

NORTH DALLAS FORTY
(second draft)

screenplay by

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from the novel by

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SCENE 1. INT - PHIL ELLIOT'S BEDROOM - DAY

PHIL ELLIOT is lying asleep on his bed. He is naked except for a sheet tangled around one thigh and coving his mid-section more or less. ELLIOT is a big man of about thirty, obviously an athlete, muscular, a couple of inches longer than his mattress. But what's most noticeable about his body is not the size or the shape of it but the damaged condition it's in. he looks like somebody who's been in a highway accident, and maybe not just one but several.

As he sleeps ELLIOT'S breath whistles audibly from the the dried blood caked around his nostrils. The low whistling is joined by the ringing of a bedside phone.

ELLIOT wakes and tries to reach the phone first with one hand and then with the other. But both times his broadly taped ribs protest and he refuses to make another effort.

Some one outside the bedroom answers the phone. In a moment ELLIOT'S black maid, a woman named Johnny, peeks in the door.

JOHNNY

Excuse me Mr. Phil, but are you awake.

ELLIOT grunts a negative response.

ELLIOT

I'm not even alive.

JOHNNY

I'm sorry to bother you but that was somebody callin to say there is a party at Mr. Greg Andrus's house and they said you and Mr. Maxwell was supposed to be there.

ELLIOT

A party...

JOHNNY

He said they was gonna do some...serious drinking and he said they was gonna do...

She pauses to consider her phrasing.

JOHNNY

He says they were gonna...do... something dirty with some women that was there. He sounded pretty serious about that too.

ELLIOT

What time is it?

JOHNNY

I'm sorry, Mr. Phil. But I cain't understand you with your nose all like that.

He gestures at his wrist.

ELLIOT

What time is it?

JOHNNY

Oh, it's the afternoon. Bout two o'clock. It's monday.

ELLIOT grunts. JOHNNY smiles.

JOHNNY

Everybody says that was sure a fancy catch you made yesterday, Mr. Phil. I was sure proud of you. Everybody at the church knows I'm your maid. And the reverend, he made fifty dollars on the game.

She dissappears. ELLIOT stares for moment at the ceiling, his breath rattling, then he rolls out of bed. He literally rolls from the bed and lands on his hands and knees on the floor. With his cracked ribs it is the only way he can get to his feet without fainting. ELLIOT hobbles then to the bathroom. He is having trouble breathing with tape around his ribs. In the bathroom he finds a pair of scissors to free the tape from his ribs. The only trouble is with his fingers taped together he can't use them.

ELLIOT (Calling)

Johnny! Johnny!

The maid appears.

ELLIOT

I can't breathe. Can you cut this tape off me?

JOHNNY snips the tape and tries to ignore the fact that her employer is naked except for his bandages.

JOHNNY

If I was you, Mr. Phil, I'd marry me a nurse, cause you sure seem to need one more after every game.

The tape falls away from his chest and hangs from his back like a pair of cheap angel wings. ELLIOT takes a careful breath.

ELLIOT

Thanks, Johnny.

JOHNNY

Here, I'll run you a hot tub.

She turns the water on full in the bath-tub and ELLIOT works to take the tape from his splinted fingers.

ELLIOT

Do I have any more Codiene pills here, Johnny?

JOHNNY

They should be some more up there in the cabinet, Mr. Phil.

With the loose tape hanging from his fingers he opens the medicine chest and seizes a vial of the pills. He shakes out two and takes them and then for good measure he takes two more. JOHNNY looks at him in amazement.

JOHNNY

You sure you gonna be alright?

ELLIOT

Yeah. I'm fine.

JOHNNY disappears shaking her head. ELLIOT looks in the mirror.

ELLIOT (to his battered image)

Whoa, brother. One a these days you're gonna run outa scar tissue.

SCENE 2 . INT - ROYAL COWBOY CLUB BAR - DAY

Behind the glossey mahogany bar of a businessmen's club in Dallas there is a smiling half-lifesize statue of a football player dancing over imaginary oponents. The plaster ballplayer has a plaque beneath it bearing the name of the club, "THE ROYAL COWBOY". The figuing wears a ten gallon hat on it's head in place of a fotball helmet, and on it's padded shoulders there is a regal ermine cape. The smiling plaster all star looks nothing like the battered image of the real ballplayer in the previous scene.

Around the well- appointed bar a dozen and a half businessmen chatter excitedly about their football team, that has done so well the previous day. ~~Though the men are grouped in twos and threes at tables and at the bar they don't seem to be talking in close conversations. They are all talking at once to anyone, to the air itself, perhaps to the unseen god of football.~~ The talk is as unorchestrated as a chorus of frogs around a country pond.

The men can be labeled by their appearance. One man has grey muttonchop sideburns.

MUTTONCHOPS

I say we have us a damn dream team in Dallas. We have us a damn superbowl - team. And if there was something to win beyond the superbowl we'd win that too. I'll cover any damn bets against this being a superbowl team.

Another man has the leathery skin of a lifelong cowboy or a roughneck who made it good.

LEATHERSKIN

If I was buying me a herd a beef cattle and they looked good as this team even from a mile away I'd pay twice the damn top dollar for the lot. I guarantee you. And that's what they are, a damn fine herd a beef, these boys. By god they look good to me.

Another is a middle-aged bald man.

BALD MAN

Somebody talkin about a dream team... I'll tell ya what'd make this a dream team to me is if we had one goddamn good running back or even a wide receiver that wasn't a goddamn nigger. I'd sure like to see a good white running back, but all these fast one's seem to be niggers.

A tall skinney man in a western cut suit answers that.

SKINNY

Well it's the damn niggers get all that practise runnin. They're runnin for welfare checks, or runnin off with sombody's tv.

BALD MAN

Or they're like this old boy used to work for me. He was a Oakie, a hillbilly, you know. He could run like a damn rabbit. One day I ast him where he learned to run like that and he said, he tol me, mister, where I come from all us boys in my family could run. I said how come and he said 'cause if we couldn't run we wouldn't get no sex. I said how's that? He said, well they's five girls in my family an they's five boys. I said what's that have to do with sex and running. He said, well, us boys we all wore cowboy boots and to keep us from getting to much sex my qaddy made sure everyone of the girls in the family all wore sneakers.

At the other end of the bar a man with a big nose has a theory about raising football players.

BIG NOSE

I'LL tell ya, if I owned me a football team and I wanted to beat this team we got here in Dallas ...

Another man in an aqua blazer interrupts him.

AQUA BLAZER

You wanna beat this football team, you'd be sore put. Cause this damn football team has got it all, hoss, they got it all.

Up the bar Muttonchops is creating a litany of the Dallas team players..

MUTTONCHOPS: on the
Maxwell never looked better to me. That ol boy has an arm like a damn rifle. He's got a brain too. That ol' boy's a fox. Course you gotta be fox at his age, just to keep your ass with only one hole in it.

MUTTONCHOPS (cont.)

Damn, they all looked good. This black boy we got at wide receiver, Huddle. He showed me a lotta talent and he's a youngun. That running back, that other black boy, Richardson...he's a damn bull. And Douglas, that cornerback...he's one mean sombitch.

At a table in the corner of the bar two other men are talking. One is short, chubby, loudly dressed, ruddy-skinned, a drinker with a grinning energy that renews itself with every aggressive smile. He is BOB BEAUDREAU, 35. BEAUDREAU is carving a gigantic piece of roast beef and washing down every bite with a swallow of bourbon. Between bites he talks to EMMET HUNTER, a man in his early thirties whose older brother, CONRAD HUNTER owns the Dallas franchise. EMMET is an agreeable but weak-looking young man.

BEAUDREAU
This is gonna be a superbowl year for Dallas, Emmet. I know. You know it. Everybody in Dallas knows. But it's already damn near the end of the season, so you gotta look to next year, I mean financially this year's over. You have to look to next year. You have to make these kinds of promotional deals now cause when Dallas wins the superbowl, hell you have to be ready to capitalize on that, and every little thing's gonna help. I mean if you're smart you'll be raising your ticket prices for next year, and you'll..

EMMET
Well, confidentially, my brother's already mentioned that...if we win the playoff even.

BEAUDREAU
Well I don't blame him. And if I were you I'd tell your brother to make these promotional deals now. I mean it's like baseball cards. I'll put a player on every bottle cap, and on the back of every can and then I'll put the player of the week on every can of pop and every can of beer. And we'll make up tv spots for the whole southwest. We'll put the player of the week on those spots. I mean I'll level with you. I'm doing this for the team, I'm doing this for the ballplayer

BEAUDREAU (cont.)

More than I'm doing it for my business. Hell, you know I love those ballplayers. I know most of em. Hell I have em over to my house. I take em to dinner...

EMMET

Well, my brother and I know how you feel about the franchise.

BEAUDREAU

I'll tell you too, Emmet, if you're ever lookin to get outta football for any reason...I mean...I'll tell you boy I hope you come an talk to me...before you get into something else. I'll tell ya straight I've made a hell of a lotta money in my business and I'm always lookin for new things to get into but I'm only one man.

EMMET

Well thanks, Bob, I...

BEAUDREAU interrupts his chewing and EMMET'S... conversation with an appreciative look at a young woman who is entering the club. The woman is with an athletic looking young man and another plainer looking woman. The plainer looking woman is pregnant.

BEAUDREAU

Jesus Keerist, who's that?

EMMET

That's Mayhak, and his wife.

BEAUDREAU

I know Mayhak and his wife, I'm talking about that girl.

At the bar MUTTUNCHOPS and the other men continue their chatter unabated.

MUTTUNCHOPS

I'll tell you too, this fella Elliot, Phil Elliot, looked real good to me yestiddy. He made himself a catch or two that ...sheeoot, was real pretty.

LEATHERSKIN

Elliot? That somebitch is good but I tell ya I doubt he'll last out another season. His legs are about gone.

BALD MAN

You talkin about ELLIOT? I been hearing some bad shit about that boy. They say he's nothin but a damn clown, and a hell raiser, drinkin all the time, chasin women ...he don't take any kinda good care of himself.

SCENE 3. INT - ELLIOT'S BATHROOM - DAY

ELLIOT is clearing the caked blood from around his nostrils so that he can breathe. He uses a cotton swab for the operation. Fortunately for us the worst of that vision is obscured as the rising steam from the bathtub clouds the mirror.

Elliot turns away then to the tub. He sinks into the scalding water and inhales sharply as it boils his painful limbs. ~~Once submerged and finding his breath again~~ He reaches for a shoe box near the tub. From the shoe-box he produces some cigarette papers. Drying his fingers on a towel he sprinkles some grass into one of the papers and rolls himself a fat joint. He licks the length of it. Lights it and inhales deeply as the dying wounded in the war movies drag desperately on their last Lucky Strike.

SCENE 4. INT - THE ROYAL COWBOY DINING ROOM - DAY

BEAUDREAU has abandoned his commercial pitch to EMMET HUNTER in favor of tracking down BILLY MAYHAK in the club's spacious diningroom. His incentive for talking to the young ballplayer and his pregnant wife is obviously the beautiful girl that he spotted with the MAYHAKS when they entered the club.

BEAUDREAU

Say, Billie, hidy, how you? Congratulations. Just wanna shake your hand after that fine game yestiddy. Looks like you boy's are on your way to the big 'un now, hey don't it?

BILLY MAYHAK is a young, handsome, clean cut, blue-eyed blond, SMU graduate who plays reserve quarterback for the Dallas team. His young wife EMILY is a pixy with short hair and large innocent eyes. ~~She has the bright toothpaste smile of an ex-cheerleader. Her pregnancy seems incongruous on such a youthful-looking girl.~~

~~MAYHAK rises politely to shake hands with BEAUDREAU.~~

MAYHAK

Well, jeez , thanks Bob...I...

MAYHAK looks embarrassed.

MAYHAK

Well, damn,I didn't even play yestiddy.
But thanks,I...Oh, honey this is Bob...
a...darn I...

BEAUDREAU

Beaudreau...

MAYHAK

Oh, jeez, I'm sorry.How'd I forget your
name. Bob Beaudreau, jeez. Bob, this is
my wife,Emily, and this is Charlotte Ann...
Charlotte Ann Caulder.

EMILY (brightly)

Charlotte Ann is my best friend...I mean
next to Billy. Ha Ha. Course, jeez, Billy
better be my best friend. Ha.Ha.

She touches her bulging midsection, proudly. Her
husband gives her a kiss on the cheek.

CHARLOTTE ANN

Pleased to meet you.

~~CHARLOTTE ANN offers her hand and a beautiful smile
that BEAUDREAU is not likely to forget.~~ CHARLOTTE ANN
has a face and figure of the sort that graces
magazine covers. She is older than her friends, perhaps
thirty.

BEAUDREAU

Well, damn,I'm pleased to meet you,Charlotte
Ann. Welcome to Texas.

EMILY

Charlotte Ann is from Texas. She lives in
Dallas.

BEAUDREAU

Well, I'll be damned.I thought you must be
from New York er someplace. A girl as
beautiful as you lives right here in Dallas
an I never met you before. Wel isn't that
fine.

He turns back to MAYHAK.

BEAUDREAU

Say,I didn't want to interrupt your lunch,
I just wanted to shake your hand an...

MAYHAK

Well, jeez, I didn't play...

EMILY

Well, darn, you should have played. You're a better quarterback than that ...old man, Maxwell.

MAYHAK (nervous)

Honey, don't say that...

EMILY

Well, jeez he can't even throw long anymore, an he...

MAYHAK

Honey...

BEAUDREAU

Say, I did wanna mention one thing ,Billy. I been talking to Emmet and to Conny about a little deal I wanna start...to have some ballplayers maybe do some tv. commercials and things...

MAYHAK

Well, jeez, Bob...I'm not even a starter...I...

EMILY

Honey, dammit, you're gonna be a strater...

MAYHAK

Don't talk like that, hon.

EMILY

Well, you're so modest.

She lowers her voice and touches her stomach again.

EMILY

Maybe you can make some more money. You know were gonna need...everything we can get.

BEAUDREAU

I'm talking about settin these up for next season and you know Maxwell isn't gonna... I mean Maxwell is a great quarterback...

MAYHAK

By jeez he sure is...

BEAUDREAU (lower)

But Maxwell isn't gonna last forever.

EMILY

You're darn right he isn't.

SCENE 5. INT- ELLIOT'S KITCHEN - DAY

~~ELLIOT is dressed in a long terry cloth robe. His hair is still wet from the bath.~~ He pops the top on a can of "Pearl" beer, eases onto a stool behind the kitchen counter and dials the phone. JOHNNY, the maid, moves about the livingroom policing up the myriad empty beer cans, dirty dishes and full ash trays in the room. ~~As she works she~~ sings religious songs to herself. Her voice is squeaky and flat enough to belie the myth of negro musicality.

ELLIOT (into phone)

Darrell? Phil. Phil Elliot you southern-fried asshole, your star receiver...

There is a pause.

ELLIOT

Well wake up. It's two thirty...

Another pause.

ELLIOT

In the afternoon...monday...November...

SCENE 6. INT - ROYAL COWBOY DININGROOM - DAY

BEAUDREAU has taken a seat at the MAYHAK'S table. His interest seems mostly taken with CHARLOTTE ANN as a waiter sweeps around the table serving food. The main dishes are obscured by silver covers.

BEAUDREAU (to CHARLOTTE ANN)

What are you having?

CHARLOTTE ANN

Roast beef...

The waiter uncovers her plate revealing a gargantuan piece of prime rib. CHARLOTTE'S eyes widen.

CHARLOTTE ANN

My God...

BEAUDREAU

Say, I guarantee, that's the finest damn piece of beef you'll find in Texas or anywhere. Yes mam.

CHARLOTTE ANN

Do I eat it or does somebody have to perform an autopsy?

BEAUDREAU laughs uproariously. Diners at several other tables glance at him. One of the diners who is distracted by BEAUDREAU'S boisterousness is a middle-aged silver haired man at a table near the large windows that look down on modern Dallas. The man is CONRAD HUNTER the owner of the Dallas franchise. He looks like a man of money and power. He shares a table with his younger brother, EMMET, and with a young woman, JOANNE RODNEY who is brother EMMET's fiance, and with a chubby Catholic cleric, MONSIGNOR HUGHES.

HUNTER (to EMMET)

Who is that drunk over there?

EMMET

That's Bob Beaudreau.

HUNTER

Who is he? What's he do for a living?

EMMET

He's a big beer distributor. He has a bottling works... I don't know what all... I was just talking to him in the bar. He wants make a protional deal with us. He wants to put the players on his bottle caps and beer cans. Do some commercials... I told you about it a couple weeks ago. Sounds alright.

HUNTER

Is that what he's talking to MAYHAK about?

EMMET

I don't know. I think he just wanted to meet that girl that-came in with them.

HUNTER (imperious)

Well you tell him that any deal he wants to make with my players will go through me. I don't want anyone talking to my players about any deals. There's enough of that going on now. Dammit, all these hustlers come around and they think think these ballplayers are all free to do what they want. Well they're not. I pay their salaries

and I'll say who they can talk to
and who they can't about any deals.
They don't have any right to re-
present themselves. just like they
were any fellow off the street. They're
my ballplayers and I'll say what deals
they can make.

EMMET

Take it easy Connie. Beaudreau's been
talking to me, about this.

HUNTER

You? It's my franchise. Why isn't anybody
talking to me?

The MONSIGNOR takes a sip of his wine and smiles.

MONSIGNOR

I'll talk to you Connie. What do you
want to talk about.

The MONSIGNOR winks good naturedly at JOANNE, who
gives him a perfunctory smile. JOANNE doesn't
particularly enjoy the company of the MONSIGNOR, or
the Senior HUNTER.

HUNTER

No, dammit I'm serious. These hustlers
just take advantage of them, and they
all think they can use my franchise to
promote their schemes...

MONSIGNOR (cloying)

I'd think it would be to the players
advantage to let you watch after their
interests...

HUNTER

Of course it is. Hell, they don't know
what they're doing. Now they're all getting
these damn crooked agents and lawyers...
I'll tell you I won't deal with any damn
agent...

MONSIGNOR

They're just youngsters most of them.

HUNTER

These agents? Hell they're a bunch of damn
shiesters...

MONSIGNOR

I mean the players. They're still boys.
They haven't been out in the world.

JOANNE (low)
They don't look much like boy's to me.

EMMET
Joanne, it's not your business, stay out of it.

HUNTER
Dear, you haven't been around these players like I have.

JOANNE
No, I can't say I have.

EMMET (joking)
She better not have been. Or our deal's off.

He gives her a smile and kisses her. She covers one hand with another, hiding a large diamond ring.

JOANNE
If you think you can get this ring back that easily.

HUNTER(low to MONSIGNOR)
He better not. I advanced him the money for it.

HUNTER winks.

MONSIGNOR
You have a pretty soft heart under neath that tough hide, don't you, Connie?

HUNTER
I'll never admit to that.

At the other table MAYHAK distracts BEAUDREAU from his attentions to CHARLOTTE ANN.

MAYHAK
Bob, you know I'd like to...jeez...we could use the money and all but you see I don't know if I could promote beer.

BEAUDREAU
Sure you could you jest...

MAYHAK
No, I mean, I'm a christian and I dnn't think I could promote the use of alcohol.

The response surprises BEAUDREAU and dissappoints EMILY.

EMILY
Oh, Billie!

CHARLOTTE ANN tries to lighten the moment.

CHARLOTTE ANN
Well, I have nothing against it. How about me? I could put on shoulder pads...

BEAUDREAU
I'll take you up on that offer, honey, I mean if you're serious. I mean that's a damn great idea. I'm damn serious. I'll put you in some commercials...shoooot.

CHARLOTTE ANN
Oh, I was kidding. I was...just kiddin.

But she isn't dissinterested.

MAYHAK
I'm real sorry, Bob. I hate to let you down but I just made my committment to Christ. I try to live a clean life.

SCENE 7 . INT - MAXWELL'S APARTMENT - DAY

DARRELL MAXWELL, the aging quarterback of the Dallas team, rises looking nearly as painful and dammaged as ELLIOT on the same occasion. He reaches for a bottle of liquid "Mylanta" which is next to the bed.

MAXWELL (clutching his stomach)
Aw fuuuuuck.

He takes a long drink from the antacid, grimacing.

MAXWELL
Jesuuuus.

He puts down the bottle of mylanta and picks up a bottle of Cutty Sark scotch which is also next to the bed. He takes a long drink of that.

MAXWELL
Goddaaaamn.

After the scotch he is forced to take another long drink of the liquid antacid.

MAXWELL

Shiiiiit.

After the second drink of mylanta he has to take another drink of scotch.

MAXWELL

Oh, maaaaan.

MAXWELL carries both bottles to the bathroom. He turns on the water in the shower. Then he swigs again from both containers. He sets them on the back of the toilet. He steps into the shower.

MAXWELL (in the shower)

Oh, lordy.

The door of the shower flies open and MAXWELL lunges out. Soaking wet, he falls in front of the toilet and gets sick into the bowl.

SCENE 8 . EXT - ELLIOT'S APARTMENT - DAY

ELLIOT climbs into his sporty brown Buick. He starts the motor. He selects a tape from a pile of cassettes on the floor and jams it in the tape player. He reaches in the glove compartment and takes an already rolled joint from a cigarette case he finds there. He lights the joint and pulls away from the curb to the strains of a country song, from the tape player.

SCENE 9. INT - ROYAL COWBOY CLUB - DAY

BEAUDREAU has pried CHARLOTTE ANN away from MAYHAK and his pregnant wife. He has taken her back to the bar with him where the crowd of Monday morning quarterbacks has swelled and the football talk swirls thickly around the end of seasons snow in Green Bay.

BEAUDREAU'S manic energy is approaching his peak now. He is downing his double Wild Turkeys in great gulps. His currency in the bar has trebled now that he has such a stunning woman on his arm and nearly the whole stag population of the bar is playing their punch lines, as male crowds will, in the direction of the man with the most lovely woman at his side.

BEAUDREAU (shouting)

Bartender, lemme have another of these..

He raises his empty whiskey glass at the bartender.

BEAUDREAU

An lemme have another of these...

BEAUDREAU (to CHARLOTTE ANN)
What'd you say this was?

CHARLOTTE ANN
A marguerita.

Suddenly a chorus of men at the bar amplify the call for CHARLOTTE' ANNE's marguerita, playfully.

SEVERAL MEN (randomly)
Yeah, Henry. Give Charlotte Ann another Marguerita. Yeah, give Charlotte Ann a drink. Here you can have my drink, Charlotte Ann. Say, Beaudreau, what's a pretty thing like Charlotte Ann doing with an ol rattlesnake like you? Watch out for that one, Charlotte Ann. He's a mal hombre, that one. He's a sidewinder. Better give him up, Charlotte Ann.

Charlotte Ann laughs at the collective nonsense. ~~Her smile lives up the promise of the rest of her and BEAUDREAU answers the catcalls as best he can while he downs his fresh drink and CHARLOTTE ANN sips at hers.~~

BEAUDREAU
Don't let any of this bother you, Charlotte Ann. These boys are all just high on yesterday's winnin and they're all playing hookey from the office.

BEAUDREAU and the chorus of CHARLOTTE ANN'S sudden admirers might continue but at this moment there appears at the entrance of the club a group of eight men in uniform grey blazers and short military-style haircuts. BEAUDREAU is among the first to spot them. He speaks his wonder to the crowd.

BEAUDREAU
My god, there's B.A. and the boys.

Exclamations are heard throughout the bar. All the football talk and palaver is suddenly hushed by the notice of these identically dressed men. ~~Someone very important has just arrived and we're here.~~ B.A. QUINLAN is the head coach of the Dallas football team. The men following him are the members of his coaching staff. B.A. is an iron-jawed upright man with the bearing of a pentagon colonel. His assistant coaches are all thick-necked ex-ballplayers who follow him like musclebond ducklings behind a steel-spined gander.

The Men in the Bar

begin hurling congratulations and compliments at the Dallas coaching staff. As the matre'd of the Royal Cowboy leads the coaches into the dining room, the diners there join the chorus from the bar. On the way to a large table at the rear of the dining room the coaching staff walks past the table of their employer, CONRAD HUNTER. HUNTER, of course, spots coach QUINLAN and rises to greet him. The comments from the other diners and from the admirers in the bar are louder now and they become a unanimous cheer supported by applause from all hands as the team owner and the team coach shake hands and all the assistant coaches look about them grinning and looking pleasantly awkward as schoolboy athletes at a high school rally.

SCENE 10. EXT - MAXWELL'S APARTMENT - DAY

ELLIOT ~~simply~~ knocks and lets himself in the door of MAXWELL's apartment. From the previous glimpse we had of MAXWELL throwing up in the john it may be surprising to see the old quarterback fully groomed and impeccably dressed reclining in an arm chair with his expensive wing-tip cowboy boots propped up on a coffee table and a glass of Cutty Sark in his hand.

MAXWELL (raising his glass)
Entrez voocs, hoss! Let yourself in. Seems my poor butler's down with the hoof an mouth.

ELLIOT (smiling)
Morning, Darrell.

ELLIOT enters the room limping on a badly sprained ankle.

MAXWELL
That's a shame pardner. What'd you do, stub your toe on the way over here? I know how that hurts. Done it a time or two myself. Lemme pour you a drink for consolation.

ELLIOT collapses in another arm chair and MAXWELL leans forward to reach the bottle of Cutty Sark. Something catches painfully in his hip. He grabs at the pain.

MAXWELL
Cottdamn. Must be pinchin a nerve...that sombitch hurts like somebody drove a nail through your nuts.

ELLIOT

Shoulda kept up your music lessons, like your momma wanted, hoss. They say you never get too old to play tennis or the piano...

MAXWELL scoops up the bottle of scotch and walks across the room, suddenly without a trace of a limp. His face is ~~suddenly~~ hard as stone.

MAXWELL

I ain't old, Elliot, not yet. And I ain't crippled either...not like you. I just been down the road a few times, that's all.

ELLIOT (grinning)

Yeah, Darrell, you aren't old...

He chants.

ELLIOT

And football is just good clean fun. It builds character, it develops leadership capabilities. America is a true democracy and your mother never sucked a man's joint in her life...

MAXWELL (suddenly hostile)

You asshole...one a these days I'm gonna let Joe Bob and them others kick the shit outta you like they been wantin too fer years!

ELLIOT (still smiling)

You do that Darrell and there won't be anybody left to dive for those underthrown passes a yours. You get rid a me an everybody gonna find out about that hollow arm a yours.

SCENE 11. INT - ELLIOT'S BUICK - DAY

The two athletes speed across north Dallas in ELLIOT'S buick. Maxwell's got his Cutty Sark stowed between his legs.

MAXWELL

Say there ...er...a babee..."

MAXWELL is doing a poor version of a black accent.

MAXWELL

Why don't you break out some a dat der... reffer...motherfucker...I'd like to have

MAXWELL (cont.)

some a dat der reefer to...expand my...
consciousnesses.

ELLIOT

Try the glove compartment, in the cigarette
case.

ELLIOT imitates MAXWELL's texas accent.

ELLIOT

Hep youseff.

MAXWELL finds a joint and lights it.

MAXWELL

You know there was time not so long ago
when if someone offered me a majuana
cigarette...a ...what you part-time niggers
would call a...reefer or a joint...an I
woul'da done something desperate to you...
broke your arms...or got you kicked off
the squad. An now here I am...a damn...
hop-head myself. Another damn Gene Krupa!

He draws the smoke down into his lungs with great
exaggerated air-leaking hits. He looks like someone
who has learned how to smoke from reading a rock
and roll newspaper. ELLIOT has to admit.

ELLIOT

Damn, boy. The way you smoke, you better
tighten your asshole. You're gonna burn
your underpants.

ELLIOT slows his buick for a tollbooth on the
~~expressway as America's most famous quarterback~~
~~turns blue in the face holding the smoke in~~
~~his lungs from the joint he is decimating.~~ The
boy at the toll booth is a dopey-looking country
boy with his name on a name tag above his shirt
pocket: BILLY WAYNE ROBINSON. BILLY WAYNE leans
down to take the toll from ELLIOT as MAXWELL
exhales the cloud of smoke from his lungs. MAXWELL
reads the boy's name from the tag on his shirt.

MAXWELL

Say, Billy Wayne, how's your mom an them?

BILLY WAYNE recognizes the old quarterback. He
can't believe his luck. He reaches across ELLIOT'S
chest to shake MAXWELL'S hand..

BILLY WAYNE

Kot damn, Darrell Maxwell. Holy Jesus

BILLY WAYNE (cont.)

Darrell! You done em good yestiddy, din ya boy? Damn, Darrell Maxwell! Nice to see ya!

Then the boy gets a whiff of the smoke in the car. He grins.

BILLY WAYNE

Damn boy, Darrell, you smoke dope? You smoke dope, boy? Damn. I do too. I just never...

MAXWELL turns suddenly serious.

MAXWELL

That ain't dope. He just farted, that's all. I smoke cigars.

He hits ELLIOT on the leg.

MAXWELL

Let's get outta here, hoss.

The buick accelerates and the grinning toll collector calls after it.

BILLY WAYNE

Hey, Darrell. I don't care what you do. I wouldn't tell nobody on you, ol boy. Hell, I smoke it too. Everybody does.

ELLIOT

Did you know that ol boy back there?

MAXWELL

Naw, hell I'm jst practicing for when I run for governor a texas.

ELLIOT

Governor, shit. you ain't corrupt enough to be governor of texas. They'd laugh you aughta the whore houses of Austin when you told em the worst thing you ever did was fuck these three fourteen years olds at your niece's pajama party.

MAXWELL

Who the hell told you about that?

ELLIOT

You did, that night we got the girl's band Santa Fe...

MAXWELL

Well don't spread that story around. My sister'd put me in jail if she ever heard about that night.

SCENE 12. INT. - ROYAL COWBOY - DAY

B.A. Quinlan and his covey of assistant coaches are seated around a large table in the rear of the dining-room. Two uniformed waiters are serving each of his stupendous serving of prime rib, baked potato with sour cream etc. ~~This meal is apparently the "heart attack special" at the Royal Cowboy.~~ As the coaches anticipate their meal they chatter about football, ~~of course.~~ One of the waiter's asks for drink orders. He begins with an assistant coach named BUDDY WILKS.

WAITER

Mr. Wilks, would you like something to drink with your meal?

WILKS

I'd sure like a beer.

The waiter moves to B.A. for his order. The other coaches look curiously at WILKS..

WAITER

Mr. Quinlan, your beverage?

QUINLAN

Milk please.

Once B.A. has ordered milk every other coach at the table orders milk. ~~WILKS cannot help but get the message. He calls the waiter back.~~

WILKS (low)

Can you change mine to milk, please.

The football talk continues very technically through the beverage orders, ~~The eight coaches carry on four distinct conversations and they are so dense with technical specifics it's pointless to produce them here~~ but eventually the talk turns to the the subject of running backs and tight ends. Assistant coach JIM JOHNSON makes a suggestion, to B.A., the head coach.

JOHNSON

You know B.A. I ran some stats on the computer this morning and I think one of the problems we're running into on the right side of that line is that Phil Elliot just isn't quick enough off the line to block for Richardson. Elliot's forty time has

JOHNSON (cont)

dropped two tenths since September. Richardson's gotten faster since he lost weight and Gilbert's picked up two tenths on his sprints since last month. Maybe when we play Richardson we're gonna have to play Gilbert.

B.A. makes a hissing noise through his teeth, and shakes his head.

B.A.

Phil Elliot. Phil Elliot, now where have I heard that name?

The assistant coaches laugh.

WILKS

Phil Elliot. I think that's the name of a virus or a flu that's going around.

More laughter.

B.A.

That's a virus alright. I hope it doesn't infect the entire team.

SCENE 13. INT - ELLIOT'S BUICK - DAY

Elliot slows the brown buick as they cruise broad street through the universally infamous Daley Plaza where Kennedy was eased off the planet. They pass the manicured "grassey knoll" and the blunt ediface of the Texas School book depository. The locale makes MAXWELL philosophical, as he sucks hard on another joint.

MAXWELL

You know, I never know how to feel when I drive through here. It's like...this is the very spot where it all started to change...America just got that bullet...right in the ass...

ELLIOT takes the joint from the pensive quarterback.

ELLIOT

I know how I feel. I feel like I do every other day of my life.

MAXWELL

How's that?

ELLIOT

I feel just like little ol Lee Harvey oswald, myself. I always identified with that hopeless little bastard.

MAXWELL (suddenly incensed)
How the hell can you say that? What's that supposed to mean?

ELLIOT
Just working for the front office...just like ol Lee Harvey...

MAXWELL
Goddammit, Phil, what are you so bitter about? You get a check every week for what you do.

ELLIOT
I'm sure ol Lee Harvey did too...in ADVANCE.

MAXWELL ponders something.

MAXWELL
You know, Phil, I like you...

ELLIOT pats MAXWELL'S Knee. He grins.

ELLIOT
That's lovely, Darrell. I like you too. An my mom likes you...

MAXWELL
An outside of a couple of those dope smoking hippies and niggers that you like to hang out with...I may be the only man on the team that's willing to say that.

ELLIOT looses his smile.

MAXWELL
However, I do agree with everyone else about one ~~nothing...aside from the fact that you throw a fair block and for a man that runs like a damn armadillo you can catch a football...~~ ~~I do agree that~~ you got the weirdest damn sissy attitude about life I ever did see...

ELLIOT
Oh. yeah, coach. How's that?

MAXWELL
I don't know how to put it, hoss...but you seem to think that everybody is responsible for all the shit in your world but you.

ELLIOT
It looks to me like you and I live in the same world...same team...

MAXWELL

Hell, no, hoss. My world is Reeeeeeal simple.
I like to fuck women and play football.

ELLIOT

So what else is new.?

MAXWELL

An when I play football I like to win! All
the rest is just passing time.

They ride for a momentt in silence. ~~MAXWELL isn't looking here.~~

MAXWELL

AND If I had to make a choice I'd give up women.

ELLIOT laughs. He doesn't believe it.

MAXWELL

Now you, you don't have such...priorities. You
got it all mixed together. And that'll make
you crazy...and it'll make you weak...and the
weak don't inherit much of the earth down here
in Texas.

(SCENE 13 HUNTER, EMMET, THE MONSIGNOR, BEAUDREAU AND CHARLOTTE ANN
and others from the ROYAL COWBOY collecting their cadillacs
as they exit the building. A traffic jamb of luxury cars)

SCENE 14 INT- GREG ANDRUS'S HOUSE - DAY

JOE BOB WILLIAMSON is a giant ~~center~~ lineman. He goes
six seven and weighs 270 lbs. He has his pants off.
He head is stuffed in a child's Hutch Football helmet
that pinches his features into a hideous pig's face.
The giant is crazed on alcohol, drugs and his own horny
enthusiasm. He looks like some Japanese movie monster.
JOE BOB is standing in the middle of a party. He roars
and reaches into the crowd and selects someone's date
like a grizzly snatching a ripe fruit from a low tree.
The pretty girl screams as she is lifted from her
feet. JOE BOB sticks his tongue out and licks the
girl's face like an ice cream cone. The room is
filled with ballplayers who are not that much smaller
than JOE BOB and they would like to rescue the girl
but do not dare try. Her date, a short business type
pulls at JOE BOB'S arm uselessly.

SALESMAN

Let her go now, JOE BOB. Fun's fun but you
better let her go now.

ELLIOT and MAXWELL enter the party in the midst of this but they are unwilling as the other's to intervene

ELLIOT
 But I know the big one's King Cong but I don't recognize the girl.

MAXWELL
 They shouldn't let ol Joe Bob out in the middle of the day unless he's had a whole antelope an a couple or three cheerleaders for breakfast.

ELLIOT
 I don't know how you bring down something that mean without a net and tranquilizing gun.

MAXWELL
 Hell, don't shoot him, It'll just make him mad.

JOE BOB has tired of the salesman prying at his fingers. He drops the girl and with an angry growl he picks up the salesman, with one hand. with the other he begins beating on his bald head like a man dribbling a basketball. The salesman is terrified. He begins crying like a baby at the brutal treatment. The girl has collapsed. Joe BOB finally drops the man and as he is momentarily empty-handed ELLIOT calls out.

ELLIOT
 Darrell, you better find something for Joe Bob to do with his hands.

JOE BOB recognizes the voice and he cries out in blind Sampson-like rage.

JOE BOB
 Phil Elliot, you goddamn wise-ass crackin faggot...if I get my hands on you I'm gonna.. rip your damn arms out an...an...

ELLIOT
 Somebody supply Joe Bob with a nice quaint brutal Texas expression so he can finish his threat properly.

JOE BOB lunges in ELLIOT'S direction but ELLIOT moves quickly toward the kitchen. MAXWELL'S voice stops JOE BOB in his tracks.

MAXWELL
 If we make it to the superbowl, Joe Bob, I promise you, I'll lock you in the clubhouse together and you can do anything to him you want.

JOE BOB

Come on, Darrell, jes lemme rip his tongue out.

On his way to the kitchen ELLIOT passses a young blk running back named THOMAS RICHARDSON. RICHARDSON is a lithe, hansome, smoldering man who, even in repose, looks like he could run down a gazelle.

RICHARSON

I wouldn't be too sure Maxwell won't keep that promise. Specially if you ain't a starter by the superbowl.

ELLIOT slaps the black man's hand.

ELLIOT

How you doing, T.R.?

Across the room JOE BOB mumbles in MAXWELL'S direction.

JOE BOB

If I ever get ELLIOT in a room somewhere he's gonna suck my dick like he does them niggers he loves so much...and then I'm gonna reach up his asshole, grab his tongue, an turn him inside out.

MAXWELL

O.K. Joe Bob, but don't you hurt him till the season's over, you hear? He's been catchin passes real good these last couple a weeks.

SCENE 15. INT- ANDRUS'S KITCHEN - DAY

In the kitchen there is a girl in tears. As ELLIOT goes to the refridgerator for a beer he passes her. The girl is with a man in a flashy suit. His name is STEVE.

GIRL (weeping)

You said we were going to a party. Not a pig pen full of damn animals.

STEVE

Come on, baby. He's not a bad guy, he just...

GIRL

Not a bad guy? I just walked in the room and he grabbed me and shoved my head down...he didn't have any clothes on.

STEVE

I'll talk to him or why don't you go talk to him.

As the girl continues to sob, STEVE notices ELLIOT passing.

STEVE

Phil Elliot. Hiddy. How you boy. I been lookin for you. Man you played a fantastic game yestiddy. Say I got a business proposition for you. My brother and I just got a chevy dealership. How'd you like to have a new car? You could just put in some time on weekends when the seasons over. Just be on the floor. It's easy. Maybe we'll make you sales manager afer while...

ELLIOT is looking at the weeping girl.

ELLIOT

I'll think about it, Steve. But I got a problem with selling things, you know.

STEVE

How's that?

ELLIOT

I'm a marxist.

ELLIOT walks out of the kitchen. He pats the weeping girl on the ass as he leaves. The gesture induces a new surge of tears against the male of the species.

SCEN 16. INT - GREG ANDRUS'S DININGROOM - DAY

In the next room there is a great c^ush as two powerful looking men, a rookie cornerback named ALAN CLARIDGE and a linebacker, the party's host, GREG ANDRUS wrestle in the diningroom. Furnitue is flying. ELLIOT dodges a chair as he passes through the room. He finds himself next to THOMAS RICHARDSON again.

RICHARDSON

Say that was a nice catch you made yesterday. I didn't know a cripple like you could still move like that.

ELLIOT

Thanks. I wish I'd a been in long enough to make a couple more.

RICHARDSON

Yeah, well all I know is when you're in I'm on the bench so I can't say I wish you luck. That's funny ain't it?

ELLIOT(deadpan)
Hilarious.

RICHARDSON
Funny how they set us all against each other.
Yeah that's sure funny. I used to think we
was all on the same team.

ELLIOT(dryly)
Why we are,T.R. You, me, Joe Bob, Maxwell,
these two back here. All for one and one for
all.

He gestures at the two men wrestling behind them,
destroying the dining room.

RICHARDSON
Twenty-four hours after the game and those
cats haven't come down yet. Either they're
turnin punk or they better ease of the
amphetamine.

ELLIOT
A little of each I think.

RICHARDSON
MAYbe we could change all that.

ELLIOT (playing dumb)
Football faggots and speed freaks? How can
we change a fine tradition like that?

RICHARDSON
I don't mean that. I mean maybe we can change
this slave system we work under.

ELLIOT
Oh, fuck you,Richardson. Don't start on
that political shit.

RICHARDSON
YOU know better,man. You too bright to
pretend this cotton pickin is the way it's
gotta be. You , Maxwell...

ELLIOT
Joe Bob.

RICHARDSON
Fuck, Joe Bob. He's still in the trees,brother.
But that doesn't excuse the rest of us.We don't
have to have all this dog eat dog...

ELLIOT
What do you propose?

RICHARDSON
I propose you do what I'm doing. ORGANIZE!

ELLIOT
Organize what?

RICHARDSON
Organize the white ballplayers, like I'm organizing the black players. Get Maxwell on your side and organize the white ballplayers. Sometime down the road a piece we'll get your side and my side together and we'll have a real union. We could do that. You, me and Maxwell.

ELLIOT can't help but laugh.

ELLIOT
Say that's a great idea T.R. You, me and Maxwell: An all-star team, there's only *one* problem.

RICHARDSON
What's that?

ELLIOT
Maxwell hates niggers and I hate politics.

RICHARDSON takes a long look at ELLIOT. It's impossible to see whether the look is charged with anger or curiosity. ELLIOT looks at a big breasted blond that passes close by him smiling.

RICHARDSON
That's a damn shame, Phil.

ELLIOT
How's that?

RICHARDSON
You the only half-way hip white man on this team. An you ain't serious.

ELLIOT (eyeing the big-titted girl)
Oh, I'm serious about some things.

RICHARDSON
Chasin pussey ain't serious, man. An anyway that chick's a drag. All she wants you to do is raise welts on her ass and all that freaky shit. Don't waste your time man. I know. I fucked her after the Minnesota game.

ELLIOT is slightly suprised that RICHARDSON knows the blond girl. He is probably jealous. He walks away to talk to the blond.

RICHARDSON hears a crash behind him and turns to see the two wrestlers collapse with the Dining Room table under them. CLARIDGE and ANDRUS laugh and finally relax sweating in each other's muscular arms. RICHARDSON nearly chokes as he sees ANDRUS plant a great open-mouthed kiss on his young wrestling companion. He walks away as the linebacker's tongue snakes into the cornerback's mouth.

RICHARDSON (to himself)
The motherfuckers are turned punk. I knew it. The motherfuckers are turned punk.

SCENE 17 INT - HALLWAY AND BATHROOM - DAY

MAXWELL, with a drink in one hand, wanders down a hallway and knocks on a bathroom door. A female voice responds to the knock.

GIRL
Stay out. There's a woman in here. I'll be out in a minute.

MAXWELL opens the door anyway and barges in on the girl, smiling. The girl is sitting on the john.

GIRL (shocked)
What are you doing in here? Get out of here.

MAXWELL (smiling)
I thought you said there was a woman in here. Why you're just a little bitty girl.

The girl screams a protest. MAXWELL closes the door behind him. You can hear his voice as the door closes.

MAXWELL
That's alright don't get up. No need to be formal. I'm Darrell Maxwell. I'm a quarterback. Do you like football players?

SCENE 18 INT - LIVINGROOM - DAY

ELLIOT is talking to the blond girl.

BLOND
I like football players.

ELLIOT
Gee, I don't. They're all so hairy and muscular. I prefer teenage boys.

The blond goes into paroxysms, as they say, of laughter. And ELLIOT is distracted by a commotion inside the front door. BOB BEAUDREAU has walked in the front door with CHARLOTTE ANN on his arm.

BLOND

You mean you're ~~not~~ a queer? I've been reading how you big jocks are really just little ol' fairies inside.

ELLIOT (looking at Charlotte Ann)

Inside and out lady.

BLOND (stepping closer to him)

I bet you're not.

ELLIOT (deadpan)

I'll bet you five bucks I am.

BLOND

Aw, how you gonna prove that.

Elliot

Well, let's see...

BLOND

Are any of these other guys queer.

ELLIOT

Just Darrell Maxwell.

BLOND

I don't believe that! Darrel Maxwell, queer?
Aw.

ELLIOT

He's a raving faggot, baby. A genuine three dollar bill.

SCENE 19. INT - HALLWAY - ANDRUS'S HOUSE.

There are several people lined up outside the bathroom door waiting to use the john. A college boy is knocking on the door with a worried look on his face.

COLLEGE BOY

Lucy?. You alright, Lucy?. Answer me. Are you still in there? Are you sick or something?
Lemme in...

A mean looking football player named JIM DOUGLAS, a cornerback, pushes through the waiting line and bangs roughly on the door himself.

DOUGLAS

Hey, who's ever the hell's in there hurry up an get finished. They's a lotta folks out here's gotta pee.

MAXWELL's voice is heard from behind the locked door.

MAXWELL'S VOICE

Yeah, hoss. I'll done in a minute. I always have this terrible constipation the day after a game.

DOUGLAS is cowed by the old quarterback's voice.

DOUGLAS

Aw. hell, Darrell. That you in there? I din know. Jess take your time, Darrel. We can wait.

MAXWELL'S VOICE

I appreciate that hoss

SCENE 20. INT - BATHROOM ANDRUS'S HOUSE - DAY

Inside the bathroom MAXWELL has got the girl, LUCY, propped up on the edge of the sink. Her skirt is up around her waist. MAXWELL is fucking her. She looks astonished.

SCENE 21. INT - HALLWAY - DAY

The college^{boy} in the hallway has heard MAXWELL'S voice. He turns to DOUGLAS with great concern.

COLLEGE BOY

Say, who the hell is that man in there? My GIRL FRIEND is in there! Hey, who's in there with my girl friend?

He bangs on the door. DOUGLAS grabs the boy's arm and tugs him down the hall, away from the john.

DOUGLAS

Sonny, if that's you a girl friend in there you aughta put her on television, cause she sure does one hell of a imitation of Darrell Maxwell with her voice.

COLLEGE BOY

But I know she's in there!

DOUGLAS

Well then probably ol Darrell's jes heppin her with her zipper...or maybe her string on her.. tam-pax broke...Darrell's real helpful like that sometimes.

SCENE 22.INT- LIVINGROOM - DAY

The BLOND GIRL reaches in her pocket book and produces a ten dollar bill.

ELLIOT

What's that?

BLOND

Ten dollars. You bet me

ELLIOT

I only bet you five, I'm a queer.

BLOND

You bet me Maxwell was queer too. We're gonna find Maxwell and the three of us are gonna go back in Greg's bedroom and...find out.

ELLIOT

Ah, you're sly as a fox, baby. But Darrell and I are pro's we don't go down for just five bucks.

BLOND (seductive)

Aw come on, Phil. I was in Miami last week, an they were real nice to me. We got real friendly.

ELLIOT'S

Who's we?

BLOND

The offensive line, two cornerbacks and... one assistant coach...and me.

ELLIOT (amused)

You're kidding.

BLOND -

Nope. I'm going to Minnesota next week. I gonna make it through the whole league before I quit.

ELLIOT

Then what are you gonna do?

BLOND

Get married.

She shows him her engagement ring.

ELLIOT (shrugging)
Well don't forget to take a shower before
the wedding.

BLOND
Come on Phil. What do you say?

ELLIOT
I would baby but frankly I'd rather fuck her.

BLOND
Who?

ELLIOT
Her.

He nods in the direction of Charlotte Ann.

BLOND
Who's she?

ELLIOT
I don't know, yet.

BLOND (unjealous)
She's pretty. Can I join you?

Another ballplayer walks by and punches ELLIOT on the
arm. ELLIOT winces. The ballplayer is toothgrinding
speed freak with a face like Carmine Bassilio, and
body like a fireplug. His name is GINO MECHADO.

GINO
Say, Phil, you asshole, what you doing?
He punches ELLIOT'S arm again.

ELLIOT
Ouch. Cut it out Gino.

GINO
You gonna make me. Phil? You asshole.

He punches ELLIOT'S arm again, and laughs. GINO is pretty
well "zoned" on pills and alcohol. The punches hurt.

ELLIOT
Who's that girl over there, Gino.

GINO
Where?

ELLIOT
There by the door.

GINO

Oh. I don't know. But I know him. He's a crazy motherfucker. He's a friend a Greg's. He's a crazy motherfucker. He's gonna put us all on bottle caps and beer cans. He sells beer and stuff. He's a crazy motherfucker. Name's Beaudreau. He's a crazy mother...

ELLIOT

I know Beaudreau, I wanna know...

GINO

He's a crazy motherfucker. Him and me an Greg an them was out driving around the other night, drinking an drivin around...he's a crazy...

ELLIOT

Gino, we have already established that the man is an eccentric who has sexual relations with at least one member of his family but who is the girl...

GINO (undetered)

We were driving out to "Stumpy's Kitchen" for breakfast. It was morning, like around dawn and we pass this ranch and somebody...I think it was me...they say...or I say...somebody says they want steak for breakfast an ol Beaudreau he stops the car and gets out and ...he shoots this cow...right between the eyes. Jess, pow! Right between the eyes. Right between the eyes.

Gino is obviously an admirer of that sort of behavior.

GINO

Yeah, Beaudreau. He's a crazy motherfucker.

ELLIOT rolls his eyes. The BLOND loved the story.

ELLIOT

Say, Gino. This is a friend of mine. She says she wants to meet your red-headed friend. Why don't you take her back in Greg's room and introduce her.

GINO (stupidly)

Who's my red-headed friend?

BLOND

Your pee-pee, stupid, your pee-pee.

ELLIOT escapes shaking his head.

SCENE 23. INT - LIVINGROOM - DAY

Across the room BEAUDREAU is clowing with some of the ballplayers, introducing them to CHARLOTTE ANN.

BEAUDREAU
This is John Wilson. He plays strong safety.

GREG ANDRUS
The strongest thing about him is his jock strap.

CHARLOTTE ANN frowns at that.

BEAUDREAU
And this is your host, Greg Andrus. He's a linebacker.

GREG ANDRUS
Howdy do, Miss Charlotte.

ANDRUS kisses CHARLOTTE ANN sloppily. She struggles to shove him away, laughing.

BEAUDREAU *7. Pick RETURN*
This is Alan Claridge. He's a cornerback. He's gonna be all pro in a couple of years. He's just a rookie now.

Andrus grabs at CHARLOTTE ANN'S chest.

ANDRUS
You bet your nipples he's gonna be all pro.

CLARIDGE offers his hand politely. ANDRUS interferes jokingly and perhaps jealously.

ANDRUS
Ah, don't shake his hand. He's got the clap.

CHARLOTTE ANN (cooly)
How would you know?

ANDRUS
I'm his doctor.

CHARLOTTE ANN
Oh.

ELLIOT arrives in the middle of this.

BEAUDREAU

Say, Phil. I didn't see you there. How you?
That's was a hell of a catch you made yestiddy.

ELLIOT largely ignores BEAUDREAU. He has suddenly got an urgency about him. He walks directly up to CHARLOTTE ANN.

ELLIOT

Excuse me, miss. What's your name?

CHARLOTTE ANN (surprised)

A...my name? Charlotte Ann.

ELLIOT

Charlotte Ann what?

BEAUDREAU

Charlotte Ann. This is Phil Elliot.

ELLIOT continues to act with an odd urgency.

ELLIOT (to CHARLOTTE ANN)

I have a message for you. It's important. Can I talk to you?

CHARLOTTE ANN (looking at BEAUDREAU)

Well...

ELLIOT

Excuse me, Bob. But this is urgent.

BEAUDREAU

Well...is somethin wrong ?

ELLIOT

Well, I should talk to Charlotte Ann alone.

CHARLOTTE ANN (concerned)

Well, ok...

ELLIOT

Excuse us a second.

He takes her arm and leads her away. BEAUDREAU accepts the event with some concern on his face.

SCENE 24. EXT - PATIO - LATE AFTERNOON

It is getting dark outside. ELLIOT leads CHARLOTTE ANN out the door. On the way they pass MAXWELL. ELLIOT grabs him with his free hand...

ELLIOT

Come here, Darrell. This is Charlotte Ann. Charlotte Ann, Darrell Maxwell, semi-retired quarterback. Darrell, you gotta help us out here.

CHARLOTTE ANN

What's going on.

ELLIOT

Come over here, I'll tell you.

As they walk to edge of Andrus's lawn past a pool and some patio furniture where the distressed COLLEGE BOY is talking to his girlfriend from the bathroom, LUCY. MAXWELL nods and smiles in passing.

COLLEGE BOY

Lucy, my god, how could you let a strange man come in there while you're going to the bathroom.

LUCY (lamely)

Billy Jim, I've gone to the bathroom in front of you lots of times.

COLLEGE BOY

Aw, Lucy...

SCENE 25. EXT - ANDRUS'S LAWN - EVENING

In the shadow of the trees at the edge of Andrus's lawn ELLIOT, MAXWELL and CHARLOTTE ANN, stop walking.

CHARLOTTE ANN

Are you gonna tell me what this is all about?

ELLIOT

This!

ELLIOT produces a fat joint.

MAXWELL

Now you're talking, hoss. I could sure use me a pick me up...

CHARLOTTE ANN

You mean you... I don't...

ELLIOT (lighting up)

You don't smoke?

CHARLOTTE ANN
Well, yes, I smoke but...

ELLIOT
Well you can't smoke in there.

CHARLOTTE ANN
I don't follow this whole thing. I'm going back inside.

MAXWELL
Well if you two are gonna quarrel whyn't you lemme tend that smoke.

CHARLOTTE ANN
Well, as long as I'm here...

She takes the joint and draws hard on it. She hands the joint to MAXWELL then and it goes around between the three of them until it is nearly gone. At that point MAXWELL detects someone moving in the bushes near them. He cannot see who the figure is.

MAXWELL
Who's that?

ELLIOT
Probably somebody taking a leak.

MAXWELL
Well put that out.

ELLIOT crushes the joint between his fingers.

ELLIOT
DAMN boy, you're gettin jumpy in your old age.

CHARLOTTE ANN (amused)
It is the modern world. Everybody smokes dope.

MAXWELL
Could be, honey, but me an him we aren't exactly in the modern world. We're just a couple a pieces of football property...just a couple of tax losses for the front office. We ain't fully-fledged citizens like you are, honey.

There is a sound in the bushes again and MAXWELL flinches. Then BEAUDREAU'S voice is heard and he approaches.

BEAUDREAU
Charlotte Ann, honey. Everything alright?

CHARLOTTE ANN
Fine, Bob... we were just sharing a little...
MAXWELL squeezes her arm, hard.

CHARLOTTE ANN
A...Phil was just giving me a message...
from my mother.

BEAUDREAU
Say, Darrel Maxwell. Hey, I gotta talk to
you boy. I been cooking up a little deal
the front office. I wanna talk to you about
being my first player of the week...I mean
I wanna talk to you an Phil, both...

BEAUDREAU puts his arm around MAXWELL chummily.
MAXWELL frowns.

ELLIOT
Yeah, well whyn't you two talk an I'll get
Charlotte Ann a drink. Come on Charlotte Ann.
He drags her away again.

CHARLOTTE ANN
Hey, what the hell are you doing to me?

ELLIOT
I'm in love with you. I'm never going to
let you out of my sight.

CHARLOTTE ANN
You're full of shit.

ELLIOT
You've been reading my mail.

SCENE 26. INT - KITCHEN - EVENING

GINO MECHADO is pounding his fist against one of the
kitchen cabinets. His knuckles are bleeding profusely.

ELLIOT
Don't you think you're being jess a
a little hard on yourself, Gino?
You're gonna break your fist an all...

CHARLOTTE ANN
Is he crazy?

ELLIOT
Sure.

GINO
You know that big blond you turned me onto?
She said...she told me she really gets crazy
behind a little blood.

He pulls up his pants' leg revealing a hideous bruise.

GINO
I showed her my bruise. She got real interested.
I figure the blood'll get her going pretty good.

He pounds the cabinet once more. Blood spurts
from his hand. He rushes from the room greatly excited
as ELLIOT gets a beer and pours CHARLOTTE ANN a drink.

CHARLOTTE ANN
There's something about football players
that I find puzzling.

ELLIOT
Well you can't judge everybody from these
parties.

CHARLOTTE ANN
Oh?

ELLIOT
Everybody's still pretty high.

CHARLOTTE ANN
On what?

ELLIOT
On yesterday's win. On the tension...and the
speed...frustration...

CHARLOTTE ANN
You take speed for a game?

ELLIOT (solemn)
Me? No. I wouldn't do anything like that. No.
Not me. Hell no. I just spend the morning in
prayer and meditation. I beg Jesus Christ to
give me the strength to live up to the fine
tradition of excellence that so many great
sportsmen have nurtured here in Dallas...
I would never defile my body like these others.

He pops the top on his beer can, and drinks half the contents on one draught.

ELLIOT

Why don't you and I get out of here before your date comes back?

CHARLOTTE ANN

What do you have in mind?

ELLIOT

Well, we could go to dinner...get loaded... go to bed...

She turns him down with a look.

ELLIOT

Oh, well...I'm sorry...if you're not hungry... we could skip dinner.

CHARLOTTE ANN

Thanks for the drink. I admire your direct approach. It's real dissarming. Nice try.

She turns to leave the kitchen.

ELLIOT

Chicken.

She doesn't look back. He finishes his beer in one more gulp and reaches in the refrigerator for another.

SCENE 27. INT - LIVINGROOM - EVENING

JOE BOB, WILSON, CLARIDGE, ANDRUS and the rest are playing a game of football on their knees. Their bulk and violence shakes the house. WILSON runs for a near touchdown. JOE BOB reaches out and grabs his shirt. The shirt tears and comes off in his hand. WILSON protests. JOE BOB throws him down and pulls his pants off. That starts a chain reaction. Other clothes are ripped off. CHARLOTTE ANN and the other partiers watch the action in cautious amusement. JOE BOB decides the game needs some female participation.

JOE BOB

We need some new bodies. Them others are all too hairy. We need some smooth new bodies...

He looks around the room. BEAUDREAU and MAXWELL have re-entered the party. BEAUDREAU has his arm around the old quarterback's shoulder. MAXWELL is enduring his attention.

BEAUDREAU

You can own this damn town, Darrell. When you retire, you can own this damn little town. But you gotta get working now. You gotta start capitolizing on your name.

ELLIOT walks up behind CHARLOTTE ANN.

ELLIOT

Pretty please.

She smiles at him but stands her ground.

ELLIOT

I'll be nice. We'll just get loaded and go to dinner. You don't have to go to bed with me till the second date.

She tries to ignore him.

ELLIOT

The third date.

CHARLOTTE ANN

Really, I'm not interested.

ELLIOT

Alright this is your last chance. The fourth date. That's my final offer. You are beautiful and I'm dying to get in your drawers but I have my principles too. You can only ask so much of a guy. The fourth date is my final offer. What do you say?

She says nothing.

ELLIOT

O.K. I've been generous, I've been reasonable. It's your loss.

JOE BOB suddenly looms up before CHARLOTTE ANN and ELLIOT. He scoops CHARLOTTE ANN up in his arms. She is scared and looks to ELLIOT for help.

JOE BOB

Hey, man. I got a good one.

He rips at her blouse.

ELLIOT

I'm sorry, baby. I'd like to help but...
I got my pride.

CHARLOTTE ANN

Let me down.

BEAUDREAU hears CHARLOTTE ANN'S protests.. He rushes foreward.

BEAUDREAU

Let her down, Joe Bob. Let her down, goddammit.

JOE BOB grabs CHARLOTTE ANN'S breast. She screams and BEADREAU freaks out.

BEAUDREAU

Joe Bob, let her down. Let her down you big bastard!

JOE BOB ignores him. BEAUDREAU is livid. He is bouncing around the giant lineman, cursing and shouting at him, when suddenly he reaches under his suit coat, pulls a thirty-eight pistol and fires it into the ceiling. The blast stuns JOE BOB, CHARLOTTE ANN, ELLIOT and everyone else in the room. There is a moment of innaction and then a rush for the doors.

BEAUDREAU (shouting)

Goddammit, Joe Bbb, I warned you. I warned you

JOE BOB has let CHARLOTTE ANN slip from his arms. She scrambles for the patio door along with the rest. ELLIOT catches her there and ushers her through the crowd.

ELLIOT

Come on, I'll take you home.

She pulls away.

CHARLOTTE ANN

Jesus Christ. Leave me alone!

SCENE 28. INT - DALLAS-FORT WORTH AIRPORT - NIGHT

EMMET HUNTER is purchasing a ticket at the TWA counter. JOANNE RODNEY, his fiance, accompanies him.

JOANNE

When are you getting back, thursday?

EMMET

I don't know. I'll call you from Philadelphia. You gonna miss me?

JOANNE

I miss you already.

EMMET

You gonna be good?

JOANNE

I'm always good. Sometimes I'm great.

EMMET (grinning)

You're always great.

They carry on like lovebirds, until the ticket clerk interrupts them to hand EMMET his ticket.

CLERK

Your ticket, Mr. Hunter. That'll be fight 43, gate 57A. That flight is boarding now. You better go right to the gate.

JOANNE looks around the lobby and then accepts a final embrace and kiss from EMMET. As she looks over his shoulder she sees ELLIOT standing not ten feet away. Her eyes widen. ELLIOT winks at her and then steps up to the same ticket clerk and inquires about an incoming flight. JOANNE, for some reason, seems horrified to see ELLIOT there, particularly when EMMET recognizes ELLIOT's voice and turns to greet him.

EMMET

Phil? What are you doing here?

ELLIOT (faking surprise)

Say, hiddy, Emmmet. Where you off to?

EMMET

I have a league meeting in Philly. You going some where?

ELLIOT

No. I'm meeting a flight. My...mother's coming in...she's on her way to California.

EMMET

Oh, that's nice. Do you know, Joanne?

ELLIOT

No. I don't beleive I do. I mean, I've seen you together a lot. Nice to meet you, Joanne.

JOANNE shakes his hand and looks at him coolly.

CLERK

Mr. Hunter. I'm sorry but you better hurry if you're gonna catch that flight.

EMMET snaps out of it and embraces JOANNE passionately.

ELLIOT

It's nice to see real love. It ain't around much anymore.

EMMET

I gotta run, babe. See you this weekend, Phil. Don't let your mother wear you out this week. We got a big game coming up. Take care.

EMMET grabs his briefcase and rushes for his plane. ELLIOT smiles benignly as he leaves.

ELLIOT

Nice fella you got there.

JOANNE

You asshole! You are such an incredible asshole, I don't believe it. What are you doing here.

ELLIOT

Picking up my mother.

JOANNE

Yeah, I'll bet.

ELLIOT

How much you wanna bet?

JOANNE

I'm not a gambler.

ELLIOT

Too bad. If you played your cards right, you might get laid tonight.

JOANNE

How'd you know he was taking this plane?

ELLIOT

I called his house. The maid told me.

JOANNE (amazed)

You called his house?

ELLIOT

I disguised my voice.

JOANNE

Oh, Jesus...

SCENE 29. EXT - AIRPORT - NIGHT.

ELLIOT and JOANNE exit the terminal together.

ELLIOT
Did you drive?

JOANNE
No. We took a cab.

ELLIOT
How convenient.

ELLIOT'S buick is parked in the "no parking" area. His car is being ticketed by a policeman.

ELLIOT (to the cop)
That's ok officer. I don't really need any of those. I have some in my glove compartment.

OFFICER
Well, boy you can add this one to your collection.

ELLIOT
I'm gonna move it, right now. I was just dropping off out assitant general manager. He has to go to Philly for a league meeting...

OFFICER (recognition dawning)
Oh, Damn, you're Phil Elliot.

ELLIOT immediatly plays humble.

ELLIOT
Well...yeah...but I don't wanna...

OFFICER
Say, I'm sorry. You aughta have one a stickers on your car, you know.

ELLIOT
Yeah, I'll have to do that. I...

OFFICER
Say, that was some catch you made yestiddy. You play like that against New York, Sunday, an' we're gonna go all the way. Nive to see you Phil.

He shakes ELLIOT'S hand, grinning. His ticket book is already away. ELLIOT gets into his car. He and Joanne pull away as the cop holds up on coming traffic. As they depart a car

follows them away from the curb and stays behind them as they exit the airport. ELLIOT pays no attention to the car behind him. He lights a joint and shares it with JOANNE. The following car turns whenever they turn.

SCENE 30. INT - JOANNE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

ELLIOT and JOANNE are in bed, fucking. An oversized television is playing at the foot of the bed. Monday night football is playing. The announcers excited inanities could be as much a comment on the couple's sexual athletics as those on the screen.

JOANNE

Phil.

ELLIOT

What?

JOANNE

Have you heard about Emmet and me?

ELLIOT

Shut up.

JOANNE

I gotta tell you. We got engaged today.

ELLIOT continues moving above her without comment on her announcement.

JOANNE

Don't you care?

ELLIOT

Shut up.

JOANNE

Don't you care.

ELLIOT

Yes, I'm crushed.

JOANNE

I'm sorry, Phil, I'm really sorry but I gotta take care of my future...

He continues to fuck her as someone makes an impressive catch on the television screen and she continues talking.

JOANNE

I mean what future would I have with you?
You can't play much longer. Your legs
are giving out. You won't get serious and
get into business while your name still
means something...

ELLIOT finally succumbs to the distractions. He
rolls off of her. He reaches for a joint, and focuses
his attention on the game.

JOANNE

I'm really sorry, Phil.

ELLIOT

So am I. You ruined a good fuck and I'm missing
a pretty fair football game.

ELLIOT is more hurt than he is letting on.

SCENE 31.

INT - THE CONRAD HUNTER BUILDING - TUESDAY MORNING

ELLIOT, looking painful almost as the previous
morning, still limping, steps into the elevator,
and pushes the button for the thirtieth floor.
He is nervous. He wipes his palms on his thighs,
mutters to himself, glances at the numbers, then
quickly reaches in his pocket, pulls a matchpack
from his shirt pocket, produces a small roach,
lights it, takes it down to his fingernails
in one long pull, then holds the smoke in his lungs,
and pinches out the roach with his fingertips so
no smoke escapes in the elevator. He does not exhale.
He punches the button for the 29th floor. The doors
open, he looks out into the hall. It is empty.
He waits until the doors are closing again and
at the last minute he exhales the incriminating
smoke into the empty hall.

He steps off the elevator on the 30th floor. And
pretends he is a new man. On this floor are the offices
of the Dallas franchise. There are action photos
of ballplayers everywhere. ELLIOT steps up to the
receptionist. He has cranked up his wise-ass public
manner. He does a quick buck and wing for the girl
behind the desk.

ELLIOT

Hello, Ruthie.

RUTHIE is not amused.

ELLIOT imitates a british accent.

ELLIOT

I beleive I have a ten o'clock with
his majesty the king...a...the coach.
Shall I just hobble in unnanounced or
have you someone here to carry my chair.

The secretary punches a button on the phone.

RUTHIE

Phil Elliot is here.

She waits for a response.

RUTHIE

You may go in.

ELLIOT

Say Ruthie, don't you ever get horney working
up here with all these old men?

RUTHIE (flat)

You may go in now, Phil. Please.

SCENE 32.

INT - THE FRONT OFFICE - MRONING

ELLIOT walks past doors marked "Public Relations",
"Accounting Office " etc. A man comes out of an
office marked "William Needham, Business Manager".

NEEDHAM

Say, Phil. I need to talk to you. I got
a bill from the hotel in Philly. You
charged sixteen beers and ten chicken salad
sandwiches to your room.

ELLIOT

Yeah, the beer was warm and the chicken salad
came out the wrong end of the chicken. Don't
pay it.

NEEDHAM

You can't do that.

ELLIOT

I already did.

NEEDHAM

You get per diem. You're supposed to eat offa
that. You're the only one on the team charged
food to his hotel room.

ELLIOT

I was the only one pregnant and you know how that is.

NEEDHAM

You keep that sort of thing up and Clinton'll have your ass, Elliot.

ELLIOT

He already has. How do you think I got pregnant?

Elliot starts as he hears a gruff voice behind him.

ELLIOT

Oh, hi Clinton. Nice to see you again.

He throws a little upper body fake at the big ugly man who is the General Manager of the franchise.

ELLIOT

Say, I'd like to lodge a complaint about the poor quality of the food in that hotel in Philly. But right now I got a meeting with the coach.

CLINTON (frowning with hatred)

I beleive your contracts coming up for renewal after next season, isn't it Elliot? When it does you're gonna find me a hard man to bargain with. Remember that when you're working on your joke book at night.

He gestures over his shoulder with his thumb.

CLINTON

B.A.'ll see you now, joker.

CLINTON walks away. ELLIOT shoots him his middle finger without looking back as he walks into the head coach's office.

SCENE 33. INT - B.A. QUINLAN'S OFFICE - MORNING.

B.A.

Sit down, Phil.

ELLIOT takes a seat.

B.A.

Not there. There.

He points to another chair. ELLIOT moves, pretending to be calm and not to notice his sore ribs and legs.

B.A. is looking over some grading sheets. Elliot's is on top.

B.A.

Well, Phil. What do you think?

ELLIOT

I think you called me. I didn't call you.

ELLIOT wishes that did not sound so smart-ass.

B.A.

What do you think I called ^{you} in for?

ELLIOT shrugs.

B.A.

A couple of weeks ago I called you in here because you showed up at practise in a halloween costume. After that I had to put up with half the team showing up in wigs and false noses.

ELLIOT

It was haloween, B.A.

B.A.

The following week I had you in here because you kept writing "Clinton Foote is a trans-vestite" on the bulletin board.

ELLIOT

It was never proven that I did that.

B.A.

Why do you think you're here this week, Phil?

ELLIOT

I hate to venture a guess, but I hope it's to tell me that I'm gonna start against New York this week, I hope.

B.A.

Do you think you deserve to start?

ELLIOT (very serious)

I know I do. Look at the grading sheet you've got right in front of you. I rate higher than Gilbert or...

B.A.

You rate very high, Phil. I've told you I think you have the best hands on the team, maybe in the league, but I also

B.A. (cont)
get complaints from some of your teammates
that you laugh in the locker room before
games and that you tell jokes in a huddle...
Now how can I start a man who would rather
be a clown than a football player?

He looks hard at ELLIOT.

B.A.
Do you know what you lack, Phil?

ELLIOT (resigned)
Maturity?

B.A.
Exactly! Maturity.

B.A. narrows his eyes.

B.A.
Are you disturbed about something, Phil?

ELLIOT
There's nothing bothering me, B.A., that a
starting position wouldn't clear up.

B.A.
I want to make it clear, Phil, that I'm
offering you any personal help and guidance
that I can.

ELLIOT (serious)
B.A. I appreciate your concern about my
personal life... I... I don't know about
all that but ... I wanna tell you that
I don't mean to be offensive... if my
immaturity offends you, I'm sorry. I'll
try to do better. But I don't like sitting
on the bench. It's frustrating. I wanna
play football. But I'll sit on the bench
if that's what you want. I'll wait my
turn. When you decide to put me in,
you'll be glad I was around. I promise.

B.A. is surprised at his serious^{NESS} He looks down at
ELLIOT'S performance sheet.

B.A.
It looks like you're losing a little speed.
Your leg isn't getting worse, is it?

ELLIOT (too quick)
No. No my legs are great.

L.B.A.

You need to lose about five pounds then.
You're no good to us if you get too slow.

SCENE 34. INT - TEAM CLUB HOUSE - DAY

ELLIOT walks through the clubhouse in his jock strap and t-shirt. There are ballplayers all around in various stages of undress. ELLIOT goes to the trainer's cage and bangs on the counter. A radio is playing country music behind the wire screen. The trainer's name is EDDIE. ELLIOT can't resist singing to him.

ELLIOT

Eddie. Eddie my love...whoa, whoa, whoa...

EDDIE (unamused)

What do ya want, Phil?

ELLIOT

Codiene, number 4. Numero quattro, eh. You bastards have ruined my body, stolen my youth, at least gimme the dope to bear the pain.

EDDIE

I don't dispense dope, Elliot.

ELLIOT

Come on Eddie, jest gimme the damn goods and I'll get outa here before we all get busted.

EDDIE

Goddammit, Phil...

He throws him a vial of white pills.

ELLIOT (with accent)

Tanks, Eddie. I knew I could count on yous.
I'll leave the cash in my jock strap tonight.

ELLIOT goes to the water fountain, to wash down a couple of the number 4 codiene. JOE BOB WILLIAMSON walks by and thumps him on the back.

JOE BOB

How you doing, faggot?

The thump drives ELLIOT'S lip against the spigot painfully and sends a mouthful of water down his windpipe.

SCENE 35. INT - CLUBHOUSE - DAY

MAXWELL is soaking in a whirlpool bath when ELLIOT enters and prepares to slip into another tub.

MAXWELL

Watch that water, hoss. It's hotter'n a rabbit's pussey.

ELLIOT

Damn. Hot. What's Eddie trying to do to us. This is like boiling oil.

MAXWELL

You know that sombitch Andrus said the other day. We were all in here an Joe Bob was scratchin at his nuts and that sombitch Andrus said 'whatcha fixin, Joe Bob, crab fondu?' That sombitch kills me.

There is a third ballplayer in another tub. He is a gigantic black defensive lineman, with a face as enigmatic as a great mustachio'd Easter Island head. MEADOWS listens to the talk without comment.

ELLIOT

Speakin of Joe Bob, what'd he do to Beaudreau, after that shoot-up last night?

MAXWELL

Oh hell, nothing. Joe Bob say's Beaudreau's the last red-blooded man in Texas.

MEADOWS (hissing)

Shit. Joe Bob's a punk. I'd like to bust his skull.in.

ELLIOT

Meadows, I'll give you a week's pay if you ever do that job.

MAXWELL

You get laid last night?

ELLIOT

More or less. Did you?

The black running back, RICHARDSON, slips into an whirlpool next to MEADOWS.

MAXWELL

Naw. I went to Andrus's room and watched this circus act that big-titted blond was putting on with about five guys. She had em all lined up on this bookcase. She had em all sitting there like birds on a telephone line an she was going down on all of em at the same time...man she using both hands and her mouth and she looked like trained seal or a swiss bell-ringer...man she should have been on the Ted Mack Amature hour or something?

ELLIOT

She get em all off at once?

MAXWELL

Naw, she woulda, but ol Joe Bob got greedy at the last minute. He grabbed her head and wouldn't let her go.

MEADOWS

Damn, what kinda damn women you all hanging out with. A woman'd do a thing like that? Damn you all cat's turn a natural man's stomach with that freaky shit.

ELLIOT

Well now wait a minute, Meadows, You aren't being fair to the girl. You're only hearing Maxwell's side of the story. Maybe this wasn't her first date with these fellows. Maybe they were old high school chums...

MEADOWS.

Shit.

RICHARDSON

You gotta start understanding these white folks, Meadows. They're all getting wierd. . . . They call that 'decadence'. It happens everytime people run outta self-respect. That's what makes white folks fools and black folks slaves.

MAXWELL doesn't like this talk.

RICHARDSON

I'm a football player, Richardson. What's that make me?

Richardson

Both.

SCENE 36. INT - CLUBHOUSE MEETING ROOM - DAY

The team is watching films of Sunday's game. On one play ELLIOT makes an impossibly graceful catch against two or three defenders. The room sings with appreciation for the lyric move.

B.A.

That was a nice move, Phil. Very nice.

MAXWELL winks at ELLIOT.

B.A.

However, Darrell, you should never have thrown to him with that kind of coverage. Huddle was open the whole time. I don't like this buddy system interfering with my good judgement.

MAXWELL (low)

Shit. You can't win for losing around here.

MAXWELL glares at B.A. and B.A. looks back at him unblinking. There is a rivalry between the two men, and any advantage is hard to come by for either side.

Another play is run on the screen. This one features ELLIOT again. In this one ELLIOT attempts a block for the running back. A big outside linebacker literally picks ELLIOT up and throws him at the ball carrier, breaking the play. The players chuckle at ELLIOT's misfortune.

B.A.

Now let's look at that again. Phil, look at this. You're trying to position that man. He's twice your size. That's what happens when you think you're better than the diagrams. If you're afraid of getting hurt out there, Phil, you're just no good to us.

The projectionist runs the play over again, and again. The laughter in the room rises.

B.A. (loud)

I fail to see the humor. Stupidity like that can cost you guys the championship. It's ~~NO~~ skin off my teeth. My contracts longer than any of your...boys!

The room becomes silent as the play is run back wards and forewards. ELLIOT sinks in his chair humiliated.

SCENE 37

EXT - NORTH DALLAS PRACTISE FIELD - DAY

The team is doing calisthenics led by asst. coach JIM JOHNSON, when a loud noise is heard overhead. A helicopter is descending directly over the field.

B.A.

Alright, let that chopper in. Clear the area.

The players move out of the way and the Helicopter lands. The players have various reactions to the intrusion.

The team owner, CONRAD HUNTER, steps out of the helicopter with his eleven year old son in tow. Both are wearing expensive-looking wool sweat suits. HUNTER waves to the chopper pilot when they are clear of the blades and the machine ascends. RICHARDSON is standing next to a young black wide receiver, DELMA HUDDLE, as the chopper flies away.

RICHARDSON

You know how sweet it must have been to be lying in the tall grass with the Viet Cong and just raise your automatic rifle...and..pow,pow...bring that damn chopper down...

He openly pantomimes firing at the chopper. And B.A. who is greeting CONRAD HUNTER glares at him for the gesture.

HUDDLE

Be cool, you fool. B.A.'s checking you out.

RICHARDSON takes one more imaginary shot, ignoring the coach's gaze.

SCENE 38.

EXT- PRACTISE FIELD--DAY

The team is back in ranks doing their calisthenics. This time CONRAD HUNTER and his eleven-year-old son, JACKIE, perform the exercises with the team. Both father and son look proud of their participation.

SCENE 39. EXT - PRACTISE FIELD - DAY

The offense is running pass skeletons. MAXWELL repeatedly connects with HUDDLE the wide receiver, and with ELLIOT, at tight end. Every time ELLIOT catches a pass it is at the expense of the ~~right~~ cornerback, DOUGLAS, who obviously hates ELLIOT'S guts. And each time ELLIOT catches a pass he he razzes DOUGLAS for his failure to defense. ELLIOT uses a loud kissing sound to annoy DOUGLAS. After the third catch in DOUGLAS'S territory, the mean cornerback, cannot contain himself. He dives at ELLIOT with the intent of breaking his back. ELLIOT elludes him neatly.

ELLIOT

Tut, Tut, Jimmy. Coachy says no contact in the pass skeletons. Someone might get hurt.

DOUGLAS spits a gob of tobacco at ELLIOT'S head. ELLIOT ducks it and walks away.

DOUGLAS

Chickenshit.

SCENE 40.

INT - A-MUSIC BAR - EVENING at one end of the room.

MAXWELL and ELLIOT enter the club. There is a long-haired country-rock group playing at one end of the room. A few tables of listeners attend them including one long table full of ball-players and their wives/dates. A gangsterish-looking maitr'd spots ELLIOT and MAXWELL.

MAITRE'D

Darrell Maxwell, how goes it? Phil, how you?

The gravel voiced man makes a particular fuss over MAXWELL.

- MAITRE'D

Say, ol riflearm, lemme get you a table. You gonna have something to eat? Some of your friends are over there. You wanna join them? You're a hell of a man, Darrell. You were beautiful, Sunday. Just beautiful. You too Phil...

ELLIOT

Yeah...

ELLIOT wanders to the bar to avoid the man's attention. MAXWELL is caught. RICHARDSON is at a table by the bar. A tv set is playing with the sound down. B.A. QUINLAN is being interviewed on the tv. RICHARDSON nods toward the tv.

RICHARDSON
There's your man, Phil. You better tune in and pick up some pointers.

ELLIOT
Hi, T.R.

RICHARDSON
Sit down, Phil. Lemme buy you a beer.

ELLIOT
How about a double scotch?

Richardson nods at the bartender.

RICHARDSON
I been doing a little research, man.
I'd like to talk to you about it.

ELLIOT
Research about what?

RICHARDSON
Economics. Football and economics.

ELLIOT
You never give up, do you T.R?

ELLIOT is forced to smile. He likes Richardson.

RICHARDSON
Nope. I am the original dog with a bone.
I don't give up.

SCENE 41. INT- BAR - EVENING

MAXWELL has joined some of the other ballplayers at the big table at the other end of the room. CLARIDGE, and ANDRUS are there with three stewardesses. JOHN WILSON is with his solemn-faced WIFE. Young BILLY MAYHAK is there with his wife, EMILY. etc. The country rock band is playing and singing a modernized version of a Hank Williams tune. They all greet MAXWELL enthusiastically. ANDRUS offers him a chair.

MAXWELL
Don't mind if I do, hoss. But I don't wanna sit next to you. I wanna sit next

to her.

ANDRUS

You can't. That's my date.

He nods toward another of the girls.

MAXWELL

How about her?

CLARIDGE

This is my fiance. Marylou, this is Darrell Maxwell.

MAXWELL and MARYLOU exchange smiles. He pulls a chair up beside the third stewardess.

MAXWELL

Looks like it's you and me, baby.

The girl giggles as Maxwell sits down. He spots MAYHAK with a drink in his hand.

MAXWELL

Why it's little Billy Mayhak having himself a drink and in public too. You're never gonna get my job that way, son. If you don't take care of that body of yours.

MAYHAK smiles. Little BILLY is a good four inches taller than MAXWELL.

EMILY

He'll get your job, Darrell. One of these days.

MAXWELL

Don't hold your breath, Honey. It'd be bad for that baby.

MAYHAK

I'm just drinking orange juice, Darrell.

MAXWELL

That's too bad.

MAXWELL puts his hand on the STEWARDESS'S leg.

MAXWELL

What's your name, honey? You like football heroes ?

At the bar RICHARDSON is giving his economics lesson to ELLIOT.

RICHARDSON

So I took those figures ~~that figures~~ that good old Conrad Hunter gave out to the press last year when he was trying to justify his damn self to everybody for raising the ticket prices and everything else...and I checked them out...I checked them out real good against a lot of other figures that I... researched myself...

He is proud of his work. A sly smile shows.

RICHARDSON

The man's a damn thief. He's a thief, a liar and a damn pirate.

ELLIOT

Oh really? I always thought he was a holy man.

RICHARDSON

This franchise is worth something like thirty million dollars and it makes about two and a half million dollars a year. I can prove it you. How much money you making?

ELLIOT (shrugs)

Twenty thousand bucks, twenty-one.

RICHARDSON

See?

ELLIOT

SEE what?

RICHARDSON

Do you know that CONRAD HUNTER can take you off his taxes every year? He can depreciate you like you were a piece of machinery in one of his airplane factories, or some building he owns downtown somewhere. If you have a useful life of eight years in football he can deduct so much of your total salary over that period from his taxes just like you were some damn machine that was slowly wearing out. He's getting paid for the wear and tear on your body. AND YOU CAN'T EVEN DO THAT! YOURSELF!

CHARLOTTE ANN walks out of the ladies' room and slips into the seat next to RICHARDSON. ELLIOT is surprised to see her there. She touches RICHARDSON'S arm and then smiles reservedly at ELLIOT.

The ballplayers at the big table are getting rambunctuous now. ANDRUS is throwing napkins soaked in beer at WILSON and CLARIDGE. The band is playing louder. BILLY and EMILY MAYHAK are looking nervous at the horseplay. WILSON'S wife is nagging at him to stop the horseplay. MAXWELL is applying a little pressure to the STEWARDESS. He turns his chair toward her and slips his hand under her skirt. She giggles and tries to remove his hand. He tightens his grip and her giggling recedes. A flush of startled emotion warms her features.

MAXWELL

I believe that too much talking takes the edge off it. You know? It's like a fist fight. You don't wanna spend too much energy pushin and shoving. You know?

MAXWELL'S got the STEWARDESS charmed, but in the primitive sense. She is frozen like a deer in the headlights of his gaze. It's not a subtle con. The horseplay intensifies down the table.

EMILY

I think we oughta get out of here Billy.

MAYHAK

In a minute sweetheart.

MRS. WILSON gasps as a full beer is pushed in her lap. CLARIDGE's fiance tries to calm him.

SCENE 43

INT - BAR - EVENING

RICHARDSON

The players association doesn't do shit for anybody. And all these cats working through agents and lawyers are only working for themselves, playing at being superstars. We need to expose the economic myths man. We gotta explain how much these damn owners are making off of television and stadium rents and we have to explain how a man can get released and then how he gets black-listed so no other team will pick him up. Not even a canadian team. We are

RICHARDSON (cont)

the ones taking the beating man. We should be the ones making the rules. The front office should be working for us, man, not vice versa.

ELLIOT is listening, perhaps, but his eyes are on CHARLOTTE ANN. RICHARDSON has worked himself into a real anger.

RICHARDSON

Are you hearing any of this shit, man?

ELLIOT

Sure.

RICHARDSON

Hey, man. Fuck it. You got a one-track mind. Charlotte Ann, the man wants to get in you pants. And as long as you're sitting there the dude is gonna/deaf and dumb to what I'm saying. ^{be}

CHARLOTTE ANN

I'm sorry. I'll leave...I go back to the other table.

He stops her from rising.

RICHARDSON

No, baby. It's not your fault. This cat is like a dog in the alley when there's a bitch around. He can't help it. So why don't you take him home and give him what he needs, then maybe I can catch him later and talk some sense in his head.

RICHARDSON rises, grabs his expensive leather jacket.

RICHARDSON

See you later, man. Charlotte Ann, I'm sorry, I got work to do.

He leaves.

CHARLOTTE ANN

I'm gonna join my friends.

ELLIOT looks pissed now too. RICHARDSON has embarrassed him. He sips his scotch and glares at her.

CHARLOTTE ANN

He's just very serious, you know?
He can't help it. He cares a lot about...
things.

ELLIOT (flat)

Yeah.

CHARLOTTE ANN

Don't you think what he says is true?

ELLIOT

Course it's true, and there's probably
more to it than even he knows. But I'm
hanging to this damn team by a thread.
I'm getting slow, I'm half crippled,
and all I want to do is get off the bench
and play football before I can't do it
anymore.

This is ELLIOT'S first try at seriousness.
And CHARLOTTE ANN responds with a look that's
at least something like ~~compassion~~.

COMPASSION.

SCENE 43.

INT - BAR - EVENING.

Havok is breaking out at the big table across
the room. ANDRUS is grabbing at CLARIDGE.
CLARIDGE'S fiance is hollering at him to
stop it. JOHN WILSON goes to join in and his
wife stands up to leave. He freaks and pulls
her down in the chair. She slaps his face.
CLARIDGE finally freaks out and hollers at his
fiance. He jumps up on the stage and starts
taking his pants off as the FIANCE starts
weeping. A bouncer starts up on the stage
after CLARIDGE. WILSON dives at the man and
knocks him down. The MAYHAKS rise and flee
for the door in terror. EMMILY is shrieking
At MAYHAK for bringing her here. MAXWELL
takes the STEWARDESS by the hand and leads her
across the room, to where ELLIOT and CHARLOTTE
ANN are watching.

MAXWELL

I don't need this, hoss. You leaving?

CHARLOTTE ANN sees the MAYHAK'S fleeing.

CHARLOTTE ANN

See you later.

ELLIOT

Wait a minute.

In the midst of this confusion who should appear through the door but BOB BEAUDREAU.

BEAUDREAU

Charlotte Ann, I'd sure like to talk to you, honey. I'm sorry about last night...What's going on here?

CLARIDGE is naked on the stage aiming his cock at the crowd while his fiance weeps and WILSON and ANDRUS brawl with the club's bouncers.

BEAUDREAU

Phil...

ELLIOT

Get the fuck out of the way, Beaudreäu.
Come on Charlotte Ann.

SCENE 44. INT - CHARLOTTE ANN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT.

ELLIOT and CHARLOTTE ANN, MAXWELL and the STEWARDESS are sitting in CHARLOTTE ANN'S livingroom, drinking and sharing a joint. There is no conversation for a long while. MAXWELL is bored. The STEWARDESS is in a state of nervous anticipation. CHARLOTTE ANN is not certain she wants these people here and ELLIOT is trying to outwait her uneasiness.

CHARLOTTE ANN (to the STEWARDESS)

A...I'm sorry but what did you say your name was?

STEWARDESS

Patti. My name is Patti.

CHARLOTTE ANN

An you do...your a stewardess?

STEWARDESS

I fly for TWA. It's a lot of fun.

MAXWELL (bored)

Well this is a lot of fun too, but you wouldn't mind if ol Patti and I borrowed your bedroom would you. We're gonna go fly United for a little bit.

CHARLOTTE ANN (dubious)

Help yourself.

They exit. CHARLOTTE ANN and ELLIOT eye each other in silence a while.

ELLIOT
What...a...what if we maybe did the same thing?

CHARLOTTE ANN
Please. Stop it.

ELLIOT
Stop what?

CHARLOTTE ANN
Stop imitating your friend. It's childish.

ELLIOT
What's childish about it? I think you're beautiful I want to...assault you.

She shakes her head and gives him a look that you would give a child who is being more than silly.

CHARLOTTE ANN
I'm not a football groupie.

ELLIOT
Where do you know Richardson from?

CHARLOTTE ANN
He's an old friend.

ELLIOT
Oh. And Beaudreau?

CHARLOTTE ANN
I met him yesterday.

ELLIOT
A new friend.

CHARLOTTE ANN
You are the team clown, aren't you?

ELLIOT
Yep. That's me. The team clown.

They hear noises from the others in the bedroom. The sounds further burden the awkwardness here.

CHARLOTTE ANN
If you don't like that role why do you play it?

ELLIOT (sneezes)

I don't know. If you don't wanna be a groupie, why do you hang out with football players?

CHARLOTTE ANN

Don't you think any girl that hangs out with football players is a groupie?

ELLIOT (shrugs)

Yeah, I guess I do. The women and the men. Yeah, I think they're all groupies. Except the wives. They married it. They're stuck with it.

CHARLOTTE ANN

Well, you don't like us groupies but you don't care much for football players either, do you?

ELLIOT

Mind if I light this joint?

CHARLOTTE ANN

Help yourself.

ELLIOT

About the only people I know are football players. And I guess...yeah, I guess I don't...like football players. I guess I'm getting kind of sick of football players...and football coaches...and football fans...and sports writers...and all the other blood-sucking assholes in the world.

She looks at him in silence.

ELLIOT

Well, you asked me.

ELLIOT drags hard on the joint trying to get more solace out of it, probably, than he is likely to get. ELLIOT is sweating now. He rubs his damp palms on his thighs. There is more sympathy in her face now.

CHARLOTTE ANN

You alright?

ELLIOT

Yeah. I just hurt a little. You don't have any codiene here do you?

CHARLOTTE ANN

Aspirin.

He drags on the joint, then offers it to her.

ELLIOT

This'll help in a minute.

The sounds from the bedroom get loud again. They are an annoyance now. Then to make things worse, the doorbell rings.

CHARLOTTE ANN

Oh, Jesus.

She answers the door and a grinning BOB BEAUDREAU steps in with a cluster of long stem roses in one hand and a bottle of Wild Turkey in the other.

BEAUDREAU

These are for you. I wanna make up for yestiddy.. I sure do. Hiddy Phil.

ELLIOT'S eyes roll heavenward at the sight and he snuffs the roach he's got between his fingers eating the evidence. He takes the cellophane baggie of grass from the coffee table and slips it under the sofa.

ELLIOT (weary)

Hi Bob.

BEAUDREAU

Where's Darrell?

ELLIOT

Oh, he's around here somewhere.

BEAUDREAU

Say, I brought us a little bottle a something to drink. Think you might have some ice around here?

ELLIOT (sarcastic)

You sure like a party don't you, Bob?

BEAUDREAU (grinning)

Yeah, well, sure. I'll be damned if I don't.

There is a loud banging noise from the bedroom. It sounds like MAXWELL and PATTI are fucking on the walls and ceiling.

BEAUDREAU

Damn, what's that?

ELLIOT

Don't go for your gun, dead-eye. That's just ol Darrel, chasing the cat.

CHARLOTTE ANN is forced to smile at that.

BEAUDREAU

Well, now that you brought that up, I guess I ought to say I'm sorry about what happened at that party. That's one of the reasons I wanted to talk to Charlotte Ann. I'm real sorry Charlotte Ann.

CHARLOTTE ANN

It's alright. I guess it kept me from a worse fate.

BEAUDREAU

Well, now that's the point. I just... well, I don't hardly know you but I can tell your not one those...others...

ELLIOT

Groupies.

BEAUDREAU

Exactly. You're not one a those groupies and I just couldn't stand to...Joe Bob he doesn't stop to think...an I jest felt responsible.

HE tries to include ELLIOT in this.

BEAUDREAU

I think Charlotte Ann is...special. From the minute I laid eyes on her, I jest knew she was special. That's why! I wanna put her on television.

ELLIOT doesn't get the logic.

ELLIOT

That's why you what?

BEAUDREAU

I wanna put her on television. I'm gonna have em make some commercials with Charlotte Ann.

ELLIOT

That's real romantic, Bob. Damn, that's the

ELLIOT (cont)
most tender sentiment I've heard since
I came to Dallas.

BEAUDREAU
Oh, you're a damn joker Phil. I'm being serious

ELLIOT
I know you are, Bob . And it's true I'm
a joker compared to somebody serious like
you, but I still say that's real tender.
In fact that's the difference between
a serious guy like you and a guy...a joker
like me. That's what Charlotte Ann was saying
to me before you came in, with your roses
an all. Charlotte Ann says I'm a joker too,
because I don't have any intention of
putting her on television...

BEAUDREAU is getting confused. He looks at
CHARLOTTE ANN.

CHARLOTTE ANN
Phil. Would you like a drink? Bob?

BEAUDREAU (releived)
I sure would. Here take this.

CHARLOTTE ANN leaves with the bottle.

ELLIOT
See, what I wanna do with Charlotte Ann,
is I just wanna get in her pants.
I just wanna take her back in the bedroom and
just fuck her brains out. What do you wanna
do with her?

BEAUDREAU (getting worried)
Come on, Phil. She's gonna hear you now.

ELLIOT
That's ok. I already told her that.

There is more noise from the bedroom. Patti is
giggling or weeping.

BEAUDREAU
Ol Darrel. I guess He's going at it. Isn't
he. Ha ha.

BEAUDREAU laughs slyly trying to reestablish a
little masculine rapport. ELLIOT doesn't let up.

ELLIOT

Yeah. Ha ha. Ol Darrel's going at it, alright.

BEAUDREAU

He's got that stewardess, huh. I saw her coming out of the club back there. She's a real nice one. Big tits.

ELLIOT

Wouldn't you like to be back there going at it with ol Charlotte Ann? Just right back there going at it. hm?

BEAUDREAU looks at him, puzzled.

ELLIOT

I think you ought to knock it off with the roses and the job offers and the bullshit and tell her what's on your mind.

BEAUDREAU

I don't know what the hell's got into you, Phil. Hell I was gonna make you a player of the week. I was gonna...

ELLIOT

You wanna get in my pants too, Beaudreau?

BEAUDREAU

You gonna act like this I guess one of us is gonna have to leave.

ELLIOT

Yeah. I guess one of us is gonna have to leave.

ELLIOT glares at him. CHARLOTTE ANN arrives with drinks.

BEAUDREAU

Say, Charlotte Ann. I'm gonna have to take a raincheck. I jess remembered I have some business I have to do down at the office. See you later, Phil.

BEAUDREAU exits.

CHARLOTTE ANN

What'd you do?

ELLIOT (playing dumb)

Jesus, You got me. He just said he had to go.

CHARLOTTE ANN

Oh, boy. I wanted that job.

Before more can be said, the stewardess, Patti appears at the livingroom door. She is holding her dress up in front of her body. She looks weary.

PATTI

A...do you think we could use your shower?

SCENE 45.

INT - CHARLOTTE ANN'S BEDROOM - MORNING. - WEDNESDAY.

It is dawn. ELLIOT wakes in CHARLOTTE ANN's bed. She is still sleeping. He is hurting again. He rises painfully and makes it to the bathroom. He takes a handful of aspirin from the medicine chest. Swallows them with a handful of water, then sits on the edge of the tub and holds his head in his hands. CHARLOTTE ANN steps into the bathroom then. She has been wakened by his movements. She touches him sympathetically. Both are naked.

ELLIOT

Next time around I'm gonna live in the mountains. I'm gonna practise yoga. I'm gonna eat brown rice and I'm gonna meditate. I'm never gonna pick up a football, or take a drug. I'm gonna go to church.

She smiles at him and runs her hands over his shoulders.

ELLIOT

You don't believe me, huh?

CHARLOTTE ANN

Nope. I don't believe you in a lot of ways.

She rubs the area of his bruised ribs.

ELLIOT

Ow.

CHARLOTTE ANN

Sorry, baby.

SCENE 46

INT - ELLIOT'S APARTMENT - MORNING

ELLIOT returns to his apartment to find it has been ransacked. He is looking about the dishevelled livingroom when he hears a sound from the bedroom.. He goes to a gun rack and quietly takes down one of three or four shotguns. He quietly opens a box of shells and slips one in each barrell. He looks in the bedroom. It is empty. Then he hears a faint noise in the closet. He touches the closet door, then slides it open quickly. He is met with a bloodcurdling scream from his maid, JOHNNY. The scream startles him and he nearly unloads both barrells into the wall.

ELLIOT

Johnny.

JOHNNY

Oh, Mr. Phil. I thought it was the burgler when I saw dat gun. Then when I saw your long hair I thought it was them LSD people, like is always killing out there in California. Oh, Mr. Phil you gimme a scare.

ELLIOT exhales.

ELLIOT

Who did all this? Anything missing?

JOHNNY

Not anything I can tell. I was looking when I heard you come in. I didn't know it was you. But I didn't find nothing missing.

ELLIOT

Did you call the police?

JOHNNY

No. I was gonna but then I stopped an thought.

ELLIOT

About what?

JOHNNY

Well. It's none a my business, Mr. Phil, but I know you keep that box of ... marajuanna around here..an...it's none of my business but...I was afraid that might get you in trouble.

ELLIOT walks into the bathroom. The lid to the shoe-box is there but the box is gone.

SCENE 47. INT - TEAM CLUBHOUSE - DAY

The team is assembled in the Meetingroom. B.A. is at the lectern with his reading glasses on.

B.A.
This is called "Winning". I think it's pretty important. I want you to hear it.

ASST. COACH BUDDY WILKS
Alright, you guy's. Listen up!

B.A. (Reading)
"If you think that you're beaten,
you are.

If you think that you're losing,
you're lost.

If you refuse to strive to the limit,
the limit's as far as you'll go.

If you give into the fear and the pain
there are thrills you will never know.

We have all been put here by god
as a test of our courage and faith.

The rewards to his warriors are many.
The rewards to the losers...disgrace.

Some say that winning's not everything.
That competition has a limited place.

But if that cowardly slogan is true,
why did god name this the human race?

B.A. dwells for a moment.

B.A.
I guess you guys understand what this poem means.

MAXWELL (to ELLIOT low)
It means you've lost your fucking mind.

ELLIOT coughs to keep from laughing. B.A. glances at him.

B.A.
You guys are all good football players. That's why you're here. But the difference between being good and great is only this much.

He holds up his thumb and forefinger pressed together.

B.A.
And it comes from up here.

He taps his skull.

MAXWELL (low)
I thought it came from those little pills we take.

ELLIOT coughs again.

B.A.
Have you got a cold, Elliot?

ELLIOT
No, sir. Something in my throat...

B.A.
I can't think of anybody who could use this advice more than you.

MAXWELL (Low)
Don't let em see you crack, Phil.

ELLIOT loses his temper at MAXWELL. He spins around.

ELLIOT
Shut the fuck up, asshole.

B.A.
Phil, if I hear that kind of language from you again, you'll be fined two hundred dollars.

ELLIOT sinks in his chair, defeated.

SCENE 48. INT - CATHOLIC SCHOOL GYMNASIUM - DAY

It is raining outside. The offense is running pass skeletons in the gymnasium of a nearby Catholic school. Several priests are sitting in the bleachers watching practise. MONSIGNOR HUGHES is sitting with B.A.

MAXWELL bends over in the huddle.

MAXWELL

Ok. Red Wing. Down and in on two.

ELLIOT is the receiver on this play. He is being defended by DOUGLAS at cornerback. On the snap a linebacker drops back to double-cover ELLIOT. ELLIOT outleaps the linebacker to snag the pass but his old friend DOUGLAS catches him violently in the throat with a forearm. ELLIOT'S adam's apple drops to his knees. He comes down hard on his back. He hangs onto the ball, even though the blow has blacked him out. The trainers rush onto the floor.

MONSIGNOR (to B.A.)

I think it's amazing how these young men can endure the punishment that their profession brings them. They remind me of soldiers or the magnificent missionaries of history.

B.A.

Yes, they do Monsignor, and it's nice of you to let us use your gymnasium in this ungodly weather.

ELLIOT is revived now. He walks off the floor under his own steam.

B.A.

Phil. That's hanging onto the ball. Good concentration.

MONSIGNOR

You're very brave, young man. Very tough. That's real devotion. God bless you.

SCENE 49. INT - CLUBHOUSE - DAY

JOE BOB is gleefully working at slipping a live toad into the web lining of BOB MEADOWS helmet, as ELLIOT walks toward the showers.

JOE BOB

Listen, fucker. Don't you say nothing to Meadows about this.

ELLIOT

Don't flatter yourself, Joe Bob.

The giant lineman giggles as the toad jumps in his hand.

SCENE 50

INT - CLUBHOUSE SHOWERS - DAY

Elliot, enters the shower as the speed freak GINO, MECHADO is watching the Black wide receiver soap his cock with loving strokes.

MECHADO

Say, tripod, don't rub that thing too much. If it gets hard there ain't gonna be no room for the rest of us in here.

GINO cracks up at his own joke. HUDDLE glances at RICHARDSON who shakes his head tolerantly.

HUDDLE

Gino, if the man cut a inch off your cock, you'd end up with a scar on your ass.

The usually impassive black giant, MEADOWS, finishes his shower and booms his laughter down at the merely large MECHADO as he leaves the tiled room. MECHADO flinches slightly as if the laughter were a club. MEADOWS passes JOE BOB who enters the showers. Nothing is said but JOE BOB looks suspiciously solemn.

As the others meditate under the hot water there is an explosion in the lockerroom. MEADOWS has discovered the toad. His helmet crashes against a locker like a giant gong. JOE BOB whistles.

MEADOWS VOICE (off sc.)

JOE BOB! You motherfucker...I'll crush your skull!

The naked enraged MEADOWS fills the doorway to the showers like a standing grizzly. ELLIOT, and MAXWELL exchange glances, as do HUDDLE and RICHARDSON. RICHARDSON gestures for HUDDLE to move further down the row of showers. ELLIOT raises his eye-brows to MAXWELL.

MAXWELL

Fuck it. Let em have at each other.

With a roar MEADOWS lunges for JOE BOB. At contact both men go down immediately, slipping on the wet floor. It would be a titanic battle except that

B.A. is passing the shower and his voice rivets the fighters. His authority is obviously absolute. It is comical how quickly they respond. The giants look like foolish children lying naked on the shower floor, as B.A. reprimands them.

B.A.
That behavior does not win championships, boys! If either of you are hurt from this you'll be fined and suspended...so help me...

Other ballplayers in the clubhouse fall silent for this sudden lecture. B.A. includes them with a sweeping glance.

B.A.
...god. If anyone gets hurt on this team it'll be out there on the field! Darrell, I expect a little more leadership from you than this.

MAXWELL
I was just fixin to stop em, coach.
Couldn't get there quick enough.

He ignore's B.A. cold stare by looking up into the showerstream. ELLIOT follows suit when B.A.'s eyes shift to him.

ELLIOT
I'm innocent coach.

SCENE 51.

HARVEY'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON.

ELLIOT knocks on the door of a rundown house on the outskirts of Dallas. A skinny girl in her late teen answers the door.

ELLIOT
Hiddy, sweetheart, is Harvey here?

The girl is pretty stoned.

GIRL
No he isn't. Wait. Yeah I think he is.

ELLIOT
Don't commit yourself.

GIRL
No. He is. I was just talkin to him. Come on in. I forgot.

ELLIOT

Swell...

They walk down a long dingey hallway in the funky house. They pass a young man who is walking toward the door.

GIRL

Hi. Donald. Where you going?

DONALD (stoned)

Somebody's at the door.

DONALD walks past ELLIOT with unseeing eyes. ELLIOT shakes his head. They proceed to the kitchen of the old house where there are two other girls discussing politics. The SKINNEY girl joins them at the table full of dirty dishes. ELLIOT is stranded by the kitchen sink, which is also full of dirty dishes. All three girls are fuzzy haired, bare-footed, dopers, from the nearby college. They are DEBBIE(the girl who answered the door), and SHARON and GLORIA.

SHARON

America is down the tubes, man. Down - the fuckin tubes. In the shitcan, man. and it's all a matter of...it's all because nobody will cop to the problems, or the fucking responsibility.

GLORIA

Really, nobody has any social responsibility. Man everybody's just driving their cars and watching football games and drinking beer, man. Really.

DEBBIE

Really.

SHARON

REALLY. It's all fucked. Nobody'll cop. Nobody'll take responsibility man. Nobody'll admit they killed the vietnamese, nobody'll admit they work for the CIA, nobody'll admit they killed, man, they killed everybody. America's down the fuckin tubes, man. Forget it.

DEBBIE

Really, man. Forget it. The oil companies, man... forget it.

A roach runs over ELLIOT's hand. He flicks it off.

ELLIOT

Say, men, is Harvey around?

DEBBIE

Oh, yeah. He wants to see Harvey.

SHARON

Who're you?

ELLIOT would answer but HARVEY enters the kitchen.
He is a jolly looking young man who needs a
shave and a couple of good nights of sleep. He is glad
to see ELLIOT.

HARVEY

Say, brother. How you doing?

ELLIOT

Fine, Harvey. Fine. How's the professor business?

HARVEY

Groovy. What do ya need, hoss?

ELLIOT

Couple of lids.

HARVEY

Far out. Did you meet my students.
Debbie, Sharon, Gloria...and this
is Donald.

Donald has reappeared he shakes ELLIOT'S hand earnestly.

DONALD.

Far out. Some body was at the door.
But they musta split.

DEBBIE

That was him, stupid.

DONALD

Oh. Wow. I must be ripped. What's
your name, man.

HARVEY

Oh, this man is one of our local heros.
This man is a football star. This is Phil...

ELLIOT

Darrell...Darrell MAXWELL. Nice to meet you...
you men.

DONALD

Far out, man, you fucking Darrell Maxwell, man?

SHARON
Football. Ugh. What a fucked trip!

She fake vomits.

ELLIOT
Thanks.

HARVEY
I'll get you that dope, man.

DONALD
Say man lemme ast you a question. Now I
want the truth, man, ...as you know it.
The truth.

ELLIOT
What's that?

DONALD
You ever play football stoned, man?
I hear you guys take speed, and
demerol and everything.

ELLIOT
No. That's not true.

SHARON
Bullshit.

ELLIOT (deadpan)
Oh, sometimes we take acid.

DONALD
You take acid before a game, man?

ELLIOT
Sure.

DONALD
Whoa. That's heavy man.

ELLIOT
Nothin to it.-

SHARON
He's fulla shit, Donald. Man if you ^{took} acid
ever, you wouldn't be an asshole enough to play
football, ever! He's fulla shit.

DONALD
I'll tell you what, man.

He reaches in his pocket.

DONALD
Here.

He drops a handful of capsules in ELLIOT'S hand.

ELLIOT
What's that?

DONALD
Mescaline. I don't have any acid. But...
Where you playing next week?

ELLIOT
New York.

DONALD
You hand that shit out to your boys
before the game an...is it gonna be
on television?

ELLIOT
Sure.

DONALD
You take that before the game man, and
we'll be watchin. And if you're smiling
during The national anthem...then we'll
know.

Harvey returns with two lids of grass.

HARVEY
Here you go, man.

ELLIOT reaches for money.

SHARON
If you take that shit, man and play
football on network television, man,
I'll ball your ass in Daley Plaza...
and they can televise that at half time.

ELLIOT
Nothing, personal, honey but how about
your friend, there.

He points to GLORIA who smiles.

GLORIA

I'll ball you if you just take some of it right now. And give me one.

ELLIOT looks at HARVEY.

HARVEY

It's cool. It's good shit. I capped it myself.

ELLIOT takes a capsule and gives one to GLORIA who takes hers. He hands her a glass of water.

ELLIOT

Your house or mine?

GLORIA

I'm sorry, man. I had my fingers crossed.

DONALD

Whoa, that's shitty.

GLORIA

Hey, man, I'm sorry. I'm into women.

She touches SHARON'S arm. HARVEY shrugs.

HARVEY

The times they are a'changin...

SCENE 52. INT - ELLIOT'S BUICK - EVENING

ELLIOT and CHARLOTTE ANN are driving through the rural countryside. Country music is playing on the tape deck. It is dusk and darkening gradually as they drive through the ranch country past barbed-wire fences and herds of white-faced cattle, into the older more legendary Texas.

ELLIOT (appreciatively)

Texasss!

CHARLOTTE ANN

It's wonderful...this part of it.

ELLIOT

That's the mescaline, talking.

CHARLOTTE ANN

No. It's beautiful, out here.

ELLIOT

So are you.

CHARLOTTE ANN

Do dah, do dah...

She smiles.

ELLIOT

If you don't like compliments I can always go back to talking like a football player.

CHARLOTTE ANN

I think I should get to talk like a football player once in a while.

He shrugs.

ELLIOT

Suit yourself.

CHARLOTTE ANN (narrowing her eyes)

You got nice tits, baby. What do you say we get outta here and go fuck, baby.

ELLIOT

I don't say, "baby".

CHARLOTTE ANN

Shut up or I'll slug you. You'd like that wouldn't you? A little pounding around. Wanna feel my muscles? Wanna feel my other muscle. My love muscle. Yuk. Yuk. I call it my crank sometimes. Aw, I gotta fuck somebody. How bout you baby? I'm gonna fuck you. I'm gonna rip your clothes off an pound your pee hole. I haven't fucked anybody for a couple a hours. How bout a good gang bang? Me an the boys. Huh, lemme see your tits, honey. A nice ass. I wanna bite your ass. I wanna spread your legs and bite your box. Huh. You'd like that wouldn't ya. What airline you fly for? Wanna fuck my friends. Every chick just wants a big cock. They all love us football players. You wanna see me drink a bottle a wild Turkey and two cases a beer. Wanna see me beat the shit outa somebody? How bout you? Aw fuck. Fuck, shit, piss. I'm a football player. You're just a cunt.

ELLIOT

That's ugly.

CHARLOTTE ANN

Aw. Sorry baby. I didn't know you were a lady. I'm used to being around the boys.

ELLIOT has slowed and pulled off the road onto a dirt ranch road. The Buick has clanked over a cattle guard. He pulls off the dirt road then and drives up a grade around some mesquite bushes through a grazing herd of curious cattle. He stops at the top of the hill. The lights of Dallas are coming on in the distance. They listen to the country music from the tape player and stare at the vista. ELLIOT opens a beer. They share it.

CHARLOTTE ANN

Do you ever want be a woman?

ELLIOT

Do you ever want to be a man?

CHARLOTTE ANN

Sure, but I asked you first.

ELLIOT

I don't know. I probably couldn't admit it if I did.

CHARLOTTE ANN

Mucho macho. Desperado to the end.

ELLIOT

Ha! I'm the biggest chickenshit in the world.

CHARLOTTE ANN

Ha.

ELLIOT

I am. I'm scared to death...all the time.

She looks at him with a new concern.

ELLIOT

Except when I'm stoned like this.
But otherwise...I'm one scared cowboy.

CHARLOTTE ANN

Scared of what?

ELLIOT

Getting crippled. Losing my job...
Losing my mind...turning chicken all the way.

Silence, except for the music. The cows wander up to sniff the car and look in the windows of the low machine.

CHARLOTTE ANN
You don't act like it.

ELLIOT
I don't dare. I live in a tough world.

CHARLOTTE ANN
Well, some day you'll be out of it.

ELLIOT
That scares me too.

More silence.

CHARLOTTE ANN
Poor baby.

ELLIOT
Yep. Poor baby.

She puts her head down in his lap.

ELLIOT
Say, while you're down ther...

JENE 53 INT - CHARLOTTE ANN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

ELLIOT and CHARLOTTE ANN are in CHARLOTTE ANN'S bed.
ELLIOT has a plate on his lap. He is eating a steak.
The phone rings.

CHARLOTTE ANN
It's for you. A girl.

ELLIOT(into phone)
Yeah. Joanne? What do you want? How did you
know I was here? I'm tired. I'm busy. Oh, shit
Joanne. Oh, God. Alright. In a while.

He hangs up.

ELLIOT
A friend. She's being painful. Sometimes
I wish I was a woman.

SCENE 54 INT- JOANNE RODNEY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

ELLIOT is slouched on the sofa. He is exhausted. JOANNE is pacing around the room in an ice blue negligee. She is tired and distressed and drunk.

JOANNE
I just can't do it anymore, Phil?

ELLIOT (wearily)
Do what?

She makes a gesture that includes the whole apartment.

JOANNE
This.

ELLIOT isn't really all that interested in her anxiety. He's just trying to stay awake till it passes.

ELLIOT (joking)
Oh, this. Well, now I understand.

JOANNE
Please don't laugh at me.

ELLIOT
For Christ's sakes, Joanne. Why don't we just go to bed. I have practise tomorrow.

JOANNE
I'm gonna tell him, Phil!

ELLIOT
Tell him what?

JOANNE
Tell him I'm in love with you. That I don't want to marry him. That I was just in it for the money, for the security of his big brother's money. I'm gonna tell him I'm gonna marry you. I don't want this.

She yanks the huge engagement ring off her finger and throws it.

JOANNE
I'm gonna tell him I've been fucking you all along! Then we can get married.

ELLIOT
Oh, that's very creative thinking, Joanne. Really. That's very very shrewd. Very.

ELLIOT (Cont.)

And what are you gonna do for sex?

JOANNE

What do you mean?

ELLIOT

I mean what are you gonna do for sex after Emmet tells Conrad and Conrad has my nuts cut off and hangs them behind the bar at the "Royal Cowboy"?

JOANNE

Connie can't do anything to you.

ELLIOT

Oh, for Christ's sakes, Joanne. Don't be so goddam stupid.

JOANNE

You can play for somebody else.

ELLIOT

Oh, sure. Play for somebody else. Like who? The ~~son of~~ Tanganyika Bobcats? If Connie Hunter bounces me for sneak-fucking his little brother's fiancée, he won't do it without a phone call to every other owner in the league and Canada, you twit.

JOANNE (resolute)

I'm sorry, Phil but I have to tell Emmet.

She walks to the phone.

JOANNE

Operator. I'd like to place a long distance call to Philadelphia...

ELLIOT leaps up and snatches the phone from her.

ELLIOT (screaming)

Are you ~~being~~ crazy?

JOANNE breaks into tears.

JOANNE

Oh, Phil. Please, let's get married.

ELLIOT (sarcastic)

Yeah, sure. But let's do it in the morning. You're going to bed.

JOANNE

It's that girl, isn't it? You're
in love with her.

ELLIOT (exhausted)

Yeah. Right. I forgot. I can't marry
you. I'm in love with her.

SCENE 55 INT.- CLUBHOUSE - THURSDAY

ELLIOT and MAXWELL are on adjacent massage tables.
EDDIE is working on ELLIOT'S legs. Another trainer
massages MAXWELL'S back. Across the room young
BILLY MAHAK is working out on the Nautilus Exercise
machine. His muscles are bulging and sleek with
sweat.

MAXWELL

How the hell am I supposed to keep
ahead of that damn kid over there
with this old broke down body of
mine? Hell he's thirteen years
younger than me and while I'm out
trying to fuck the entire female
population of America he's sellin
real estate and going to church.
Maybe I could rape his wife and
murder his kid and hope he goes insane
worrying about it.

ELLIOT

I think you're a little too late for
one and too early for the other but
maybe you could take him out and
wear him down a little bit. Intro-
duce him to a life of sin.

MAXWELL (serious)

I don't know. A kid like that, that
young an all. He'd probly outfuck me,
too. That's be awful.

ELLIOT

Well you gotta pass the old torch
to the younger generation someday,
Darrell.

MAXWELL eyes Mayhak intently.

MAXWELL

Not yet I don't, hoss. Not yet I don't.

EDDIE manipulates ELLIOT'S leg, kneading the knotted
hamstring muscle in back of his thigh so deeply

that ELLIOT can't resist screaming.

ELLIOT
EEEOW! Eddie! Jesus!

EDDIE
You got scar tissue on that hamstring like that.

EDDIE holds up his fist.

EDDIE
Scar tissue just don't stretch.

ELLIOT
No shit, Dick Tracey.

EDDIE
And everytime that leg stretches too far an you feel that sharp sting like somebody jammed a hot poker in there, that's that scar tissue tearing some more. Working your leg like this'll keep it loose but you ain't got too many more years left on this leg.

MAXWELL
You ever get to feel like a ol race horse, Phil? How they're all sentimental an all about putting you down.

EDDIE
Roll over an let me put some alalgesic on your legs, then we'll wrap em an let some a that heat work on ya.

SCENE 56 INT - HALLWAY, CLUBHOUSE - DAY

RICHARDSON is tacking up a boldly typed sheet or sheets of paper on the bulletin board. He surpresses the desire to duck away when he hears someone coming down the hall, until he sees that it is the black receiver, DELMA HUDDLE.

HUDDLE
What are you doing, T.R.?

RICHARDSON
I'm putting out a little information for the troops. It's troop information time. again.

HUDDLE

Oh, T.R. What kind of information?

RICHARDSON

Economic information. Facts about how much money this franchise really brings into Conrad Hunter's pockets, as compared to the figures he puts out to the press every year. Facts about ticket prices at the stadium that he owns and why they are about 40 percent higher than they should be on the basis of the charter that he got from the city when the stadium was built. Facts about how much money he could be putting into the players pension fund along with every other owner. Facts about the gangsters that...

HUDDLE

Come on man, take that shit down. You're gonna be on waivers by midnight if B.A. reads that shit.

HUDDLE reaches for the papers.

RICHARDSON (threatening)

Don't touch that, Delma!

HUDDLE

Alright, man, you're on your own, but Lemme tell you something. If you don't wanna play football anymore why don't you just have the guts to walk up to the man and tell him you quit? Why you wanna hide make all these bullshit excuses? You wanna be a politician, get out in the streets and be a politician where it counts.

RICHARDSON

Every brother's gotta start from where he's at, Delma. Ain't nobody gonna elect me to congress.

HUDDLE

Nope, not the way you act, turkey. But if you ever got serious and got to be the best running back in the league, the way you could be...who knows?

RICHARDSON (smiling)

I already done that, baby. I already done that.

SCENE 57 INT - CLUBHOUSE - DAY

EDDIE is finishing wrapping ELLIOT'S legs. The tape is wrapped from his ankles to his hips.

EDDIE

I'll put a heel lock on that bad ankle.
But I'm not gonna do the other one.
It'll put too much strain on the left knee.

HUDDLE and RICHARDSON enter the training room.
HUDDLE grins at ELLIOT who looks who looks like a gunfighter in his ankle to hip adhesive tape.

HUDDLE

Say Turkey, who you? The nude ranger.

RICHARDSON

What's happening ,Phil?

HUDDLE (to MAXWELL)

Darrell. You in here getting fitted for spare parts?

MAXWELL

Delma, come here. I decided that I don't want you to will me your cock when you die...

HUDDLE tries to "hump" MAXWELL'S head as he lies on the table.

MAXWELL

Get out. I don't want that. What I need is your whole uninjured body so I can hold off the rush of that young quarterback over there on the Nautilus.

He means BILLY MAYHAK.

MAXWELL'S

Either your body, or Richardson's.

HUDDLE

Take his. He won't be needin it much longer around here.

RICHARDSON (cold)

Can't do it Darrell. Times have changed when you can get a black man's body to work behind a white man's brains.

MAXWELL (cold)

You got a real sense of humor, Richardson.

ELLIOT and HUDDLE exchange glances..

RICHARDSON

This ain't a fuckin minstrel show.

EDDIE interrupts the conflict, brandishing a needle.

EDDIE (to HUDDLE)

Huddle. Everybody gets B12 shots today. You want yours now or later?

HUDDLE turns nearly white.

HUDDLE

I don't want no shots now OR later, man.
Last time you broke a needle in my ass.
That's the last of that shit for me.

EDDIE

B.A. says everybody gets B12 shots today.
That means you, boy an every mother's son.

RICAHRDSON has left the room. On his way out he passes Asst. coach JIM JOHNSON who enters with some papers in his hand. JOHNSON is aggitated.

JOHNSON

Listen up. There will be a team meeting in half an hour. B.A. says bring your playbooks and don't anybody be late.

JOHNSON takes a hard look at ELLIOT, and waves the papers at him.

JOHNSON

ELLIOT. You better be there with ~~BELLS~~ on if you know what's good for your future around here...that is assuming you have a future around here. And you better have a good explanation for this!

He waves the papers, and exits. ELLIOT looks worried.

ELLIOT

What the hell is that? Hey, Johnson come back here and tell me what the hell's going on.

ELLIOT looks at the others in the room, bewildered.

ELLIOT
What the hell is he on my case for?

HUDDLE
I think it's something Richardson put
on the bulletin board. I guess he thinks you
did it.

ELLIOT
What's it about?

HUDDLE
Economics.

ELLIOT
Oh, man. Fuck that bullshit. I didn't
have anything to do with that. Aw
man, now I have a great shot at the
bench this weekend.

EDDIE
Hey, Huddle. Whyn't you get on the table
I'll give you a rubdown and tape those
ankles.

SCENE 58 MAXWELL and ELLIOT are sitting at their locker-room
cubicles in practise pants etc.

ELLIOT
You gotta help me out with this, Darrell.

MAXWELL
With what?

ELLIOT
With this bullshit that Richardson did.
You gotta tell em I didn't have anything
to do with it. I'll never play sunday...

MAXWELL (laughing)
Everytime there's a shit storm around
here, Phil, you're out standing in the rain.

SCENE 59 INT - TRAINING ROOM - DAY

HUDDLE is face down on the table expecting a rubdown,
from EDDIE. Instead EDDIE surprises him by jamming a
B12 needle in his bare ass. HUDDLE jumps when the spike
hits him. The needle breaks again. HUDDLE is incredulous
that EDDIE has done this to him.

HUDDLE (hopping around madly)
 Goddamnit, Eddie. You motherfucker, you did it again.

EDDIE (worried)
 Hold still, Huddle. I'll get it out. Bring me some tweezers somebody. God, don't move or this thing'll go straight inside. B.A.'ll kill me if I put you on the injury list.

HUDDLE
 B.A.'ll kill you. I'll fucking kill you...

EDDIE
 Boy, you got an ass like cement.

SCENE 60 INT- TEAM MEETING ROOM - DAY

The team is assembled. B.A. is at the podium. DELMA HUDDLE is standing by the door.

B.A.
 Delma, don't you think you better take a seat.

HUDDLE
 I can't sit coach. That damn fool trainer broke a needle in my ass.

The team laughs. HUDDLE is still angry. B.A. holds up RICHARDSON'S "economics lesson".

B.A.
 I don't know how many of you saw this paper that was pinned to the bulletin board... I don't know who posted it but whoever it was did not have the courage to sign his name to it. Which I think is typical of the type of individual that would make up this sort of thing.

JIM JOHNSON is staring at ELLIOT. ELLIOT avoids his eyes.

B.A.
 I will say it is very well written. I doubt there are many among us who have the ability to write this ...clearly...and I doubt that many of us have the imagination to...manufacture this many lies.

B.A. cannot help but glance at ELLIOT.

B.A. (cont)

I have my own opinion about the author of this but I expect whoever wrote it will be man enough to own up to it.

ELLIOT (low to MAXWELL) his throat.

You better help me outta this.

Well, I don't have much to say.

B.A.

Do you have something to say, Phil?

ELLIOT

No, sir.

B.A.

I thought you might.

ELLIOT (nervous)

I didn't do it. I didn't write it.

I swear. I don't even know anything about that stuff.

B.A. (shrewdly)

What stuff, Phil?

ELLIOT

Oh, Christ. Whatever it's about. I had nothing to do with it.

B.A.

How do you know what it's about?

ELLIOT (desperate)

I don't.

MAXWELL chuckles.

MAXWELL

You're doing great, hoss. You're a real F. Lee Bailey.

Other ballplayers chuckle at that.

RICHARDSON

B.A. I didn't get a chance to read that either. I did see it up there on the board and I mean to check it out but I didn't get a chance. Maybe you oughta read it out to us an...we can get a line on the kinda turkey would write something like that.

ELLIOT is off the hook. B.A.'s eye's go to RICHARDSON.
Unlike ELLIOT, RICHARDSON does not flinch.

B.A.

Did you write this, Richardson?

RICHARDSON

I didn't say that. I SAID 'why don't you
read it to us all and we can get a line on
what it's about and who might have written
it'.

RICHARDSON's street dialect has dissappeared. He
enunciates very clearly. It's an intentional hint,
which B.A. catches and isn't sure what to do
with. He's afraid of a dispute with RICHARDSON here
infront of the others.

B.A.

I don't intend to read this to anyone.
I'm gonna put it in the garbage where it
belongs.

RICHARDSON

Well somebody told me that they read it...
not me you understand...but this other guy
told me that there were some pretty
right on facts about the amount of money
that we aren't making and things like
that...That's what I was told.

There is a silence. Some of the ballplayers are
uncomfortable. Some are amused at RICHARDSON's
boldness. HUDDLE is shaking his head.

HUDDLE (low)

Well, T.R. you better start looking
for a job.

B.A.

Richardson, we'll discuss this in my
office after this meeting.

RICHARDSON

Sure. I'd like that.

B.A.

And Phil, so that you understand that
I don't confuse this sort of thing
with the game of FOOTBALL I want to tell
you openly that I don't intend to start
you this weekend.

ELLIOT sinks in his chair.

ELLIOT's rival tight end, TONY GILBERT, smiles at the news.

B.A.

However, I like what I've been seeing from you these past weeks and I've told Darrell that he can call you in from the field whenever he feels that you are needed.

ELLIOT's grief turns to confused elation. HUDDLE winks at him. MAXWELL is impassive. GILBERT looks glum.

SCENE 61 INT - CLUBHOUSE - DAY

ELLIOT and MAXWELL are suited for practise. ELLIOT is angry.

ELLIOT

Goddammit, Darrell, you knew about this all week. Why didn't you tell me? You know What I been going through.

MAXWELL (flat, almost an imitation of B.A.)

I was gonna tell you later. Saturday.

ELLIOT (mad)

You son of a bitch. What am I , a damn kid or something?

MAXWELL

I thought it would give you more energy if I told you Saturday.

ELLIOT(furious)

Goddammit, Darrell. You're just as bad as Goddammed B.A.

They are walking out of the clubhouse to the practise field.

ELLIOT

You don't care what anybody's going through. All you care about is what you think'll help you win.

MAXWELL

I told you that a thousand times kid. I like to win. I thought telling you Saturday would be better.

ELLIOT

I wish to Christ, once in my life, I could tell where the next freight train was coming from before it ran me down.

MAXWELL

I've told you that too. You'll know which winds the shit's ridin on when you start payin attention to the weather. Take a little responsibility for your own life and quit being a clown.

ELLIOT slams his helmet to the ground.

ELLIOT

Well I'll be goddamned. You hypocritical son of a bitch. I can't see any difference between you and that cold power-hungry son of a bitch in there, except you don't go church and you get laid once in a while.

MAXWELL

I got a flash for you, hoss. There ain't much difference, tween me an B.A. Why do you think he leaves me alone? Why do you think he backed offa Richardson in there? B.A., me, Richardson, even Conny Hunter...we make our choices, then we do what we gotta do.

ELLIOT is speechless at MAXWELL'S new attitude.

MAXWELL

We ain't scared of it all, like you are.

That line hurts ELLIOT. MAXWELL softens.

MAXWELL

But I'll tell you something else fore we drop all this an practise football... It's partly that your so fucked up that I like you...or maybe it's cause I haven't got you all figured out...I don't know.

He finally smiles and returns to his usual manner.

MAXWELL

But you're a hard man to keep on a football team. .

MAXWELL walks out onto the field. Bowlegged, ready ready to do what he's gotta do.

SCENE 62 EXT - PRACTISE FIELD - DAY

The team is working on sharpening their goal line short yardage offense. As the plays are run a tense battle builds on the right side of the line between JOE BOB WILLIAMSON on offense and BOB MEADOWS at defensive end. MAXWELL finally calls a straight "dive wedge" to get a yard and MEADOWS manhandles JOE BOB easily breaking the play.

ASST. COACH JOHNSON

Goddammit, Joe Bob you gonna let that man push you all over the field? Maybe we aughta move him into your spot and let you be wedge buster on the kick returns.

Joe Bob trudges back to the huddle muttering.

MAXWELL

O.K. Joe Bob, well get that sandbagger this time. Green right, dive forty-three on two.

It a straight hand-off play. Joe bob anticipating an outside move from MEADOWS misses him entirely. He flops to the ground foolishly. MEADOWS stops the ballcarrier.

JOHNSON

Joe Bob, if you can't do this drill maybe we aughta go full speed.

On the next play, Joe Bob is so stoked with anger and frustration that when the ball is snapped he makes no attempt at blocking. He hits MEADOWS on the side of the head with a forearm right off. Immediately the fight is on. The two giants sold like apes hitting tree trunks with baseball bats. The coaches exchange sly glances pleased with the show of emotion at this final practise before the weekend game. MAXWELL removes his helmet and walks calmly away from the fight. His eyes catch B.A. enjoying the fight. Caught in his glee B.A. is forced to intervene.

B.A. (to JOHNSON)

O.K. Jim, break it up.

As JOHNSON steps foreward to intervene Joe Bob hits him flush on the chest. JOHNSON goes down hard, gasping for breath. The players cheer. JOE BOB rips his headgear off and flings it at MEADOWS. MEADOWS rips off his helmet and throws it at Joe BOB. Joe Bob dives for MEADOWS. MEADOWS drives his knee into the wearying whiteman's head. JOE BOB groans. MEADOWS goes in for the kill. JOHNSON jumps on MEADOWS.

JOHNSON

CHRIST. We got a game sunday...

MEADOWS turns on JOHNSON now. He grabs JOHNSON'S throat and lifts him off his feet. JOHNSON's eyes buldge.

MEADOWS

Leave off me, you motherfucker.

JOHNSON wrenches free and runs away to the cheers of the crowd.

B.A.

Alright. That's enough. Practise is over. Get your B12 shots. Be at the airport at 10 O.K. tomorrow...and get some rest tonight. Watch your drinking.

SCENE 63 INT - CLUBHOUSE - DAY

RICHARDSON is dressed when ELLIOT comes out of the shower.

ELLIOT

What happened, T.R.?

RICHARDSON

This agony is over, man.

ELLIOT

What do you mean?

RICHARDSON

I told him I ~~would~~ play Sunday, unless he posted those sheets I wrote on the bulletin board. He didn't go for the idea.

ELLIOT

You're not going to New York?

RICHARDSON

Nope.

ELLIOT

That's too bad.

RICHARDSON

It's alright. I'm tired of this bullshit anyway.

, . . .

, . . .

SCENE 64 INT - CLUBHOUSE - DAY

MAXWELL, JOHN WILSON, GINO MECHADO, GILBERT, DOUGLAS and MAYHAK are autographing footballs by a few large garbage cans of same.

MECHADO

How much they get for these damn balls now?

MAXWELL

Fifty dollars. They sell em to Churches and shit, Kiwanis clubs...then they auction em off for charities and stuff.

MAYHAK

Fifty dollars?

MAXWELL

Ol Conrad's gotta keep that helicopter flying somehow.

DOUGLAS(to MAYHAK)

Hey, man what the fuck are you doing. People don't want this religious shit on no fifty dollar footballs. This asshole's putting bible verses under neath his autograph. John, Chapter 1:12. Jesus.

MAYHAK looks sheepish. ELLIOT and RICHARDSON walks past them headed for the door.

MAXWELL

Hey, Phil. Where you going. This young Christian...

(He means MAYHAK)

and I are gonna go out for a couple a beers. Whyn't ya go long?

ELLIOT is still pissed at MAXWELL.

ELLIOT

Fuck you. I got things to do.

He goes out the door.

DOUGLAS
How can you hang out with that pussey,man?

MAXWELL
I like him.

DOUGLAS
He's a fuckin quiff.

MECHADO
What's a quiff?

DOUGLAS
That's a guy farts in the bathrub and bites
the bubbles.

SCENE 65 EXT - CLUBHOUSE - DAY

RICHARDSON
Where you headed,man?

ELLIOT
I got a date.

RICHARDSON
You seeing Charlotte Ann?

ELLIOT
Yeah.

RICHARDSON
You like her?

ELLIOT
Yeah. A lot. A lot.

RICHARDSON
She's a good lady, man. She's alright.

ELLIOT
T.R. I'm real sorry about your gettin fired.

RICHARDSON
Hey, you're alright, Phil. It's just these
motherfuckers have still got you hanging
on the string.

SCENE 66 EXT - CHARLOTTE ANN'S HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

ELLIOT climbs out of his car and turns toward the house when he sees BEAUDREAU pull up in his Cadillac. BEAUDREAU blows his horn and waves. ELLIOT stops, breathes in and out sharply, and looks angrily in BEAUDREAU's direction. BEAUDREAU steps out of his car wearing his usual grin as if he and ELLIOT were the best of friends.

BEAUDREAU

Say, Phil. I just had the best idea. I was gonna ask CHARLOTTE ANN if she wanted to fly over to New York for the game this weekend. We could all get together over there an...

ELLIOT

Bob, get the fuck outta here, will you?

BEAUDREAU

But I was jes thinking it would be real great to...

ELLIOT

Bob, I'm in a bad mood. I wanna see Charlotte Ann and I don't want any interference from you. Now get the fuck out of here.

Again BEAUDREAU tries to ignore the obvious. He puts his hand on ELLIOT's shoulder.

BEAUDREAU

Come on now, Phil, I...

He is still grinning when ELLIOT hits him hard in the face. Blood flies from his nose. He seems incredulous as he falls back over the fender of the car.

SCENE 67 INT - CHARLOTTE ANN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

ELLIOT and CHARLOTTE ANN fuck on the livingroom floor in front of a glowing fire in the fireplace. He looks massive and she is small and gorgeous in the shifting light from the fire.

SCENE 68 INT - TEAM PLANE - FRIDAY MORNING

The TEAM, COACHES, PRESS, CONRAD HUNTER and his party etc. are boarding the plane for New York. MAXWELL is already on the plane and asleep when ELLIOT boards. ELLIOT takes the empty seat next to MAXWELL. BILLY MAYHAK is across the aisle. He looks terrible, exhausted and beat up.

ELLIOT
Jesus Christ, Billy. What happened to you.

MAYHAK
I spent a week with Maxwell last night.

ELLIOT
Looks like you either fucked or fought half the town last night.

MAYHAK looks contrite almost tearful.

MAYHAK
We weren't fighting. I don't think. Emily wouldn't even come see me off this morning.

ELLIOT
What happened to your face?

MAYHAK
Some woman bit me, I think.

ELLIOT
That's the wages of sin, Billy boy.

MAYHAK
How does he do it, Phil? I mean he lives like that all the time doesn't he?

ELLIOT
Mostly.

MAYHAK (awed)
God. I feel horrible.

A stewardess comes by and puts her hand on ELLIOT'S head.

MARY JANE
Hi, Phil.

She looks over at the sleeping MAXWELL lovingly.

MARY JANE
How's the king?

ELLIOT
Dunno. We haven't got the tests back from the lab. He'll live.

MARY JANE

He better.

ELLIOT

You gonna steal us a little whiskey for the trip back.

MARY JANE

I got you covered. Bourbon for you. Scotch for the king.

MAXWELL speaks without opening his eyes.

MAXWELL

Mary Jane. Soons I get a little shuteye, whyn't you an me get together in the john. Got somethin I wanna tell ya.

MARY JANE

You better get your rest, Darrell.

JOE BOB reaches past CLARIDGE as he boards the plane and grabs MARY JANE on the ass. As she flees, ELLIOT sees CONRAD HUNTER, EMMET HUNTER and JOANNE board plane and turn into the first class compartment. JOANNE winks at ELLIOT. He nods. DOUGLAS spots the handsome JOANNE going by.

DOUGLAS

I'd swim through a mile a shit to get within an inch a her asshole.

ELLIOT

That's charming, Douglas.

DOUGLAS

Shut up, faggot. I'll break your teeth off.

SCOOP WALINSKY a local sports reporter stops by ELLIOT'S seat.

SCOOP

Say, Phil. You catch the piece I wrote about you in the paper thursday.

ELLIOT

I hear you called me the team clown again, Scoop. You do that again and I'm gonna kick the shit outta you.

SCOOP

Oh, Nice. Can I quote you on that.

ELLIOT

Yes, you can, Scoop. You quote me verbatim. I'll tell you something else I wish you'd

ELLIOT (cont.)
print. Tell your fans that I'm giving
up that title. Tell them that I played
a magnificent game against New York this
week. That I was a key element in our
victory, which I am gonna be, and tell
them I said that if that asshole Douglas
over there...

He says this loud so DOUGLAS can hear.

ELLIOT
says another word to me I'm gonna kick
the living shit out of him right here on
this plane.

DOUGLAS, SCOOP and everyone around them on the plane
is shocked to hear ELLIOT talk this way.

DOUGLAS
I'll say what ever I want to you...

ELLIOT (convincing)
Try me motherfucker.

MAXWELL (eyes closed)
Damn. You got your insurance paid up, Phil?

ELLIOT
You just better get me in that game Sunday.
You been telling me all along to be serious.
Well, I'm serious. So don't fuck me around.

MAXWELL
Damn. Must be that girl you're seeing,
that's got you all stoked up.

ELLIOT
Yeah, that's part of it.

SCENE 69 INT - PLANE - DAY

The plane is circling over New York. MAXWELL is awake
and staring out the window at the monumental colony
below.

MAXWELL
I'm gonna whip her this time.

ELLIOT
Who?

MAXWELL (pointing down)
Her. She beat me ten times in the last five
years. This time when I leave her she's
gonna be all mine.

MAXWELL is dead serious. His eyes are like steel balls.

MAXWELL
If you're serious about being serious then
you just stick with me cause I'm gonna
teach these city boys how to play football.
First, I'm gonna fuck all their women an
then I'm gonna show em how a country boy
plays football. When I fly outta that town, hoss,
they're just gonna be glad it was only
a game an it wadn't a war!

SCENE 70 INT - HOTEL ELEVATOR - DAY

ELLIOT, MAXWELL, and MAYHAK are riding up in the hotel
elevator.

MAXWELL
Say, ma ol buddy Hoot from Houston is
here in town and we're going honky tonkin
tonight. You going along.

ELLIOT
I got a date. I gotta get somethings
straight.

MAXWELL
Anybody I know?

ELLIOT
Yep.

MAXWELL
You better watch your step with that woman,
hoss. That's awful thin ice.

MAYHAK
Are you seeing Emmet Hunter's girl, Phil?
That's what I heard.

ELLIOT (a little white)
No.

MAYHAK
She's beautiful.

MAXWELL puts his arm around MAYHAK'S shoulder.

MAXWELL

How about you ,sonney boy. You wanna go out an witness for Christ a little bit tonight?

MAYHAK (scared)

We got a game Sunday, Darrell.

MAXWELL

Oh my God boy, how you ever gonna be a football hero if all you think about is the game on sunday. Anyway you're never gonna get off the bench ,sonny. Less I run up a forty point lead..

SCENE 71 INT - N.Y. PARTY - NIGHT

ELLIOT is talking to JOANNE in a room full of people drinking cocktails and smoking grass and snorting coke. An older lady offers ELLIOT a joint.

ELLIOT

No thanks. I don't smoke.

LADY

Oh, I forgot your an athlete. It's nice to see someone taking care of his body.

JOANNE (taking the joint)

Isn't it?

The lady moves on.

JOANNE

What's wrong with you?

ELLIOT

I'm being discrete. Speaking of discretion, what did you do with Emmet. Is he likely to come barging in here?

KE

JOANNE

No. He has a meeting and then a poker game. He'll be out all night. We can safely rendezvous in my hotel room.

ELLIOT

Joanne, look, I'm giving you up, O.K. Somethings are changing in my life. I wanna quit taking chances. I wanna quit fucking around. I wanna play football while I still can. I got a couple more good years. I don't even want to be seen here with you tonight.

JOANNE

I'm not going to let you get that serious. You talked me into going through this marriage with Emmet, you can't turn around and abandon me now.

ELLIOT (dry)

A...yeah, that makes real good sense.

JOANNE

I love you.

ELLIOT

Right.

There is a loud banging at the door. Someone is kicking it or pounding it with their fists. The partiers all turn their heads at the noise.

VOICES OUTSIDE THE DOOR

Open up. We know you're in there. Open up goddammit.

The guests start and hurry to pocket their cocaine and grass.

OLD LADY

My god. You don't suppose we're being busted.

A nearby writer comments.

WRITER

It would be exciting to think so but doubt anyone would have the nerve to "bust" your party.

OLD LADY

Perhaps, it's Gene Hackman or someone like that. Let them in, and don't put anything away.

The door opens and MAXWELL, HOOT (his preposterously tall Texas friend) and PEEWEE, (a twenty year old hooker) who lunges forward with her fingers cocked like six shooters and MAXWELL'S ten gallon hat on her blond head.

PEEWEE

O.K. you motherstickers, this is a fuck-up.

MAXWELL and HOOT let out a rebel yell. The partier's like the entrance. DARRELL MAXWELL'S name flies about the room with energy.

MAXWELL

Don't anybody get excited. We're just here to rape and pillage.

SCENE 72 EXT - GRAMERCY PARK TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

MAXWELL, HOOT, PEEWEE, ELLIOT and JOANNE move toward HOOT'S limousine.

MAXWELL

Come on kids. We got work to do.

ELLIOT

I think I aughta bow out.

HOOT

Aw common, Phil, lemme show you a lil a this town. It's all on me.

JOANNE

Please, Phil, don't do this to me.

MAXWELL

Come on, Phil. I told ol Peewee here, that you were the only man in Texas could keep up with me at honky tonkin. Don't let the lil girl down.

JOANNE (to PEEWEE)

What is your name, young lady?

PEEWEE

My name's Peewee. I ain't a lady. I'm a hooker. But I only work when I'm hungry.

MAXWELL

Well I hope you're hungry cause you're sure gonna work tonight.

ELLIOT sighs and walks with them to the car.

ELLIOT

I hope you got some money, Hoot.

HOOT

How much you need, Phil.

ELLIOT

Just enough to go our bail.

SCENE 73 INT - ELLIOT AND MAXWELL'S HOTEL ROOM - SATURDAY

PEEWEE is crashed on one bed. ELLIOT and JOANNE are on the other. MAXWELL is not in view. JOANNE wakes slowly and then looks at the clock. It is nearly noon. The late hour startles her.

JOANNE

Oh, my god. How did it get this late?

He bounds out of bed and grabs her dress. The activity wakes. ELLIOT and PEWEE.

JOANNE

Christ. I have to get to my room. It's almost noon.

She is dressed and gone before ELLIOT or PEWEE can fully comprehend what's happening in their hungover condition.

PEEWEE

Who was that masked man? I gotta pee.

She rises and walks to the bathroom. Once there she let's out a scream, that raises ELLIOT from his bed.

PEEWEE

Phil, he's not breathing. Phil, he's dead.

ELLIOT rushes to the john. MAXWELL is lying on the floor by the toilet bowl. There is blood arpund his mouth. He is mouth. ELLIOT looks scared. He bends over the body.

ELLIOT

Darrell. Darrell.

PEEWEE

Jesus, do something, Phil.

ELLIOT

Darrell.

ELLIOT leans down to listen for a heartbeat. MAXWELL opens his eyes.

MAXWELL

You trying to steal my watch, hoss?

PEEWEE

We thought you were dead.

MAXWELL

Naw, I was just practising, honey.

PEEWEE

But you have blood...

MAXWELL

Aw, ma ulcer was acting up. Jess go
go on outa here, I'll get straightened around.

SCENE 74 INT - HOTEL ROOM - EVENING

ELLIOT is lying on his bed watching televion and smoking a joint. MAXWELL and PEEWEE are dressed and ready to go out.

MAXWELL

We'll see ya later, hoss. I gotta get a steak or two. You don't wanna go along?

ELLIOT

No thanks. I gotta make a call. I'll get something sent up.

MAXWELL and PEEWEE leave. ELLIOT picks up the phone and places a call.

ELLIOT

Charlotte Ann. This is whatsis name. Just hangin out, getting some rest. Listen, I been thinkin. Why don't you and I set up house somewhere when I get back. Just for the hell of it...

The sports news is on televison. B.A. QUINLAN is being interviewed about the coming game between Dallas and New York. B.A. is his icy, confident, military self.

SCENE 75 INT - YANKEE STADIUM LOCKER ROOM - MORNING

ELLIOT is having his legs elaborately taped for the game. He has an unlit cigar in his teeth. JOHN WILSON is having his hip injected with novocaine from a five inch needle that a DOCTOR wields, painfully.

WILSON

Oww.

DOCTOR

Just one more shot. There. How's that?

WILSON stands and moves around on the leg with the hip pointer.

WILSON

Great. I can't feel a thing.

ELLIOT walks away from the training table as a Trainer jabs a needle in JOE BOB'S huge thigh.

JOE BOB

Fuck!

Other ballplayers are lined up awaiting their shots. All are dressed in their jocks and T-shirts. ELLIOT walks to his cubicle where his uniform is laid out as are forty others, one at each man's cubicle. He slips his game pants over his elaborately taped legs as GINO MECHADO approaches him. GINO is wired on speed and adreniline. He is trying unsuccessfully to tape his forearm pads in place. His eyes are large as the veritable saucers.

MECHADO

Hey, Elliot. Wrap this motherfucker for me, will ya?

ELLIOT obliges. MECHADO taps his cleats on the concrete floor, a furious drumbeat.

ELLIOT

Hold still Gino. I can't wrap straight.

MECHADO

Tighter, man. Wrap it tighter.

ELLIOT

If I wrap any tighter you'll get gangrene.

MECHADO

Wrap it tighter motherfucker, I'll kill you.

ELLIOT

Steady boy.

Around the locker room the giant ballplayers slip on their pants and pads. A dozen transistor radios are tuned to a dozen stations. Men work the huge muscles in the necks. Some grind their teeth and try to work up a little spit in their mouths.

CONRAD HUNTER and his favorite Cleric, the boozy MONSIGNOR HUGHES, accompany B.A. QUINLAN through the lockerroom now. EMMET HUNTER trails behind them. CONRAD and the MONSIGNOR begin patting the ballplayers

and giving them encouraging words.

SCENE 76 ELLIOT ,MAXWELL, CLARDIDGE, ANDRUS, MEADOWS, and the rest file onto the field now for a pregame warm-up. The NEW YORK crowd boos them as they appear on the field.

 ELLIOT
What shoes are you wearing?

 MAXWELL
I don't know yet. Somebody said you might need mud cleats. That one end is wet.

 ELLIOT
Playing on real turf always feels strange now.

 MAXWELL
These ol' legs are always ready to play on some good grass.

A New York ballplayer walks across the field toward MAXWELL and ELLIOT.

 ELLIOT
There's your oposite number, Darrell.

 MAXWELL
Probably heard how we treated his town last night and he's coming to beg for mercy.

MAXWELL goes off to meet the oposing quarterback. . . Another New York player tosses a ball, hard thrown, at ELLIOT.

 N.Y.PLAYER
Heads up, Phil.

ELLIOT catches the ball.

 ELLIOT
Billy Joe. What do ya say, boy?
Well, it's nice to see these city folks have bought you pair of shoes to wear.

He fires the ball back at BILLY JOE.

SCENE 77 INT - LOCKER ROOM - DAY

The team is gathered for B.A.'s final pregame remarks.

B.A.
 Alright. Listen up. Don't forget
 to take your helmets off during
 the national anthem. And it wouldn't
 hurt some of you to sing along.

ELLIOT (to MAXWELL)
 Anybody know the words.

B.A. glares at that.

ASST COACH JOHNSON
 And if you'll remember, you all got a
 letter last week from the commissioner
 that you're not supposed to pick your nose
 or scratch your nuts.

B.A.
 Monsignor Hughes is going to lead
 us all in prayer.

Everyone sinks down on one knee except MAXWELL
 who lights his cigar and walks away to sit by himself
 and think. B.A. glares at him for that.

MONSIGNOR
 Dear Lord, I ask you blessing on these
 boys as they venture out to battle. And
 may we thank you for these brave lads
 who go out today to serve as America's
 finest example to our country's youth.
 May we all remember that ancient ideal
 of the balanced man commanding a sound
 mind and body in the service of his
 god and his fellow man.

Let us pray: Our father who art in
 heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy
 kindon come, thy will be done, on
 earth as it is in heaven. Give us this
 day our daily bread, and forgive us
 our tresspasses, as we forgive those
 who tresspass against us. Lead us not
 into temptation and deliver us from
 evil, Amen.

GINO MECHADO is so primed for the coming action
 that he leaps up from the floor and shouts.

MECHADO
 Let's go out and kill those cocksuckers.

As soon as he says this, GINO looks embarrassed.

MONSIGNOR

That's alright, Gino. I know how you feel.

B.A.

Alright. Defensive team out first and Elliot...

ELLIOT looks up sharply, terrified of some last minute retribution.

B.A.

Elliot, you stay close. I may need you to run plays.

SCENE 78

EXT - YANKEE STADIUM

The National Anthem
songstress whose face
for her frequent appearance
Her voice is not quite
song. The team is lined up
their helmets on one
stand alone behind the
casually and ELLIOT
He drops it twice during
dictum from the commentary
and several other ball
nuts. GINO MECHADO plays

When the anthem is over
the ball behind the
inspirational huddle
joins. A young T.V. announcer
approach MAXWELL for

M
Get outa here
sonny, I got

The young announcer
thing ferociously pushes
His eyes are cold he
analogies all apply:

E
How you feel?

MAXWELL doesn't answer
the kick-off and makes
ELLIOT ignore the action
back and forth.

* NOTE : the game action
"highlights".
attempted. Rather
ballplayers is
down for drama
the "key" moment

The huge defensive end
quarterback once. JOHNSON
pass. MEADOWS bats down
York team punts. With
HUDDLE receives the punt
yards and then fumble
lineman picks off the
thirty yards to sprawl
first score.

With ELLIOT standing next to B.A. on the sidelines and MAXWELL standing several yars from ELLIOT the New York Team kicks off. CLARIDGE rushes forward for the short kick. He bobbles the ball and New York recovers. B.A. slaps his forehead in disgust. MAXWELL walks calmly to the bench and sits alone. He seems to have no emotions. ELLIOT looks at the sky.

After a brief series New York scores again and again kicks off. The ball sails into the end zone. MAXWELL walks onto field, to a 14 point disadvantage.

B.A.

PHIL!

ELLIOT walks to B.A.'s side. MAXWELL takes the ball from center on a quick count with no set. He rolls out and completes a sideline pass to HUDDLE. With the completion, B.A. forgets his instructions to ELLIOT and walks away. ELLIOT talks to himself, sarcastically.

ELLIOT

Right, coach. I agree. Good plan. -

ELLIOT takes to the bench mumbling.

MAYHAK

Looks bad out there.

ELLIOT (surly)

I hope it gets worse.

MAYHAK (shocked)

Worse?

ELLIOT

Worse.

MAYHAK

Why?

ELLIOT

Wouldn't you like to see ol Darrell break leg...or pull a hamstring? So you could get in the game.

MAYHAK (shocked)

No.

ELLIOT

You lying asshole.

MAYHAK keeps his thoughts to himself, as MAXWELL takes the center snap and rolls out to his right again. He tries to get off a pass but he is smothered by rushing linemen. MAYHAK jumps up excitedly. When MAXWELL rises from the turf unhurt MAYHAK sits down again. ELLIOT smiles at him. MAYHAK is forced to admit his feelings.

MAYHAK

Well, I never wish nothing serious on him. Just a separated shoulder or something like that.

ELLIOT

Well, I wish to christ Gilbert would break his neck.

MAYHAK (suddenly moved)

It's wierd isn't it?

ELLIOT

What ain't?

MAXWELL fires a pass over center to ELLIOT'S alternate tight end, BILLY GILBERT. GILBERT drops the hard thrown pass. ELLIOT lights up.

ELLIOT(mumbling)

Great.

B.A.

Phil.

ELLIOT rushes to B.A.'s side. GILBERT drops another pass from MAXWELL and the field goal team goes in. ELLIOT looks pleased. The field goal is blocked and New York recovers, but fails to move the ball well and WILSON incepts a deep post.

After the first play MAXWELL calls to B.A. and points at ELLIOT.

B.A.

Phil. Get in there and tell Darrell to watch for that Sara blitz.

ELLIOT passes GILBERT coming off the field. They exchange glances. ELLIOT makes no pretense.

ELLIOT

Thanks.

GILBERT

Fuck you, second string.

ELLIOT lines up outside the defensive end. He runs a down and out pattern one on one against the left cornerback. He beats him to the outside, and dives catch an underthrown pass. He bounces into the endzone upside down, for the score.

DELMA HUDDLE and ELLIOT alternately make well-caught passes on the next drive. MAXWELL steps into the huddle with Dallas on the New York 19 yard line. MAXWELL is singing a country song.

MAXWELL (singing)
I didn't know that god had made
honkey tonk heroes.
I should have known that you
would never make a wife...

The other players smile at MAXWELL'S confidence.

MAXWELL
Delma, you ready?

HUDDLE affects a minstrel show accent.

HUDDLE
I's ready, boss. Throw me dat
watermellon.

MAXWELL
Fire ninety T pull pass. Wing
zig out. On two. Let's get it!

HUDDLE leaps like the veritable gazelle, and catches the lofted ball for a score.

At half time with the score tied, MAXWELL'S spirits are up. He sits down next to ELLIOT with a lighted cigarette and a Dr. Pepper.

MAXWELL (grinning)
All I need now is a moon pie
and half-timed be hog heaven.

Other ballplayers are sprawled around them smoking cigarettes and drinking cokes. JOHN WILSON is having his hip shot full of novacaine. He screams when the needle goes in. ALAN CLARIDGE is on a training table. A doctor is prodding and probing his right hamstring. CLARIDGE grimaces as the Dr. grabs the knotted muscle and spikes it with a syringe full of novacaine.

DOCTOR
You won't feel much from this...

CLARIDGE
My hamstring?

DOCTOR
Just hope it tear...

The trainers are patching a hole in JOE BOB'S nose.

JOE BOB
Just fix it so the damn blood stays out of my eyes.

The trainers white clothes are splattered with blood now, like workers in a slaughterhouse.

B.A. and JOHNSON are at a blackboard going over a list of New York defensives and discussing the offensive plays for the second half.

Across the dressing room WILKS is prepping the defensive team for the second half.

B.A. turns away from his blackboard.

B.A.
O.K. boys, listen up. We've had some bad breaks out there, but we've come back and it's a brand new game. We receive this time so let's take it to em. The same team that started the game starts the second half.

GILBERT, the receiver who alternates with ELLIOT smiles at him. ELLIOT looks at his feet, disgusted. MECHADO stops one of the trainers crossing the room.

MECHADO
Gimme a couple more a them dexamyls.

TRAINER
Gino. They won't start working now till the games about over.

MECHADO
Well, what if we go into overtime?

ELLIOT continues looking glum on the bench in the third quarter as GILBERT catches a couple of good passes, and B.A. ignores his presence. Most of the time B.A. stands impassive on the sidelines. Chewing gum, occasionally adjusting his fifties style hat, or rolling a program in his hands. When things go badly he paces. But things are not going that badly until JOE BOB misses a block on the defensive end and MAXWELL is sacked for a twelve yard loss. He is hit on the blind side and stunned for a moment. MAYHAK watches expectantly. B.A. glances at him. MAYHAK grabs a football and a second string receiver and begins tossing a ball to warm up. He keeps checking the field during the time out hoping that MAXWELL is hurt.

He is dissappointed when play resumes and MAXWELL stays in.

MAYHAK

Shit.

MAXWELL tosses a pitchout to one of his running backs. The back drops the ball when he is hit. New York recovers. ELLIOT claps his hands with glee then shrinks as he glances up to see a hand held t.v. camera is trained on him. He quickly changes his joy to disgust for the camera.

ELLIOT

A damn. Too bad. Rough one.
Lets get it together out there!

NEW York runs two plays on the ground. Misses a pass for the first down. The kicker comes in. There is no camera on ELLIOT now. He roots for the field goal.

ELLIOT

Get it.

The kick is good. B.A. glances at him.

MAXWELL is on the headphone, swearing at the assistant coach in the pressbox.

MAXWELL
Goddammit I haven't had time
to throw a deep zig out all day,
maybe that's why they ain't
covering it. Fuck you. Don't tell
me. Tell your fucking linemen.
Asshole.

MAXWELL throws down the phones. He points
to ELLIOT.

MAXWELL
I want him in.

B.A.
Keep Gilbert. I want you to...

MAXWELL
I want him. Gilbert can't take
that linebacker out. He's missed
Whitman twice.

B.A. looks again to ELLIOT.

B.A.
Phil...

The New York kick off comes to ALAN CLARIDGE who
is deep with HUDDLE. CLARIDGE returns the ball
twenty or twenty-five yards before he suddenly
stiffens. His head snaps up. His hamstring has
ripped. He screams and falls forward. On his way
down a New York tackler hits him flush in the
face with his headgear. CLARIDGE recoils like a
man hit by a car. He twitches on the ground.
The ball has squirted free. A New York player
dives on it. ELLIOT looks elated at the turn of
events. MAXWELL spots this.

MAXWELL
What the fuck's with you?

ELLIOT immediately looks glum.

ELLIOT
Nothing. I...got confused.

MAXWELL
You're off the bench now, hoss.

MAXWELL (cont.)

Get it straight.

ELLIOT (serious)

Alan is hurt.

MAXWELL

I ain't got time for that, look...

ELLIOT

Must be that leg...hamstring...

MAXWELL

Fuck that. Look. I want you cracking back on Whitman. Cut that son of a bitch in half. I want that middle open. Aw fuck...

New York's quarterback scrambles and hits a receiver very close to MAXWELL and ELLIOT on the sidelines. The receiver steps out of bounds in front of them.

ELLIOT

Nice catch, Bobby Joe.

BOBBY JOE

Phil. Darrel. How you doing?

MAXWELL says nothing. He spits on the ground.

New York makes another field goal. 20-14. ELLIOT loosens up on the sideline. The doctors bend over ALAN CLARIDGE who is face down on the bench.

DOCTOR

See. Feel this. The hole? I can put my four fingers in it. It's torn pretty bad.

GREG ANDRUS is carried, or half carried off the field. He is put down on the bench near CLARIDGE'S head. They have not removed CLARIDGE'S headgear. ANDRUS' near has been badly damaged. The trainers pull his pants leg up.

ANDRUS

How you doing Alan?

CLARIDGE gurgles a response. ANDRUS lifts his head for him. CLARIDGE'S face appears. The damage there has been unnoticed because CLARIDGE has kept his head down.

ANDRUS

Jesus Christ! He's gonna bleed to death! Doc...

CLARIDGE'S face guard has been snapped and driven into his face. His nose is laid open so that the cartilage is showing white in the mess of red. He is indeed nearly choking in his blood. ANDRUS holds his head up so the blood does not drown him.

CLARIDGE (gurgling)
I'm alright...

ANDRUS
Get a fucking ambulance.

A T.V. camera man moves in for a shot of the wounded player. ELLIOT pushes him away.

ELLIOT
Get outta here, creep...

DOCTOR
Did he bite his tongue?

The doctor shoves his fingers in CLARIDGE'S mouth.

On the field, a huddle forms around SCHMIDT, the center. The exhausted and short tempered linemen snap at each other.

SCHMIDT
Goddammit, Joe Bob. That sombitch is walking over you.

JOE BOB
Kiss my ass Schmidt. Who put you in charge?

HUDDLE (to ELLIOT)
How's Claridge?

ELLIOT
Bad.

SCHMIDT
Motherfucker...I'm taking charge.

MAXWELL steps into the huddle.

MAXWELL
Schmidt, you're taking a walk if you don't shut up in my huddle.

SCHMIDT
Shit. I'm...

MAXWELL

You're shit, buster. You're out if you say another word in my huddle. I'm the only one that talks out here. Get it straight. We got work to do. Alright. Brown right dive forty-nine G take, on three.

The huddle breaks with a grunt and MAXWELL strides up behind the center. JOE BOB goes off sides on the count. As the penalty is stepped off, SCHMIDT hassles JOE BOB. This continues into the next huddle.

SCHMIDT

Pay attention to the count this time.

MAXWELL

Shut you're mouth, Schmidt, or you're off the field.

SCHMIDT

Like hell I am...

MAXWELL steps out of the huddle. He exhales and calls time. He walks to the sideline. ELLIOT watches him talk to B.A. B.A. protests. MAXWELL shakes his finger at the coach. B.A. walks away. MAXWELL walks back to field..

MAXWELL (calmly)

You're out Schmidt.

A new center walks onto the field. MAXWELL pans his gaze across the other faces.

MAXWELL

Anybody else?

The ballplayers look down.

MAXWELL

Alright. Now let's fucking go to war. I didn't leave them sand hills to come up here to the city an get beat.

The reserve center arrives.

MAXWELL

Conclin. You know what to do on a draw trap delay?

CONKLIN (nervous)
I'm not sure.

MAXWELL
Just set for a pass, then
fire out and get the middle
linebacker. No sweat. Alright
red right draw delay trap, on two.
Got it, Conklin. On two.

CONKLIN'S legs shake as he leans over the ball.
On the snap he ignores the pass set and dives at
the linebacker, mauling him. The broken play
works well. The running back, CRAWFORD makes a
first down on the play.

On another play ELLIOT sneaks down the line and
cracks the unsuspecting linebacker, driving
his head into his knees. He nearly breaks his
own back on the play. But the linebacker goes down
and HUDDLE takes a neat pass over center. ELLIOT'S
head is swimming.

MAXWELL
You alright.

ELLIOT
Wonderful. Just a day at the beach,
hoss.

MAXWELL
Red right. Freeze protection. Wing
out at six yards. You linemen on
the strong side, cut block and get
their hands down. On three...

ELLIOT beats the cornerback, makes the catch, and
is nearly knocked out when the cornerback catches
him in the chest with his headgear. He holds onto
the ball, however.

On another pattern ELLIOT fakes the same defender.

CORNERBACK
You son of a bitch!

ELLIOT catches the pass and scores. He falls in the
endzone and tries to kiss the ground with a smack
but his face mask interferes.

On the bench MAXWELL, ELLIOT and HUDDLE drink water, spit and look intense. The scoreboard reads New York 23. Dallas 21.

MAXWELL
We'll get it.

ELLIOT is wide open. So is HUDDLE. The ball is lofted. Both receivers go for it. HUDDLE makes an extraordinary catch. ELLIOT cuts down the safety man. HUDDLE slants for the endzone. He is hit on the one yard line and falls into the end zone. Unfortunately the tackler hooks his arm and the ball pops out to be recovered by New York on the three.

The final score of the game remains. New York 23. Dallas 21.

SCENE 79

INT - LOCKER ROOM - DAY

The rest of the team has left the locker room. The trainers are moving boxes of equipment out the door. MAXWELL is still in his jock strap cutting the tape from his ankles. The last bit of tape sticks to his fingers and he snaps his hand violently to free it. He is swearing as ELLIOT walks in already dressed.

MAXWELL
Cocksucker...goddamn son of a bitch...
motherfucker...

The tape comes off and hits the floor with a splat.

ELLIOT
Well, congratulations. The way things went today, I'm surprised you hit the floor.

MAXWELL leaps up and flings the tape cutters at ELLIOT with a force that would kill him if he did not duck the flying sheers.

ELLIOT
A that's my boy. Now we better get dressed or we are gonna miss the bus to the airport.

MAXWELL'S eyes are holes full of hurt.

MAXWELL
She whipped me. She whipped me again.

SCENE 80 MAXWELL and ELLIOT are leaving the lockerroom.

MAXWELL
You have a joint.

ELLIOT
Yeah, but...

MAXWELL
Light it up.

ELLIOT
Not here.

MAXWELL
Light it up goddammit.

ELLIOT
Darrell, I had a good day today. I'm gonna be a starter from now on. I don't wanna...

MAXWELL drills ELLIOTT with his field commander eyes. ELLIOT lights the joint. And passes it to MAXWELL as they walk through the tunnel exiting the stadium. Pictures of the greats of Yankee stadium, Gifford, Y.A. Tittle, Mickey Mantle, Joe Dimmaggio etc. glower down at them from the walls of the tunnel. ELLIOT spots PEEWEE at the end of the tunnel.

ELLIOT

Loaks like you got one loyal supporter. Hi, Peewee.

MAXWELL levels his gaze on her and exhales.

MAXWELL

Hi, kid.

PEEWEE

Oh, Darrell... You were beautiful. You were just simply beautiful.

MAXWELL

Humph. I got whipped.

PEEWEE

Oh, but you were so beautiful. Who cares? I told everybody around me you were my lover. And they all just couldn't believe it.

MAXWELL

Yeah, well listen...

PEEWEE

I packed my bag. I'm ready for Texas.

MAXWELL

Yeah, well you ain't going.

PEEWEE

What do you mean, I ain't going. You said...

MAXWELL

Yeah, well you ain't going. O.K.?

PEEWEE (hurt)

O.K.

MAXWELL

O.K.

She is also angry.

MAXWELL

Here.

MAXWELL hands her the joint. She smokes it.

MAXWELL

Well, I'll see ya.

He offers her his hand to shake. She puts the joint out in it.

PEEWEE

O.K. Prick.

MAXWELL turns and walks away leaving her standing there with her suitcase. ELLIOT has already gone on.

SCENE 81

INT - TEAM PLANE - EVENING

The team is on the plane. The plane is in flight. ALAN CLARIDGE, the formerly handsome rookie corner-back is laid out on a reclining seat. His face is sticked and bandaged. He moans low from the pain of his injuries. A stewardess sits by him in attendance. GREG ANDRUS is in his undershort, his ballooning knee packed in ice. WILSON, and several others are trying to play poker further back the plane as DOUGLAS and some others watch. Their disappointment and anger at the lost game makes the game hard to play. Epithets fly. MAXWELL is sleeping next to ELLIOT when MARY JANE, the Stewardess comes by with her apron pockets full of tiny whiskey bottles. She drops them in ELLIOT'S lap.

MARY JANE

How's he doing?

She means MAXWELL.

ELLIOT

Can't kill King KONG with ordinary ol tanks and aeroplanes.

MARY JANE

No but you can hurt his feelings.

She takes the seat behind them and runs her fingers through MAXWELL'S hair.

ELLIOT

You like him don't you?

MARY JANE

I sure do.

ELLIOT

Why?

MARY JANE
He's the way men are supposed to be.

ELLIOT
How about me?

MARY JANE
Well, Phil...you're more the way men
really are. I'll bring you some glasses
and some ice.

She leaves. JOE BOB comes down the aisle. Without
a snarl he touches ELLIOT'S shoulder.

JOE BOB
Nice game ,Phil.

ELLIOT and MAYHAK who is across the aisle are surprised.

MAYHAK
What's with him?

ELLIOT
Dunno. Brain damage, I guess.

SCOOP WALINSKY, the drunken reporter comes by.

SCOOP
Phil. Tell me what happened.

ELLIOT
We lost.

SCOOP
I gather. What happened.

ELLIOT
You miss the game?

SCOOP
I had a few drinks. I missed the game.

ELLIOT
You can get it off the wire in Dallas.

MAYHAK
He played a great game.

SCOOP
You did? What'd you do?

ELLIOT
Played a great game like I told you I
would, you asshole.

SCOOP (to MAYHAK)
Is he kidding?

MAYHAK
No. He did.

SCOOP (fumbling for his sony)
Give me an interview.

ELLIOT
Kiss my ass, Scoop. I'm the team clown,
remember?

SCOOP (meaning DELMA HUDDLE)
I hear the nigger dropped a big pass.

ELLIOT might comment but an explosion from the rear
of the plane where Asst. Coaches JOHNSON and BUDDY
WILKS pause by the poker game distracts him.

DOUGLAS
You bastards. Get the fuck out of here
before I rip your eyes out. Get up in the
front of the plane with all the other
bloodsuckers.

WILKS
Knock it off, Douglas.

DOUGLAS
You sons a bitches. I give my goddamn
blood and you ...look at Claridge up there,
and Andrus...

JOHNSON
Shut up Douglas. Keep your voice down.

DOUGLAS
I keep my fist down your goddamn throat
you mothersuckers. I hate your goddamn
guts. I give my goddamn blood for this
game since I'm ten years old and you
ass suckers, you and B.A. and that
rich flabby motherfucker that thinks
he owns my goddamn body and soul. You mother-
fuckers. You ruin everything. I love this
fucking game. I fucking love it. You hear
me you...you and your goddamn computer and
your...I'd like to kill you. You ruined
my FUCKING GAME...ALL OF YOU...you ad
your motherfucking television deals and
I FUCKING WANNA KILL YOU. You and Howard
fucking Cosell and Conrad Hunter and all
you...

He leaps for BUDDY WILKS. BOB MEADOWS intercepts him.

JOHNSON

Douglas, you're a professional! I'm a professional. You get paid for what you do. I get paid for what I do...

DOUGLAS

Yeah. Professional. Professional motherfuckers that's what you are. That's what we all are. We ain't nothin anymore. Cause it's all fuckin gone to hell with being professionals. What about loving the goddamn game? I WANNA PLAY FOOTBALL. REAL FOOTBALL!

DOUGLAS is weeping.

DOUGLAS

I don't want it all fucking ruined with MONEY! I WANNA PLAY FOOTBALL.

MEADOWS (soft)

You cats better get back up front fore I let this man loose. Cause I agree.

The two assistant coaches shrink toward the front of the plane. The damaged ALAN CLARIDGE moans in his pain. The stewardess touches his arm to console him. ELLIOT takes a long drink of the bourbon that MARY JANE has brought him and puffs on a cigar. He is in a good satisfied mood.

SCENE 82

INT - ELLIOT'S BEDROOM - MONDAY MORNING.

Looking much the way he did when this whole thing started a week ago, ELLIOT lies asleep on his bed, with old scars and new injuries, his breathe whistling through his congested nostrils when the phone rings. JOHNNY, the maid answers it in the hall. And in a moment she peeks in the door.

JOHNNY

Mr. Phil? You awake?

ELLIOT

Hm.

JOHNNY

Well, that was the girl at Mr. B.A...the coach's office. They say he'd like to see you at eleven O'clock this morning.

ELLIOT

About what?

JOHNNY

They didn't say. But Mr. Phil...you surely did play fine yesterday even if we all did lose to them New Yorks. My husband, the reverend, said he didn't hardly mind losing the hundred dollars he lost on the game he was so pleased at the fine way you played.

ELLIOT

Thanks, Johnny.

She disappears and ELLIOT makes an heroic effort to rise from the bed and hobble to the bathroom.

SCENE 83 INT - TEAM OFFICES - LATE MORNING.

ELLIOT knocks and then swings open B.A. office door.

B.A.

Come in, Phil.

B.A. is behind his desk. With him in formidable tableau of front office personnel. CONRAD HUNTER, CLINTON FOOTE (the general Manager), RAY MARCH (team security director) and a man in a rumpled suit, JOE O'MALLEY, whom ELLIOT has never met.

B.A.

Phil, you know, Conrad, and Clinton, of course. And Ray March. This is Mr. O'Malley.

The men all look solemn. Elliot can't resist.

ELLIOT

Where's the body?

CLINTON(warning)

Phil...

B.A. (wasting no time)

Where were you last monday evening?

ELLIOT

What?

B.A.

Were you at a party last monday evening?

ELLIOT

What is this?

CLINTON
Answer the question.

ELLIOT
I don't get it. Was I at a party last...monday?

MARCH (looming)
You better answer, young fella.

ELLIOT
B.A., what the hell do you think I've done now. I mean every damn week you call me in here and we play...

HUNTER
This is hardly play, ELLIOT..

B.A.
Where were you after that party last monday evening, Phil?

ELLIOT
Alright, I'll play your game, B.A. I give up. Where was I?

CLINTON
Goddammit, ELLIOT, your wise-ass attitude won't get you outta this...

ELLIOT looks scared, now.

B.A.
Mr. O'Malley.

O'MALLEY rises and opens a thick folder, with his thick hands. He has a thick voice also.

O'MALLEY
I am Joseph O'Malley. I am a vice officer with the Dallas police force. Off duty I work for Mr. March, here, checking out charges of player's misconduct.

ELLIOT checks the ceiling for flaws or assistance.

O'MALLEY
A couple of weeks back I was hired by Mr. March to take up surveillance of one Phillip Elliot, an employee of the Dallas franchise. I followed the suspect from the time I was contacted by Mr. March until last friday when the suspect boarded a plane allegedly bound for New York.

B.A.
Anything to say, Phil?

ELLIOT
Please, B.A. ~~May~~ call me "the suspect".

CLINTON
Elliot, so help me god...

B.A.
Please continue, Mr. O'Malley.

ELLIOT
Yes, please...

O'MALLEY
On Monday, the suspect arrived at a party at the Sunset View apartments, at approximately four o'clock. At approximately six o'clock, the suspect was observed in the yard of those apartments in the outward appearance of smoking marijuana. The suspect was in the company of a young woman and another adult male caucasian...

ELLIOT
The outward appearance...what the fuck does that mean?

O'MALLEY
The outward appearance means the peculiar physical motions of smoking marijuana cigarette. Cupping the hands, drawing forcefully...

ELLIOT
Yikes.

O'MALLEY
After the suspect left that party I followed him to and from the Dallas-Fort Worth Airport. At the airport he made contact with one Joanne.. Rodney...

CONRAD HUNTER clenches his teeth at the mention of this.

O'MALLEY
The suspect then apparently spent the night at Miss Rodney's apartment. That was monday night. On Tuesday...

HUNTER can't contain himself.

HUNTER
You're through, Elliot. Finished. We have the whole goddamn thing down in black and white. The whole thing. The dope and the adultery...

ELLIOT

Adultery? Conny, you're rushing ahead a little bit. Joanne isn't even married.

CONRAD

We have the goddamn box of marajuanna out of you house! O'Malley saw you at the house of a known dope pusher, what's that guy's name?

O'MALLEY

Harvey Beldon, an alleged professor of...

CONRAD

He's a dope pusher. You're finished, Elliot.

ELLIOT

B.A. what's this all about. I came down here knowing I played a great game yesterday. I thought you were gonna make me a starter.

CLINTON FOOTE laughs.

ELLIOT

Obviously, I was wrong about that. But what the hell do you want? You're after my contract, aren't you? You think my legs are gone. You want my contract.

B.A.

Phil, your contract is worthless. As of eight o'clock this morning you have been suspended from the league by the commissioner.

ELLIOT

For smoking grass and fucking somebody's girl friend?

CONRAD

Not just somebody.

ELLIOT

Not quite somebody. Where is Emmet? Isn't your little brother man enough to be here?

CONRAD

Show him the commissioner's letter.

RAY MARCH hands the letter to Elliot. He doesn't read it.

ELLIOT

B.A., isn't it gonna look pretty bad when I tell the papers that this fat asshole peeping Tom you hired broke into my apartment to get a half an ounce of grass, with no warrent? He was off duty...

HUNTER

Elliot, I promise you . . . that you will go to jail if there are any repercussions on this. If you want to doubt that, I'll make the call right now. You can listen in on the other phone. I have some power in these parts.

ELLIOT is silenced, and scared.

B.A.

The charges are clearly spelled out in the commissioner's letter. If you'll just sign the release that Clinton has prepared for you...

CLINTON shoves a paper at him.

CLINTON

Sign at the X.

ELLIOT doesn't move.

B.A.

Phil, what do you think?

ELLIOT

I think this is a roomful of the sleaziest cocksuckers I've ever seen...and if I didn't include myself in that I'd get up an lock that door and take you apart one by one.

CLINTON

Listen you broken down dime a dozen nobody. This team owns you. Where else do you think you're gonna make a living? You and that nigger punk Richardson and all the other wise-guys like you think you can criticise this team...

ELLIOT

Clinton you better shut up or I'll make an exception for you...

B.A.

Clinton...

CLINTON sits. B.A. rises

B.A.

Phil, I would have liked this to turn out differently. I respect you ability as a football player and I respect you right to live your life as you see fit, but as a representative of this team and of this league you have obligations that go beyond your personal rights...

ELLIOT

Save it B.A. I got nothing against you. You're a great coach. You're not much of a man, but I'm not much of one either. And as for Mr. Dallas here...

He looks at HUNTER.

ELLIOT

Shit. What can I say about a winner like him? You're a saint, Conrad. A real modern day American saint. A winner all the way. Airplane factories, race horses, football teams. You're a champ, Conrad. I hope you fucking boil in hell.

ELLIOT winks and walks out, limping.

CLINTON.

Elliot, you have to sign this release....

ELLIOT

Put it in the mail, asshole.

SCENE 84 Out side the Conrad Hunter Building Elliot zips his windbreaker against the winter wind, that blows his long hair. MAXWELL is sitting at the curb in his blue Cadillac. ELLIOT walks to his car. He looks like a load's been taken off him.

ELLIOT

Hey, Darrell. How you feeling?

MAXWELL

Not bad. How'd it go in there?

ELLIOT

Couldn't a gone better. How'd you hear bout that?

MAXWELL

I don't know. I heard.

MAXWELL looks concerned.

MAXWELL
My name come up in there?

ELLIOT
No they were after one broken down, dime-a-dozen receiver. No need to bring you into it.

MAXWELL
How you feeling?

ELLIOT
Truth? Well, I'm feeling great. I'm outta the fucking race. You always said I wasn't a winner and now I can quit pretending. They did me a favor.

MAXWELL
What are you gonna do?

ELLIOT
I'm gonna go find Charlotte Ann and go to bed for a week. Heal up. Spend a lot of time with her. Ease up.

MAXWELL
Well, listen ,hoss. I appreciate your keeping my name out of it.

ELLIOT
No sweat.

ELLIOT puts his face up into the refreshing wind. Then he has a flash.

ELLIOT
Say, Darrell. How'd you know about that meeting in there?

MAXWELL (worried)
Oh, I just heard it...

ELLIOT (incredulous)
You son of a bitch! You knew about they were gonna get me all along ,didn't you?

MAXWELL
I'll see ya around, hoss.

He starts the car. ELLIOT grabs his sleeve, as he starts to pull away.

ELLIOT

You cocksucker. You coulda told me.

MAXWELL

They had you already, Phil. Conny Hunter found out about you and Joanne. I warned you about her.

ELLIOT

Darrell...

MAXWELL

I needed you for that game.

MAXWELL finds a hole in traffic. He surges into it.

ELLIOT (screaming)

You motherfucker. You knew all about it!

MAXWELL doesn't look back.

SCENE 86 ELLIOT drives across Dallas to Charlotte's house. Country music plays on his tape deck. He smokes a joint, and drinks a beer from the six pack of "Pearl" on the seat.

SCENE 87 ELLIOT pulls up behind BEAUDREAU'S Cadillac which is parked in front of CHARLOTTE Ann's. He swears at the sight of the Cadillac and walks into the house. The front door is slightly ajar. BEAUDREAU is sitting alone on the couch. The two men exchange a glance.

BEAUDREAU

Phil...a...she's in the bedroom.

ELLIOT walks through to the bedroom. He glances in the door and then recoils from the hideous sight. CHARLOTTE ANN is on the bed naked. RICHARDSON is half on the bed and half on the floor also naked. Both have been shot dead.

BEAUDREAU (from the livingroom)

Didn't know she'd been fucking the nigger, did you?

ELLIOT comes back into the livingroom moving like a man on wires. There is a gun on the table in front of BEAUDREAU. A 357 Magnum. An ugly weapon.

BEAUDREAU

She was. I found them in bed.

ELLIOT lunges for the magnum. He rams it into BEAUDREAU'S face with the force of a punch. BEAUDREAU hardly minds. A sound escapes ELLIOT'S throat. He cocks the pistol

and turns his face away to avoid the gore from BEAUDREAU'S about to be splattered head. He pulls the trigger. The gun clicks harmlessly.

BEAUDREAU
It's empty. Big-shot football player.
it's empty.

ELLIOT screams and brings the gun down on BEAUDREAU'S head. The blow would have killed him had it hit him solid. It merely sends him to the floor bleeding. And it brings him from his stupid nonchalance to sudden fear. As ELLIOT clubs him with his fist. The gun has gone flying.

BEAUDREAU
You're crazy. Jesus. You're crazy.
You're gonna kill me.

ELLIOT kicks him savagely. Then grabs a chair and breaks it over him and the edge of the coffee table.

ELLIOT
Get up and fight, you son of a bitch.
Get up you fat fuck so I can kill
you right.

BEAUDREAU is bleeding like a stuck pig. He is whimpering. ELLIOT looks about the room for something more to hit him with. He lunges for the kitchen.

ELLIOT
A knife. I'll cut his guts out.

He grabs a drawer and pulls it from it's tracks. Then another. He rummages for a knife. BEAUDREAU crawls across the livingroom blinded by his own blood

BEAUDREAU
He's crazy. The cunts fucking with niggers
and he wants to kill me. There's dope
all over the room.

BEAUDREAU makes it to the door and crawls outside. ELLIOT finds a drawer full of silverware and cuttlery. He rips it from the wall. The contents fall in a pile on the floor. ELLIOT falls to his knees and his eyes blinded with tears. He weeps and gropes through the utensils feeling for a knife. And then the horror of it all rips through him and he begins to wretch. The tears and the puke pour from his face as he convulses there on his hands and knees on the kitchen floor.

THE END