big, strong boys.

31 EXT. ODESSA SUSHI RESTAURANT - NIGHT 31

Looks like a rugby game is going on inside the
restaurant. A cop car drives by. Stops. U-turns into the
restaurant parking lot.

ACT THREE:

32 EXT. COACH LONG'S HOUSE - MORNING 32

ESTABLISHING:

The little house with a couple of lights on.

"WEDNESDAY"

MOJO RADIO (V.O.)
I don't know how ready they are. We got
running backs fish fighting at fish
restaurants. I suppose it's all good so
long as it gets transferred out onto that
field.

33 INT. HOUSE FOR SALE - NORTH ODESSA - DAY 33

Coach Long walks the interior of a modest three bedroom
house with a FEMALE REALTOR.

FEMALE REALTOR

It's a single story, what we call "flow plan." You see how it all just kind of flows one room into the next?

COACH LONG

Yes, I see.

FEMALE REALTOR

It's a new trend. People are realizing that the biggest and best room in the house is a "living room" that no body ever lives in.

COACH LONG

That's true.

Coach Long is eyeing the set up, checking out the price tag.

TIGHT ON THE PRICE TAG:

\$425,000.00

Coach Long moves with the Realtor into the master bedroom. Then into the his and her separate bathroom areas. Clearly impressed by the amount of space.

COACH LONG (CONT'D)

She'd sure love this.

FEMALE REALTOR

Room in the bathroom. Saved more marriages than Oprah and Dr. Phil combined.

Coach Long smiles as he walks into the oversized walk-in closet.

COACH LONG

Wow.

FEMALE REALTOR

There's an identical closet on the other side. His and Her's walk-ins. Plenty of room for everybody.

Coach Long walks out through the bedroom, out through a side door, into the back yard, up to a small sunken swimming pool.

The Realtor follows.

FEMALE REALTOR (CONT'D)

Peaceful, isn't it?

COACH LONG

Yes, it is.

They stand in silence. Coach Long looking over the property.

FEMALE REALTOR

So, what do you think?

COACH LONG

It's beautiful.

FEMALE REALTOR

Why don't you have your wife come down and take a look?

COACH LONG

I don't need to. I know she'll love it.

FEMALE REALTOR

I'm sure she will.

A touch more silence.

FEMALE REALTOR (CONT'D)

You want to make an offer?

COACH LONG

Let's see how we play Friday night.

FEMALE REALTOR

You're gonna kill em', Coach.

Long looks up at the Realtor, gives a small smile.

COACH LONG

I hope so.

CUT HIGH AND WIDE:

The Football Coach and the Realtor standing in the back yard of a three bedroom, West Texas single story.

34

INT. WALMART - DAY

34

Tami Long walks the make-up aisle with an empty handcart, somewhat paralyzed by the array of choices. She wears jeans and an Izod. As she moves in to scrutinize Revlon, a sweet Texas twang is heard behind her.

MISSY AUBREY (O.S.)

Heyhi!

Tami startles, turns to find four sparkling Odessa Ladies: MISSY AUBREY (the Principal's wife), TANYA GARRITY (Buddy's wife), and LUCY RODELL (the Mayor's wife). All pumps and pearls.

TAMI

Well, hello ladies.

MISSY AUBREY

Howyou?

TAMI

Great. Y'all?

TANYA GARRITY

Fantastic. Precious blouse, Tami.

Tami glances down at her Izod.

TAMI

Thanks?

LUCY RODELL

Now Tami, why is it that you never come to Book Club?

TAMI

Book club?

TANYA GARRITY

Ludy Rodell, that is a FANTASTIC idea! Come on, Tami.

TAMI

You know...that is so nice of y'all, but as you know, with the start of the season-

MISSY AUBREY

-Exactly. You are a football widow.

Tami hesitates.

TANYA GARRITY

Come on, Tami. Wednesday is our next meeting. A little wine, a little gossip - it'll be good for you, girl.

LUCY RODELL

Better than sitting home watching him, watching tapes.

Tami know she's cornered.

TAMI

What are we reading?

MISSY AUBREY

"A Billion Lil Pieces." It's about
(whispers)... drugs... but Oprah picked
it! Kept her up for two nights straight!

TAMI

Well thanks. That sounds great. It should
be-

TANYA GARRITY

Fun.

TAMI

Right. Real fun.

35

INT. RATLIFF STADIUM - DAY

35

FOOTBALL PRACTICE MONTAGE:

Leading up to the season opener. We can feel the
intensity building.

-Assistant coaches swarm over players.

-Jason Street runs the offense.

-Jason's PARENTS talking with DIFFERENT RECRUITERS.

-Brian's Uncle, Earl sitting with USC RECRUITERS.

EARL

What he likes is the ocean and he likes
the way you all have treated Reggie Bush.
We not in any way afraid of working with
a strong pass oriented offence so long as
we feel that we going to get our carries.
That's all it is.

The recruiters nod and drool as Brian demolishes
linebackers and scores at will.

-Matt Saracen watches Street. Occasionally steps in. His
passes clearly lack the authority of Street's. An
assistant coach jumps all over Saracen.

-Riggins blocks for Brian, who works the field like a
young Barry Sanders.

-Mr. and Mrs. Street sit with EDDIE McMANNUS - red headed Notre Dame quarterback scout.

MCMANNUS

We'd like to get you all on the field next Saturday up in South Bend. There's really no words to describe the experience.

MR STREET

That sounds terrific.

MCMANNUS

We're ready to get this done right now.

MR STREET

I think we are, too.

As Jason throws sixty yard missiles: each one tight and perfect.

MRS STREET

How good do you think he is?

MCMANNUS

Mrs. Street, I've been scouting quarterbacks for Notre Dame for twenty-seven years. Your son might be the best I've ever seen.

A mother could beam no brighter.

ACT FOUR:

36

INT./EXT. ODESSA - SERIES OF TRANSITION SHOTS

36

ESPN CREWS interviewing LOCALS about their expectations for the coming season.

FORD DEALERSHIP:

Eli Further - The ex-cop sporting a State Championship ring. He looks into the ESPN camera. His right hand pressed firmly on the hood of the Ford pick-up.

ELI FURTHER

It's just a rare coming together of forces. A team this good. A quarterback, a running back as big and fast as Boomer. The right coach. It's gonna be something special. Really special.

ESPN INTERVIEWER

How long are you prepared to stay in this competition?

ELI FURTHER

I'll be here as long as it takes. Even if it means I have to watch the State Championship with one of my hands still down on this baby.

PERMIAN LOCKER ROOM:

By the sinks, the boys blow drying their hair and brushing their teeth. Rugged young beauty.

TGIF'S:

Two middle aged waitresses are hanging up posters of the PANTHERS.

WAITRESS 1

We do a Wednesday "Two Day Out chili special," then a Thursday "Get Psyched Super Size Me" salad taco bar, Friday is "Game Day Blast Off" breakfast. That's four eggs any way you want em', three pancakes, sausage, bacon, and a wedge of ham. We fill 'em up on game day!!!!

37

EXT. AUSTIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - DAY

37

"THURSDAY"

A mixed practice between the PEE WEE FOOTBALL PLAYERS and the Varsity team. Street, Brian, Riggins, and Matters all working with the little, future players.

SERIES OF SHOTS:

-The Varsity scrimmaging the Pee Wees. They are really scrimmaging.

-Five TEN YEAR OLDS trying to take down Brian.

-Coach Long and his assistants coach from the sidelines. The pee-wee coaches coach from the opposite sidelines. This is treated like a real football game.

38

EXT. AUSTIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - LATER

38

On the field, EIGHTY PLAYERS. Young and old, gathered in a pack. Jason Street stands in the middle of the field, talking to the players.

STREET

You guys really want to focus on learning these plays. They are the exact plays we run and if you learn it right here, like we all did, you will have a really solid understanding of what's going to be required of you when you get to Varsity.

A TEN YEAR OLD FUTURE QUARTERBACK looks up at Street with stars in his eyes. Puts his hand up.

LITTLE QB

Mr. Street?

Street looks down at the little kid.

STREET

Son?

LITTLE QB

Mr. Street, are you going to play professional football?

STREET

I'm thinking about it.

LITTLE QB

I think you should. I think you should play for the Cowboys and that you should be better than Roger Stauback and better than Troy Aikman.

STREET

Well, I'm going to think about that.

Another little player chimes in.

LITTLE PLAYER 1

I think you're better than Payton Manning.

STREET

Well, I appreciate that. OK, let's pray.

TIGHT SHOTS of all the boys reaching for each other's hands. Small hands join larger hands. Football helmets tilt down.

Street is about to start when,

LITTLE PLAYER 1

Do you think that God likes football?

Street looks up at the little man.

STREET

I think that everybody likes football.

Street bows his head.

STREET (CONT'D)

Our father, who art in Heaven...

39

EXT. DESERT - DUSK

39

Riggins, Matters, and a dozen other PLAYERS AND GIRLFRIENDS parked out in the desert. Tyra and another girl. Everybody's in full make out mode. Street and Lyla Garrity parked next to them.

RIGGINS

Street, here's how I figure it's gonna work... Correct me if missing something here, but I'm cool hanging right here, you go do your what...maybe ten years... in the NFL. Say at five mill a year, send me one percent of every paycheck. I'll buy some land down here, then when it's done you and me have us a big, old hunting ranch. I'll keep it stocked and-

STREET

I don't want you living on my land.

Riggins's drunker than the rest. Grabs two more beers from the cooler.

RIGGINS

Yeah, you do. I'm the care taker.

MATTERS

Dude, it's Thursday. You got to slow down.

RIGGINS

Slowdown what? This is my blocking fuel.
I'm a fill up, lay down some un-Godly
pain tomorrow night.

Riggins's climbing up on the roof of his car. Two beers
raised high towards the setting sun.

RIGGINS (CONT'D)

Here's to God and football and, ten years
from now, good friends living large in
West Texas. West Texas forever!

The group cant resist Riggins's spirit.

STREET

West Texas forever.

RIGGINS

It's an honor blocking for you, my
friend. Yo! Everybody listen up! Let's do
it! Let's touch God this time, boys.
Let's touch God!

ACT FIVE:

40

INT./EXT. ODESSA - DAY INTO NIGHT

40

"GAME DAY"

MOJO RADIO (V.O.)

I never felt this kind of electricity.
Not in years. This town is on fire. I
mean, really on fire.

SERIES OF SHOTS:

- The town shuts down early.
- The Ratliff parking lot starts to fill up.
- PLAYERS in class, not able to concentrate.
- PLAYERS arrive in the locker room.
- ABILENE arrives in buses headed for the visiting locker room.
- Players try to make small talk.

-Bomber tries to make jokes. They fall flat. The vibe is very much like heading to war. Confident, but very serious.

-Outside the stadium, MULTIPLE MEDIA CREWS talking about what the game means.

-Ratliff starts to fill up: The Streets, Earl, Billy and Flippy, and Mrs. Saracen sitting up in back with Landry Clarke.

41

INT. RATLIFF STADIUM - LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

41

Coach has the team gathered around.

COACH LONG

Gentlemen, we have been hearing a lot of talk about expectation. Expectation of what we should be able to do. To win. People are "expecting." Expecting quite a bit. Now, I do see us winning today. I have no trouble seeing that. That is not my expectation. I expect you boys to go out there and play hard foot ball. I expect you boys to not take this team lightly because I promise you they will come at you with everything they have. I expect you to execute.

TEAM

Yes, Sir.

COACH LONG

I expect you to play football.

TEAM

Yes, Sir.

COACH LONG

Clear eyes. Full Hearts. Can't lose.

TEAM

Can't lose.

COACH LONG

Get her done, boys!

The team starts charging up and out of the locker room. Coach Long makes eye contact with Jason. They start slowly walking out together. A quiet moment.

COACH LONG (CONT'D)

You deserve this. You understand that?

JASON STREET

Yes, Sir.

COACH LONG

You've earned this. The right to win. Put that in your head.

JASON STREET

You, too.

Coach looks at his young quarterback.

JASON STREET (CONT'D)

Expect to win, Coach. You've earned that.

Jason puts on his helmet and moves out after the team.

42

INT. RATLIFF STADIUM - PERMIAN VS. ABILENE - NIGHT

42

The Team in a FRENZY.

CAPTAINS shake hands.

Saracen on the bench, cheering like a fan.

1ST QUARTER:

SERIES OF PLAYS: We see pieces of each play. Enough to tell the story.

Coverage of all our main cast is assumed. There will be constant "game appropriate" coverage of all cast throughout the entire game.

Smooth Permian drive. Street 5 for 5. TOUCHDOWN.

Abilene answers.

SCORE 7 TO 7.

Street leads another Permian drive.

We are IN THE HUDDLE with Street and Permian. He is a strong, calm focused leader.

14-7 PERMIAN.

INTERCUT: Corresponding sideline and stand coverage. The Abilene team in no way vilified.

Young men and parents who love each other and the game every bit as much as Permian.

The style of the football is very violent. Aggressive. War like.

2ND QUARTER:

Abilene scores.

SCORE 14-14.

Abilene kicks a field goal.

Major celebration from Abilene as the KICKER is congratulated by his teammates.

43 INT. COACHES BOOTH - NIGHT 43

We are CUTTING from Permian to Abilene's coaching booths. Getting an added sense of how intense the programs are. How sophisticated the offensive and defensive playbooks are.

44 INT. RATLIFF STADIUM - NIGHT 44

The Second Quarter comes to an end. Both teams heading into the locker rooms for half time.

45 INT. PERMIAN LOCKER ROOM - HALF TIME 45

Coach calms the team down.

Riggins has a wicked, deep slash on the right side of his throat. Trainers work to stop the bleeding.

COACH LONG

I told you they'd come at you hard...we have to relax.

46 INT. RATLIFF STADIUM - PERMIAN VS. ABILENE - LATER 46

3RD QUARTER

Abilene scores AGAIN.

Street's passing well, but his RECEIVERS are dropping passes.

47

INT. HUDDLE

47

Street talking to his receivers.

STREET

Have faith in the routes. Run your routes. You'll catch the ball.

RECEIVER

I'm sorry.

STREET

Don't be sorry! Just run the routes.

48

INT. RATLIFF STADIUM - NIGHT

48

14-24 ABILENE.

4TH QUARTER:

Street throws an interception.

His NECK IS BROKEN making a tackle.

DEAD SILENCE in the stadium. The only sound is Lyla Garrity and Mrs. Street crying. Mrs. Street is on the field, moving, disoriented. Staggering onto the field, past kneeling, crying players... We never get a good look at Jason. He's surrounded by coaches, trainers. BURST CLOSE UPS of his flaring eyeballs, spit slapping off his quivering lips.

His body lies face down, twisted. Utterly broken.

We hear pieces of conversation: Paramedics. Coaches. Players on sidelines. A mother calls her husband from the sidelines.

MOTHER

(on cell)

Something horrible's happened...

News crews, the ESPN crew. Paramedics stabilize Street, load him onto a stretcher.

The stadium is DEAD SILENT.

Lyla Garrity - in shock with several CHEERLEADERS. Paramedics stabilize Street and prepare to move him.

Coach Long looks to Tami, then to the clock...

3 MINUTES LEFT IN THE GAME.

Permian's down by ten points. Long looks from the score board to Matt Saracen. Matt is standing silently with a couple of other players. The fact that he's about to have to play football has not yet begun to dawn on him.

Long looks from Saracen to the stands. 25,000 people aren't moving.

Three minutes.

COACH LONG

Matt.

Saracen looks up at Coach Long.

SARACEN

Sir?

Coach Long just stares at Saracen. Saracen slowly looks from his coach to the scoreboard. He starts to get it.

COACH LONG

Start throwing some, son.

Long starts moving down the sidelines, clapping his hands.

COACH LONG (CONT'D)

Three minutes, boys! Let's start getting it up!

Confused looks from the players.

On the Abilene side, it's the same thing. ABILENE COACHES and PLAYERS start to psyche themselves back up.

Helmets return to heads. Chin straps snapped. Mouth pieces inserted.

THREE MINUTES.

The energy in the stadium starts to build.

Saracen's throwing passes on the sidelines. Players coming up to him one after the next, tapping his helmet. Guys he doesn't even know....

PLAYERS

Come on, Matt! Hey, Baby! Let's get it on, Matt!

Matt's warming up when the REF, center field, calls for a Captain's meeting.

REF
Captains. Coaches.

Coach Long looks to Matt Saracen.

COACH LONG
Saracen!

Matt looks back up to his coach.

SARACEN
Sir?

COACH LONG
Quarterback is a captain.

Saracen looks up to Bomber and Masters looking back at him mid-field. Saracen walks up to them, takes their hands as the three young men start moving out towards the middle of the field. Saracen in the middle.

REF
OK, we got three minutes. Let's play hard and clean. Tell your players to keep their heads up. Hit what they can see.

49 INT. ODESSA HOSPITAL - SAME 49

Jason Street is rushed into a trauma operating room. Quick panicked, HYPER INTENSE SHOTS as the medical CREW works to save his life.

50 INT. GARRITY CAR - SAME 50

Lyla Garrity and her mother driving in shock to the emergency room.

51 INT. RATLIFF STADIUM - SAME 51

The game begins.

Abilene on offense - a BRUTAL series of defensive stops by Permian.

Abilene punts. Permian's ball on their own twenty-five yard line.

Here comes Matt Saracen. Nervous. Shaky. Uncomfortable as all hell.

52 INT. RATLIFF STADIUM - IN THE STANDS - SAME 52

Mrs. Saracen sitting in the back of the stadium with Landry Clarke.

MRS. SARACEN

Good God.

FIRST PLAY:

Saracen goes the wrong way on a fullback dive. Tries to hand off right to a player who's gone left.

Saracen gets pounded by two Abilene Linebackers. Fumbles. Mad scrambles after the ball. Barely recovers it.

TIGHT ON MRS SARACEN.

TIGHT ON COACH GAINES.

53 INT. RATLIFF STADIUM - PERMIAN HUDDLE 53

Bomber and Riggins are trying to calm Matt down.

RIGGINS

You got to breathe, Matt.

Saracen seems to be hyperventilating.

SECOND PLAY:

Saracen drops back to pass. Sets up. Throws. Drilling his own left guard in the back of the helmet.

54 INT. ODESSA HOSPITAL - SAME 54

Jason Street being operated on through the front of his throat. Doctors removing pieces of his shattered vertebrae from his spinal chord.

55 INT. RATLIFF STADIUM - SAME 55

THIRD DOWN:

Saracen again drops back to pass. He starts to scramble, gets blind sided by a blitzing linebacker. SMASHED with evil intent deep into the turf.

Riggins helps him up.

RIGGINS

Just keep breathing.

FOURTH and TEN:

Permian going for it. Long calls a time out. Saracen, on the sidelines, trembling with his coach.

COACH LONG

Matt, this is it, son. You got to just do your best. Breathe, slow down, and try and read the coverage. You remember how to read coverage?

SARACEN

Not so well, Sir.

COACH LONG

What you want to do is take a look before you throw the ball. See where the defense is, see where your guys are? You with me?

SARACEN

Yes, Sir.

COACH LONG

Then try and throw the ball to your guys. You with me?

SARACEN

Yes, Sir.

COACH LONG

Do your best.

FOURTH DOWN:

Saracen drops back in the shot gun. Looks terrified. The crowd is on its feet. Saracen takes the snap, starts scrambling... Heavy pressure. Saracen evading tacklers, running for his life.

Mrs. Saracen ON HER FEET.

MRS. SARACEN

Come on, Matthew!

Saracen cuts back, dodges two more tacklers.

HE'S GOING TO RUN IT! When... he pulls up just at the line of scrimmage and hurls the ball with everything he's got.

NFL FILMS STYLE. TIGHT ON:

The beautiful arching spiral up up up... slowly cresting... down down down... perfectly landing in the stretched out fingers of the Permian receiver in full stride.

EIGHTY-FIVE YARD MO-JO TOUCHDOWN!

PANDEMONIUM!!!

56 INT. ODESSA HOSPITAL - SAME 56

Jason FLAT LINES. Doctors frantically working on him...

57 INT./EXT. ODESSA - SAME 57

Another brutal defensive stand. Permian stops Abilene with 1:03 left, down by four.

Saracen and the Permian offense take the field on their own 19.

INTERCUT WITH STREET IN THE HOSPITAL.

INTERCUT WITH THE HANDS ON A HARD BODY COMPETITION.

INTERCUT WITH ALL OF OUR MAIN CHARACTERS: Buddy Garrity, Tyra, Lyla Garrity, Mr. and Mrs. Street... etc...

Saracen leads Permian on a spectacular hurry up drive. He scores the WINNING TOUCHDOWN himself on a brutal eight yard quarterback option.

PERMIAN WINS.

58 INT. RATLIFF STADIUM - LATER 58

INTERCUT: Both teams pray together on the field as Jason is stabilized. Players and coaches hand in hand. Coach Long on a knee leading the prayer.

COACH LONG

Give us strength to remember that life is so very fragile. That we are all vulnerable. That we will all, at some point in our lives...fall. We will all fall. We must carry this in our hearts...that what we have is special. That it can be taken from us and that when it is taken from us we will be tested. We will be tested to our very souls...

59 INT. ODESSA HOSPITAL

59

Music up.

SERIES OF SHOTS as Coach Long and his family move down the hospital hallway.

Coach Long hugs Jason's parents.

COACH LONG

We will now all be tested.

60 INT. ODESSA HOSPITAL - TIME LAPSE

60

Jason in recovery. Tubes and Halo braces bolted into his skull. Coach Long holding his hand. He's stable but paralyzed.

COACH LONG (V.O.)

It is these times. This pain. That we are able to look inside ourselves.

61 EXT. ODESSA HOSPITAL

61

Saracen pulling into the parking lot. Standing with the other players. The Bomber. Tim Riggins. Masters.

Lyla Garrity is standing alone, devastated, by her mother.

Players from both teams start pulling up, getting out of their cars. Hundreds of young people.

A parking lot vigil.

COACH LONG (V.O.)

We are now going to find out who we are.
If you're interested in finding out who
you are, I'll be here tomorrow. Will
you?"

CAMERA STARTS TO RISE up out of the parking lot and over
the low, single story skyline. Miles and miles of West
Texas moon glowing flat.

Forever and ever.

THE END.