

OVER THE TOP

screenplay

by

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FINAL DRAFT

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OVER THE TOP

FADE IN:

1 INT. ROADSIDE BAR

1

Dimly lit. The CAMERA SLOWLY DOLLIES IN on an arm wrestling match. There are nearly thirty people, mostly men. The men are all rugged blue-collar types that are loudly CHEERING the combatants on.

A single metal overhead lamp, the type used in old pool halls, casts stark shadows on the two men locked in a strenuous arm wrestling match.

One man is named LINCOLN HAWKS, a well-built truck driver with chiseled features. He has a slight beard, and his hair looks very disheveled. His clothes are very well-worn. The other is DEM, a burly, bearded, 230 pound farm-type. *

The onlookers clutch money in their hands and passionately CHEER their local farmboy hero on. Linc jockeys back and forth for the proper position, relying more on technique than strength to compete with his physically superior foe.

The farmer's veins bulge in his neck as he goes for the kill; Linc counters by dropping down and curling his wrist towards his chest. Linc now applies all his strength and expertise and slams the other man's hand down.

All present emit a collective moan, and Linc rises to collect his bets.

DEM

One more time.

LINC

(collecting)

Can't. I got places to go.

DEM

Next time I'll get ya.

LINC

Probably will, big man.

2 EXT. BAR - NIGHT

2

Linc exits the rundown building and climbs into a fantastic Volvo-White tractor-trailer truck.

3 INT. BAR 3
McBROOM, a normal looking fellow with thinning hair, glances at Linc through the window... Two men are seen in the darkness moving suspiciously away from Linc's truck.

4 EXT. BAR - TRUCK - NIGHT 4
Linc FIRES UP the powerful diesel and starts to pull out.

5 INT. BAR - NIGHT 5
McBroom angles past several patrons and goes to a pay phone.

6 EXT. WINDING ROAD - NIGHT 6
Linc is driving his trailer-less rig along a lonely stretch of declining road...

7 LINC 7
shifts gears to slow the rig down.

8 EXT. ROADWAY - NIGHT 8
The winding road gets steeper.

9 INT. TRUCK - NIGHT 9
Linc presses down on the brakes and the truck fails to respond...

10 CLOSEUP - LINC'S FOOT 10

11 CLOSEUP - TRUCK'S TIRES 11
speeding along.

12 EXT. TRUCK - NIGHT 12
The truck gets dangerously close to the edge.

13 LINC 13
He tries to down-shift.

14 EXT. ROADWAY - NIGHT 14
Suddenly a huge dark tractor-trailer comes barreling
INTO VIEW... It gains steadily on Linc.

15 CLOSEUP - THE ATTACKING TRUCK 15
comes right up behind Linc and taps the rear of his
truck.

16 INT. LINC'S TRUCK - LINC 16
stares in the mirror, his face flushed with danger...
The high beams of the attacking truck blast with
searing light into Linc's cab...
Linc swings closer to the inside of the highway to
let the attacking truck pass.

17 EXT. ATTACKING TRUCK - NIGHT 17
The truck resembles a shark as it stays on Linc's
tail, trying to force him off the road.

18 EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT 18
Both trucks swerve back and forth, dangerously close
to the edge.

19 LINC 19
sees an emergency truck pull-off just up ahead.

20 ATTACKING TRUCK 20
is gaining momentum for one big, final push that will
plunge Linc over the side... The attacker makes his
move. At the last second Linc whips his truck into
the emergency exit ramp, and the attacking truck ROARS
by with terrifying vengeance.

21 EXT. LINC'S TRUCK 21

does a half power slide as it GRINDS to a stop.

22 POV - THROUGH LINC'S DUSTY WINDSHIELD - THE ATTACKING TRUCK 22

pulling rapidly out of sight.

23 LINC 23

his face flushed of color, reflects on the moment, his eyes revealing nothing.

24 EXT. MILITARY INSTITUTE - FULL SHOT - THE PARADE GROUNDS - DAY 24

FROM HIGH ANGLE we see the entire military corps of students, both upper and lower schools, assembled, company by company, at full attention, facing the small, elite cordon of student commanding officers.

All the cadets are assembled in full-dress uniform, the teaching staff on the reviewing stand also in military attire, the regular Friday afternoon parade just having been completed.

Off to one side in a bleachers section a scattering of parents who've come to pick up their children for the weekend.

The shouted command "DISMISSED" rings across the grounds. The ranks break, some of the cadets hurrying directly toward their waiting parents, others streaming off toward their dormitories.

25 CLOSER ANGLE - THE PARADE GROUNDS - ONE COMPANY OF YOUNGER CADETS 25

These boys are seventh graders -- all about the same age -- twelve. Among them we MOVE IN and TRACK one in particular -- a handsome, but overly serious-faced boy who seems to set himself apart from the others. Everything about him radiates "loner."

26 EXT. OUTSIDE THE MILITARY SCHOOL GATES - DAY 26

Linc's truck pulls into view. He pulls to a stop just before the school's entrance gate.

27 INT. TRUCK - DAY

Linc gets out of the driver's seat.

28 CLOSEUP - SINK

being filled.

29 CLOSEUP - LINC

shaving his beard off.

30 CLOSEUP - LINC

combing his hair.

31 CLOSEUP - LINC

splashing on cologne.

32 CLOSEUP - LINC

inspecting his clean-shaven face.

33 EXT. ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

ANGLED PAST the sign: "Crest Military Institute" TOWARD the imposing colonial building. We see this THROUGH the windscreen of Linc's cab as he guides the truck through the parent traffic of Mercedes and BMW sedans all bearing their loads of children away for the weekend.

34 ANOTHER ANGLE - THE TRUCK

glides expertly into a space vacated by departing cars. Linc kills the power, sets the brakes.

35 ANOTHER ANGLE - LINC

steps down from the cab, comes around the front of the truck and onto the sidewalk. He stops there, looks off at the grounds and at the cadets with their parents. Linc is carrying an 8 x 10 envelope.

36 HIS POV - ONE FAMILY

A boy hurries in with an overnight bag. He runs to his waiting parents. Hugs and kisses.

watching, isolated.

SMASH TO:

38 INT. OFFICE OF COLONEL DAVIS, COMMANDING OFFICER,
CREST MILITARY INSTITUTE - FAVORING LINC

38

standing -- in some suspense -- in front of the Colonel's desk as the Colonel is concluding a telephone conversation. COLONEL DAVIS is a dedicated officer-teacher, bald, square-shouldered, and in his fifties.

DAVIS

(into phone)

I understand fully, thank you.
I'll handle it. Don't worry.

(hangs up; looks
over at Linc)

She confirmed everything you
told me.

(flipping
intercom lever)

Have the O.D. bring Cadet
Michael Cutler to my office.

SMASH TO:

39 EXT. DORMITORY - MICHAEL

39

comes out, moves along the walk toward a limousine waiting at the end of the walk. A uniformed DRIVER trots toward the boy.

DRIVER

'Afternoon, sir.

Michael nods at the man. The Driver reaches for the boy's bag and Michael surrenders it to him as though used to such personal services from adults.

Without further attempt at conversation, the Driver hurries ahead to open the limo door for the boy.

An UPPERCLASSMAN wearing an armband labeled "OFFICER OF THE DAY" runs toward Michael from the direction of the administration building.

O.D.

(shouting)

Cutler!

waiting, waiting, trying to appear cool, but in fact torn by emotions and deep feelings he is trying to conceal. So much is at stake -- so very much -- everything he's worked for and dreamed about for the last ten years.

It's all on Linc's face as he watches the door open and sees this 12-year-old boy -- Michael Cutler -- enter.

The boy scarcely glances at the truck driver with his work clothes, assuming simply that he's a laborer who happens to be in the Colonel's office at the moment.

Michael's attention is devoted fully to the Colonel, whom he salutes.

MICHAEL

(standing stiffly
at attention)

The Colonel wishes to see me,
sir?

The drama of this moment is certainly not lost upon Colonel Davis.

DAVIS

Your father wishes to, Cadet.

Michael replies as though the word "father" is not only unknown to him, but also distasteful.

MICHAEL

My father?

DAVIS

He's come to drive you home.

41 CLOSE ON LINC

41

LINC

Hello, Mike.

42 CLOSE ON MICHAEL

42

The boy turns slowly, with total shock and disbelief, toward Linc.

43 CLOSE ON LINC

43

His eyes show love for the boy -- they also show his need.

44 FAVORING MICHAEL

44

MICHAEL

I don't have a father.

The words are said without cruelty -- simply a statement of the boy's belief system.

45 FAVORING LINC

45

still trying to keep his smile active.

DAVIS

This is your father, Michael.

Michael considers Linc without expression or emotion.

46 FAVORING MICHAEL

46

MICHAEL

Sir, my grandfather has instructed me that I'm not to be taken from this school by anyone other than himself or my mother.

DAVIS

(somewhat sharply)

Your mother has legal custody over you, Cutler, not your grandfather. And it is her request that your father bring you home -- not your grandfather.

MICHAEL

Sir, may I ask a question?

DAVIS

Of course.

Staunchly, Michael turns to face this stranger-father.

MICHAEL

May I see some identification, please?

(CONTINUED)

DAVIS
That's not called for --

LINC
(shyly)
... It's all right. I'm ready.

47 EXT. CREST MILITARY INSTITUTE - FULL SHOT - LINC'S TRUCK 47

parked out front in all its splendor.

MICHAEL
We're going in that?

LINC
Your mother figured it would be a chance for us to get to know each other.

MICHAEL
How long will it take?

LINC
I've got one more pickup -- say two days, at the most. We'll be in Virginia by Monday the latest. She doesn't go into surgery 'til Wednesday morning.

MICHAEL
Do you think you can make up ten years in a few days?

Linc climbs up into the cab with Michael's bag.

LINC
... No, not really.

48 INT. THE CAB AND SLEEPER AREA BEHIND THE CAB - LINC AND MICHAEL 48

Linc stows Michael's bag and in the process we are treated to a good look at this spacious area of the Volvo-White Integral Sleeper.

On the bulkhead, an array of photographs -- all of Michael, snapshots showing his growth from infancy to his present age.

running through the pre-heat ritual before the big turbo unit hums into life. During this:

LINC

Let me tell you what all this stuff is. This is an air-suspended cab with a double bunk right behind these fully adjustable seats... There's a skylight, a small shower, and even a small gym in the back. You want to see?

MICHAEL

Sir, do you sell them, or drive them?

LINC

... Drive them, why?

MICHAEL

... Well...

LINC

So much for the small talk...

Linc pushes it in gear and the truck slowly DISSOLVES as it pulls away.

DISSOLVE TO:

50 EXT. MILITARY SCHOOL - LONG SHOT - DAY

50

A limo is seen pulling up in front of the school. JASON CUTLER, Michael's grandfather, gets out -- followed by two other men, one being quite tall -- still in a LONG SHOT. They all enter the columned building. We don't see the men quite clearly yet.

51 INT. COLONEL DAVIS' OFFICE - DAY

51

Jason Cutler is still strong looking at 55. At the moment he appears ready to rip the world apart with his bare hands as he confronts Colonel Davis. Standing beside him is the pair of men, one being his secretary and the other being a man named RUKER, a towering 30-year-old karate-trained bodyguard.

JASON

I called you yesterday, Colonel...
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JASON (CONT'D)

... made a special point of saying that if the sonofabitch showed up here, you were under no circumstances to allow him to see or speak to Michael!

DAVIS

I spoke to the boy's mother. She insisted that Michael leave with his father.

JASON

Damn it, she's in no condition to make that kind of decision! She's dying! I didn't fly up here to hear that you turned my grandson over to that worthless bastard. I cannot tolerate stupidity, Davis, so when I'm through talking about this to the Board of Trustees, you can consider yourself finished here.

Jason turns and exits the room, followed by Ruker and his secretary, TIM.

SMASH TO:

52 EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

52

Linc's truck is barreling along. OVER we hear a TAPE blasting from inside Linc's cab.

53 INT. THE CAB - LINC AND MICHAEL

53

MICHAEL

Sir, I'd like to ask you something.

LINC

Wait -- We have to do something about that.

MICHAEL

About what, sir?

LINC

About -- sir -- You don't have to call me 'sir.'

(CONTINUED)

MICHAEL

I don't?

LINC

'Course not. I mean, if it's hard to call me Dad, call me Linc in the meantime, but not 'sir.' Makes this too business-like.

MICHAEL

Fine. Could you turn off the music, adult?

LINC

(surprised)

Adult?

MICHAEL

If you don't like it, I'll go back to 'sir.'

LINC

Do that -- How can anybody not like music?

MICHAEL

Would you turn it off, please?

Linc, trying not to be offended, pushes the reject button... They go into silence for a moment.

LINC

So what sports are you playing?

MICHAEL

... None.

LINC

Nothing?

MICHAEL

I don't think competition is healthy.

LINC

Competition is what life's all about.

MICHAEL

Maybe your life, sir.

(CONTINUED)

LINC

So I guess you wouldn't know
much about arm wrestling?

MICHAEL

Not much at all.

LINC

Would you like to learn something
about it?

MICHAEL

... No.

LINC

That's nice -- I like a kid
with an open mind -- You'd like
it.

MICHAEL

Not a chance.

LINC

You would. With a few techniques
you could beat almost anybody
your weight... unless you went
against some freak of nature.

MICHAEL

Not interested.

LINC

Then what do you like to do?

MICHAEL

Probably nothing you'd have
any interest in.

LINC

Try me.

MICHAEL

-- Accelerated geometry --
introductory physics and
computer language... By the
way, I've always gotten perfect
test scores.

LINC

Congratulations! But to me
there's two kinds of smarts --
book smart and street smarts.

(CONTINUED)

MICHAEL

So what's that mean?

LINC

It means someday you're gonna have to step away from those books and try to pass the hardest test of all.

MICHAEL

... What test?

LINC

... I'll let you know when it's time.

54 FAVORING MICHAEL

54

MICHAEL

(abruptly)

Could you stop, I'm feeling very sick -- please --

Linc hits the air.

55 EXT. THE HIGHWAY - THE RIG

55

slows, rolls to a stop.

56 INT. THE CAB - MICHAEL AND LINC

56

LINC

Let me help you down.

Linc jumps out to go around and help the boy climb down. But Michael has moved like lightning in the interim, thrown his door open, slid down and is now darting out into the highway.

LINC

(continuing)

Mike!

57 EXT. THE HIGHWAY - ONCOMING TRAFFIC

57

speeding toward the boy. Michael runs directly and heedlessly into the path of the approaching cars.

looking out, horrified, at the boy streaking into the highway toward the onrushing cars.

Linc sprints with a burst of maddened energy toward his son.

59 ANOTHER ANGLE - THE LEADING CAR

59

The driver spots the man and boy running in front of him. He slams on his BRAKES, starts to SKID. Behind him a close-following car also BRAKES, also begins to SKID. Both cars wheel wildly across the road toward Linc and the boy.

60 ANOTHER ANGLE - LINC

60

scoops up the boy with one powerful arm just as the nearest car slashes by, missing man and child by mere inches.

Linc rolls to safety onto the shoulder of the road, Michael in his arms.

61 CLOSER ANGLE - LINC AND MICHAEL

61

Linc's breath is coming in tatters so great, so abrupt has been the shock and the physical demand of saving the boy.

Michael simply lies in his father's arms and weeps with angry frustration.

LINC

What the hell are you trying to do!?

The boy sharply turns unforgiving eyes on his father.

MICHAEL

Get off me!

LINC

What's the matter?

MICHAEL

I hate you!

LINC

You hate me?

(CONTINUED)

MICHAEL

That's right!

It's like a shot between the eyes for Linc. But he takes it gamely.

LINC

... Oh, I thought it was something serious... C'mon, let's go.

Linc gets up, pulling Michael to his feet and maintaining a firm grip on the boy's hand.

SMASH TO:

62 EXT. THE HIGHWAY - SERIES OF AIR-TO-GROUND SHOTS (FROM HELICOPTER CAMERA MOUNT) - LINC'S TRUCK - LATE AFTERNOON

62

flashing swiftly, magnificently along a highway.

We see it FROM ABOVE, FROM HEAD-ON, then ROLLING TOWARD US, then up one rise, down another -- a lyrical flow of mechanical power through spectacular countryside -- America at its most beautiful. Then CAMERA gives us ANGLES on the gleaming chrome bumpers ... the powerful hood... until finally we MOVE IN on the symbol of the hawk painted on Linc's door.

CAMERA LIFTS to HOLD on Linc's profile as he drives.

63 INT. THE CAB - LINC AND MICHAEL

63

Linc glances over at the uncommunicative boy sitting stiffly in his full uniform with its chin-high, stiff collar with the Institute's insignia of crossed cannon on either side.

Michael is staring morosely out his side window.

LINC

Are you comfortable, Mike?
That collar must be tight.

MICHAEL

I'm fine, thank you, sir.

LINC

Nice country, isn't it...
If you're getting hungry --

(CONTINUED)

The boy continues to stare bleakly out the window.

LINC

(continuing)

We'll be rolling across into
a great little stop for beef
-- just before the state-line.

MICHAEL

I don't eat red meat.

Linc appears shocked.

LINC

Don't eat red meat? Y'know,
every now and then it's not so
bad.

The boy forces himself to look over.

MICHAEL

Sir, you're a victim of
cholesterol poisoning. Later
in life you'll start to rot
away.

LINC

You're just full of good humor,
aren't you?

SMASH TO:

EXT. MARTHA'S TRUCKER STOP - FULL SHOT - LATE
AFTERNOON

Martha's is one of those classic diners for truckers
only. Like a round-up of buffalo that once roiled
across the American midland plains, now a hundred
long-haul trucks are lined up in massive echelons
off the highway, their drivers taking their meal
breaks in Martha's famed eatery.

The diesel pumps are fully occupied topping off tanks
in the Freightliners, the GMC Astros, the Kenworth
W-900's, the Ford LTL-9000's, Mack's Cruise-Liners,
International Eagle Brougham Conventionals, and the
tough Diamond Reo giants with their Cummins 400 HP
diesels.

Linc's rig turns in off the roadway, rolls TOWARD
CAMERA.

From the high cab, Linc can look out at all the milling activity. His face tells us he feels at home here --

LINC

You'll like these men.

(looks at Michael)

Then again, maybe you won't.

Truckers already out of their rigs wave to him as they recognize him. We catch, now, the first signals that the other men already bear Linc some kind of deep respect.

toward the diner. We get the feeling that Linc would like to take the boy's hand, walk with his son, hand-in-hand, into the diner... Michael is ramrod straight.

LINC

Do you still have the hanger
in that coat, boy?

MICHAEL

What's that supposed to mean?

LINC

You look a little unnaturally
stiff -- Once knew a guy who
was always standin' stiff
like you.

MICHAEL

So?

LINC

So he snapped.

We're right into the center of one of the last outposts of real middle American machismo. Fifty rugged, beefy, independent souls who take no shit from anybody are all gathered together in one NOISY, beer-swilling, hair-down convention hall broken up into booths and tables and a long bar packed with drinkers only.

(CONTINUED)

We see Linc enter with the boy at the far end -- past a sea of rolled sleeves and bulging biceps and trunk-like necks -- a lot of the truckers concentrating on the new arrival. Linc blends with the crowd and moves to an empty booth.

68 ANGLE AT COUNTER

68

SMASHER, a huge wrestler type, sits at the counter watching Linc's entrance. Smasher is with a crowd of ten supporters. Beside him is his manager, LANDIS.

LANDIS

I told you -- he's nothin'.
Half your size. Hell, you'll
tear his arm off.

69 ANOTHER PART OF THE DINING ROOM - ANGLE ON A GIANT OF A MAN

69

He sits on the bench along one entire side of a table and watches Linc with more than passing interest. This is BOB "BULL" HURLEY, a mountain of a man. His body flares out in all directions from a point just below his ears. Bull stares across at Linc and his son.

70 AT LINC'S TABLE

70

Linc's buddy -- BEN "THE DAM" SCHMIT -- another independent trucker. Ben is thick-bodied and powerful. He radiates sullen power, but his eyes remain soft.

SCHMIT

Hey there, Hawk.

LINC

Hey, Benny.

SCHMIT

This your kid?

LINC

That's right -- Mike, this is Benny.

SCHMIT

Hey, Mike -- nice outfit --
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SCHMIT (CONT'D)

Linc, there's a live one for you today! He heard you were comin' through, so he and his buddy hung around since yesterday. The man's hungry.

LINC

You seen him go?

SCHMIT

Only his mouth. But he's big... Then again --

SCHMIT/LINC

Why worry?

Benny moves away. MARTHA comes in. She's not what you'd expect in a place like this. Martha is a simple woman who never, never uses nasty words like "fuck." The truckers would kill for her.

MARTHA

So this is your kid -- Hi, kid.

LINC

Michael, this is the famous Martha.

MICHAEL

(courteously)

How do you do, ma'am?

MARTHA

I like that -- So how is it seeing your father again?

Out of courtesy for women bred into him:

MICHAEL

It's been a great surprise, ma'am.

Linc looks relieved -- and grateful.

MARTHA

Well, you two have a lot to catch up on -- so I'll leave you. Couple of big steaks, Linc?

(CONTINUED)

LINC

Just for me. Mike feels like chicken tonight.

MARTHA

Fried bird -- sure.

MICHAEL

Excuse me, but for a man who exercises, you don't know much about nutrition.

LINC

Really.

MICHAEL

A fried chicken dinner with mashed potatoes and gravy is about 1000 calories and fifty percent fat. These fats have been linked to heart disease and some cancer.

Martha stares at the boy; Linc barely smiles.

MARTHA

... Interesting boy, Linc. So what would you like?

MICHAEL

Tuna salad, whole wheat toast and spring water with lemon.

LINC

... Ah, double that.

Martha moves away. Ben leads a monster of a man to the table -- The Smasher, about six-two, two-hundred-and-twenty pounds, most of it in his chest, shoulders and arms. He looms over the booth like a redwood tree. Landis stands beside him. Behind them are Smasher's ten rowdy friends, who rarely ever seem to stop their supportive comments to Smasher, constantly keeping the big man psyched up.

SMASHER

You Hawk?

LINC

(amicably)

Yeh.

(CONTINUED)

SMASHER

I'm the Smasher.

Smasher's friends exhort comments like "Tear him up," "You're the best," "Drive, Smasher, drive," etc.

LINC

Aaa, nice name -- Don't you think, Mike?

Michael is taken aback by the man's hostile presence.

SMASHER

You gettin' wise?

LINC

What can I do for you?

SMASHER

All I been hearin' lately on the road is Hawk is the man to beat.

LINC

Don't believe everything you hear.

SMASHER

... I don't -- I don't believe anything.

Smasher grins, looks around at the crowd. Other truckers have already formed up around Linc's booth, and money is already changing hands.

LANDIS

He don't look like much. Maybe he better borrow some more arm.

This really stimulates the bettors. Linc looks at Ben.

SMASHER

I'm layin' three thou on the table.

71 ANGLE ON MICHAEL

71

sitting alongside the cool Linc. Michael is totally confused by what's happening around him, by this rough world of which he has neither knowledge nor experience.

(CONTINUED)

He watches bills passing from hand to hand and it seems that by now every trucker in the place is crowded around to get a final look at Linc and the monster standing over him at the booth.

MICHAEL

What's he going to do?

LINC

Prove himself.

MICHAEL

What do you mean?

LINC

(quietly)

... I can't talk just now, Mike.

Linc begins to sink into deep concentration.

72 MOVING SHOT - WITH BULL

72

He pushes his way (no great problem) through some of the toughest manpower on earth until he has selected the vantage point which seems to offer him the best observation spot -- not too close to Linc, but close enough to be able to watch Linc without Linc seeing him.

73 FAVORING BEN

73

gathering in the bets. The crowd is giving its predictions to one another.

SCHMIT

(to the assembly)

Last chance to get your money down. One touch only.

The bets are all laid. The crowd pushes in closer, expectantly.

74 FAVORING THE SMASHER

74

pacing above Linc. He starts to work himself into a frenzy. This is not comical theatrics, but true case of a form of violent self-hypnosis. Smasher's crowd gets him more and more charged up until Smasher's volcanic presence would unnerve even the strongest of heart.

(CONTINUED)

He smashes his fist on the counter hard enough to make the plates jump into the air.

MARTHA

... Enough of that!!

Michael discovers that his father has suddenly become something else. Linc appears to have gone into a private world of pure crystalline concentration. His eyes seem to be searching other cosmoses.

MICHAEL

It's ridiculous. The other man is huge.

SCHMIT

It's not the size, kid, it's the psyche. Watch your ol' man.

The Smasher jams himself into the seat across from Linc. His reddened sweaty expression stares hard into the black, mysterious pools that Linc's eyes have become.

Smasher's jaws clench uncontrollably as he places his elbow and lifts his hand, as Linc has.

Ben is acting as judge.

Now Michael sees his father's hand and Smasher's joined.

The Smasher's hand is so huge it completely envelopes and enwraps Linc's.

For a moment the two contestants seem to be jockeying with each other for position, but Smasher is already using strength, whereas Linc appears relaxed, almost passive.

SMASHER

(to Linc)

You ain't got it.

(low but confidently)

He ain't got it --

(CONTINUED)

Ben corrects Smasher's wrist to make sure it's properly aligned. Smasher's crowd is really getting Smasher crazed.

SCHMIT

Even them up -- c'mon, boys.

SMASHER'S FRIENDS

Gonna put him through the table.
Ain't nothin' gonna be left but
a broken arm!

LANDIS

Break it, man, break it!

SCHMIT

Ready!

Ben makes a last adjustment; a three-second interval; then:

SCHMIT

(continuing)

Go!

Something awesome happens. Linc explodes into a force. His entire body becomes one gigantic locked spring, one overpowering turning, whirling torque, like a transmission turning unstoppably. His arm is simply a steel beam, the unflexing extension of his body's torque. Inexorably, he forces the Smasher's monstrous arm and resisting body closer, closer to the table.

77 ANGLE ON THE CROWD

77

SHOUTING and CHEERING for each man -- depending on where their bets have been laid... Michael is shocked by the intensity of it all.

78 FAVORING BULL

78

Mountainous as he is, his eyes are shrewd and calculating. He watches every move Linc is making... Martha stops serving and cheers Linc on.

79 LINC AND THE SMASHER

79

SCHMIT

Over the top!!!

(CONTINUED)

It is as though a burst of lightning now drives through Linc and re-energizes him. He slams Smasher's arm down onto the table so hard the wood nearly cracks. The Smasher collapses for a moment, then angrily rises and shoves his way out of the diner.

Ben gets busy collecting.

80 ANOTHER ANGLE - BULL HURLEY

80

Bull considers what he's just seen. He looks very thoughtful.

81 LINC AND MICHAEL

81

By now Linc comes out of his self-hyped-up state of mind. He grins at the astonished boy.

MICHAEL

What was that all about?

LINC

What do you mean?

MICHAEL

Is this what you do for fun?

But before Linc can tell him, Ben, with fistfulls of money, comes over and shoves the wad toward Linc, who pockets it without bothering to count it.

Martha appears.

SCHMIT

Good show -- great timing on that last move. You know who that guy was? Supposed to be the best in Canada. And look who's leaving?...

Linc looks out and sees "Bull" Hurley leaving and getting into a fancy pickup truck.

LINC

Is that Hurley?

SCHMIT

Yeah, he's on his way to Vegas for the competition. Must've stopped here to check you out. Large model, ain't he?

(CONTINUED)

LINC

Yeah -- He takes up space.

SCHMIT

Catch ya in Vegas. Call if ya need anything.

(to Michael)

Good-looking boy -- must've been an accident.

Ben smiles and moves on and Linc turns to his son.

LINC

Let's eat, then call your mother.

MICHAEL

You're a hustler. You hustled that man for money.

LINC

I competed against that man for money. There's a difference, boy.

MICHAEL

I don't think so.

LINC

I don't need you to judge me, I'll do that job myself, okay -- Now let's eat our healthy meal.

82 EXT. PHONE BOOTH

82

Linc and Michael are outside in the parking lot. Trucks NOISILY pass by in the rear. Linc is outside the booth.

MICHAEL

... I know you want me to do it. But I don't even know him.

CUT TO:

83 CHRISTINA

83

is in an intensive care unit set up at her lavish home ... She was once a lovely woman, but now is drained by illness.

(CONTINUED)

CHRISTINA

(into phone)

... I want you to try, Michael.
It's important to me.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

Why? I thought everything was
fine.

CHRISTINA

... Michael, there's more to
life than what you've seen.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

But he left you --

CHRISTINA

He had his reasons --

(weakly)

Darling, I have to go now --
I love you.

84 EXT. PHONE BOOTH

84

Michael steps outside and hands his father the phone...
Linc steps inside and takes the phone. He looks at
Michael and slowly closes the door.

LINC

Excuse me.

Linc smiles as he talks into the phone. Michael ap-
pears frustrated.

CUT TO:

85 EXT. LINC'S TRUCK - DAY

85

Linc's mammoth machine is backing into a 50-foot
trailer.

86 EXTREME CLOSEUP - THE TRAILER AND TRACTOR

86

being locked securely together.

87 INT. TRUCK - DAY

87

Michael and Linc sit in competitive silence.

(CONTINUED)

Michael turns off the music. Linc calmly turns it back ON... Michael, after a moment, turns it back off.

LINC

... We're wearing the knob out.

MICHAEL

Can I ask you a question?

(off Linc's nod)

Are you still dealing drugs, sir?

Shocked, Linc looks over at the intense boy.

MICHAEL

(continuing)

Are you?

LINC

Think this up all by yourself, Mike?

MICHAEL

My grandfather gave me the facts.

LINC

And what are the facts?

MICHAEL

He said when you met my mother you didn't have a nickel to your name.

LINC

Maybe less -- What else?

MICHAEL

That you didn't really go off to fight in any war, that was just the excuse you used to leave. All the years you were away in Asia, you were making money bringing in drugs from the Golden Triangle -- that's why you've come back and bought this truck -- for your drug business -- That's the truth, isn't it?

Linc looks over at the boy. Linc's eyes are deep pools of hurt.

88 LINC'S POV - MICHAEL 33
studying him without forgiveness.

89 LINC 89
reacts the only way he knows how at this moment -- physically. Up ahead he sees a turn-off he recognizes. He swings the big wheel with all his strength.

90 EXT. THE HIGHWAY - THE TRUCK 90
loops off and onto the side road with blistering speed -- onto a narrow dirt road leading into woodland, branches of trees whipping behind as the tractor and trailer push through.

SMASH CUT TO:

91 EXT. A BROAD, SWIFTLY-FLOWING RIVER - DAY 91
CAMERA IS SHOOTING ACROSS the river TOWARD Linc's onrushing truck.

92 INT. THE CAB - MICHAEL 92
looks anxiously from his father's taut profile to the sight of the river looming up dead ahead at the end of the country road.

93 EXT. THE RIVER BANK - ANGLE UP - AT THE TRUCK 93
as Linc hits the air. The trailer and tractor shudder to a stop just feet from the river bank. CAMERA HOLDS on this UP ANGLE -- the powerful tractor on the bank above the swirling water.

MICHAEL

No!!!!

Linc chops the diesel silent. Now nothing but the swirling power of the RIVER is heard.

94 INT. THE CAB - LINC AND MICHAEL 94
Linc sits there without a word and stares out the windshield at the tumbling white water.

(CONTINUED)

Michael tears his eyes from the rapids and looks over at his father.

LINC

You can stop squeezin' the dashboard now.

Linc climbs out of the cab. He calls up to Michael still sitting in the cab.

LINC

(continuing)

You know how to swim?

95 INT. THE CAB

95

Michael in f.g., Linc in b.g. outside.

MICHAEL

I swim in pools, sir. Not in dirty rivers.

96 EXT. THE CAB - LINC

96

stares out at the beautiful sight.

LINC

That's right. You've very into health -- Anyway, we're going to be camping here tonight.

Michael opens the door on his side, climbs down, crosses toward his father with a look of incredulity on his face.

MICHAEL

Camping -- all night?

LINC

All night! They don't have room service, but the view is great.

Linc gestures around this truly beautiful woodland spot.

97 ANGLE ON MICHAEL

97

staring out at his father as he walks away.

DISSOLVE TO:

98 EXT. WOODLAND SPOT - LINC

98

is tending the fire and cooking hamburger patties on the grill... He looks down at Michael some fifty yards away.

99 MICHAEL

99

The boy moves to the edge of the river. He sits down on a rock, removes his black dress shoes and socks, rolls up his trouser cuffs until his legs are bare to mid-shins, then he lowers them into the water; lets the river slosh over them.

He has to admit to himself, it feels good. He stands up in the swirling water at the bank, takes a careful step toward the top of a big, flat rock somewhat further out into the stream. He gets one foot on the rock, balances, then as he brings his shoreward foot toward the rock, his balanced foot slips on the wet moss. Michael goes sprawling into the deeper water beyond the rock.

Instantly, the river grabs at him, tumbling him downstream. He's already thrashing and swallowing water as he's pulled into deeper, fiercer water.

MICHAEL

(a desperate scream)

Dad! -- Help!

100 ANGLE ON LINC

100

He reacts to the calling of his son.

101 LINC'S POV - THE BOY'S ARMS

101

flailing in the foam.

102 LINC

102

dives in, going with the sweep of the river now, racing furiously, his strokes almost super-human as he speeds toward the boy.

103 SERIES OF SHOTS - THE ACTION IN THE RIVER

103

Some feet ahead of Linc, Michael is driven against a huge boulder by the river, swirled around it and down into the white water that sluices furiously at its base.

(CONTINUED)

The boy is tumbled headlong through the turbulence.

LINC

(shouting)

Keep your head up.

Linc forges with his full force toward the boy, reaches for him, but misses his hand. Instead, he catches the boy's wet uniform sleeve. He tugs to pull the boy to him; but Linc is whirled around a boulder to one side, the boy to the other. Michael's sleeve comes off in Linc's hand.

Now Linc comes up ahead of the boy, further downriver than Michael. Linc is swept toward a tree branch wedged between boulders. As he's being whirled by the branch, he tears it free with one violent spasm of strength. Now, with the branch, Linc tries again to get close to the tumbling boy. He succeeds and thrusts out the branch to Michael.

LINC

(continuing;
shouting)

Try to grab it!

Just as he's caught in a swirling whirlpool, Michael manages to grasp the branch with both hands.

Now Linc fights his way toward the shore, swimming with one arm, holding onto the branch -- and his son -- with the other. Hurling this way and that, he does not let go. He manages at last to find a footing in a side eddy and to pull Michael in toward him.

104 EXT. RIVER BANK

104

Linc hauls the boy onto the bank. Michael is coughing and puking. Linc holds the boy in his arms as Michael throws up the water he's swallowed.

Finally, though still gasping, Michael lies trembling in his father's arms.

105 CLOSER ANGLE - THE TWO

105

Tenderly, Linc pushes the boy's wet hair out of his eyes and back over his forehead. Linc cradles the boy's head into his powerful shoulder.

(CONTINUED)

MICHAEL
... I'm okay. I'm okay.

LINC
You're gonna be all right...
you're gonna be fine.

106 EXT. HOSPITAL - HIGH ANGLE LONG SHOT - ESTABLISHING 106
- NIGHT

Lights ablaze from the luxurious central structure.

107 CLOSE ON JASON'S LIMO 107
as it pulls up to the front and Mr. Cutler, Ruker and
Tim exit.

108 INT. THE HOSPITAL - MOVING WITH JASON CUTLER 108

He exits an elevator and finds himself in the intensive
care unit. A DOCTOR and a NURSE are waiting for him.
Both look concerned.

JASON
How is she?

DOCTOR
She's been asking for you, Mr.
Cutler.

JASON
Once again -- How is she?

DOCTOR
No change, I'm afraid.

Jason brushes past the two, moves down the hallway
of the intensive care unit.

109 INT. PRIVATE ROOM 109

The room has been jammed with every sophisticated piece
of life-saving equipment.

110 CLOSER ANGLE - CHRISTINA 110

She is wasted, pale, almost ghost-like, yet still love-
ly, a wraith with little will to live.

(CONTINUED)

Jason comes in, settles beside her on the bed.

JASON
How are you, honey?

CHRISTINA
... Are you mad at me?

JASON
Have I ever been mad at you?

CHRISTINA
Tell me the truth.

JASON
No, I'm not mad, I'm a little disappointed.

CHRISTINA
I just wanted him to know his father.

JASON
That man is no good, darling.
And you trying to bring him
back into this family is
wrong.

CHRISTINA
(a careful beat)
I've been seeing Linc.

111 CLOSE ON JASON

111

This hits him in his heart. He stares back at her with terrible eyes.

JASON
(finally)
Seeing him?

CHRISTINA
About a month ago...

JASON
Why, for God's sake?! I understand you're not feeling well, but understand that I'm all the boy needs in the way of family.

(CONTINUED)

We see now how weak the girl truly is -- not just physically -- but emotionally -- in the presence of this powerful and dominating father.

JASON

(continuing)

But enough of this discussion.
It will all work out for the best, won't it -- So rest now, daughter, and I'll look in a little while later.

She seems not to have heard him. He kisses her and rises.

The medical team drifts in. Jason moves out.

JASON

(continuing; to
a doctor)

Any calls on her private line,
I want to know about.

112 INT. I.C.U. HALLWAY - CLOSE ON JASON

112

He walks briskly up to the luckless secretary, Tim. Ruker, the bodyguard, walks behind.

TIM

... From the reports coming back, they can't find them.

JASON

I want my grandson back --
I don't care how it's done,
just do it.

SMASH CUT TO:

113 EXT. CAMPFIRE - CLOSE ON THE CAMPFIRE - DUSK

113

Ashes now. Not even a wisp of smoke.

CAMERA PANS OVER, HOLDS on Linc's face. Michael sits across from him. Their hands are entwined. Linc is instructing him in arm wrestling.

LINC

See, it's not the size so much --
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LINC (CONT'D)

-- I mean I've seen guys with arms like trees lose to much smaller guys.

114 ANOTHER ANGLE - LINC AND MICHAEL

114

MICHAEL

How is that possible?

LINC

Technique -- like the bigger the muscle, the slower the speed -- so you get the jump on them, then you pull to the chest -- But the most important thing is the mind -- The mind is stronger than any muscle in the body -- Now try it.

Michael pulls hard, then stops.

MICHAEL

Why try? I can't win.

LINC

Listen, you should never say that -- never. Say it and you've beat yourself.

MICHAEL

Can we try later?

LINC

What's wrong?

MICHAEL

Nothing -- it's just my hand's getting a little wrinkled.

They separate and Michael moves back a few paces.

MICHAEL

(continuing)

Can I ask you a question without you getting mad?

LINC

Ask.

MICHAEL

Why did you leave us?

LINC

Well, when I met your mother,
I was loading trucks -- Things
happened and we got married --
I was your grandfather's worst
nightmare..

116 FAVORING MICHAEL

116

MICHAEL

Why?

LINC

Every father wants something
special for their daughters --
I was about as special as
yesterday's catfood. Anyway,
he made it rough for your
mother -- and he turned her
against me -- just like he
turned you against me.

117 CLOSE ON LINC

117

LINC

We lasted a couple of years...
but I saw it was tearin' her
-- trying to choose between
her father and me. So just
before you turned two I took
off -- Merchant Marine.

118 CLOSE TWO SHOT - LINC AND MICHAEL

118

LINC

I saw the world, Mike.

(a beat)

An' I started arm-wrestling in
bars all over Asia, and I
found out I was pretty good at
it. I made enough to put money
down on this rig. Now they're
having this big contest in
Vegas. And I'm gonna sell
this truck and bet it all. If
I win, start my own trucking
company, a small one, and then
maybe give you the kind of life
you and your mother deserve.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LINC (CONT'D)

Next weekend, Mike -- it's either over the top, or it's over! I know people think I'm a fool. But anybody who's ever wanted to do something different, I'm sure was always called a fool first -- Any more questions?

Michael settles into the large bunk in the sleeping compartment.

MICHAEL

... not tonight.

LINC

Good night, Mike.

MICHAEL

... good night.

119 ANOTHER ANGLE - LINC

119

spreads his sleeping bag to one side of the still-burning campfire he's made. Michael's underclothing, shirt, trousers and one-sleever uniform tunic hang on a scaffolding of branches Linc has made near the fire to dry them out.

120 INT. THE SLEEPING COMPARTMENT - MICHAEL

120

throws back the covers, gets up and kneels in front of the telling display of photographs on one bulkhead: his mother and Linc in the wedding picture... the various photographs of Michael as a baby, as a toddler, as a boy. A wall of memory -- a wall of a father's love. Where could Linc possibly have gotten these photographs, the boy's puzzled eyes seem to be asking.

After a moment, Michael slides down to the far end of the bunk so he can look over the photos and posters on the bulkhead on that side of the compartment.

He sees the announcement of the upcoming World Championship Arm Wrestling contest in Las Vegas -- prizes totaling \$250,000.

CUT TO:

Linc is exercising with Michael, who really wants no part of it; but he can't contain his curiosity...

... Linc is doing chest pulls with a machine rigged in his truck. He completes his set.

LINC

Your turn.

MICHAEL

What's this going to prove?

LINC

Nothin' -- But you've got a good mind; now you need to build a classy chassy to carry it around... go.

Michael pulls the weight and it rises.

LINC

(continuing)

... Are you sure you're not super-boy?

Michael strains and smiles.

Michael is now dressed; and he looks somewhat ludicrous in his tunic with its high collar and one sleeve...

Linc is exercising with a pulley cable as he drives. The cable is connected to the side walls of the truck.

LINC

Y'know, some people might disagree, but that outfit has real style.

MICHAEL

Are you being sarcastic?

LINC

No, I mean you look real interesting -- like half-boy, half-accident.

Another huge rig that has "Cutler National Trucking" painted on the side, passes them.

MICHAEL

There's one of our family's trucks.

LINC

Sure is.

The boy snaps on the RADIO, begins to dial. He snaps off the radio. They ride in silence for a moment.

MICHAEL

If all the time you were gone you were thinking about Mom and me, how come in all those years you never sent me a single birthday card or a letter or anything?

Linc looks with astonishment at the boy.

LINC

What are you saying?

MICHAEL

We never heard from you.

LINC

I wrote almost every day!

MICHAEL

(a beat)

How'd you get those snapshots of me -- the ones you got on the wall in back?

LINC

Your mother sent 'em to me.

MICHAEL

Why?

LINC

Why? Because I like having your happy face around -- Look, why don't you ask your mother for some of these answers -- Maybe you'll believe her.

This part of the matter really troubles Michael -- as though for the first time he's becoming aware that his mother may not have told him everything.

125 ANOTHER ANGLE - FAVORING LINC 125
reacting to:

126 HIS POV - A REFLECTION IN HIS SIDE-VIEW MIRROR 126
A Highway Patrol car pops out of nowhere and closes in
from behind.

127 LINC 127
reacts further to:

128 ANOTHER POV - THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD 128
A mile ahead down the highway two state patrol cars
pull out and block the road.

129 LINC AND MICHAEL 129
Michael has seen it, too. Now the SIREN from the car
behind reaches their ears.

MICHAEL
What's happening?

LINC
Ask your grandfather.

Linc begins to slow down. He reaches into his glove
compartment for a packet full of state permits, docu-
ments and licenses.

130 EXT. THE HIGHWAY - THE PATROL CAR 130
coming in from behind draws alongside the cab, the OF-
FICER in the passenger seat waving Linc over toward
the shoulder of the road.

131 ANOTHER ANGLE - LINC'S RIG 131
slows and stops just this side of the patrol cars block-
ing his way.

132 EXT. THE RIG - LINC 132
climbs down with his documents.

(CONTINUED)

132 CONTINUED:

132

Troopers -- six of them -- spill out of the three cars.
One pair of troopers has a German shepherd on a leash.

133 CLOSER ANGLE - FAVORING LINC

133

He holds up the packet of documents.

LINC

Who gets these?

The OFFICER who'd been driving the pursuing car takes them from Linc, riffs through the papers, the other OFFICERS forming a semicircle around Linc.

Linc looks them over, gives them a faint, ironic smile.

FIRST OFFICER

(with Linc's papers)

Lincoln Hawk?

LINC

Yes, sir.

FIRST OFFICER

Who's the minor boy up there in that cab?

LINC

My son.

FIRST OFFICER

Tell him to step down.

LINC

(calling)

Mike!

Michael climbs down, comes around, looks the Officers over without blinking.

FIRST OFFICER

You look like you've been in an accident, boy.

Linc glances over at Michael and nods.

MICHAEL

... I haven't. It's the style.

(CONTINUED)

FIRST OFFICER

What style?

MICHAEL

Punk Military -- Here's my I.D.

He hands the Officer his school I.D. card. The man looks it over.

FIRST OFFICER

This man claims he's your father.

MICHAEL

Thank you, but he's already informed me of our relationship.

FIRST OFFICER

Then this man is not taking you against your will?

MICHAEL

Excuse me?

LINC

He wants to know if you're being kidnapped.

MICHAEL

Not really.

134 ANOTHER ANGLE - MOVING WITH THE DOG AND THE OFFICER
as the dog sniffs each wheel.

134

135 MICHAEL
glances up into the cab.

135

136 INT. THE CAB - MICHAEL'S POV THROUGH THE SLIGHTLY
OPENED DOOR

136

reacts to the Officer who'd climbed up a moment before. The man fails to see Michael just outside the cab and about to slip in. Michael watches him take a plastic bag of heroin from inside his tunic and place it under a pillow.

The Officer with the dog hurries to the cab, boosts the dog up, climbs up after him.

(CONTINUED)

THIRD OFFICER (O.S.)

Here!

The Third Officer reappears, holding aloft the bag of heroin. He lowers the dog, then climbs down.

FIRST OFFICER

(to Linc)

Okay, up against the truck --
feet apart.

Linc stares at the Officer.

LINC

Best cops money can buy.

The Officer pulls his gun, levels it at Linc.

FIRST OFFICER

Keep your mouth shut!

137 FAVORING MICHAEL

137

MICHAEL

(commandingly,
overlapping
the Officer)

That's it!

LINC

Take it easy, Mike.

MICHAEL

Please, I'll handle this.

They all look at the boy. He is the symbol of righteous indignation.

MICHAEL

(continuing)

That man...

(pointing to man)

... took the drugs from his
jacket and placed it in the
truck.

FIRST OFFICER

Yeh? Well, you'll have to prove
that, won't you, boy?

(CONTINUED)

MICHAEL

No, you'll have to prove it because his prints aren't on that bag, but his prints are. But since I'm sure you have ways to cover that up -- I think you'd better know that the Governor of this state is one of my grandfather's closest friends and has contributed more than half a million dollars to his last campaign. Now, either you take that stupid bag of dope out of here and go back to your coffee and donuts -- or I'll speak directly to the Governor and see that criminal charges are brought against each of you for drug trafficking -- And a civil suit against all of you for harassing this man.

During this we INTERCUT TO CLOSEUPS of Linc. It's as though all his dreams are being answered in one instant.

138 ANGLE ON THE TROOPERS

138

FIRST OFFICER

(hard)

... cute kid.

Abruptly, the First Officer, without a word, wheels and returns to his car. The others take their cues, hurry off to their cars.

139 FAVORING LINC

139

His eyes are not on the troopers. They're on the boy.

LINC

(deeply moved)

What do I say, Michael?

Linc smiles and pats the boy's shoulder... Michael glances at his wristwatch.

MICHAEL

I don't know -- Say you're impressed.

(CONTINUED)

LINC

I'm impressed.

MICHAEL

... Thanks.

Michael heads for the cab. Linc's face is shining.

140 EXT. CUTLER MANSION - RE-ESTABLISHING SHOT -
DAY

140

OVER we hear the resounding single word:

JASON (V.O.)

What?141 INT. CUTLER'S OFFICE IN THE MAIN HOUSE - ANGLE ON
JASON CUTLER

141

on the phone at his desk, around him all the apparatus
and the electronics that come with the responsibility
of running a national conglomerate.

Jason is alone in the office.

JASON

(into phone)

Michael said all that? Of
course the damn officers had
to back off. No, stay out of
it from here on -- I'll make
other arrangements.Jason hangs up, sits thoughtfully, then picks up the
phone again.142 EXT. RIVER - BRIDGE - HELICOPTER SHOT - AIR-TO-
GROUND HIGH ANGLE - MOVING - DAY

142

We're above Linc's rig and TRACKING it as it crosses
a river.

143 INT. THE CHOPPER - PILOT AND PASSENGER

143

The passenger, McBroom the detective, stares down at
Linc's rig seen below as it flashes in the afternoon
sun-patches behind a f.g. of web-like steel grillwork
on the bridge.

(CONTINUED)

McBROOM
(into microphone)
... crossing the Pennsylvania
line.

SMASH CUT TO:

144 INT. LINC'S CAB - LINC AND MICHAEL 144

Both catch sight of:

145 THEIR MOVING POV - THROUGH THE WINDSCREEN - THE ROAD 145
SIGN

YOU ARE NOW
ENTERING
PENNSYLVANIA

146 BACK TO SCENE - FAVORING LINC 146

as he is doing a mock arm wrestling contest with
Michael.

LINC
That's right -- Pull it in
and twist your shoulders --
C'mon, not like a weird monkey,
put some muscle in it. Not
bad.

Michael tries harder; and Linc smiles.

MICHAEL
Weird monkey?

LINC
It was meant in a nice way --
Sensitive, aren't you? Keep
going.

MICHAEL
I was terrible.

LINC
Your attitude is sorta rotten,
but your arm is pretty good
for somebody who doesn't do
much of anything.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LINC (CONT'D)

Keep driving through it! Work on the machine awhile. That's good for you.

MICHAEL

You mean good for you.

LINC

How's that?

MICHAEL

You're embarrassed that your boy isn't what you are, right -- But I'm not as hopeless as you think.

LINC

You're not hopeless; you just don't use what you've got -- And don't ever say I'm embarrassed about you. Listen, I'm not close to being perfect either.

MICHAEL

Truer words were never spoken.

LINC

Excuse me?

MICHAEL

I don't see any books around -- You don't read much, do you?

LINC

Enough -- I know you think I'm not as smart as your grandfather, do you?

MICHAEL

... You're different.

LINC

Different's a polite word for dumb.

MICHAEL

Not dumb -- You simply have a different life-style. I mean you live in motels, drive a truck -- and arm-wrestle -- You're just on a different social scale.

(CONTINUED)

LINC

Like where?

MICHAEL

Why aggravate yourself?

LINC

Aggravation is my hobby.

MICHAEL

Okay. It's been said the average mental age of an adult is 15 -- just three years older than I am. For truckers it has to be somewhere in the 11 to 13 year range.

LINC

Thirteen years old.

MICHAEL

Maybe 13 if they have good genetics.

LINC

... You're a real well of info, son, aren't you?

Linc slows the truck, pulls off onto the shoulder of the highway.

147 EXT. THE HIGHWAY - THE RIG

147

slows and stops.

148 INT. THE CAB - LINC AND MICHAEL

148

Linc kills the power. The truck just sits there in its own dust. Long silence between man and boy.

MICHAEL

Why'd you stop?

LINC

You wonder if I'm aggravated? I passed aggravation a mile back, it's now --

MICHAEL

-- Emotional turbulence.

(CONTINUED)

LINC

Give me a break -- You shouldn't believe everything you read. Since you think it takes a brain the size of a baked bean to handle this monster, why don't you just slip over here into my seat and you see if you can move the machinery.

MICHAEL

What?

LINC

Drive, genius.

Linc climbs down, slams the door. For a moment, Michael sits, considering, then defiantly crosses the cab from the passenger seat into the driver's seat.

Linc pops up on the other side, opens the door, gets into Mike's seat.

LINC

(continuing)

Good luck, Einstein.

149 CLOSE ON MICHAEL

149

looking over:

150 HIS POV - THE DASHBOARD

150

It's almost as complex and as sophisticated as the console of a 747. Gauges surrounded by buttons, switches and levers confront him on all sides.

151 TWO SHOT - LINC AND MICHAEL

151

Linc kicks off his boots and props his feet on the padded dash.

LINC

C'mon, boy, we got miles to make.

MICHAEL

This is an unfair test -- I've never driven a truck.

(CONTINUED)

LINC

Child's play.

MICHAEL

I need some instructions.

LINC

Why ask me? I'm only a dumb
trucker. You're the one with
all the brains.

MICHAEL

At least we're being honest.
What is the big deal? Step
on the clutch, press the gas
and shift the gears -- no
problem -- I once drove a
dune buggy.

LINC

I'm impressed.

Michael decides to go for it on his own. He turns
the key. Nothing happens. He hits a button that
looks like it might be a starter. The semi's long-
range driving lights kick on. Flicking them off,
Michael jabs at another switch. With a dry MOAN,
the air-conditioner springs to life.

LINC

(continuing)

You're doin' great, but here's
a hint.

Linc flicks on the power. A second later the glow
plug lights indicating that the diesel can now be
started.

LINC

(continuing)

Press the magic button.

Linc points to a silver button. Michael presses it.
The diesel begins CHURNING. Feeling the power under
him, Michael's eyes begin to glow.

LINC

(continuing)

Okay, Mr. Dune Buggy, she's
all yours.

On this deserted stretch of highway the tractor-trailer waddles off the shoulder and onto the road, picking up speed erratically. Gears GRINDING, the rig lurches forward.

LINC
... Interesting style.

153 INT. THE CAB - MIKE AT THE WHEEL, LINC RELAXING
ALONGSIDE HIM IN THE PASSENGER SEAT

153

The boy is wrestling with the multi-gears. Linc reaches across and guides Michael's hand into an upper gear.

LINC
Easy, you're not grinding
coffee -- push the clutch in
all the way.

154 EXT. THE HIGHWAY

154

With less shudder than before the truck slides into higher and higher gear.

As it picks up speed, it still weaves all over the road.

LINC
Stop trying to run over bugs
and hold it steady.

Linc puts his arms around the boy's shoulder and holds the wheel straight.

155 INT. THE CAB - LINC AND MICHAEL

155

Linc watches, pleased -- the boy, though apprehensive, his hands tightly clasping the wheel -- seems to be enjoying himself.

LINC
Okay, let's visit the other
side of the road.
(beat)
Good -- not bad. You're on
your own.

MICHAEL
No.

(CONTINUED)

LINC

Gotta go now.

Michael eases the wheel to the right and the truck reports instantly.

The boy grins from ear to ear.

MICHAEL

I'm doing it. This is great.

LINC

Now that didn't hurt, did it?

MICHAEL

What didn't, sir?

LINC

Smiling.

The boy keeps his grin on.

MICHAEL

... Not too much.

156 EXT. HIGHWAY

156

Linc is enjoying himself as he watches his son drive... Even though Mike is behind the wheel, Linc is constantly coaching his son. For fun Linc moves the wheel back and forth, which makes the truck snake down the empty highway. Michael loves it, and they now seem to have found a common ground of communication.

No dialogue as MUSIC PLAYS OVER the entire scene.

157 EXT. TRUCK STOP - DAY

157

Several RAPID CLOSEUPS. The trailer is being unhitched from Linc's tractor. Michael watches. The trailer is left with a group of other trailers.

158 INT. TRUCK STOP - DAY

158

Linc has just finished a cup of coffee and watches his son wolfing down his second piece of cake.

(CONTINUED)

LINC

That cake didn't have a chance,
did it.

MICHAEL

I was really hungry.

They rise.

LINC

Truckin' can do that -- So you
want me to help you? I mean,
you ate so much I'm afraid
your legs might collapse.

MICHAEL

(smiles)

I can make it. May I call
Mom?

LINC

That's a nice idea.

Linc and Michael pass several boys in their teens play-
ing video games near the exit door... Linc pauses and
backs up.

LINC

(continuing)

I feel it.

MICHAEL

What?

LINC

There's something in the air.

Michael looks around.

MICHAEL

What are you talking about?

LINC

I feel it.

MICHAEL

It's probably ptomaine
poisoning.

LINC

No, it's something good.
Well, are you ready?

(CONTINUED)

MICHAEL

For what?

LINC

To make legend.

Linc guides Michael towards the group of boys. They give him an indifferent stare and continue playing.

MICHAEL

Where are we going?

LINC

Over there.

MICHAEL

What's wrong with that direction?

Michael points the opposite way.

LINC

Stay with me.

MICHAEL

What are you doing?

LINC

Excuse me, boys -- I think this boy here can beat any one of you, two out of three times in arm-wrestling.

The LARGEST OF THE BOYS stops playing and eyes Michael.

MICHAEL

(to Big Boy)

He's a practical joker -- a kind of comedian on wheels. Sorry.

(tugging)

Let's get out of here --

LINC

Modest, kid -- Guys, I'm so sure he can beat you, I'm willing to bet on it.

BIG BOY

If I couldn't beat you --

MICHAEL

... Yes?

(CONTINUED)

The Big Boy eyeballs Michael hard.

BIG BOY
... I'd kill myself.

MICHAEL
(very nervous)
Sorry to have interrupted your
game... Why don't we forget I
was ever here; even ever born.
How's that.

LINC
You're just too generous, Mike;
I've always said that.
(to Big Boy)
The truth is, you don't have a
chance against this boy.

MICHAEL
Yes he does!

LINC
(overriding)
This man's a machine.

MICHAEL
No I'm not -- I'm a total pile
of uncoordinated flesh.

BIG BOY
Let's do it -- five bucks.

LINC
Get it -- Two out of three.

They approach a table and sit.

BIG BOY
(loudly)
What're those two threads
hangin' from his shoulder?

FRIEND
Those are his arms!

They laugh more than loud enough. Michael pulls his
father aside.

MICHAEL
You think this is funny, too,
don't you?

(CONTINUED)

LINC

No, boy, I think this is serious.

MICHAEL

Why did you do this -- he'll beat me easy.

LINC

Don't say that, damnit -- You know the technique to win.

MICHAEL

I've never tried it before.

LINC

Perfect -- now's your chance.

The Big Boy sips from a soft drink and smiles at his FRIEND.

FRIEND

He's a wimp.

BIG BOY

If I lost, I'd kill myself.

Linc and a terrified Michael come over.

BIG BOY

(continuing)

Make it ten bucks.

LINC

Ten -- Okay, get the arms up here.

Big Boy puts his up, followed by a reluctant Michael.

LINC

(continuing)

Okay, Michael, get your mind ready.

Linc adjusts their hands but looks hard into Michael's eyes. We now see what appears to be a friendly game has much more serious overtones.

LINC

(continuing; low)

You're a winner -- always have been -- you can do it.

(CONTINUED)

BIG BOY
Let's start! Ready, wimpo?
(to his Friends)
His skin feels like a girl's.

Linc moves back.

LINC
Concentrate, Mike.

FRIEND
Maybe he is one!

LINC
All right, Mike, ready --
Start!

The Big Boy's Friends cheer him on, and the Big Boy slowly but surely puts Michael down. Big Boy and his Friends let out a victory cheer, and after a few seconds of silence Michael gets up and bolts for the door...

Linc catches him.

MICHAEL
Let me go! All you wanted to
do is embarrass me...! You
did it, okay -- You happy?!
Now let me go!

LINC
No, you're staying!

MICHAEL
You're not using me for a joke
anymore -- maybe next time
you'll have a son who's a
winner!

LINC
You are a winner! You lost
because you beat yourself --
I know you can do it! And
I want you to be able to look
at yourself and say, I'm
special -- 'cause you are!
But everybody's always done
everything for you -- Now it's
your turn to do for yourself.
I told you some day you'd have
to step away from the books
and take the real test.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LINC (CONT'D)

This might not be so nice,
but this is the real school.
And, if you need something to
get you mad, think about how
much you used to hate me, and
maybe still do -- But honor
yourself, give yourself some
honor!

Michael goes back to the table and sits.

BIG BOY

Thought you said he was strong.

LINC

You won 'cause he was feeling
generous... Now he's feeling
nasty.

(to Mike)

Aren't you.

Mike looks at his father with a hard expression, then
turns the expression on Big Boy.

MICHAEL

(low and mad)

... Yeah.

The Big Boy is slightly taken aback by Michael's new
attitude.

LINC

Honor yourself! Let's do it.

Both participants lock grips.

FRIEND

Through the table this time!
Smash him, Richie!

BIG BOY

This is gonna hurt, wimp.
What do you think about that?

MICHAEL

... I think your breath stinks.

The Big Boy is about to comment.

(CONTINUED)

LINC

Ready -- Go!

Michael explodes with unexpected fury and has the Big Boy halfway down.

LINC

(continuing)

Pump it! Pump it! Over the top!

Michael pulls Big Boy's hand closer to his chest and pumps it vigorously until Big Boy collapses under the strain.

BIG BOY

(insanely)

Again! He cheated! One more time -- He cheated! Let's go! He cheated, man.

LINC

He didn't cheat. My son just blew you away, big guy. He didn't cheat.

BIG BOY

Again! C'mon, creep!

The two boys lock hands. Michael's blood is boiling.

BIG BOY

(continuing)

I'll break your arm, punk.

Mike looks at his father and nods.

LINC

Ready -- Go!

Michael again, using technique and speed, defeats Big Boy. Linc smiles and pats his son's shoulder. They hang for a moment.

LINC

(continuing)

... I'm proud of you. Tough little sucker, aren't you.

(to Big Boy)

... Don't you owe this man something?

(CONTINUED)

BIG BOY
(exhausted)
How'd he do that?

The Big Boy hands over the money.

LINC
(shrugs)
... Beats me.

159 INT. PHONE BOOTH - SUNSET

159

Linc and his son are on the phone with Christina.

LINC
Sure, we're having a good
time.

CUT TO:

160 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - CHRISTINA - INTERCUT

160

CHRISTINA
I hope so. I know it won't
be easy.

LINC
It's gonna work out fine. How
do you feel?

CHRISTINA
... Oh, I'll be all right.

LINC
Your idea of spendin' time
with him this way was good.
But -- here, you talk to him
-- Love you, honey.

Linc hands Michael the phone.

MICHAEL
Hi, Mom. How do you feel?

CHRISTINA
Fine, darling. Are you giving
your father a chance?

(CONTINUED)

MICHAEL

Yeah -- I'm doing whatever
you want me to do.

CHRISTINA

He said he let you drive the
truck?

MICHAEL

Yeah, it was great. I'm a
pretty good driver.

LINC

(yells)

Great driver!

MICHAEL

And, Mom, I just won an arm-
wrestling contest. And the
other boy was bigger -- maybe
five foot six.

Linc gestures with his thumb in the upward direction.

MICHAEL

(continuing)

No, five foot nine --

Linc again gestures upward.

MICHAEL

(continuing)

No, at least six foot, Mom!

Linc gives him the "okay" sign.

CHRISTINA

(cheerful but weak)

Good, darling. I'm so proud
of you, but -- I better go
now. I love you. See you
soon.

MICHAEL

I love you.

Michael hangs up the phone.

MICHAEL

(continuing)

... She sounds so sick.

LINC

We'll be there soon.

161 CLOSER ANGLE - MOVING WITH LINC AND MICHAEL

161

Linc is walking with both hands behind his back.

LINC

Which hand?

MICHAEL

For what?

LINC

Which hand?

MICHAEL

Left.

Linc brings up his left hand. It's a hat that truckers wear. On the front is a patch that reads "Gear Jammer" over a picture of a truck. Michael is truly pleased.

LINC

If nothin' else, it'll keep
that wonderful brain warm.

SMASH CUT TO:

162 EXT. THE HIGHWAY - FULL PANNING SHOT - LINC'S RIG - DAY 162
speeds along the highway adjoining Arkansas River.

163 INT. THE CAB - LINC AND MICHAEL - FAVORING MICHAEL 163
moving to MUSIC. He already looks like a different person than the uptight, stiff little monster we met back at the Institute. His eyes, half-closed, as he savors the beat, fail to see what Linc now sees:

164 LINC'S POV - A BIG SEMI 164
THROUGH THE WINDSCREEN, directly ahead, is parked across the road, effectively blocking the highway.
Two MEN with flashlights are waving for Linc to stop.

165 EXT. HIGHWAY - LINC'S RIG 165
slows, stops just short of the truck angled across the right of way.

advance toward Linc's cab.

FIRST MAN

(calling out)

Hey, buddy, you got anything
in your first-aid kit for
shock?

LINC

(alerted; turns
to Michael)

Stay back!

The Two Men attack Linc simultaneously.

167 ANOTHER ANGLE - THE BACK OF LINC'S TRACTOR

167

Two more men in another car pull up and get out.

168 INT. CAB - MICHAEL

168

A Man looms up and pulls him out of the cab.

169 SERIES OF SHOTS - THE ACTION

169

Linc is a whirling Dervish of flailing elbows and knees; the four assailants land punishing blows. Within the first thirty seconds of the fight, Linc has badly hurt two of the four assailants.

While all this mayhem is happening, Michael has been hauled, kicking, toward a pickup truck. He screams, kicks, bites and spits -- you name it. In the melee, his already-torn uniform tunic is ripped almost in half, leaving him in a T-shirt and his dusty uniform-grey trousers.

The Third Man clubs Linc over the head with a blackjack. Linc slumps down, semi-conscious.

The Two Men drive away with Michael... Moments later, Linc climbs back into his truck, FIRES IT UP and takes up the chase.

170 EXT. ROAD - DUSK

170

-Linc's truck is straining to pick up momentum.

171 PICKUP TRUCK 171
moves over a small bridge.

172 EXT. LINC'S TRUCK 172
Linc sees them far ahead and decides to take a shortcut through a cornfield. Pickup truck continues to speed along. Linc's truck is bulldozing its way through the field with incredible power. Pickup truck moves freely down the road -- feeling safe.

173 INT. PICKUP TRUCK - NIGHT 173
The two MEN don't see Linc.
DRIVER
You lost him.

174 EXT. PICKUP TRUCK - NIGHT 174
WIDE SHOT to MED. CLOSE. Linc's truck suddenly explodes out of the field, up a roadside embankment and is catapulted nearly five feet in the air. It lands almost directly behind the pickup, weaving in and out among cars.

175 INT. PICKUP 175
All the occupants are in shock.
MAN #2
Get on the freeway!
The pickup swings onto the freeway ramp... soon followed by Linc's tractor.

176 EXT. SIX-LANE HIGHWAY - NIGHT 176
The pickup is moving at great speed. The Driver looks into his rearview mirror and sees a pair of massive headlights a couple hundred yards back. The Driver does not give it much attention and glances at Michael who appears frightened, sandwiched between the Two Men.

177 EXT. SIX-LANE HIGHWAY - LINC'S TRUCK - DUSK 177
ROARS ahead like a metal dragon, weaving in and out among cars, rapidly closing the distance.

178	ANGLE - LINC	178
	Blood runs into his eyes as he wildly shifts gears.	
179	INT. PICKUP - NIGHT	179
	The Driver looks up at the rearview mirror.	
180	CLOSEUP IN MIRROR	180
	The mammoth truck is drawing closer.	
181	EXT. LINC'S TRUCK	181
	The giant machine is now twenty-five yards away.	
182	LINC	182
	looks at the tachometer and shifts as the ENGINE STRAINS at the red line.	
183	CLOSEUP - LINC'S HAND	183
	clenched on the shift.	
184	INT. PICKUP TRUCK - NIGHT	184
	The Driver looks up and sees the massive truck almost on his rear. Linc's truck flashes on its bright lights, plus an extra set of four Hologen lights set behind the truck's grill. Linc BLASTS the AIRHORN. The Driver pales in fear.	

DRIVER

Goddamn!

The pickup truck starts to speed and surge between traffic. Linc's truck stays right on his tail and proves to be a terrifying image!

185	WIDE SHOT	185
	The pickup truck and Linc's machine veer wildly through the sparse traffic -- Linc keeps BLOWING his AIRHORN.	

The Driver glances at the speedometer; they are doing a hundred miles an hour. The pickup suddenly slams on its brakes and swings wildly into an opening reserved for official use only and heads down the freeway in the opposite direction.

Linc's truck slams on its brakes, causing a wall of burning rubber and also slips through the official opening and almost gets sideswiped by another tractor-trailer.

The pickup truck is speeding along and again they see the ominous headlights of Linc's truck growing in the b.g.

DRIVER

The bastard's crazy!

MICHAEL

(hysterical)

Pull over! Why are you doing this! Why are you doing this!!

as the Driver floors it.

REVEALING how quickly Linc is closing the gap.

Linc's eyes reflect the fire of determination.

Linc is one inch from the pickup's bumper... He BLOWS the hair-raising AIRHORN.

MICHAEL

Pull over!!!

DRIVER

Shut up!

(CONTINUED)

Linc now pulls into the opposite lane and runs neck and neck with the pickup, which appears to be a small fish about to be engulfed by a killer shark.

192 MEDIUM SHOT

192

The pickup tries to out-maneuver by rapidly slowing down, but the big rig jockeys for position and Linc stays right with him, and eventually Linc slowly forces them off the road.

193 EXT. HIGHWAY

193

Linc jumps out of the truck.

LINC

... Mike! Come here!

All three get out of the pickup truck. Michael goes to his father.

LINC

(continuing)

You wanna kill me, you kill me -- But he's staying with me -- You tell him that! Get in, Mike.

(back to Men)

... Wanna make your move, then make it.

The two Men realize they are so exposed on the side of the fairly active freeway. They decide to back off.

LINC

(continuing;
to Mike)

Get in the truck.

Michael obeys and hoists himself into the towering rig.

Linc backs into his truck... the Men remain frozen.
Linc gets into his truck.

194 INT. CAB OF LINC'S RIG - MOVING POV OF DOWNTOWN
WASHINGTON - SUNSET

194

seen THROUGH THE WINDSCREEN from several miles out of town on a freeway.

(CONTINUED)

MICHAEL (V.O.)
Weren't you afraid of those
men?

LINC (V.O.)
You bet.

MICHAEL (V.O.)
Why didn't you show it?

195 ANOTHER ANGLE - LINC

195

LINC
I did, but it was too dark to
see me shakin'.

MICHAEL
Really?

LINC
No, I enjoy facing death --
It's a fun hobby.

Michael in the back with the arm wrestling machine.
TAPE is blasting away on the STEREO.

196 CLOSER ANGLE - MICHAEL

196

staring thoughtfully at the bulkhead and all the photo-
graphs of himself at various stages of his twelve years
of life.

MICHAEL
(to Linc)
Did my mother really send these
to you?

LINC
Yes she did.

MICHAEL
(more to himself
than to Linc)
Why didn't she tell me?

LINC
Probably afraid you'd tell
Grandpa.

(CONTINUED)

Michael climbs into the front seat.

MICHAEL

That's not right. I'd never
do anything to hurt her.

LINC

You see, your grandfather is
a hard man in some ways -- and
your mother couldn't take it.
Guess I couldn't either. But
that's back down the road now.

197 LINC'S POV - A ROAD SIGN

197

THROUGH THE WINDSCREEN, indicating the turn-off for
"MEMORIAL HOSPITAL."

198 EXT. FREEWAY - TRUCK

198

turns off onto the road leading toward the hospital.

SMASH CUT TO:

199 EXT. MEMORIAL HOSPITAL - SUNSET

199

ESTABLISHING SHOT.

200 INT. HOSPITAL - INFORMATION WINDOW - LINC

200

is standing next in line in the crowded foyer for his
turn at the window. Michael waits off to one side.

Above them a wall clock shows that the time is just af-
ter 8:00 p.m.

The party ahead of Linc gets her information, moves out.
Linc steps to the window.

LINC

(to Clerk)

Mrs. Christina Hawks, please.
Has she been assigned her
room yet?

CLERK

Let me check, sir.

(CONTINUED)

The Clerk inputs a display terminal, reads the message, not visible to Linc.

CLERK

(continuing)

Sorry, sir, but we have no record of a pending room assignment for a Mrs. Christina Hawks. Was she expected in today?

LINC

About an hour ago. She's supposed to have surgery Wednesday morning.

ANOTHER CLERK behind the information window has overheard the conversation. She takes the First Clerk aside, whispers to her. Both Women glance over at Linc. Something in their eyes begins to alarm Linc.

The First Clerk returns, almost reluctantly, to the window.

CLERK

May I ask who you are?

LINC

(slight note of concern in voice)

Her husband.

The Woman looks even unhappier now.

CLERK

Possibly you would prefer to talk to one of the doctors on the case.

201 CLOSE ON LINC

201

LINC

(almost harshly)

You tell me!

202 CLOSE TWO SHOT - LINC AND THE CLERK

202

CLERK

She died Saturday night.

(CONTINUED)

LINC

Died?

CLERK

You should speak to Doctor
Dietrich. We've sent for him.

203 ANOTHER ANGLE - LINC

203

turns away, numbly. His eyes go to:

204 HIS POV - MICHAEL

204

A changed boy since Friday -- scuffed trousers, T-shirt
and trucker hat.

205 CLOSE ON LINC

205

CAMERA MOVES IN on his eyes. They are filled with shock
-- and dismay.

SMASH CUT TO:

206 EXT. HOSPITAL - HIGH ANGLE SHOT - NIGHT

206

Michael is seen streaking out of the hospital, Linc pur-
suing him.

207 CLOSE MOVING SHOT - MICHAEL

207

as he runs. He is weeping, tears filling his eyes, run-
ning down his cheeks.

208 CLOSE MOVING SHOT - LINC

208

pursuing the shattered boy.

LINC

(calling)

Mike! Mike, stop!

209 ANGLE ON LINC'S TRUCK

209

as Michael runs up to it and collapses against the huge
radiator.

(CONTINUED)

209 CONTINUED:

209

Linc comes in, kneels, pulls the sobbing child to him, tries to comfort him.

210 CLOSER ANGLE - LINC AND THE BOY

210

Suddenly Michael regains control of himself. He stiffens, pulls away from his father's arms.

MICHAEL

(accusingly)

If you hadn't come to pick me up, I'd have been home with her -- not out riding around ... having fun while my mother was dying!

LINC

(also suffering)

Nobody knew. It just -- happened.

The child stares unforgivingly at his father.

MICHAEL

You've never been there when anybody needed you, have you?

Without warning, Michael wheels away, runs toward the street and a passing taxi, screaming for it to stop. The cab slams on its BRAKES.

Michael piles in. The cab guns away.

211 CLOSE ON LINC

211

standing immobile, making no move to stop the boy.

DISSOLVE TO:

212 EXT. CEMETERY - LONG SHOT - DAY

212

A group of mourners led by Jason Cutler are gathered around a tented area with a flower-covered casket about to be lowered.

213 ANGLE ON JASON CUTLER

213

reacting to:

214 HIS POV - MICHAEL

214

stands beside the coffin and weeps without shame.

215 LINC

215

in the b.g. He moves forward and several people begin to notice his presence. Jason's Bodyguard motions to his boss, who locks eyes with Linc. Linc places a humble bouquet of flowers on the coffin. All present are stunned by this. Linc takes a long look at his son who lowers his eyes. Linc glances at Jason who looks triumphant. He turns and walks away as the congregation's eyes bore into his back. Jason looks at his Bodyguard and frowns.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

216 EXT. A CHEAP DINER - ANGLE ON LINC'S TRUCK - LONG
SHOT - NIGHT

216

parked in the lot. THROUGH THE DINER WINDOW we see Linc holding a cup of coffee, staring thoughtfully into space ... We never go inside the diner.

217 EXT. CUTLER ESTATE - A HIGH GATE AT THE ENTRANCE - DAWN 217

and its steel barrier arm. There's a gatehouse resembling a sentry post at an Army base. TWO ARMED GUARDS watch the approaching tractor. Linc stops the rig. The Guards step forward.

LINC

I want to talk to Mr. Cutler.

GUARD

You're not wanted here.

LINC

I want to talk to my boy.

GUARD

I said you're not wanted here.
Move it out.

Linc pauses.

GUARD

(continuing)

You deaf? Get this thing the
hell out of here.

head back into the gatehouse. CAMERA HOLDS outside -- on the gate of the barrier arm. The dawn seems especially quiet. For a moment only. Then we hear a growing SOUND, the ROAR of a mighty ENGINE.

The Guards hear it, too. They run back out, look off the way Linc had gone. They react to:

219 THEIR POV - LINC'S TRUCK

219

rushing towards them like a gigantic metallic monster.

220 THE GUARDS

220

dive to either side of the road as Linc's rig smashes the steel barrier arm as though it were a toothpick and speeds down the road toward the main house. The AIRHORN BLOWS, and people scatter.

The Guards scamper back into the gatehouse, activate the ALARM SYSTEM.

221 INT. THE CAB - LINC

221

steering the rig resolutely forward.

222 INT. HOUSE - JASON CUTLER

222

in his study faces the TV screen and the Gate Guard's face on it.

GUARD

(on TV screen)

He's comin' straight in! No way to stop him now.

JASON

Call the state police.

Jason snaps off the set, runs out of the study.

223 INT. SECOND-FLOOR BEDROOM - MICHAEL

223

rushes out and sees his grandfather.

JASON

Look -- now you see how insane he really is!

Jason grabs the boy's hand, half drags him to a window.

224 THEIR POV - LINC'S RIG

224

hurtling toward the front door of the mansion. It COLLIDES with several estate CARS, sending them careening into space.

225 EXT. HOUSE - LINC'S RIG

225

driving straight in toward the porch and steps. He tears through a group of hedges. He slams on the air brakes.

226 INT. THE CAB - LINC

226

bracing himself for the impact as the truck smokes and snakes itself towards the front porch.

227 EXT. HOUSE - THE RIG

227

At the very last moment, when disaster seems imminent, the SCREECHING TRUCK shutters to a halt, smashing only the front door open.

228 HIS POV - JASON AND MICHAEL

228

on the landing above. Grandfather and child stare down at:

229 THEIR POV - LINC

229

entering below them under the chandelier.

LINC

Michael...

230 ANOTHER ANGLE

230

HOLDING all three IN SHOT: Jason and Michael, above, Linc below.

JASON

What the hell have you done?

LINC

You're not keepin' him away from me anymore.

231 CLOSE ON MICHAEL

231

Tears suddenly fill his eyes.

JASON

You'll be put away for this.

232 CLOSE ON LINC

232

looking up at him, begging.

LINC

Please... come with me, Mike.

233 ANOTHER ANGLE - ALL THREE

233

JASON

Say here! Portrait of a loser.
It's not very touching, and as
always, totally irresponsible.
Did it occur to you, Hawks,
that you might have killed this
boy with that truck?! Of
course not. You never think
about the consequences of your
actions!

234 FAVORING LINC

234

LINC

Come, Mike, I can't leave you
again.

235 FAVORING MICHAEL AND JASON

235

Michael half-turns, stares up at his grandfather.

JASON

You think you can get away
with this.

The O.S. SOUNDS of ARRIVING POLICE CARS can be heard.

JASON

(continuing)

Do you think you can come in
here and nearly destroy my
home and then demand to take
this boy!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

235 CONTINUED:

235

JASON (CONT'D)

You gave the child up years ago, and that's one fact you're never going to change -- I'm going to make certain you're put away, Hawks.

LINC

Then put me away! You've been trying long enough. You broke everyone else down, but you're not breaking this kid down.

Linc starts to move up the stairs. Suddenly Ruker seizes Linc from behind in a death grip. Linc struggles in vain, just as the police arrive.

MICHAEL

Let him go!

JASON

Michael, understand this man is dangerous. Always has been.

MICHAEL

... No he's not.

JASON

Don't argue. Hold him, Ruken!
(to Linc)
You can't be civilized with people like you.

236 FAVORING LINC

236

whirling, reacting to FOUR STATE TROOPERS moving on him with their drawn guns.

FIRST TROOPER

We've got him... Turn around, both arms behind you!

Linc, glaring up at Jason, obeys their orders. Handcuffs are snapped on him.

MICHAEL

Let him go!

(CONTINUED)

JASON

Don't ever give me orders
again! Go to your room.

FIRST TROOPER

This way.

They half shove, half push Linc out through the debris.
Linc goes, but eyes raised, fixed on Jason.

CUT TO:

237 INT. COUNTY JAIL - MOVING WITH A TURNKEY - EARLY
MORNING

237

down a cell corridor. He unlocks the barred gate, looks
in at the tank filled with last night's arrests. Among
the prisoners is Linc. The TURNKEY crooks his finger at
Linc.

TURNKEY

Okay, Hawks.

CUT TO:

238 INT. JAIL - LINC AND TIM SALANGER - DAY

238

Tim, Jason Cutler's personal secretary, is waiting in a
visiting room. Linc comes in and sits.

TIM

I'll make this brief, Hawks;
I'm Tim Salanger, Mr. Cutler's
personal secretary.

Linc remains silent. Tim is slightly unnerved by Linc's
hard stare.

TIM

(continuing)

As you can see, you've got a
serious problem on your hands
and, more than ever now, you'll
need money for attorneys and
additional expenses. What we
want is for you to leave and
don't come back. We won't
prosecute.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

TIM (CONT'D)

If you decide to contest the whole matter of legal custody, you won't have a prayer -- we retain the finest law firms, so that's it.

LINC

What does Mike want?

TIM

Ask him yourself.

Tim rises and nods to a guard that permits Michael to enter.

TIM

(continuing)

Not too long.

Tim exits. Michael goes over to the glass partition and stares at his father while still standing.

LINC

(softly)

... At ease.

Michael remains mute.

LINC

(continuing)

Are you here to tell me to get out, too?

MICHAEL

(low)

... No.

LINC

... Good, I was starting to think I was unpopulare around here.

MICHAEL

I don't know what to think.

LINC

You don't have to say anything -- I don't blame you if you don't trust me; I haven't earned that yet.

MICHAEL

It's just that I feel like I have some kind of home here... I mean, if I were to go with you, where would we go? Where would we end up?

LINC

We'd end up together, that's all I can guarantee.

MICHAEL

You say that now --

(CONTINUED)

LINC

I gave up the best piece of my life -- I can't get it all back, I know that. But I'm a different person now. I'm not rich, I'm not that smart, I'm just a father who messed up. I want to try to fix some of the things I've broken -- I don't have a lot, maybe never will, but I want to share what I've got inside with the only person I care about.

MICHAEL

... I can't.

LINC

I just want a chance.

MICHAEL

I wish I could -- Do understand; I wish I could.

LINC

... I understand.

Michael exits... Tim re-enters.

TIM

... Should I draw up the papers?

CUT TO:

239 EXT. HIGHWAY - LINC'S TRUCK - DAY

239

crossing from one state into the next.

240 INT. TRUCK - LINC

240

Linc is staring out the window. But his right hand is working relentlessly on a tough spring grip. Closing, opening, closing, opening.

SMASH CUT TO:

241 INT. CHRISTINA'S APARTMENT SUITE - CUTLER ESTATE -
MICHAEL

241

is searching methodically every square inch of his mother's apartment. Her desk drawers still remain open and turned inside out. Chests of drawers have been ransacked. Now the boy moves to the first of the closets.

242 CLOSER ANGLE - MICHAEL

242

opening handbags. His mother obviously was fond of them.

(CONTINUED)

The shelves are packed with bags. Michael hits the jackpot after his seventh bag -- he brings out a packet of letters and an envelope stuffed with old snapshots.

We see what he sees: the letters have been secretly saved and hidden away over a period of years -- letters from Linc addressed to Mrs. Christina Hawks and Mike -- with stamps from Singapore, Japan, Indonesia, Australia and New Zealand.

Mike opens one of the letters. We can't see what he's reading, but the tears in his eyes tell us that he now knows that his father has been telling him the truth.

243 EXT. GARAGE - DAY

243

Michael opens the door and reveals a row of eight very expensive cars, Rolls, Bentley, Ferrari, Porche -- a limo, etc. He walks along with a sense of urgency, eyeing each one of the cars without breaking stride. He disappears behind the limo.

The ROAR of an ENGINE is heard and a Renault Turbo explodes out from behind the limo and ROARS down the driveway.

SMASH CUT TO:

244 INT. CONSERVATIVE BUSINESS OFFICE - DAY

244

Jason is on the phone; Tim, his secretary, is present and taking notes. Ruker enters.

RUKER

Excuse me?

JASON

Yes, what?

RUKER

He's gone.

CUT TO:

245 EXT. GUARD GATE - A BANK OF TV SURVEILLANCE SCREENS

245

Multi-images flicker on them.

(CONTINUED)

GUARD

Mr. Cutler, your nephew just left.

JASON

Left? Where did he leave to?!
(sternly)
And why'd you let him out?

246 EXT. GATE HOUSE - ANGLED ON THE GUARD - DUSK

246

at the TV monitor. The Guard is looking out the window at:

247 HIS POV - RENAULT TURBO

247

driving off down the road toward the adjoining highway.

GUARD'S VOICE

Well, sir, he said he had your permission to drive up and down the driveway.

248 INT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

248

JASON

He doesn't know how to drive,
for Christ's sake -- ! Get him!

GUARD (V.O.)

Yes, sir.

Jason slams the phone down and exits. CAMERA FOLLOWS him outside the industrial building, where he motions to his men, and they exit in a hurry.

249 EXT. HIGHWAY - HIGH ANGLE PANNING SHOT - MICHAEL'S CAR 249

barreling down the road. Guards are narrowing the gap. They drive an estate jeep with the Cutler logo on the side.

250 INT. MICHAEL'S CAR

250

Michael panics and floors it.

251 EXT. RENAULT

251

The little car pulls away like a rocket ship. Michael seizes the wheel.

MICHAEL

My God!

252 EXT. THE GUARDS' JEEP

252

The Guards weave in and out of traffic in pursuit.

253 EXT. HIGHWAY

253

Two large trucks. One tractor-trailer is about to pass the slower one... Michael moves in.

254 MICHAEL'S CAR

254

At the last possible second, he zips in front of the passing truck... the passing truck closes the gap momentarily blocking both lanes from the pursuing jeep. The passing truck finally pulls away. The jeep comes speeding after and heads down the road after Michael who is nowhere to be found.

255 A SLOWER TRUCK

255

moves along in the right lane. As the CAMERA PANS OVER we see Michael and his small car driving on the slight embankment, using the huge truck as a shield.

256 MICHAEL

256

smiles as he sees the jeep speed way ahead and out of sight. Michael steers his car back onto the highway, passes the slow, freight-carrying truck and passes a sign that reads: "DULLES AIRPORT -- 10 MILES."

257 EXT. FREEWAY

257

The Guards' jeep now pulls into view and Michael does not see it. The jeep pulls up alongside the Renault Turbo.

258 *ANOTHER ANGLE - THE JEEP

258

The Guards wave Michael off the road.

SMASH CUT TO:

Jason is pacing. With him are Ruker and Tim. Jason looks ill-tempered. Suddenly the person he's been waiting for appears -- JIM OLSON, his chief counsel and attorney.

OLSON

Sorry to be late, Jason. I've been at police headquarters.

JASON

Well?

OLSON

No luck.

JASON

How the hell can that be? A boy in a Renault Turbo -- all by himself on a highway, and nobody can find him?

OLSON

But they'll get him. What I want you to worry about is this matter of the boy's custody. I've had my best people at the law firm check every applicable court decision for the last one hundred years. Bottom line, Jason: no judge is going to award you custody of Michael. The court will give him to his father. Unless Hawks can't support him.

JASON

Support him!? The bastard's lost everything! Look, there's always ways to change laws and that's your job -- to find loopholes. In the meantime, I want that boy found. Tim, check everything -- train stations, airports, everything.

Michael rapidly pulls up to the entrance and jumps out.
-A RED CAP BAGGAGE MAN flags him down.

(CONTINUED)

260 CONTINUED:

260

RED CAP
Boy, you can't just leave this
car here like that!

MICHAEL
... You're right. Keep it.

Michael tosses him the keys and runs inside.

261 EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

261

Linc is seen driving across a lonely stretch of the de-
sert... His eyes look empty.

262 INT. TICKET BOOTH - DAY

262

Michael is in line and finally arrives at the counter.

MICHAEL
One way to Las Vegas.

CLERK
Economy?

MICHAEL
First class!

Michael places down his gold American Express card.

263 INT. JASON'S OFFICE - DAY

263

Tim enters as Jason sits with his attorney, Olson, and
Ruker.

TIM
He just bought a ticket to
Vegas.

264 INT. COMMERCIAL JET

264

Michael is sitting in first class, all buckled in.

(CONTINUED)

P.A.

We regret there will be a one hour delay. Please remain on the plane. The stewardess will answer all your questions.

MICHAEL

Is there another plane I can get on?

STEWARDESS

No. Not that I know of.

MICHAEL

Then tell them to hurry. I have urgent business.

265 EXT. TRUCK SALES - DAY

265

Linc is seen selling his truck to a salesman who is filling out some transfer papers.

266 EXT. NEW NUGGET HOTEL - LINC - DAY

266

in downtown Las Vegas. Linc approaches the entrance to the hotel on foot. He's carrying his one piece of luggage. He enters the crowded lobby under a streamer:

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP ARM-WRESTLING
WELCOME ALL CONTENDERS

267 INT. THE LOBBY - FULL SHOT

267

The place is jammed with muscled-types, their wives, girlfriends and children. You can feel the energy, the excitement, hear it in the voices of old friends and competitors greeting each other.

A group of truckers gather around Linc as he registers.

SMASH CUT TO:

268 INT. GRAND BALLROOM - NEW NUGGET HOTEL - ANGLE ON LINC - DAY 268

weighing in, clothes and boots on. An official assigns him his weight division.

He is betting all the money on himself.

LINC

Put it all on Lincoln Hawks,
please.

He places a bag of money on the counter... He pauses and
takes a ten dollar bill out of the bag.

LINC

(continuing)

In case I get hungry.

270 HIS POV - THE GRAND BALLROOM

270

The place is packed with contenders, most of them looking like Ram linebackers. Streamers line the walls for Budweiser and for other products. There's a big sign: TEAMSTERS ARE NO. 1. Then a contesting sign: WELCOME OWNER/OPERATORS and HAIL INDEPENDENT TRUCKERS. Everywhere there are booths -- for the Army -- the Navy -- Air Force -- Marine Corps -- booths selling exercise equipment... selling muscle ointment and muscle wrapping ... A long bar jammed with guys and their gals... Registration desk, information booth... A bandstand with musicians already setting up and testing their AMPLIFIERS ... An announcer's booth -- testing the mike system. An area for the media. Doctors' section with a chiropractor standing by his table... Dais on the stage for celebrity observers... A cluster of referees wearing black and white checkered outfits, the men gathered around the tables and going over the rules... It is a NOISY, bustling scene shot from an ASSORTMENT OF ANGLES.

271 CLOSER ANGLE - ON LINC

271

as his eyes seek out and find:

272 LINC'S POV - BULL HURLEY

272

The world champion, seated at a table and being both interviewed and photographed by the press. A pair of young girls ask for his autograph -- He shakes his head "no." Bull dwarfs everyone around him.

SMASH CUT TO:

273 EXT. JET - DAY

273

We see the jet soaring overhead.

274 INT. THE JET - MICHAEL

274

We see Michael twitching in his seat. He motions to the Stewardess.

MICHAEL

... If you tell the captain
to speed it up, there's a
big tip for him.

SMASH CUT TO:

275 EXT. LAS VEGAS AIRPORT - JASON'S PRIVATE JET - DAY

275

greases down on the strip, rolls to a stop and a waiting limo.

276 ANGLE ON THE JET

276

as the door panel lowers. Jason steps out, followed by Tim and Ruker, his bodyguard. A man waits to meet them. He is McBroom, the private detective.

JASON

Did he arrive yet?

McBROOM

His plane was delayed.

JASON

(walking)

How about Hawks? Is he still
in -- or out?

McBROOM

He won his first three matches.
If he wins one more, he'll go
into the finals tonight.

JASON

(to Ruker)

Go meet Michael's flight.

He ducks into the car; Tim and McBroom getting in
after him. The limo speeds off toward downtown Vegas.

SMASH CUT TO:

277 INT. NEW NUGGET - GRAND BALLROOM - FULL SHOT - NIGHT

277

The arm-wrestling competition now in center-stage.

(CONTINUED)

The spectators are gathered on three sides of the dais and stage, with its central extension for the tables. They sit in separate contingents, CHEERING their favorites -- their own contenders. Wives and children make up a big part of the audience.

Huge TV screens are arranged all over the auditorium so that the spectators can watch the contests at the tables in closeup.

An ANNOUNCER reads the next match over the PUBLIC ADDRESS SYSTEM.

ANNOUNCER

And now it's John Grizzly,
three time winner from the
Petaluma Association, against
newcomer Linc Hawks.

CHEERS from the SPECTATORS -- cheers both for Grizzly and for Linc. The ROCK BAND on stage POUNDS out a couple of riffs.

278 CLOSER ANGLE - ON STAGE - GRIZZLY

278

comes clumping onto the stage wearing extra-lift boots. He glares at Linc, who is already waiting at the table. Grizzly steps in opposite Linc, who is wiping rosin to his palms... grizzly sniffs deeply from a bottle of smelling salts. His eyes are glazed with energy.

GRIZZLY

(a low growl)

Gonna tear you apart, turkey;
rip your goddamned arm right
out of the socket.

Linc concentrates through half-closed, almost dreamy eyes. He is half-bent over with his hands resting on his knees. He reaches the moment of concentration he has been trying to achieve and moves to the table. Hurley watches in the b.g.; his eyes boring holes into Linc and Grizzly.

Linc and Grizzly begin to adjust themselves at the table, the REFEREES adjust their positions to be sure no body has manipulated any advantage for himself. They break the grip several times.

REFEREE

Ready!

standing at side of the stage, looking up at the video screen on which they can see Linc larger than life.

REFEREE

Go!

280 CLOSER ANGLE - LINC AND GRIZZLY

280

On the "Go!," Linc, locking his bicep and forearm to his body, torques with astonishing strength, driving John Grizzly's huge arm down toward the touch pad. But Grizzly wraps his notched shoe into the table leg and locks his whole body, holding Linc and intending to wear him down.

But Linc, anticipating this, has applied reverse pressure on Grizzly's palm. But his timing is off, and Linc nearly pulls his arm from the elbow cup. The Referee issues a warning.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Hawks' elbow is almost out of the cup. He's got to the count of three to get it full in, or be disqualified -- Oh, let's hear it -- we've got a bottle here, folks.

REFEREE

One...! Two...!

Linc forces his elbow back into the table cup. Suddenly Grizzly goes for a drop down. But this time Linc is ready. Pushing his weight into the ball of his right foot, he deflects his opponent's momentum.

281 CLOSER ANGLE - LINC AND GRIZZLY

281

both straining, their veins standing out in their arms, necks, temples.

Suddenly Grizzly punches his fist forward, driving Linc's own fist toward Linc's nose. Just a hair from crushing Linc's nose, Grizzly stops the thrust, suddenly reverses and pulls Linc's arm back toward him.

The SCENE goes INTO SLOW MOTION... All sound drops out, except errie, dronning, ELECTRONIC SOUNDS. The tricky maneuver has diverted Linc's concentration for a split-second. In the interval Grizzly, with a huge roar, pushes Linc's arm down, closer and closer to the touch pad.

as Grizzly prevails, pushing Linc's hand onto the touch pad. The SCENE snaps BACK TO LIVE ACTION... a split second before the touch down is made... LOUD ROARING, CROWD CHEERING explodes. The Referee slaps Grizzly on the back, points his finger over to Grizzly's side, showing the audience the winner.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Grizzly defeats Hawks! Nice try! This gives Hawks one elimination more -- and he's out of the contest.

283 INT. AIRPORT

283

Michael is following the crowd. As he deplanes...

284 RUKER

284

watches from the entry gate.

285 MICHAEL

285

At the last moment he sees Ruker and starts to head back into the plane.

286 RUKER

286

sees Michael and fights the rough-go against the tide of human bodies as he forces his way on the plane.

287 MICHAEL

287

shoves and angles his way past people, frantically looking over at Ruker. Michael reaches the rear of the plane... Ruker is several yards away. At the very last moment Michael jumps into the dumbwaiter and pushes the button... Ruker arrives a moment too late and sees Michael disappear from view. Ruker tries to rush out of the plane, but he's losing time.

288 EXT. JET - DAY

288

Michael is seen climbing out of the bottom of the belly of the jet and sprinting away.

239 EXT. JET

239

THROUGH WINDOW, we see Ruker's face redden as he sees Michael running away.

290 THE AUDIENCE

290

That part of the spectators who've been CHEERING Linc on sit down glumly. CAMERA MOVES OVER TO three other spectators standing off to the side -- Jason, McBroom, Tim. Jason is straight-faced.

OVER, the P.A. system prepares the spectators for the next match -- Big Bill Larson against Mad Dog Madison. CHEERS, HOOTS and SCREAMS greet Big Bill. Madison is a magnificently-muscled black arm-wrestler with forearms bigger than Popeye's. OVER:

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

... winner of this match -- the Big Bill Larson against Mad Dog Madison. Madison will meet the Grizzly. In turn, the winner of that match will have to meet Linc Hawks for the final contest in this weight division... To be eliminated, a contestant has to lose twice.

Snarling and biting, Mad Dog Madison is led to the stage bound in chains. The ROCK BAND strikes up a riff. Like a truly rabid dog, Madison's trainers use the chains to guide him to the table. The crowd loves it.

291 THE AUDIENCE

291

The crowd is on its feet. They APPLAUD wildly.

is watching other contestants brutally working out with weights, cables. Dynamic tension. In the b.g., we see the mighty contest between Mad Dog and Big Bill, hear the ANNOUNCER and the ROCK BAND. Linc finishes his daydreaming and rises.

In the b.g. the match between Big Bill and Mad Dog is bringing the crowd to its feet over and over again.

Both men are grunting and squirming. Suddenly Big Bill's hand slips free from Mad Dog's. The Referee calls for a belt. The men's wrists are now strapped together, and the match re-started.

Jockeying for maximum position once more, the two contestants begin pushing and shoving, hissing and snarling.

At this moment the film goes into an exciting MONTAGE with PULSATING MUSIC that drives the action along:

- A) SHOTS of the crowd CHEERING wildly.
- B) CLOSEUP of the Referees watching through the arms of the straining contestants.
- C) CLOSEUP/ODD ANGLE of the Master of Ceremonies yelling into his microphone.
- D) Mad Dog's straining face.
- E) Big Bill's neck veins and PANNING to his glazed eyes.
- F) Big Bill's hand is driven down almost directly INTO CAMERA.
- G) Mad Dog goes wild and screams into Big Bill's dejected face.
- H) CLUTCHED CAMERA - A battle between two middleweights.
- I) LOW ANGLE - A battle between two lightweights.

(CONTINUED)

- J) A pair of women lock grips.
- K) CLOSEUP of Referees observing the matches.
- L) SHOT of Linc watching from behind the stands.
- M) Bull Hurley curls tremendous dumbbells off to the side of the actions... SLOW MOTION sweat running down his face.
- N) A blonde 16-year-old girl wins and leaps hysterically around the stage and jumps into her bearded father's arms.
- O) A WIDE SHOT of ten or twenty tables being used by the contestants.
- P) SLOW MOTION SERIES of six different hands being put down in defeat, filmed at 120 FRAMES per minute.
- Q) Linc flexes his forearm and rubs his stiff muscles.
- R) One bull-necked man of twenty-five breathes deeply from smelling salts.
- S) Hurley paces in a corner, viewing everyone with disdain.
- T) The contest area is now down to four tables of competition.
- U) A large loser screams at a Referee in SLOW MOTION.
- V) A girl wins and leaps in jubilation as her opponent walks away and cries.
- W) A SERIES of five men and three women psyching themselves up.
- X) A nearby medical facility tends to a muscular man who is in extreme pain while having his arms packed in ice.
- Y) Lincoln still seems like he's lost in a dream world as he drifts past an angry loser, who is vigorously complaining to his friends.

(CONTINUED)

Z) Bull Hurley watches supremely. A CLOSEUP of his hand reveals he is casually bending a hand ball of bottle caps without a hint of effort.

(All these SCENES should be filmed with a TWO-CAMERA/THREE-CAMERA SET-UP, one of the CAMERAS being solely for SLOW MOTION.)

295 MOVING WITH JASON, TIM AND MCBROOM

295

as they leave the CHEERING spectators, Jason and Tim heading in one direction, McBroom approaching Linc.

296 ANOTHER ANGLE - FAVORING LINC

296

as McBroom comes in. He hands Linc his business card. Linc glances at it.

MCBROOM

Mr. Cutler wants a word with you. He's waiting in the Presidential Suite.

Linc motions to a passing REFEREE:

LINC

How long before the finals?

REFEREE

... about a half-hour.

Linc follows McBroom out.

SMASH CUT TO:

297 INT. NEW NUGGET HOTEL - PRESIDENTIAL SUITE - TIM
- NIGHT

297

opens the door from inside, revealing Linc in the corridor outside with McBroom. Tim nods for Linc to enter. McBroom takes off. Tim closes the door.

JASON (O.S.)

Come in, Hawks!

Linc advances into the suite, our ANGLE WIDENING.

(CONTINUED)

Jason stands at the far end of the gigantic suite with doors opening off into other rooms. The suite covers almost the entire top floor of the hotel. It is lavishly furnished. Linc and Jason face each other across the long suite. Tim is in the b.g.

JASON

Care for a drink? That's right. You have to stay sharp for this game you're playing downstairs, don't you?

LINC

What do you want, Cutler?

JASON

We don't have to be enemies. Did you ever think of that?

LINC

I never wanted to be your enemy.

Just then Ruker enters. From the expression on his face, Jason knows something is wrong... Ruker crosses and speaks secretly to his boss.

JASON

McBroom!

The detective steps forward; Jason gives him instructions and McBroom leaves. Ruker coldly eyes Linc.

JASON

(continuing)

I've had my reasons for not liking you. Right or wrong, they were my reasons. But you and I, Hawks, we're both way past that now -- that's way down the road.

(a beat)

With my daughter gone, I haven't any family left in my life except for Michael. You never had anything to begin with, so you have nothing really to lose -- and I have everything to lose. Hopefully, Michael is the one who will someday run the family business.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JASON (CONT'D)

Besides, my daughter's last wishes were for me to take charge of her son.

LINC

Even you don't believe that.

Ruker makes a move toward Linc. Jason motions for him to stop.

JASON

I really don't care what you believe! You're a failure, Hawks, plain and simple. Admit it. You deserted your responsibility, you left your wife without cause.

LINC

You were tearing her apart.

JASON

Trying to clear your conscience?

LINC

I should have stayed and broke your neck.

JASON

That's exactly the kind of response I expected from you. You just don't have what it takes to get by in this world. Do you? You're a quitter -- always will be. And I don't want you around anymore -- nobody does. Now, I'll give you five-hundred-thousand dollars to go someplace -- anyplace except the States. Half-a-million dollars, Hawks. Now, I flew all the way out here to make you a reasonable offer; now let's talk business.

LINC

I want my boy back.

Linc turns, looks across the space at the self-confident man. Then Linc heads for the door. But Ruker steps in front of him.

(CONTINUED)

297 CONTINUED: (3)

297

Linc's face changes. It becomes calm, almost impassive, as he considers the big man standing in his way. Ruker advances on Linc.

JASON

Wait! Don't hurt him; you don't have to...

(moves closer)

Men like this always hurt themselves -- men like this may look the part, but inside they're losers -- big losers. You're going to leave this town broke because you're a coward. You ran when things got difficult, and now you think winning this game downstairs is going to change what you are!? You're a failure as a husband, a father and, most of all, a man!

Lincoln walks away.

SMASH CUT TO:

298 INT. GRAND BALLROOM - THE CONTEST

298

Linc is coming to the center table on stage in Vegas to face a huge man growling insanely -- Mad Dog Madison -- for the final event in their weight class. Linc looks exhausted, no look of life or vitality about him.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

And now, ladies and gentlemen
... Mad Dog Madison against
Lincoln Hawks... If Madison
wins, Hawks is eliminated.

SMASH CUT TO:

299 EXT. STREET - DAY

299

Michael is seen in a taxi... His eyes are reflected in the mirror.

CUT TO:

300 INT. GRAND BALLROOM - THE CONTEST

300

We see Linc almost defeated, Mad Dog growling and working his face insanely as he drives Linc's hand closer to the pad.

CUT TO:

301 CLOSE ON MICHAEL IN TAXI

301

MICHAEL

... A little faster please.

302 INT. GRAND BALLROOM - THE CONTEST

302

We see Linc, using his last ounce of energy, managing to come back, slowly force Mad Dog's hand down... down... touch, the Referee yells, and the crowd GOES WILD.

303 FULL SHOT

303

The excited crowd jammed in for the finals. The ROCK BAND delivers a FANFARE as the Announcer steps onto the stage.

ANNOUNCER

Of the nearly five hundred entrants who entered, only four are left...

The BAND delivers another FANFARE.

ANNOUNCER

(continuing)

Now -- here are the finalists.
From Georgia -- the reigning king of biceps, undefeated in nine years, Battling Bull Hurley.

The audience GOES WILD for the popular champion as Bull lumbers onto the stage -- all two-hundred-and-fifty pounds.

ANNOUNCER

(continuing)

And against him -- one of the gutsiest guys who ever locked arms -- from Pensacola, Florida, Slamming Carl Adams.

ADAMS moves onto the stage. He's a stocky tank of a man.

ANNOUNCER

(continuing)

The winner will find himself against one of these next two:
From Boston, Harry Bosco, pride of the Teamsters.

BOSCO strides out confidently onto the stage. He's almost six-five -- with chest, arms and legs to match.

(CONTINUED)

303 CONTINUED:

303

The teamsters in the crowd stand as one man -- and one woman -- and HOOT and HOLLER for their man Bosco.

ANNOUNCER

(continuing)

And finally Lincoln Hawks --
newcomer favorite of the
independent truckers.

A contingent of independents stand and CHEER for Linc,
who comes onto stage and stands alongside the others.
Linc is dwarfed by Bull, Bosco and Adams.

DRIVERS

Over the top, Linc! Over the top!

ANNOUNCER

Let's have a big round of applause
for these four contenders.

The crowd fills the ballroom with boisterous APPLAUSE.

ANNOUNCER

(continuing)

And now -- starting in five
minutes -- here on center stage --
at Table One -- the finals will
begin. Let the best man win!

The BAND takes over. The contestants leave the stage.

304 MOVING SHOT - LINC

304

He comes down from the stage, crosses to a quiet area to
one side of the ballroom. A contingent of independent
truckers hurry toward Linc.

CUT TO:

305 EXT. THE NEW NUGGET HOTEL - MICHAEL'S TAXI - DAY

305

*

stops in the red zone directly at the entrance to the
hotel. Michael jumps out and rushes into the hotel.

306 INT. THE LOBBY - ON A GIANT TV SCREEN - BULL HURLEY AND
SLAMMING CARL ADAMS

306

are facing each other across the table as the Announcer
proclaims the first of the three final contests. Michael
streaks past the screen and hurries to the scene.

307 MICHAEL

307

enters the arena. We see Bull Hurley flatten Carl
Adams, holding without effort. Adams strains like a man
possessed.

(CONTINUED)

307 CONTINUED:

307

He grinds harder and harder until his face is crimson.

BULL

(low)

Back off! I'm coming through!

Adams tries even harder, nearly hanging from Bull's arm.

BULL

(continuing)

Coming through!

With truly awesome power, Bull explodes with a shocking display of energy and super-human strength that nearly rips Adam's arm from its socket and rocks the table. Adams nearly collapses and is helped away.

ANNOUNCER

Hard to believe any man has that kind of power! But let's hear it for the incredible World Champion!

The BAND STRIKES UP another riff.

308 ANGLE ON LINC

308

facing Harry Bosco at the center table.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

The winner of this match will face Bull Hurley, the ruling Champion. And now... Harry Bosco and Lincoln Hawks.

Michael is seen moving through the crowd... He is spotted by the detective, McBroom. He rushes away in pursuit of Jason...

Bosco towers over Linc. Bosco seems worked up to fever pitch. He pauses and throws a folding chair against the floor. The Referees have trouble aligning his grip with Linc's.

309 THE CROWD

309

Bosco's fans start CHANTING... Bosco drives his fist into the air, leading the chant... He is insane.

(CONTINUED)

309 CONTINUED:

309

FANS
BOSCOBOSCOBOSCOBOSCOBOSCOBOSCO
BOSCOBOSCOBOSCOBOSCOBOSCOBOSCO!

310 ANGLE ON LINC AND BOSCO

310

Bosco starts screaming at the Refs who keep readjusting his grip.

BOSCO
You gonna start it? Are you
gonna start it? -- Hawks is
dead! Hawks is dead! I can't
lose! I can't lose, Hawks!
You hear that!? Everybody
hear that!!

Exasperated, one of the Refs screams back at Bosco,
as one of Bosco's friends slaps his back. Bosco
shoves him.

BOSCO
(continuing)
I can't lose!!

REF
Shut up, Bosco!

311 INT. JASON'S ROOM

311

McBroom enters and confronts Jason, who is on the
phone. Two medics work on wrapping Ruker's head.

McBROOM
Your grandson is here.

312 BACK TO SCENE - GRAND BALLROOM - LINC AND BOSCO

312

But Bosco is suddenly beyond words. Exploding an ear-
piercing howl, he grabs the table with both hands and
shakes it... Linc remains coiled by silence. Hurley
watches in the distance.

BOSCO
First you! Then Hurley!

REF
Okay, Bosco, that's one foul!
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

312 CONTINUED:

312

REF (CONT'D)

Now you get your arm back into
the cup right now -- or I'll
make it two fouls!

BOSCO

You got no right to foul me.
I'm psychin' up, you somebitch!

REF

That's two fouls! One more --
you're disqualified.

Enraged, Bosco seizes the Referee and shoves him into
the audience.

Police and security people rush onto the stage, pile
on Bosco who flails out madly, but the numbers pre-
vail and the men drag the frenzied Bosco out.

313 ANGLE ON LINC

313

standing quietly in the center of the storm. He seems
almost to have tuned out everything around him. He
turns and happens to lock eyes with Hurley.

314 ANNOUNCER

314

He's trying to quiet the SHOUTS and SCREAMS from the
aroused audience.

ANNOUNCER

Ladies and gentlemen, Harry
Bosco has been officially
disqualified. I know that's
a big disappointment to his
many friends and supporters,
but there's always next year.
So now we move directly to the
final event -- Bull Hurley,
World Champion -- and the sole
remaining challenger -- Lincoln
Hawks.

315 MICHAEL

315

moves closer to his father. He is suddenly stopped
from behind by his grandfather, who is flanked by
McBroom and Tim.

(CONTINUED)

JASON

Michael, why did you come here?

MICHAEL

Please, Grandpa, I have to go.

JASON

Let's talk about this, son.

MICHAEL

I can't now! -- I can't.

Michael pulls away and moves towards his father.

316 ANGLE ON BULL

316

coming onto the stage. It's like a giant has just arrived from the beanstalk.

317 LINC

317

doesn't even look at Bull. His eyes are half-closed as he concentrates, and steps to the edge of the stage...

Michael forces his way up to him. Linc is nearly bowled over from the unexpected shock of seeing Michael. The CHEERING crowd makes audible conversation quite difficult.

MICHAEL

Dad!

LINC

How did you get here?

MICHAEL

I had to see you -- I'm sorry!
I was wrong. I want to stay.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

The final match is moments
away -- and this may be over
in a flash, folks -- The David
And Goliath Revisited.

LINC

Your grandfather won't let it
happen.

MICHAEL

Why?

LINC

How can I support you? The
truck's gone.

MICHAEL

Because you're going to win like
you said; you'll be able to start
your own business, remember!?

(CONTINUED)

LINC

What I said and what's real are two different things.

MICHAEL

What do you mean?

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

Contestants, please approach the table!

LINC

That man over there is the best ever -- those are the facts, Mike.

MICHAEL

Are you saying you're going to lose.

Linc looks away.

LINC

... Yeah.

McBROOM comes INTO VIEW in the b.g., followed by Jason, who witnesses Michael chastising his father.

MICHAEL

You hypocrite! All this talk about never giving up and pride was all lies! You never believed it yourself! All that talking you did to me, about being a man, you weren't talking about me, you were talking about yourself, weren't you? I don't care what happened before. That's over with. I don't blame you for anything, so you can stop trying to prove yourself to me. Don't you understand, it doesn't matter if you win or lose ... I don't care! All I care about is being with you!

318 AT THE TABLE - LINC

318

moves away from Mike with renewed fire in his eyes; positions himself at the plexiglass table, his face set in a frozen mask. Only the pulsating muscles at the corners of his jaw reveal his inner emotions.

Bull settles in opposite Linc, as though all this is the easiest thing in the world. The Referees have no trouble setting these two.

Their faces only inches apart, Linc turns his attention to Bull's eyes. With the concentration of a mentalist, he holds Bull's eyes in focus. Linc breaks away and starts pacing.

(CONTINUED)

BULL

You got no chance. You know
that, don't you.

Linc remains silent and paces. He seems to be drawing
on some insane source of energy.

BULL

(continuing)

When I say I'm comin' through, back
off -- back off, or I'm gonna
damage you bad.

Linc still remains silent, and moves to the table. He
and Bull go to lock hands. Bull slaps his hand away
hard.

BULL

(continuing)

Don't fight it -- I'll tear
your arm off.

Linc becomes more intense... The men lock grips as they
grind away for the best position... Michael paces along-
side the stage.

MICHAEL

Don't let him psyche you, Dad!
Over the top, Dad! Over the top!

BULL

You got no power -- Don't make me
give you a world of hurt -- Go down
first so I don't have to make you
cry, little man.

LINC

(quietly)

Bull...

BULL

Wa --

LINC

... Your breath stinks.

Bull's concentration is broken. The Referee releases
their hands.

REFEREE

Go!

Linc moves on the split-second. By the time Bull can re-
act, Linc's locked bicep and body is pushing Bull's arm
toward the pad.

But this giant isn't about to go down that easily. He's
only lost the opening skirmish. Wrapping one massive
leg around the table, he freezes Linc's blitzkreig.

Now, with the force of wild stags, they lock horns.

319 INSERT - VIDEO

319

On the large monitors the anguishing struggle is even more intensely seen. The muscular violence throbs from flexors, biceps and triceps. Bull moves Linc's arm. An inch. Another inch. His greater weight and power are beginning to tell. Linc's arm creeps toward the pad.

320 ANGLE ON MICHAEL

320

He stands with Ben and other supporters, all shouting for Linc to "GO, LINC, GO!"

321 ANOTHER PART OF THE CROWD

321

screaming for Bull to "TAKE HIM, BULL!"... Jason, McBroom and Tim watch.

322 LINC AND BULL

322

Linc looks more and more exhausted, more pain-wracked. Bull tries a hammer down. But it's a mistake. Linc takes up the slack. Kicking in energy from somewhere, he forces Bull's wrist back slightly. Again, the two men remain locked and unmoving, veins standing out, sweat popping free.

323 CLOSE ON LINC

323

Blood trickles from his nose. It runs partially down his face.

324 ANGLE ON THE ANNOUNCER

324

Like everyone else, he is out of his mind with excitement.

ANNOUNCER

IN-CRED-AHH-BULL! Already this match has gone for thirty-two seconds! And it's dead even! In a sport where victory is almost instantaneous, this is UN - BEE - LEAVE - AHBLE!

325 LINC AND BULL

325

Despite his call-up of his last reserves, despite his urgent need to win, despite all his strength, Linc is close to breaking. Here we need VARIOUS ANGLES of his pain, his suffering, his will, his determination -- all expressed through different ANGLES on his face, his wrist, his forearm, his biceps, his chest, his shoulder -- now dangerously lumped and swollen.

326 MICHAEL

326

can't restrain himself. He pushes forward through the hysterical, SCREAMING crowd.

327 LINC AND BULL

327

Bull begins whipping his head back and forth in a final effort. He braces his huge legs even more firmly against the table and heaves with all his power.

But Linc's arm scarcely moves. A trickle of blood appears from Bull's nostrils.

328 MICHAEL

328

climbs up on a chair. He too screams at the top of his lungs.

MICHAEL

Take him, Dad! Take him!

He keeps screaming so insanely that he begins to attract attention from some of the others around him. They look over at the boy. They see a slender, intense little boy, tears falling down his cheeks, his whole body wracked with passion and need, shouting over and over again:

MICHAEL

(continuing)

Take him, Dad! Take him!

Don't give up! Please, don't.

Jason watches the love pouring out of Michael, and realizes all is lost.

CROWD

Take him!

329 LINC AND BULL

329

For Linc the real world is somewhere else -- the lights, the SCREAMS, the hovering shadows of the Referees watching the contestants' elbows in the cups, watching the pad -- nothing exists now for Linc but the arm. All else blends into a crazy fog of muffled sounds and distant shadows. Time itself has stopped.

SLOW MOTION (HEARTBEAT): Bull slowly, slowly, is beginning to drive Linc's arm down.

330 THE ANNOUNCER

330

shouting like everyone else in the place.

(CONTINUED)

330 CONTINUED:

330

ANNOUNCER

This incredible match has broken the one-minute mark -- but it can't last much longer -- any second now... It's mind over matter now! It's who wants it most!

331 LINC

331

is on the very edge of defeat. But from somewhere off in the distance he begins to hear the sound of his son's voice.

MICHAEL (O.S.)

Take him, Dad! Don't give up!!

332 ANGLE ON MICHAEL

332

crying and screaming at the same time, but now the audience is with him. The boy's heartfelt support of his father has spread like wildfire across the hundreds of spectators.

VOICES

Take him! Take him!

333 LINC AND BULL

333

The tidal wave of sound reaches Linc. The CHANT beats in his brain, like his very heartbeat. Linc draws from that unknown place where all champions go to find their victories. From within Bull, a primal scream explodes above the noise of the crowd.

The devastating wail and Bull's sudden resurgence of power stuns Linc and at that instant Bull moves. With one incredible sweep of his entire body he -- goes over the top -- Linc's arm is slowly forced down, down -- finally slamming to the pad.

REFEREE

(shouts)

Touch!

The Referee slaps the victorious Bull across the shoulder. Bull, dazed, rumbles from the table, as hundreds of crazed fans surround him.

(CONTINUED)

333 CONTINUED:

333

The whole tidal wave of people merely brush past Linc, who moves off the stage. The glory is gone. All that remains is the painful aftermath... Linc holds his damaged arm and steps down... A few well-wishers slap his shoulder and quickly move on.

Michael rushes towards him, being roughly shoved around by the indifferent crowd...

Bull Hurley, dripping in perspiration, holds the magnificent trophy high over his head. The BAND PLAYS wildly, augmented by the THRILLED crowd.

BULL

(into microphone)

Hey, thanks -- Thanks -- We
all worked hard. But I'm glad
I won it -- And Hawks, Hawks!
You were the best yet! Maybe
next year.

Bull steps down, looking very strong and hands the heavy trophy over to a large friend...

BULL

(continuing;
low and pained)

... Take this -- I think he
broke something.

Michael finally makes it over to his father... Jason sees this.

MICHAEL

You did it!

LINC

Did what? I lost.

MICHAEL

But you lost like a winner.

LINC

... C'mere.

Michael goes to his father, who embraces him with loving compassion.

DISSOLVE TO:

334 EXT. LAS VEGAS - EARLY MORNING

334

The sun is seen rising over the desert. The streets are nearly empty...

... The doors to Caesar's Palace open and Linc and Michael step out.

LINC

(to doorman)

... Which way is the bus stop?

JASON (O.S.)

Hawks!

Lincoln turns at the sound of his voice and sees Jason Cutler, Tim, Ruken and McBroom in the b.g.

LINC

What do you want?

JASON

I think you know that --
'Morning, Michael.

MICHAEL

'Morning, Grandpa.

JASON

Eat breakfast yet, Michael?

MICHAEL

Not yet, sir.

JASON

See that you do.

(to Linc)

The boy has a habit of missing meals.

LINC

I'll take care of it.

JASON

Sure... Since the boy's in your custody, you'll need means of support.

He tosses Linc a set of keys and motions over his shoulder.

- Linc sees a brand-new tractor-trailer rig...

(CONTINUED)

334 CONTINUED:

334

Jason touches Michael's hair and gives him a slight hug.

JASON

(continuing)

... Always remember, he's got
a grandfather.

Jason steps back as a limo pulls up and Jason and party
get in it.

Line and Michael approach the truck as if it were a
metal god. They look at one another and smile.

The SCENE DISSOLVES and MUSIC SWELLS as:

335 FATHER AND SON

335

are seen speeding across the desert highways disappear-
ing over the horizon.

FADE OUT.

THE END