

REMEMBER THE TITANS

An Original Screenplay
Based on a True Story

by

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FADE IN:

EXT CEMETERY; A GRAVESITE - DAY

"ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 1981"

A LIMO PULLS UP; STOPS TWO MEN in dark suits get out:
HERMAN BOONE, AN INTENSE BLACK MAN in his early forties.
He has a battle scar on his forehead as telling as Ahab's
peg leg

The other man: BILL YOAST, late forties, a COOL, RESERVED
WHITE MAN He carries a weathered, dog-eared Bible-- his
constant companion They walk to the gravesite Behind
them walks Yoast's 19 year old daughter, CHERYL HOLD ON
HER

CHERYL AT 19 (V O)

(Southern drawl)

In Virginia, high school football is a
way of life it's bigger than
Christmas day It brings out powerful
expressions in folks I grew up on
it

At the gravesite, a GROUP OF 50 YOUNG ADULTS, BLACK and
WHITE; BIG MEN-- EX-FOOTBALL PLAYERS The Coaches reach
them; they stand A PHOTOGRAPHER nearby SHOOTS THE
COACHES THE FLASH FILLS THE SCREEN

CHERYL AT 19 (V O CONT'D)

In the summer of 'seventy one our
School Board was forced to integrate
They combined the white school,
Hammond High, with George Washington
High- the black school This bright
new bastion of learning was to be
called T C Williams High, named after
our former beloved Mayor, a true son
of the South.

SUPER TITLE "SUMMER 1971" -- PHOTOGRAPHS OF THAT
TURBULENT TIME COME TO LIFE: Anti-war protests, pro-war
protests, Black Panther rallies, civil rights marches,
demonstrations, clashes with police and anti-busing
protests.

CUT TO:

EXT ALEXANDRIA, VA - THE RIDGE (WHITE SECTION) - DAY

SEVERAL HUNDRED BLACKS protest in front of a 7-11 Store
They carry signs protesting the killing of a young black
boy at the store The signs show his picture The signs
read: "MURDERER!" "EYE FOR AN EYE!"

INTERCUT: SHOTS of TEENAGERS on a FOOTBALL PRACTICE
FIELD; muddy, slamming into each other -- hitting the
dirt

INTERCUT: THE DEMONSTRATION: WHITES defend their neighborhood -- as crazed and angry as the blacks a line of police holding them apart

EXT PRACTICE FIELD/HAMMOND HIGH - DAY

BACK TO THE TEENAGERS: a dozen of them, all white, running tough defensive "plays" against each other They're watched over by BILL YOAST, now early 40's; his daughter CHERYL, now 9, and assistant coach FERRELL

CHERYL

Come on, Kirk-- don't let Ray back you down like that! You're twice his size!

The two boys, RAY STUBBS and KIRK BARKER, go at it twice as hard -- GERRY BERTIER, 18, broad-shouldered All-American linebacker, steps over to Coach Yoast

BERTIER

Coach uh, with the schools combining and all -- some of the guys are kinda nervous about, y'know. losin' their starting positions

YOAST

It's still my team, Gerry -- any team of mine, you start on

BERTIER

It ain't so much me, coach. what about the other guys?

Yoast hesitates he doesn't have such a quick answer for that then:

VOICE (O S)

It's comin' down! At the Seven Eleven!

Everyone on the field looks up, as BUCK, runs over:

BUCK

They're right out front! They wanna burn it up! It's comin' down!

The BOYS all tear off the field, ignoring Yoast as he shouts:

YOAST

Hey! Come back here! Hey!
(then;to Ferrell)
Get Cheryl inside the school!

He runs to the BLUE PICKUP TRUCK parked nearby

EXT 7/11 - THE PROTEST - CONTINUOUS

A group of young black FOOTBALL PLAYERS, some wearing "Washington High" jackets, push through the crowd, led by the 17 year-old, dashiki-wearing, JULIUS "BIG JU" CAMPBELL

BIG JU
Murderer! Shut the devil down!

INTERCUT: SCHOOL PARKING LOT: THE TRUNK of BERTIER'S CAMARO flies open: Hands grab the TIRE IRON -- a CHAIN -- and the WHITE BOYS slam the trunk down Stubbs slides across the trunk, "Starsky and Hutch" style

BERTIER
Hey! That's my car, man!

-- But Stubbs just WHOOPS with excitement, leading the way as the boys charge toward riot brewing right across the street from the school they almost reach it, but:

YOAST'S PICKUP TRUCK screeches to a halt in front of them:

YOAST
Gerry, Kirk, Ray, all of you -- if you ever want to play for me again, you get in here! Now!

Bertier is torn, but he hops into the back of the pickup; the others reluctantly follow, and Yoast guns the engine and tears off back up the street.

INT SCHOOL FOYER - MOMENTS LATER

The doors fly open, and Yoast leads the boys in past the waiting Ferrell and Cheryl:

YOAST
 (to Ferrell)
 Two weeks to training camp, and this has to happen Two weeks!

COACH FERRELL
 That boy threatened Earl, Coach He just done what he had to do

YOAST
Earl -- Earl has been itchin' to blow somebody's brains out since Charlotte split on 'im.

BERTIER
 You see 'em out there, Coach? It's like anarchy, or something -- We can't let 'em take over!

YOAST
 (walking)
 You boys are gonna cool off, and come with me to my office, help me finish packing my things come on!

COACH FERRELL
 (to Bertier)
 Gerry, you got your heart in the right place

but you ought to know better'n to be
embarrassing the Coach out there

INT YOAST'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Bertier grumbles as he steps inside past Yoast:

BERTIER

Just keep 'em all off the team, coach
I'm not playing with any of 'em black
bastards

The other guys chime in "Hell no!" -- "Me neither!"
Then they stop, as they notice:

HERMAN BOONE -- Now a black man in in his thirties,
standing by the window, looking out at the riot he
turns and faces the group of hostile white faces -- all
staring at him as if he is an enemy alien

COACH FERRELL

Who are you?

BOONE

Herman Boone. Your new assistant
coach

Yoast moves to his desk without acknowledging Boone

YOAST

Gerry, Ray I got these files need
to be collated The rest of y'all
finish taping up these boxes for me.

COACH FERRELL

(to Boone)

Why ain't you out there with your
buddies?

BOONE

This was the time arranged for me to
meet Coach Yoast I never miss an
appointment

COACH FERRELL

Maybe you better re-schedule.

Boone observes Ferrell coldly. . then walks toward the
door.. Bertier, Stubbs and Kirk are in his way . he's
either going to have to go through them or around them
a dangerous smile flashes behind Boone's eyes; he starts
forward -- but:

YOAST

Coach Boone

(Boone stops)

I did not hire you; the School Board
put you on my staff

BOONE

So I was told But I'll still help
you win

COACH FERRELL

Win? Coach Yoast's been nominated for
the Virginia High School Hall of Fame--
15 winning seasons under his belt

BOONE

(restrained)

I took state in North Carolina -- four
times As a head coach

YOAST

I'm not questioning your ability as a
coach at the AA level We're Triple
A here in Virginia This's a whole new
ballgame

BOONE

Football is football, Coach: No matter
where I am . I'm gonna compete

YOAST

There's competition, and there's
competition You're out of your
league, here

BOONE

I'll do a good job for you, Coach

COACH FERRELL

We'll be the judge of that.

Boone takes in the white coach's hostile glare .

EXT FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH; ALEXANDRIA - DAY

The SIGN outside the front door reads: "The Lord helps
those who play tough Defense"

PREACHER (V O)

. in closing today, let us all send
up a warm and heartfelt prayer for our
beloved brother Deacon, Bill Yoast

INT FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH; ALEXANDRIA - DAY

YOAST and CHERYL are seated amongst a sea of APPLAUDING
CHURCHGOERS.

PREACHER

. Take your winning ways to T C
Williams High School as our new Head
Coach.

A standing OVATION. . Cheryl beams

PREACHER (cont'd)

May you bring peace and the love of
God into the hearts and minds of all
those you shall encounter

(breaks into song)

"Why should I feeeeeel discouraged "

Congregation breaks into "MY EYE IS ON THE SPARROW"
continuing over the NEXT SCENE:

EXT WHITE NEIGHBORHOOD; ALEXANDRIA - SAME TIME

P O V 's through various WINDOW-SHADES and lowered
BLINDS, being moved aside by WHITE HANDS OVER THE
SHOULDERS of middle-class WHITES looking furtively out of
their windows to see:

HERMAN BOONE and his slim, attractive wife, CAROL,
carrying their infant SHARON; children, NICKY 9 and KAREN
5, move into their new home Boone directs the MOVERS,
who are carrying their furniture when a BLACK CADILLAC
pulls up: FERDINAND DAY, a patrician black man, and
several other BLACK MEN step out of the car, greeting the
somewhat surprised Boone

ANGLE THROUGH ANOTHER WINDOW: as Day tells Boone
something that clearly knocks him for a loop Boone
steps away from the men, sitting on the porch steps,
mulling it over

EXT YOAST'S BACK YARD - DUSK

Cheryl is weeping openly, as Yoast comforts her ATHLETIC
DIRECTOR DAVE REVERE watches compassionately

A D REVERE

I'm sorry Coach -- but that's the way
it's gonna be.

CHERYL

It's not fair! My Daddy's Head Coach!
This is gonna be his Hall of Fame
Year! You gonna take that away from
'im?

A D REVERE

No one's taking away your Daddy's
future place in the Hall But the
school board's decided Herman Boone's
gonna be Head Coach at T C.

CHERYL

But you can't just

Yoast reaches down and puts a finger to Cheryl's lips

YOAST

That's enough, Cheryl

Cheryl clenches her jaw She stalks toward the house,
pausing just long enough to PUNCH Revere as she passes

YOAST (cont'd)

Cheryl!

A D REVERE

It's all right, Bill I feel the same
way

Only it's those agitators and race
mixers I feel like takin' a swat at

Yoast starts pacing -- AND WE HOLD ON HIM --moving back
and forth in front of the yard fence:

YOAST

What about our seniority system, Dave?
I've got 15 winning seasons in this
town Three city titles

A D REVERE (O S)

Troublemakers down in the Berg are
ready to put a torch to the city You
want us to burn up like Watts?

(then)

Every head coach in the system is
white We had to give'em something
Sorry you had to be sacrificed,
Bill. but that's the world we're
livin' in -- God help us all

EXT BACKYARD/ BOONE HOUSE - NIGHT

HERMAN BOONE, paces in agitation by his own backyard
fence.

BOONE

I believe in the seniority system, Mr
Day I applied for an assistant
coach's job and that's what I'll be
Yoast's done a fine job. it's why I
applied here in the first place.
this is his job

Ferdinand Day, black school board member, sits nearby,
dabbing his face with a handkerchief

DAY

Under ordinary conditions it would
be but we are living in
extraordinary times

BOONE

I left Carolina 'cause I was passed
over for a position I earned. Lost my
job to a white coach who couldn't tie
his own cleats. Now you want me to do
the same thing to this man?

A baby's CRIES pierce the air

BOONE (cont'd)

(calling toward the house)
Everything all right in there?

CAROL (O S)

*You better take a look out front,
Herman*

DAY

Coach Boone black folks have never had anything in this city to call their own, except humiliation and despair

BOONE

Don't sound any different than any other city to me -- and I won't change the way I live my life for it

DAY

We need something to hang our hopes on

Boone strides into the house, holding the back-door open for Mr Day

BOONE

I'm a football coach -- no worse and no better But I earned everything I got

THE CAMERA CONTINUES DOLLYING ALONG THE EXTERIOR of the house, past the brightly lit windows, as Boone and Day walk though toward the front door .

DAY (O S)

People I spoke to in Carolina said you stood up to the Klan, marched with Dr King told me you're a race man

BOONE (O S)

I am that I love and respect my race But that won't mean much if I can't respect myself

The CAMERA ARRIVES at the front door just as Boone opens it, stepping into a CLOSE-UP He stops eyes widening:

HUNDREDS of BLACK PEOPLE are gathered in front of the house on the lawn, in the street, and sitting on their cars; holding candles -- a vigil When they see BOONE, THEY BREAK INTO APPLAUSE

DAY

We need you, Coach Boone

ANGLE FROM SHUTTERED WINDOWS: We see the SILHOUETTES of NEIGHBORS holding SHOTGUNS -- PISTOLS -- peering out onto the street, as:

BIG JU and MR CAMPBELL (BIG JU'S FATHER) move through the throng towards Boone

MR. CAMPBELL

Coach Boone, I'm Charles Campbell. This is my son, Julius He can be the finest defensive end in the state, if you push him to it.

(then)

You're our savior, Coach.

BOONE
 (stepping off the porch)
 Are you people crazy? I'm a high
 school football coach -- that's it!
 That's all I do! I can't save anybody
 from anything!

But they ignore his protestations and CONTINUE TO
 APPLAUD, pat him on the back, reach out to touch him
 Boone shakes his head He turns to CAROL, who stands in
 the doorway, holding the baby Nicky and Karen peek out
 from behind her, looking at their father with wonder in
 their eyes

INT YOAST HOME; LIVING ROOM - SAME NIGHT

WALT HARRIS, a sixty year old Southern gentleman, the
 Athletic Director at Loudon High, sits with YOAST and
 CHERYL

HARRIS
 Coach, I ain't got much shame, here
 We're dying to have you at Loudon
 High Bring your entire staff We'll
 up your pay \$15,000 and build you a
 fine ol' house planted right in the
 middle of ten green acres

YOAST
 I'd probably get lost in all that
 land You know my wife and I are
 it's just Cheryl and me

HARRIS
 Get lost all you want, long as you
 find your way back for the start of
 training camp.
 (laughs)
 Our away games are televised And our
 town is pristine as a new-minted
 silver dollar -- only thing black in
 Loudon is street tar

A KNOCK AT THE DOOR Cheryl moves to it and opens it
 It's BOONE.

CHERYL
 (tight)
 What do you want?

BOONE
 To see Coach Yoast, child.

CHERYL
 We're busy -- interviewing for head
 coaching jobs We've got 11 offers,
 and certainly no time for you!

She starts to close the door, but Yoast appears and stops
 it, He glowers sternly at Cheryl -- who matches his
 stare, but reluctantly backs off

INT BASEMENT - MINUTES LATER

The walls are covered with plaques and photos Trophies abound: "City Champions '68, '69, '70 " A painting of Jesus is behind the desk BOONE sits on the sofa YOAST sits on the edge of his desk

BOONE

I just want you to know one thing: I did not lobby for your job I was ready and willing to be on your staff

YOAST

But you saw an opportunity for yourself and grabbed it I can understand that Don't know if I admire it much but I understand it

Boone tenses hit where it hurts. But he presses on:

BOONE

I'm no good at diplomacy -- in fact, there ain't much in this life I am good at But I know how to coach football I'm sorry about the way it came down -- but I am qualified to be this school's head coach

YOAST

Sure You've been in what -- four, five programs in the last ten years?
(looks hard at Boone)
I've got roots here . coached 20 years in this town ---15 of 'em as a head coach.

BOONE

I know what it's like to get passed over

YOAST

This isn't just about me. . I'm worried about my boys.

BOONE

(seething)
What do you think I'm gonna do? Cook 'em up and eat 'em with a side order of grits?! The best players, the best plays; color don't matter!

YOAST

From the looks of our little situation we got us here, I'd say it's about all that does.

(pause)

I think we're done

BOONE

Coach, I'm in a difficult situation I could use a strong right hand

Come on my staff as assistant head
coach, defensive coordinator

YOAST
Work under you?

Boone fixes him with a level gaze that's right

YOAST
I've been a head man for 17 years!
Assistant?! No, sir, I'll be taking
the head coaching job at Loudon
High Now good night, Coach

Boone looks at him hard, then heads up the stairs,
walking past CHERYL, who is sitting at the top of the
stairs, furious She waits for his footsteps to recede,
then:

CHERYL
Plain ol' mother talk can't describe
my feelings towards that man

EXT CAPTAIN JOHN'S CRABHOUSE (THE RIDGE) - NIGHT

The parking lot is full of cars and TV NEWS VANS A big
sign reads: "We reserve the right to deny service to
anyone " A BLACK NEWSPAPER MAN is turned away by CAPTAIN
JOHN, 50, slim redneck with a baseball bat

INT CAPTAIN JOHN'S - MINUTES LATER

The walls are adorned with Hammond football pictures,
memorabilia, plaques, and awards YOAST stands before the
tense CROWD: HAMMOND PLAYERS, FAMILIES, AND SUPPORTERS
COACH FERRELL and CHERYL sit behind him TV NEWS
CAMERAMEN AND REPORTERS rim the room

YOAST
-- It's been a rare privilege, to have
lived here as long as I have, coaching
your boys.. trying to help 'em grow
into fine young men as well as fine
athletes.

(restrained emotion)
But the Lord in his wisdom has seen to
it that in this world all good things
must run their course. . hopefully to
bring on better things in the future

(heavy pause)
I have decided to take the head
coaching job at Loudon High School

MR COSLETT
*Boycott T.C Williams! Let 'em have it
to themselves!*

BERTIER
(standing)
He stole your job, Coach I won't play
for him . I'll sit this season out

YOAST
 (shocked)
 Only place you're gonna sit is right
 back down in that chair, Gerry
 Bertier!

MR COSLETT
Boycott the school! Boycott T C !

YOAST
 (angry; moves to Mr Coslett)
Stop this, Fred You know none of
 these boys can afford to move to some
 other district just to play ball.
 they sit out, they put their futures
 on the line

STUBBS
 (standing up)
 I'm out too I ain't playing for no
 sneak-thief!

YOAST
 (pleading)
 Don't do this don't make this any
 harder for me than it already is.

KIRK
 I sure ain't playin' for one of 'em!

Kirk stands; and another, then another stand until all 24
 players are standing to CHEERS and TEARS

INT BOONE'S HOME; THE KITCHEN - EARLY MORNING

Boone is talking into the phone, papers strewn all over
 the dining table. His kids are fighting with each other
 in the b g., making a commotion the entire time

BOONE
 -- you're sure, now.. we got a
 handful of All-State quality players
 here, I can tell you that And the
 current staff is. .
 (listens)
 uh huh well, alright, Coach. I
 understand You have my number if you
 change your mind. Thanks

BOONE bitterly hangs up the phone, then turns and barks
 at his arguing kids:

BOONE (contid)
 Hey, girls! What'd I tell you about
 bothering me in my office?

NICKY
 We in the kitchen, we ain't in no
 office

BOONE

When I'm working in the kitchen, the kitchen is my office!

(to his wife)

Mama, mind your children, will you?

CAROL

You want anything minded around here, Herman, you better mind your tone

BOONE

(sighs)

I need a staff, Mama I got Doc to come down from N C -- but Yoast's turned every qualified coach in Virginia against me

(angering)

The thought of them looking at me like I don't deserve what I got -- like I'm some kind of "put-up" man.

He stands, putting his arms around his wife

BOONE (cont'd)

I don't want to move again I just want to plant roots Somewhere where the kids can grow up and make friends .. hell, we could use some friends, too.

CAROL

You got this job, Herman You didn't ask for it, but you got it

(hugs him back)

So you got a choice; you can sit here and complain about it or you can go out there and show these townies how to play football

EXT. T C WILLIAMS FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

PETEY JONES, 17 year old black kid, a whirling-dervish of irrepressible energy, runs through a crowd of 30 BLACK KIDS in street clothes: dashikis, and/or black leather jackets, berets; BIG JU in front.

PETEY

We gonna play some ball, y'all?

ALL

Yeah! You know it, bro'!

He slaps hands, backs. his enthusiasm is infectious
GLASCOE, a running back, shouts:

GLASCOE

How many yards you figure you gonna get yourself this season, Petey?

PETEY

I'm not gon' brag on myself, but I plan on a thousand!

But I ain't braggin'!
(laughter)

Big Ju and his friend, BLUE, look around at the all-black squad

BIG JU
Man, I knew them hard-up honkies
wouldn't play for no brother

BLUE
Who needs 'em, baby? From now on the
Titans are gonna be super-powered by
soul power!
(singing)
Soul Power! Sooooooul Power!!

CHEERS OF SUPPORT A BEEFY BLACK MAN: PAUL "DOC" HINDS,
the 30 year old offensive line coach moves toward them,
followed by BOONE One kid, COOK smiles and raises his
fist in a black-power salute

BOONE
Knock that stupid grin off your face,
boy you planning to hit me or
something? Put down that fist before I
make you eat your own damn knuckles
(Cook complies)
Nobody smiles on a football field We
snarl on a football field. We grimace,
we growl and we gnash our teeth, but
we do not smile Straighten up! I am
Head Coach Boone.
(to DOC)
Check 'em in!

DOC
I'm Coach Hinds, your offensive line
coach. Yell out your name and
position, starting to the left--

BIG JU
Julius Campbell, defensive end

Then, pushing through the periphery of this black group,
is a massive, big-bellied WHITE KID, LOUIE LASTIK
Everything stops.

DOC
What on God's green earth are you?

LASTIK
(out of breath)
Louie Lastik, offensive lineman Navy
family, just moved here from Chi-Town
Somebody said "football!" So I come
running
(turning to the group)
What's up, everybody?
(cold stares)

A pious black boy, mature for his years, steps forward;
"THE REV" short for "The Reverend"

REV
Jerry Harris, quarterback

The players call out affectionately: "Rev!" "Yo, Rev,
send up a prayer for me, Rev!" "Hallelujah!" -- then,
from the far end of the field, comes what looks like an
army:

THE WHITE PLAYERS from Hammond High, led by YOAST and
COACH FERRELL Behind the coaches are BERTIER, STUBBS and
23 other players

STUBBS
Look at all of 'em Ain't none of us
gonna see nothing but the bench this
year

BERTIER
You'll play

STUBBS
Not with one of them callin' the
shots

BERTIER
He ain't callin' no shots You'll
play

The white players reach the black group; stopping several
yards away The two groups glare daggers of hate

EXT UNDER THE STANDS - MINUTES LATER

BOONE and YOAST have an impromptu face off

BOONE
You just disrupted my first team
meeting in an unacceptable fashion.
Now, I know this is not easy for you,
and I sympathize with that; but from
here on in, that will cease to be a
factor. This is my team now. . You
with that or not?

YOAST
I'm here, ain't I?
(then)
Let's talk football.

BOONE
Let's talk football

YOAST
I run the defense My formations--

BOONE
--as part of my team strategy. I've
never seen an assistant coach's name
in the paper for losing a game

YOAST
I decide who plays on my side of the
ball

BOONE
We will decide on who plays defense

They are interrupted by A D REVERE

A D REVERE
Glad to see you gentlemen working this
thing out I just want you to know you
have my full support

Both coaches stare coldly at him He gives a nervous
little cough, and moves along

YOAST
I want a job for Coach Ferrell

BOONE
That redneck? I don't think so

YOAST
He's been with me for 10 years You
don't get me without him

A tense, silent moment then:

EXT THE FIELD - CONTINUOUS

BOONE and YOAST walk out on the field. Yoast looks up at
CHERYL and nods to her The Coaches stand before the
PLAYERS

BOONE
I am Head Coach Boone. This is Coach
Hinds, your offensive line coach. This
is defensive coordinator and assistant
head Coach Yoast

Big Ju and the black players grumble They don't like
Yoast

YOAST
I am Coach Yoast. This gentleman--
(indicating FERRELL)
. is Special Teams Coach Ferrell
(FERRELL nods his
appreciation to YOAST)
I look forward to working with you
boys All of you.

BOONE
We leave for camp on August 15th at
7:29 a m. If you report at 7:30 a m ,
you will be watching football instead
of playing football. And don't bother
showing up, 'less you show up in a
jacket, white shirt and tie, either
(angry grumbles)

You don't own a jacket, buy one You
 can't afford it, borrow one off your
 old man You don't have an old man,
 find a drunk and trade him for his,
 'cause I guarantee you I have never
 seen a bum on the street looked as
 raggedy-ass ridiculous as what I'm
 seein' right now You want to look
 like a ragamuffin, you do it on your
 own time You want to play for me, you
 come dressed for business

(then)

There is no democracy here This is a
 dictatorship I am the law If you
 survive camp, you will be on the
 team if you survive

EXT FRONT OF THE T C WILLIAMS STADIUM - AUG 15 - 7
 A M

LOW ANGLE: TWO BUSES rumble past, above the CAMERA; They
 pull to a stop, revealing a throng BLACK PARENTS and
 SUPPORTERS, lining one side of the fog-shrouded street
 kissing their boys, all in jackets and ties, goodbye On
 the other side of the street WHITE PARENTS do the same
 with their sons

DOC, YOAST, CHERYL and FERRELL stand with A D REVERE,
 watching the boys trudge to the buses -- black kids
 stepping onto one bus, whites on the other.

BOONE approaches, carrying his slim playbook. Cheryl,
 still bitter, glares hard at Boone

COACH FERRELL

That's a skinny playbook you got
 there, Coach

BOONE

I run six plays; split veer Run it
 right, there ain't no stopping it

COACH FERRELL

If you say so, Coach

Boone steps away to greet Doc -- A D. Revere turns to
 Yoast:

A D. REVERE

This sorry sonofagun is in way over
 his head

(then)

Just be patient, Bill your time
 will come

SUDDENLY through the mist: BERTIER and THE WHITE
 LINEBACKERS appear... Bertier and Stubbs head toward
 Boone and stand in front of him, eyeballing him
 defiantly

BERTIER

I'm Gerry Bertier, Captain of
 Hammond

and the only All-American you got on this team If you want us to play, you reserve half the open positions for Hammond players Half the special teams, half the offensive team And we don't need any of your people on defense; we're already set

Dead silence everybody staring Yoast is shaking his head slightly, mortified Boone's eyes narrow into slits

BOONE

Gerry Bertier, huh You sure that's who you are- cause you look more like Jerry Lewis to me Funny as he is, too

(to Stubbs)

He has all the funny lines, so you must be the straight man here -- that would make you Martin, right?

(to everyone)

Ladies and gents, Martin and Lewis go to Camp he does wacky antics, he sings songs and gets the girl. I don't know about you, but I think they just walked into the wrong movie.

(moves stunned Bertier toward the white parents)

C'mere your folks here, Gerry?
(no answer)

Are your parents here, boy?

BERTIER

(reluctantly)

That's my mother

BOONE

That's nice Take a good look at her -- cause once you get on that bus, you ain't got no momma any more You got your brothers on the team, and you got your Daddy. You know who your Daddy is, boy?

Bertier grits his teeth... there are angry grumbles and protestations from the white crowd they're standing in front of..

BOONE (cont'd)

If you want to play football this year you answer me right now, boy -- when you are on this team, who is your Daddy?

(shouting)

Who's your daddy?

BERTIER

(barely audible)

You.

BOONE

And whose team is it - Your team or your daddy's team?

BERTIER
Yours

Boone glares at Bertier for another moment, ignoring the furious gaze of the white audience in front of him then:

BOONE
Get on the bus

Bertier walks past Stubbs and the shocked Yoast and Ferrell and boards the white bus -- Boone watches then something snaps in him, and he strides after them toward the white bus

He steps inside and looks down the aisle: WHITE PLAYERS and BUS DRIVER

BOONE
Everybody off the bus!

INT BLACK BUS - CONTINUOUS

BOONE boards and looks down the aisle BLACK PLAYERS AND BUS DRIVER.

BOONE (cont'd)
Off the bus!
(confused stares)
Get off the bus! Now!

THE BLACK PLAYERS grumble then follow Boone off the bus

BOONE (cont'd)
(pointing)
DEFENSE OVER HERE OFFENSE OVER HERE
(they move; then)
Bertier.. Campbell. Get on the
defense bus Sit in the second seat.
Together.

BERTIER reluctantly moves to the bus with the equally reluctant BIG JU.

BOONE (cont'd)
You and you, on the bus. You two on
the bus. Sit together.

Boone goes through the crowd picking one black player and one white player -- Noah's Ark.

BOONE (cont'd)
-- get comfortable, too, cause the
person you're sitting next to is gonna
be your roommate for the duration of
camp
(more protesting)
Anybody don't like it, you're free to
join your Mommies back there right
now

The grumbling continues, but the boys go on boarding the buses

EXT STREET - MOMENTS LATER

The buses pull out, driving past the group of shocked parents and supporters on both sides of the street -- all watching anxiously as the buses disappear into the mist

INT DEFENSE BUS - LATER

The boys all sit there dead silent Blue looks back at Petey, in the seat behind him, and smiles he starts SINGING:

BLUE
 "Ain't no mountain high enough, ain't
 no river wide enough "

Petey grins and starts to join in, when:

BIG JU
Shut up!
 (rising)
I don't want to hear no smilin'
minstrel negros sangin' on this bus,
y'all.

He slides back down next to Bertier, who mumbles:

BERTIER
 You got that right.

BIG JU
Shut up, man.
 (shakes his head)
 Damn .

EXT GETTYSBURG - DAY

THE BUSES move down the road. Song: "Are you gonna be at the Love-In?" starts on the SOUNDTRACK; as they pass a sign that says: "Welcome to Gettysburg" -- roll past an old cannon sitting in a field with a statue commemorating the Civil War.

EXT. GETTYSBURG COLLEGE - TWENTY MINUTES LATER

THE PLAYERS unload their gear from the buses and walk into the dorm

A MONTAGE OF SCENES; the SONG CONTINUES: As the boys unpack their things:

REV and STUBBS: Stubbs makes a big show of putting his stuff on one bed then changes his mind just as Rev is about to put his stuff down on the other Rev takes it in patiently

COOK and COSLETT: Cook is in the bathroom, changing the door is open a crack, and Coslett is furtively glancing over

BLUE and LASTIK: Are getting on just fine -- playing odds or evens to see who gets which side of the room, laughing

INT BERTIER AND BIG JU'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Big Ju puts up a poster of Black Panther leader Huey Newton, strips down to his shorts, jumps in bed and pulls out the Black Panther Paper -- Bertier unrolls a "Re-Elect Nixon" poster and puts it on his wall He puts Rod Stewart's "Maggie May" in his eight-track

BIG JU
Yo, I'm reading, man

BERTIER
Cool -- I'm listening to music

BIG JU
There's a word for what that is, and music ain't it Put something else on

BERTIER
You bring a deck?
(no answer)
Deck is mine, music is mine

Bertier hops onto his bed... and Ju stands up and makes for the tape deck... events follow the traditional alpha male pattern from there -- and within seconds the two big guys are slamming each other off the walls..

IN THE HALLWAY OUTSIDE -- All the nearby doors fly open, as the other players come out, drawn by the commotion then run into:

BERTIER AND JU'S ROOM -- getting into the middle of the fight. . and the room is soon more crowded than that ship cabin in the Marx Brothers' "Monkey Business." -- Coaches Ferrell and Yoast wade into the middle of it, shouting, trying to pull the boys apart. .

INT. MEETING ROOM - LATER

TEAM MEETING. BOONE stands in front Everyone is in their gear. Black eyes and busted lips abound. YOAST and the other assistant coaches are in the front

BOONE
. well, well well Look here at all you tough guys Think you're some bad mamma-jammas, don't you, beatin' on each other like a bunch of fifth-grade girls in a catfight.
(glares)
You got anger, good, you'll need it
You got aggression, good, you'll need that too

But any child can throw a fit This
game is about controlling that anger,
harnessing that aggression into a team
effort, in order to achieve
perfection

(walks amongst the players)
Perfection -- some people go through
their entire sorry lives without
knowing it for even one minute But we
will be perfect We'll be perfect in
every facet of the game I demand
nothing less Drop a ball, run a mile;
miss a block, run a mile
Perfection Now get to work

The team rises and moves to the exit Doc and Coach
Ferrell move out with the team Yoast moves to Boone

YOAST

I have to say, I don't think it's a
good idea raising their
expectations like that

BOONE

I'm giving you the best players for
defense, so you should have no trouble
achieving the perfection that I
demand.

YOAST

(quiet intensity)
Seeking perfection is a sacrilege
Only the Lord is perfect. All we can
do is try our best -- the rest is in
His hands

BOONE

Not on my squad Perfection Get used
to it, Yoast -- you'll be hearing it
all year.

EXT FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

ANGLE FROM BEHIND the PLAYERS -- they move past the
CAMERA, filing onto the field, and we BOOM UP, to reveal
the SUN cracking the horizon:

BOONE (V O)

I am change. The way we practice will
be different The way we warm-up will
be different. The old way is dead,
welcome the new day

THE OFFENSIVE TEAM sets up on the line BOONE'S LEGS
striding past the, as he inspects their stances:

BOONE (cont'd)

On my offense, the linemen tell the
linemen who to block. You audible at
the line, and you audible with
authority

LASTIK

(alarmed)

Audible? I'm a lineman, coach -- you sure you want me thinking out there?

BOONE

You are not a dumb lineman anymore, Lastik. You don't want to think, sit your large behind on that couch in your living room and watch the boob-tube. I want scholars of the game playing on my line.

ANGLE ON YOAST: walking in front of his DEFENSIVE PLAYERS; he is not loud like Boone, but he speaks with a burning intensity:

YOAST

Defense is desire. We don't read. We pressure pass, we pressure run. You will have fire and desire. Eleven on one will be our motto. Jump on that ball carrier like a starving man on a Christmas ham.

CHERYL is on the sidelines, watching in rapt admiration.

THE PRACTICE STARTS:

The offense runs the veer -- an option offense. THE REV takes the snap and sprints to the right. He pitches it to PETEY JONES, the black halfback -- the defense charges at him, and the white fullbacks blocking for him do a real half-assed job -- Petey gets tackled, and loses the ball in the process.

BOONE

(erupting)

You will never fumble again!

PETEY

My 'backs weren't hardly blocking for me, Coach.

BOONE

Your 'backs? Were your 'backs holding the ball when you got that love tap and fumbled it? Pick it up and run a mile!

Petey picks up the football and takes off dejectedly running his mile -- Yoast watches and is disturbed.

EXT FOOTBALL FIELD - THE LONGEST DAY

BOONE (V O.)

You don't want to play together, fine -
- but you sure as hell are gonna burn
and sweat and cry together.

THE PLAYERS are running through various drills, "up and downs," "agility drills," "crabbing," "tackling dummy," "sled blocking," etc. The players are dripping with sweat and exhaustion. They're dying.

BOONE (cont'd)

Only a coward will not block for his teammates. Only a coward will not give up his body to save his friend. You want to be cowards, that's all right with me -- but you are going to be the best conditioned cowards in the region. You want to run away from a challenge instead of toward it, you'll be so jackrabbit fast the only thing folks'll be able to see is that yella streak you leave behind you in the dust.

Doc walks amongst the panting, squat-thrusting boys.

PETEY

Doc, we need a water break.

DOC

Tough it out, Petey. Tough it out.

BOONE BLOWS HIS WHISTLE indicating that it is time to move to another set of drills. BERTIER moves to YOAST and whispers.

BERTIER

We been going for two hours today -- when do we get a water break, Coach?

YOAST

You're lookin' at the wrong guy, son.

BOONE

NO TALKING. NEXT DRILL!

Bertier drags to the next set of drills. Yoast moves to Boone.

YOAST

If one of these boys dies out here from the heat, so help me God.

BOONE

I know when to break, Yoast. I don't need you lookin' over my shoulder like an old mother hen.
(blows whistle)
WATER BREAK!

The PLAYERS converge on the water station. Cheryl serves as waterboy. In their rush the guys start jostling each other, and:

STUBBS

Hey, wait your turn, boy!

BIG JU
 (pushing him down)
 Boy!? I hear you say "boy," cracker?

BERTIER
 (pushing Big Ju back)
 You don't touch him!

FIGHT Cheryl jumps out of the way, throwing cups at the fighting boys, shouting: "Quit it, jerks!" as ASSISTANT COACHES run over to break up the escalating melee

Yoast gives Boone a disgusted look, shaking his head; then walks past him back toward the school Boone stares at the fracas face tight with frustration

INT MEETING ROOM - NIGHT

YOAST is at the chalkboard putting in the depth chart
 CHERYL sits in the front row

YOAST
 This is not gonna work

CHERYL
 But it has to, doesn't it? No place
 for us to go now, Coach

YOAST
 That man is in far over his head.

CHERYL
 We're just gonna have to cover for 'im
 on defense, coach Run "44 Stack," "50
 Monster," -- we just can't allow those
 other teams to score.

Big Ju enters.

BIG JU
 You wanted to see me?

Yoast motions him over Cheryl rises to exit as Big Ju moves down.

YOAST
 Julius, this is the second time you
 have been at the center of an
 altercation here at camp.

BIG JU
 I can name you a white boy been right
 in the middle of it with me Why you
 ain't talking to him?

YOAST
 I saw you leading that . riot.. in
 town I know you were an acquaintance
 of that dead boy's -- and I'm sorry it
 happened But I don't condone rioting
 and civil disobedience.

If I was head coach, you would not be on this team

(off Ju's icy stare)

But I like your hustle on that field; the way you attack the ball, finish the play You're a worker

(pause)

I'm gonna pencil you in as starting strong side defensive end

Big Ju nods and continues to glare Yoast expected more, but covers Big Ju rises and moves to the back exit door COACH FERRELL blocks the doorway as BIG JU moves to exit

COACH FERRELL

You just gon' walk out on Coach Yoast like that, boy? Without even saying "good evening"

Big Ju cuts his eyes at Ferrell Big Ju is ready to fight Ferrell moves aside Ferrell shakes his head as Ju moves past and leaves the room

EXT IN FRONT OF DORM - THREE A M

AN AIR HORN BLASTS -- THE BOYS are piling out in shock, still half-asleep.

BOONE (O.S)

On your feet! Let's go, let's go, let's go!

THERE IS A THICK FOG from the humidity, the recent rain, and the heat. BOONE stands in front of the boys, stone-faced Yoast moves to him in a fury

YOAST

Coach, I have gone along with you -- I don't agree with what you're doing, I go along because I do not want to show dissention -- but this is crazy We're not in the marines here this is a football team.

Boone looks at him, but doesn't bother to respond He turns to the boys:

BOONE

You will follow me and Doc and the other coaches! Let's go! Any one of you gets lost along the way, don't bother coming back to camp -- you just hitch yourself a ride and go right on home!

Boone takes off at a trot and the Boys run after him along with Doc, Yoast and Ferrell, splattering mud as they run the group runs through the WOODS through mist, over fallen trees . getting cut by branches falling and getting up again cursing and panting as they struggle to keep up with Boone

EXT A HILL - HOURS LATER - DAWN

Through the misty fog, the boys, now exhausted, sweating, muddy and scared run up a steep hill that is EVEN STEEPER ON DESCENT THEY ALL TUMBLE DOWN THE MUDDY HILL AND COLLAPSE IN A BRUISED HEAP AT THE BOTTOM BOONE among them They are panting, almost tearful, hurt, covered with mud

BOONE

You know where we are -- where we been playing our little games? This is Gettysburg Fifty thousand men died on this ground, fighting the same idiotic fight that we're still fighting amongst ourselves This green field was painted red, bubbling with young boys' blood; smoke, hot lead burning through'em Listen to their souls cry out: "I killed my brother with malice in my heart Hatred destroyed my family " Take a lesson from the dead
(then)

We must come together on this hallowed ground or we too will be destroyed, just like they were

Boone stands up, and as he walks we see THOUSANDS OF GRAVES lined up behind him, back-lit by the rays of the rising sun

BOONE (contid)

I don't care wether you boys like each other or not But you will learn to respect one another and once you have, maybe... just maybe. . you'll be ready to play this game like men.

INT LOCKER ROOM - DAY

The team suits up. . worn and exhausted Lastik is bent over the trash-can, puking his brains out.

ANGLE ON BERTIER, BARKER and STUBBS: Stubbs is grinning at Kirk

STUBBS

Man, you were scared in those woods

KIRK

Shut up, man -- I was not

BERTIER

I don't know, Kirk -- when that branch snapped back and hit your head, you almost jumped out of your skin like one of those cartoons, when the skeleton pops out of the guy's body -- eeeyaaaah!

ANGLE ON BIG JU, PETEY and BLUE: A little white guy, ALDERSON, tries to make conversation:

ALDERSON
 Man, I thought I was gonna die out there That Coach Boone's got a way with words, though, huh?

BIG JU
 (to Blue)
 Do you hear something? I thought I heard something? Nah, it's nothin'

Alderson slinks away Blue looks hard at Big Ju

BIG JU (cont'd)
 What?

ANGLE ON KIRK: grimacing, as he notices:

KIRK
 Man, that makes me sick

REV IS TENDING TO LASTIK; handing him a cup of water, hand on his back

BERTIER
 I guess that why they call him the Rev

STUBBS
 (grabbing his helmet; exiting)
 Yeah, he just better pray I block for his black ass

HOLD ON BERTIER -- watching Rev support Lastik

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

PRACTICE IN SESSION -- The OFFENSE lines up a play -- The DEFENSE charges . Big Ju rolls right over Alderson and Buck, instead of holding them -- which leaves Buck free to switch back and cover Rev, allowing to pitch the ball to Petey, who breaks for the goal line

BERTIER and the DEFENSE HUDDLE:

BERTIER
 44 Stack You're all supposed to know your jobs. Campbell, you are playing selfish show-off football -- hold your damn man down.
 (then)
 Remember, don't over penetrate

BIG JU
 You think I'm stupid, man? I heard you the first time!

BLUE
Come on, y'all -- let's play football.

MORE PLAYS RUN -- this is not a cohesive football team
 It all looks pretty rote and uninspired.

Yoast watches from the sidelines, resigned while Boone
churns with frustration

INT DINING HALL - AFTERNOON

The PLAYERS are still divided by race WE FOLLOW LASTIK,
his tray overflowing with food, as he moves to a black
table

BIG JU
Man, go over there sit with your
people

LASTIK
(sitting)
I don't have no people I'm with
everybody, Big Ju

REV
Just another blessed child in God's
loving family

Lastik and Rev grin, giving each other skin BLUE laughs,
and starts humming a HYMN, which PETEY joins in on Big
Ju tenses, looking away.. steaming

AT THE COACHES' TABLE

YOAST
(pulls a folded paper out of
his pocket)
These here is a few of the plays that
I won the City title with last year
Got a few trick plays, some things
that might fire up the boys'
imagination a little bit

BOONE
Trick plays.

YOAST
You have to score points

BOONE
And you think that Swiss Cheese
defense of yours is gonna do the job
anywhere outside of these sorry
practices we're running here?

FERRELL
The colored boys don't seem to relish
the hits coach.

BOONE
If they don't hit, they'll sit And
they're not "colored," they're black.
You remember that, Ferrell, if you
want to coach here

YOAST
Coach Boone, I still think a little
motivation might not hurt the .

BOONE
 Drop it, Yoast -- I'm not running none
of your dipsy doodle plays!

Boone rises in a huff He surveys the room, sees the
 still nagging racial division

BOONE
 LASTIK!

LASTIK stuffs some food in his mouth and waddles over
 Boone turns him so that they face the room Everyone
 stops, listens

BOONE (cont'd)
 Tell me something about one of your
 black teammates

LASTIK
 Well I'm roomin' with Blue, so

BOONE
 Not your roommate Somebody else.

LASTIK
 Well, I eat lunch with Rev -- Jerry
 Harriss Everybody calls him "Rev"
 'cause he's always praying and he
 won't abide a foul tongue

BOONE
 Are you a church-goer, Lastik?

LASTIK
 Not so you'd notice. But I respect The
 Rev for going.

BOONE
 What are Rev's plans after football?

LASTIK
 I don't know -- he's been talkin'
 about going to college and all

BOONE
 How about you?
 (blank stare from Lastik)
 You plan on going to college, Lastik?

LASTIK
 Not me, coach. I ain't a braniac like
 Rev

BOONE
 You think you got a future in
 football, Lastik?

LASTIK
 Heck, no I just figure if I got to be
 in school, I might as well hit some
 people while I'm at it

BOONE

A self-aware man I like that But if you're not going to college, Lastik, it won't be cause you couldn't get in You bring me your test scores every week Understand
(LASTIK nods; then)

What's the Rev's favorite music?

LASTIK

Oh, we both dig on The Temptations

And Louie starts singing a Temps song, dancing like a black man He dances well, and everybody cracks up

LASTIK (cont'd)

"Ain't tooo proud to beggg sweet darling, please don't leave me girl

Boone cuts in, barking at the others:

BOONE

Any more volunteers?

Silence Boone boils -- then snaps:

BOONE (contid)

Each one of you will spend time, every day, with a teammate of a different race You will learn about him; his family, likes, dislikes Report back to me until you've met everybody on the team

(pauses)

Until then, starting tomorrow, we will go to three-a-days! If you continue to ignore each other, then we'll go to four-a-days!

The Players are terrified, speechless Boone turns and exits the dining room .

INT CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Yoast bursts out through the doors, following Boone down the hallway.

YOAST

Are you out of your cotton-pickin' mind? Three-a-days! These boys ain't the Green Bay Packers!

BOONE

We have to get past this thing, or there won't be a season.

YOAST

I disagree strongly with you, Coach. You can't force things on people. Just give these boys time--

BOONE

No We ain't sweeping it under the carpet anymore Let's get it out-- good and bad

YOAST

Well, let's get it out then

BOONE

Something on your mind, Yoast?

YOAST

I don't approve of you: your extreme methods or your hostility And you're far, far too militant to be coaching these impressionable boys

The two men glare at one another then:

BOONE

For a minute there I thought you were gonna tell me something I didn't know

He turns and continues down the corridor, leaving Yoast standing there, speechless the SONG "Let me be your Valentine" starts on the SOUNDTRACK, as we punch into:

MONTAGE OF QUICK "GETTING TO KNOW YOU" SCENES:

BLUE AND BUCK : Buck is playing the incredibly whitebread song on his tape-deck, head bopping . while Blue smiles tightly and tries to pretend he's enjoying it.

BUCK

Cool, right? It's rockin', right?

BLUE

Yeah, man It's cool.

COSLETT AND GLASCOE : Across a table. Coslett nervous, trying to get at something.

COSLETT

So.. we are, you know .. built . different, right?

GLASCOE

Built?

COSLETT

Um, you know physically.. um, in certain areas, you know, dimensionally..

GLASCOE

(disbelieving)

You plan on putting this in your report?

REV AND LASTIK : Louie pacing around his room, freaking out:

LASTIK

I can't get no C+ grades! No one from my family's ever gone to no college! Never!

REV

I'll tutor you, Louie I told you that

LASTIK

I'm just white trash, alright? I admit it, man! I can't make no C pluses! I'm just down home, no grades, don't know nothing white trash, alright!?

BACK TO BLUE AND BUCK : Buck has another, even more painfully hillbilly rocker on:

BUCK

Wait. wait . here comes the good part!

The song busts into a guitar break, and Buck joyfully plays air-guitar along with it -- Blue watches him, an incredulous smile frozen on his face.

STUBBS AND PETEY : Stubbs holds a notebook studiously in front of him

STUBBS

So what's your daddy's name... I mean, wait, you do have a daddy, right?

PETEY

I have a father His name is Eric

STUBBS

And what's he do? Oh, wait, he does have job, right?

COOK AND BARKER : in heated argument:

COOK

It's planned genocide, man! Take the black boys and ship 'em off to 'Nam, and waste 'em there! Hell, there ain't even no real war going on down there, man.

KIRK

Hell there ain't! My brother was killed in 'Nam, man! Don't go tellin' me all they do is ship you people down there! My brother died there!

COOK

So what, man? Facts is facts, man -- it's still unproportional!

KIRK

So what!? That's my brother, man! You're talkin' about my brother, man!

BACK AGAIN TO BLUE AND BUCK : Yet another, if possible, even more agonizingly whitebread tune Buck bopping happily

BUCK

What about this one, man? What do you think about this one?

Blue's smile is finally gone:

BLUE

Does the term "cruel and unusual punishment" ring any bells?

EXT FIELD/NEAR ATHLETIC CENTER - DAY

The SONG comes to a sudden, NEEDLE-SCRATCHING END Big Ju, spattered with mud, is bent over behind the wall, gasping for breath He gathers himself, then turns, and finds himself facing an equally exhausted Bertier:

BERTIER

(hard sarcasm)

Alright I'm Gerry, you know that. You're Julius, I know that So let's get some details

BIG JU

No matter what I tell you, you'll never know me.

He tries to walk past, but Bertier pushes him back against the wall

BERTIER

I ain't runnin' any more three-a days.

BIG JU

What I got to say, you don't want to hear. honesty wasn't never too high on you people's priority list, right?

BERTIER

You want honesty -- o k. Here's honesty. You're nothing but a pure waste of God-given talent
(Big Ju looks up; surprised)
You don't listen to no one, not even Doc or Boone Shiver/push on the line, every time Use your hands, man -- turn 'em, pull 'em to you You ain't gonna be able to run over everyone in this league. Every time you roll over someone you leave the rest of your teammates with their wieners flappin' in the wind . me in particular

Big Ju studies Bertier for a moment, then:

BIG JU

We play on the same field -- but we ain't on the same team

(hesitates)
 Why should I give a damn about you or anybody else out there You want to talk about a waste -- you're supposed to be the captain, right? I thought a captain was a leader -- ain't none of your white buddies blocking for Rev worth a plugged nickel Nobody plays right, why should I wear my ass out for the "team" - I'm just gonna look out for myself and get mine

BERTIER
 That's the most pathetic attitude I ever heard of

BIG JU
 Attitude follows leadership
 Captain

Big Ju walks into the building leaving Bertier standing there to mull it over

EXT NEAR THE DORM; BY THE LAKE - DUSK

BOONE stands alone, deep in thought DOC, THE BLACK ASSISTANT COACH moves to him.

BOONE
 They all hate me yet?

DOC
 Yet? The ones that didn't hate you the minute they saw you, hated you the minute you started talkin' They been hating you since you walked onto that field Yeah, they hate you yet.

BOONE
 What's Yoast saying?

DOC
 He don't say much to me

BOONE
 (shakes his head;disgusted)
 Ah, I know what he thinks of me

DOC
 Do you?
 (sharp look from Boone)
 He ain't as simple as he looks Fact is, he don't even look simple -- 'less you're looking at him through simple eyes.

Boone starts to say something... then thinks better of it He takes a drag on his cigarette and looks out at the water .

INT DORM HALLWAY- 5 a m

BOONE walks the hall BLASTING HIS AIR HORN The horn bares so loud it almost shatters the glass THE HORNS SHOCKS THE SLEEPING PLAYERS We HEAR AND SEE BODIES FALLING OUT OF BED

BOONE

*Get up! Babies sleep! Men work!
Defecate! Brush! Eat! Pads! One hour!*

INT REV AND ALDERSON'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Rev is on the floor with the pillow pulled over his head

REV

God forgive me, but I hate that man

ALDERSON

Amen

EXT PRACTICE FIELD - DAY

PRACTICE GAME -- same apathetic deal -- the white players hardly block for the Rev -- nobody tackles with any aggressiveness

BERTIER is next to BIG JU at the line -- he looks at Ju, who keeps his eyes focussed straight ahead The play starts, and they barrel through the defending 'backs way too easily Bertier veers off before he reaches the Rev

BERTIER

(to Stubbs and the other
white 'backs)

What was that, Ray?

(they stare at him;
surprised)

Whatever it is, it ain't blocking.

STUBBS

Give me a break, man

BERTIER

(exploding)

You want a break, I'll give you a
break!

Boone sees the argument brewing on the field -- he curses under his breath and steps forward but is stopped by YOAST, who has heard what's going on between the boys

Bertier gets in Stubbs' face, snarling:

BERTIER

Me and Big Ju are coming at you full-tilt, man -- and if we take down the Rev once. .

just one time, before he gets rid of
that ball, I swear to God I'll break
you in half so bad ain't no one ever
putting none of you weak bastards
together again ever!

Big Ju watches Bertier -- his eyes beginning to glimmer
with respect and:

The Defense lines up facing the offense BIG JU and
BERTIER PLAY ON THE LEFT SIDE, THE STRONG SIDE

REV
Blue 43 HUT HUT!

Bertier shoots the gap just as Rev moves down the line
But equally impressive, Big Ju shakes off his man and
nails PETEY really hard in the backfield Bertier is
impressed that Big Ju nailed a black player so hard
WHISTLES BLOW

BOONE
(breaking his clipboard)
Buck!? You afraid of a little bump?

BERTIER
Good stick, Campbell
(no response)
He's one of your-- I mean you really
tagged him

BIG JU
(pumped)
I love contact, baby!

BERTIER, CRAZY WITH EXCITEMENT, CLUBS BIG JU ON HIS
SHOULDER PADS

BERTIER
LEFT SIDE!

Everything stops A very tense beat THEN BIG JU CLUBS
HIM BACK!

BIG JU
STRONG SIDE!

Bertier SCREAMS -- and BIG JU joins in:

TOGETHER
AAAAAAAARRRRRGGGHHH!!!

Boone and Yoast watch from the sidelines both men
hardly daring to believe what they are seeing

EXT UPPER CLASS NEIGHBORHOOD/ALEXANDRIA - ESTABLISHING

A clean white home. clean cars.. everything is green
and pristine.

COACH GAHAGAN (V O)
 We don't have a pro team in this
 state, or even a half-decent college
 team High school ball gets all the
 attention there is to get here in
 Virginia

INT DEN - CONTINUOUS

COLONEL BASS, a white Air Force officer; and his hippie,
 blond-haired son, RONNIE, sit across from COACH GAHAGAN:
 a middle-aged good old boy Ronnie plays with a football
 and looks around uncomfortably as the two men discuss his
 future

COACH GAHAGAN
 we got a top program at Wilson
 High Five All-Americans But we need
 a good arm at Q B. Who knows, your boy
 might be number six

COLONEL BASS
 T C Williams is a new school. We're
 thinking about playing time

COACH GAHAGAN
 Colonel, allow me to be direct. You
 don't want to send your boy to T C
 Williams . they're mixing over there

Ronnie looks at his father. who looks at Coach Gahagan
 with narrowed eyes. .

COLONEL BASS
 Mixing.

EXT PRACTICE FIELD - DAY

THE TITANS are in the midst of a PRACTICE, watched over
 by BOONE -- and it is KICK-ASS: Linemen desperately
 keeping Bertier and Ju off the Rev -- offense clicking --
guys really playing together, for the first time ever

YOAST walks with A.D REVERE near the sidelines.

A D REVERE
 I been talking to my friends on the
 Board of Governors They're your
 friends, too, Bill. They understand
 the sacrifice you're making They're
 impressed by it

Yoast nods, torn by conflicting emotions

A D REVERE (cont'd)
 We'll get you into that Hall, Coach
 When you start losin', they'll be all
 over Boone like flies on manure

YOAST
 Lose. ?

Yoast turns and looks out at the field the boys are
pounding away, looking damned impressive

YOAST (contid)
I'm not so sure we're going to lose

A BLACK LINCOLN pulls up nearby -- and out step COLONEL
BASS and RONNIE -- tie-dyed shirt, love beads, and bell-
bottoms

BERTIER
(loud)
Man, look at that fruit!

YOAST
Gerry, shut up and get on the field!

Ronnie and the Colonel hear this Ronnie glares at
Bertier BOONE and YOAST move to the BASSES at the other
end of the field.

COLONEL BASS
Coach Boone, I'm Colonel Bass I just
got transferred from Huntington Beach,
California This is my son, Ronnie
He's a quarterback.

BOONE
Colonel, we're a running team and
we're pretty set at Q B. You might
want to send your boy to Annandale, or
Wilson, if he's any good

COLONEL BASS
I met Coach Gahagan If these boys can
fight a war together, I figure they
can share a football field I want
Ronnie to learn how to live with
everybody
(then)
He was JV last year He can run pretty
good, and...

Ronnie picks up a football. He spots Bertier who has his
back to them. RONNIE EFFORTLESSLY THROWS THE BALL 50
YARDS AT BERTIER.

IN THE END ZONE-- A GROUP OF DEFENSIVE PLAYERS

BERTIER
.. some flower-power punk comes
walking into our camp and thinks--

THE BALL SLAMS INTO BERTIER'S SHOULDERS, KNOCKING HIM
DOWN. And BIG JU LAUGHS FOR THE FIRST TIME! Shock. He
never even smiles

BIG JU
Punk, huh?

OTHER END OF THE FIELD

YOAST

I think we can find a place for your
boy with one or two conditions

INT LOCKER ROOM - AFTERNOON

RONNIE stands in front of the mirror stroking his newly shorn golden head with his fingers His expression sinks in dismay

PETEY

Hey sunshine, all that rubbin' ain't
gonna make them golden locks grow back
no faster

BLACK KIDS

(laughing)
Sunshine, man Petey called him
Sunshine Yo, Sunshine, what up?

RONNIE

Sunshine?
(warming)
Yeah, that's cool, man. I can dig it
(hand out for slap)
Don't leave me hanging, bro'

Petey cracks up, then holds his palm out. Ronnie slaps down hard They like him -- he's a blue-eyed soul brother.

BLUE

Yo, I liked him better with the long
hair, bro' Reminded me of Bertier's
mamma.

GLASCOE

Now, how would you know what Bertier's
mamma looks like?

BLUE

Cause she was in my room last night,
bro'

BERTIER

Sonofa--!!

BIG JU grabs Bertier tight

BIG JU

It's alright, man Blue, tell your
Daddy to fix yo' Mamma's stanky shoes,
'cause I'm taking her to the prom

All the black players laugh -- Now the white players get
it

BLUE
 Jerry Buck, tell yo' Mamma stop
 callin' my house Glascoe's Mamma's
 gettin' jealous

LASTIK ENTERS bent over and walking slowly

PETEY
 Lastik, what happened to you?

LASTIK
 Yo mamma chased me all around my room,
 man; wouldn't leave me alone all night
long

The room erupts in laughter "AIN'T NO MOUNTAIN HIGH
 ENOUGH," comes on the radio (The Marvin Gaye-Tammy
 Terrell Duet) BLUE rolls up a newspaper and makes a
 "microphone " He pretends like he is Marvin Gaye and
 sings to "Tammy" Lastik -- Lastik sings Tammy's part

GLASCOE comes out of the shower, calling back, pissed:

GLASCOE
 Yo, Coslett, man, I can't be takin' no
 showers with you around, no more, with
 you be checkin' me out all the time!

COSLETT
 (from within)
 I ain't doin' nothing!

The BLACK GUYS at the lockers by Glascoe call out:

BLACK GUYS
*Oh yes, you are! You always checkin'
 out some brother, man! Put your eyes
 back in your head, man!*

GLASCOE
 Yes, Coslett, it's true -- with the
 unfortunate exception of my man Petey
 here, on the average, ours are bigger
 than yours.

PETEY
 (angrily shoving Glascoe)
 Yo, shut up, man!

THE REV covers his ears, shaking his head, smiling
 despite himself ALDERSON holds a walkie-talkie next to
 Rev's ear, making walkie sounds:

ALDERSON
*Cccchhht-- Satan calling Rev, come in
 Rev. Cccchhhhhh-- Satan calling Rev*

JELLYBELLY
 He be like -- "I don't want to listen
 to the sinful words coming out of the
 mouths of these boys, and yet -- I'm
 strangely drawn by them."

BERTIER closes his locker, revealing SUNSHINE; who plants a huge, Bugs Bunny slurpy-kiss right on Bertier's MOUTH. The guys nearby practically explode with amazed SHOUTS. Bertier is stunned, jaw on the ground -- then he lurches at Sunshine, swinging wildly -- but Sunshine is Tai-Chi quick, easily and effortlessly avoiding the punches, and Bertier goes falling over the table holding the ICE-BARRELS, spilling ice all over the floor as the others jump out of the way.

COOK grabs his jacket, heading for the door:

COOK (cont'd)
Yo, too much of that male bonding and whatnot goin' on here for me, y'all
I'm a go out find me a chick, y'all

He passes DAVIS (black), walking to the showers

DAVIS
Only chick around here is like in kindergarten and grades my ass on negative yardage

Buck and Davis slap hands.. as Sunshine runs past, chased by the snarling Bertier

Lastik passes the "microphone" and another two players step up and sing to each other. Blue and Lastik JUMPING BACK IN ON THE REFRAIN:

ALL
"AIN'T NO MOUNTAIN HIIIIIGH ENOUGH,
AIN'T NO RIVER WIIIIIDE ENOUGH, AIN'T
NO VALLEY LOOOOW ENOUGH, TO KEEP ME
FROM GETTIN' TO YOooooU!"

EXT. FIELD - SCORCHING DAY

The PLAYERS do wind sprints. THE COACHES walk among them

BOONE
This is mind over matter! You don't mind, it don't matter.
(stopping by a panting Big Ju)
You may be cursing my name now, but when you're in a close game with two minutes left on the clock, and those sorry fools on the other team are suckin' wind, you're gonna be playing like it ain't yet halftime.

There is a small bus idling off to the side of the field

BOONE (cont'd)
When things get tough, you feeling sorry for yourself; go! That bus yonder is for men who'll leave their wives one day; who'll steal, lie, backstab and take every shortcut in life

That is the bus for the weak in spirit!

(pacing)

Some coaches will cut a player if they think he ain't up to snuff -- if they think he's hurtin' the team. This is a public school program, and I will never, ever, cut a player who comes to play for me -- but if you put on that uniform, you better come to work

Grass drills, agility, wind sprints, crab drills, sled work, up and down -- All under the intense sun. And sure enough some players walk off the field; they can't take it

THE OFFENSIVE TEAM scrimmages against their SCOUT TEAM. REV is running a series. BOONE stands behind them. Rev runs the veer with silky, perfect faking, ball handling and perfect pitches

BOONE

Ronnie Bass get in there -- Show me you got something other'n those beach bum good looks

RONNIE (now SUNSHINE) runs in and replaces the Rev at quarterback. He takes the hike from center and sprints right. He doesn't read properly and overthrows the pitch.

BOONE (cont'd)

(breaking his clipboard)

You can throw it a mile! Why can't you pitch it three feet? If you can't pitch to the back, you will warm that bench 'till your ass catches fire!

REV.

Let me walk him through it, Coach.

The Rev trots out on the field.

SUNSHINE

It's hard to make that pitch, Rev. I'm used to playing drop-back.

REV.

Just watch me walk through it.

Rev lines them up and walks through the play. Rev pitches it to PETEY JONES, the BLACK FULLBACK. Petey bobbles the ball and fumbles

BOONE

Jones! Ain't your hands pretty enough? You got to grease 'em too? I told you never to fumble that ball again! Are you trying to mess with me? Are you deliberately trying to destroy my team..?

Petey slumps dejectedly and trots off the field. Boone turns and barks:

BOONE (cont'd)
 Davis! Get in there! You drop that
 ball too, you're all gonna be running
 wind sprints at midnight!

Yoast is standing on the sidelines talking to Petey,
 comforting him, an arm on his shoulder

Boone watches it, his expression hard giving nothing
 away

INT DINING HALL - NIGHT

The room is almost completely integrated The players are
 separated now primarily between offense and defense
 SUNSHINE moves through the room past Bertier's table --
 BERTIER raises his forearm and slaps it against his hand
 indicating that's what he wants to do to Sunshine

BERTIER
 You and me, out back.

SUNSHINE
 (blowing a kiss)
 Not while everyone's looking,
 sweetie come by my room later.

He winks, and Bertier jumps up, hopping mad BRAD,
 GLASCOE, BUCK, and JIM the massive white center move in
 and pull SUNSHINE away from Bertier They form a wall
 protecting Sunshine

GLASCOE
 You can't touch the quarterback,
 bro' chill out

Bertier shrugs them away He sits back down STUBBS moves
 to sit at Bertier's table

BERTIER
 Go sit with the offense

STUBBS
 But, Gerry...

BERTIER
 This is the defense table, Ray.

Stubbs is pissed and surprised He moves away. BIG JU
 starts laughing when he sees Sunshine waving over his
 shoulder at Bertier and swishing away to get his tray

AT THE COACHES' TABLE

BOONE
 I think they'll make it. Most of 'em,
 anyway.

YOAST
 You'll win some football games

BOONE

(pause)

Is that all you think I'm talking about?

Yoast looks silently at Boone then continues eating

OFFENSE TABLE

Petey leans across to Sunshine, whispering:

PETEY

Yo, Sunshine it's not like I care or nothing, but being your roommate and all . you're just messin' with Bertier, right? You just messin' with his mind, right? You're not really you know?

SUNSHINE

Not what?

PETEY

You know It don't matter to me, but I got to know

SUNSHINE

Why, if it don't matter?

PETEY

Because I got to know, man!

SUNSHINE

Know what?

PETEY

(standing;exploding)

You know what I got to know, man! Stop messing with my mind, man! I got to know!

Glascoe turns to Sunshine:

GLASCOE

I think Coach been keepin' Petey out in that sun for too long, bro'

Cheryl walks past the defense table, handing out GRADED STATISTICS.

CHERYL

Gerry Bertier, I don't wanna see any senior year fall off from you. Play like an All-American on every down
(hands Big Ju a slip)
Julius Campbell, 100% improvement;
keep at it

BUCK
 (studying his own slip)
 Dang, Cheryl, you're a tough grader!
 Coach Yoast read these things?

CHERYL
 You better believe it

The boys immediately read their slips in earnest -- Cheryl moves on to the coaches' table, and stops in front of Yoast

CHERYL (cont'd)
 Mother's outside She wants to talk to you

Yoast nods, uncomfortable, and rises, as Cheryl turns to Boone, glaring:

CHERYL (cont'd)
 Coach Boone, you did a good job up here; you ran a tough camp from what I can see

BOONE
 Well, I'm very happy to have the approval of a 5 year old child

CHERYL
 I'm 9 1/2, thank you very much.

BOONE
 Yoast, why don't you give this child some pretty dolls to play with?

YOAST
 (exiting)
 I tried. She loves football

EXT NEAR DORM - CONTINUOUS - DUSK

ARLEEN HINES -- Once Mrs. Yoast -- stands by her car, smoking a cigarette. Late thirties, wearing the sad, withdrawn look of a lifetime alcoholic. She hears footsteps approaching on the gravel, and quickly drops her cigarette, crushing it beneath her heel as YOAST approaches They stand apart, ill at ease

YOAST
 Arleen.

ARLEEN
 Cheryl told me about what happened about your job, and all I mean, everything they mighta left out of the papers. I'm sorry

YOAST
 Life's full of surprises, I guess.

ARLEEN

I guess

(pause)

Thanks for letting me have her this week I know you didn't have to, and I well, I just wanted to thank you, that's all

YOAST

You're her mother Ain't nothing happened between us gonna change that

ARLEEN

Mike and me, we're going up North for well, for good, most likely

YOAST

Cheryl told me

ARLEEN

She's all yours, now
(rueful smile)
But then again, she always was

EXT PRACTICE FIELD - DAY

FINAL PRACTICE PLAYERS are doing up-downs, running in place and then flopping out prone -- on BOONE'S WHISTLE.

BOONE

WHAT ARE YOU?

ALL

MO-BILE, A-GILE, HOS-TILE!

BOONE

WHAT IS PAIN?

ALL

FRENCH BREAD!

BOONE

WHAT IS FATIGUE?

ALL

ARMY CLOTHES!

BOONE

WILL YOU EVER QUIT?

ALL

NOOOO! WE WANT SOME MO! WE WANT SOME MO! WE WANT SOME MO!

Their legs are churning so fast they are a blur.

Yoast and Cheryl watch from the sidelines -- TEARS fill Cheryl's eyes:

CHERYL

First time since the day I was born we
won't be leading the team outta camp
(cracking)
I been praying on it every night --
but the hurt just keeps right on
coming

YOAST

It's still our team, darlin' Look at
your defense That Stack 44 is gonna
shut 'em all down You better save
your prayers for those poor boys on
the opposition

CHERYL

(brightening)
I'll pray for 'em, coach

Boone strides past his players, shouting like a general:

BOONE

TURN IN!

THEY TURN IN AND CIRCLE AROUND EACH OTHER. BERTIER AND
BIG JU JUMP IN THE MIDDLE OF THE PLAYERS.

BERTIER

DO YOU WANT VICTORY?!

ALL

YEAAAHHH!

BIG JU

I SAID DO YOU WANT VICTORY!

ALL

YEAAAHH!!! AIIIEEEEEEEEEEE!!!!

THEY DIVE ON ONE ANOTHER IN THE MIDDLE OF THE FIELD,
FLINGING THEMSELVES ON ONE ANOTHER WITH ABANDON into a
PILE A TEAM!

EXT. T.C. WILLIAMS HIGH SCHOOL; PARKING LOT - DAY

THE PARENTS wait for the players The racial tension is
palpable. BLACK FAMILIES wait by their cars away from the
WHITE FAMILIES. The blacks and whites eye each other
warily

INT. BUS - CONTINUOUS

The boys sit side by side, integrated. Blue, Petey,
Glascoe and Jellybelly are in the back, singing the verse
part of "Kiss Him Goodbye." -- The white guys nearby bop
their heads, but are still too sheepish to join in Big
Ju plops down next to Blue, who snaps:

BLUE
Yo, Huey Newton, don't even be settin'
yo big behind down here if you gonna
be tellin' us not to sang, bro'

BIG JU
No, baby, I'm a join in, bro' I'm a
sing with you, minstrel man

And he joins in, as the song reaches its CHORUS:

BOYS
"NA NA NA NAA, NA NA NAA, HEY HEY,
GOOD BYYYE "

EXT T C WILLIAMS - PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

The parents brighten in anticipation, as the buses pull to a halt. Then their faces grow confused when they hear the sound of SINGING:

The first bus arrives -- the door opens, and Boone and Yoast step out onto the pavement . then the BOYS file out, all of them singing:

BOYS
"NA NA NA NA, NA NA NA NAA, HEY HEY,
GOOD BYE. "

Pointing their fingers at the two coaches in a playful taunt, as they head back toward their stunned parents

MR STUBBS
What'd they do up there, brainwash
'em?

JEAN BERTIER, looks anxiously for her son. BERTIER runs over to her, and lifts her off her feet in a tight hug then:

BERTIER
Big Ju, come over here, man!
(BIG JU moves to them)
This is my friend, Julius Campbell,
defensive end. This is my Mother.

BIG JU
Nice to meet you, Mrs. Bertier Your
son is crazy, you know
(then to BERTIER)
Come on, I want you to meet my dad

MR COSLETT, moves anxiously to his son ALLAN

MR COSLETT
You starting, Allan? He pull you out
for one of those.

COSLETT
I'm starting, Dad

BOONE hugs his wife CAROL, while all around them black players meet white parents and vice versa The parents are reluctant, reserved

BOONE
We made it out alive, Carol No one died, I'm happy to say

CAROL
You mean you're happy you didn't kill anyone, don't you?

Yoast and Cheryl step up to Boone and Carol

BOONE
Coach, this is my wife Carol This is Bill Yoast and that is his daughter

YOAST
Mrs Boone, nice to meet you

CAROL
Your daughter's so pretty.
(Cheryl nearly pukes)
She looks about the same age as my oldest, Nicky. I know we'll be seeing lots of you, Coach, so you make sure to bring Cheryl with you when you're visitin'

YOAST
I'll do that, ma'am.

BOONE
See you in the morning, Bill

YOAST
Sunday?

BOONE
Didn't Doc tell you? We're having a Sunday coaches' meeting. My house, nine o'clock sharp.

YOAST
You know very well I'm a deacon, Coach Boone. I teach Bible and attend services on Sunday; something that would do you a world of good

BOONE
I catch up on my churchgoing off-season. My wife goes to church for me the rest of the year.

YOAST
(hard)
I will not risk my soul's eternal damnation for a coaches' meeting.

BOONE

Well, I don't know who you're gonna be coaching come Monday, then -- Maybe the cheerleaders

NEAR MR CAMPBELL'S CAR

MR CAMPBELL

Looks like your coaches are fussing

BERTIER

Oh, that ain't nothing, Mr Campbell They argue all the time, huh, Big Ju?

BIG JU

Just like me and you, baby

Bertier POUNDS BIG JU ON THE SHOULDERS -- Mr Campbell thinks they're about to fight

BERTIER

LEFT SIDE!

Big Ju POUNDS BERTIER ON THE SHOULDERS -- the entire throng of parents look on in stunned disbelief

BIG JU

STRONG SIDE!

BOTH

ARRRRRRRRRRGGGGHHH!

EXT. FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH; ALEXANDRIA - SUNDAY MORNING

Beautiful September morning light The sign in front reads: "God Bless our Titans in '71"

YOAST (O S.)

You're young, God bless you you're full of life and hope. but even the young can bend under their burdens

INT BIBLE CLASS - CONTINUOUS

YOAST sits in the small church classroom with his BIBLE STUDENTS: Some are young children, others are teenagers, a number of them from the football team .. with the conspicuous addition of the only black person in the room -- REV.

YOAST (cont'd)

In fact, some of us here were just tested at football camp -- including a few new friends, whose presence here today is surely a blessing to us Who did we put our faith in, to pull us through those trying days and weeks?

FOOTBALL GUYS

The Lord -- Jesus Christ-- Jesus God

YOAST

Amen -- In the words of the prophet
Isaiah- "He gives strength to the
weary, and increaseth the power of the
weak "

Rev suddenly cuts in, surprisingly fiery:

REV

-- "Even youths grow tired and weary,
even young men stumble and fall; but
those who hope in the Lord will renew
their strength!"

YOAST

(moving to Rev; excited)
"They will renew their strength--!"

REV

-- Praise God, they will renew their
strength!

YOAST

"They will soar on wings like
eagles. "

REV.

-- Like eagles, y'all! Praise the
Lord, like the kings of the blessed
sky!

YOAST

Halleluyah! And they will run, won't
they, Jerry?

Cheryl and the white bible students look on, somewhat
shell-shocked, as Yoast and Rev reach a crescendo,
practically hopping up and down:

REV.

"They will run and never weary, they
will walk and not be faint!"

YOAST/REV

Halleluyah! On wings of eagles! Praise
the Lord! -- Halleluyah!

INT BERTIER'S ROOM - SAME MORNING (SUNDAY)

CLOSE ON THE T V. -- blasting the "HOUR OF POWER" --
BERTIER stands in the b g wearing shorts and sneakers
pulling on a tank-top. Gerry's mother sticks her head in:

MRS BERTIER

Gerry, what are you doing?

BERTIER

I'm going down to the 'Berg

MRS. BERTIER

The 'Berg?

BERTIER

Yeah Play some basketball with Big
Ju We'll be here by the time you get
back

MRS BERTIER

You're bringing him to the house?

BERTIER

Mother, he's my friend Once you get
to know him, you'll--

MRS BERTIER

I don't want to know him, Gerry And
you're coming to church with your
mother, if you still want a mother to
come home to

EXT BOONE'S BACKYARD - SAME TIME SUNDAY MORNING

BOONE sits with the embittered FERRELL. CAROL, carrying
the baby and dressed for church, brings DOC out of the
house Doc has doughnuts

BOONE

Pray for a few wins, Mama

CAROL

You know I can't do that, Herman. God
doesn't watch no High School Football.

DOC

He does when he's in Virginia

BOONE

You were praying for a field goal when
we played Taft-- down by two with a
minute left -- I looked up there in
those stands, and there you were with
your eyes closed and your hands
clasped, looking just like a Eye-
talian painting.

NICKY

Daddy, is Coach Yoast's daughter
coming to the house?

BOONE

Not today, baby.

NICKY

Why not?

BOONE

'Cause she's at church with her Daddy,
is why.

NICKY

Why you not comin' to church with us,
then?

BOONE

'Cause I got work to do, baby, which
I'm never gonna get to if you keep at
me with all those questions Now you
go on with your mamma

DOC

(sitting beside Boone)
Man, if Yoast is off prayin', what do
I got to be here for, on a fine Sunday
like this one?

BOONE

Doc, when you become a church deacon,
and can quote scripture like box
scores, then you can be excused too
(then)
Now gimme my doughnuts

The song "Waiting for my man" begins on the SOUNDTRACK

EXT BASKETBALL COURT - SUNDAY

A game is in progress -- Big Ju stands off to the side,
looking down the street. One of the PLAYERS calls out:

PLAYER

Yo, Big Ju -- we need one!

Ju hesitates -- waiting for his friend -- then turns and
joins the game. The SONG continues over:

EXT ALEXANDRIA CITY STREETS; THE BERG - FIRST DAY OF
SCHOOL

REFLECTED IMAGE of BLACK PARENTS waving GOODBYE -- RACK
FOCUS to the FACES of their KIDS, watching them from the
back window of a BUS -- which pulls away, and we BOOM UP
TO REVEAL:

A CARAVAN OF BUSES -- Flanked by POLICE CARS, snaking
down the narrow streets of the 'Berg.. DOLLY ACROSS the
worried FACES of PARENTS and RELATIVES lining the street -
- the BUSES enter the SHOT, WIPING FRAME, and we:

MATCH CUT TO:

WHITE FACES -- CONTORTED WITH ANGER, SCREAMING:

WHITES

GO HOME! STAY OUT OF OUR NEIGHBORHOOD!
GO TO YOUR OWN SCHOOL! GO BACK TO
AFRICA!

WIDE ANGLE ON THE "SEMINARY RIDGE" STREET -- Looking over
the backs and raised fists of the HUNDREDS of white
PROTESTERS, shaking signs that read: GO HOME!" "BOMB THE
BUS!" "WHITE POWER!"

INT BUS#1 - CONTINUOUS

BIG JU, PETEY, BLUE, REV and OTHER BLACK KIDS sit, quiet and tense Blue turns from the window:

BLUE
White people

SUDDENLY EGGS, TOMATOES, AND ROCKS SMACK AGAINST THE WINDOWS

EXT T C WILLIAMS HIGH SCHOOL - MINUTES LATER

The upper levels of the building framed against the calm blue sky Birds flutter against the clouds . and BOOM DOWN TO REVEAL:

A HUNDRED POLICEMEN lined up in front of the school, keeping back screaming WHITE PROTESTERS in anticipation of riots The WHITE KIDS walk to school (it's in their neighborhood); or drive their cars BERTIER'S CAMARO pulls up, and BERTIER, BARKER and STUBBS exit, looking around in awe.

STUBBS
We're like Benedict Arnold, man. We shouldn't even be here.

BERTIER
You know what, Ray? Here.
(holds out car keys)
Go home I'll pick my car up later:

Stubbs shakes his head, and moves off toward a group of WHITE BOYS .. Bertier pockets the keys

THE BUSES PULL UP. THE BLACK STUDENTS TRUNDLE OFF: MILITANTS (berets, leather jackets, shades, afros); NATIONALISTS (dashikis, bigger afros); REGULAR KIDS

BIG JU, PETEY, and BLUE move past a phalanx of COPS This is a powder keg. The black kids are equal in number to the white kids. They glare at each other with murder in their eyes... then BERTIER stops in front of Big Ju & Co :

BERTIER
Ju, man. . about Sunday

BIG JU
I got other things to worry about right now.

He continues toward the school doors, blending in with the throng Petey is still standing next to Bertier:

PETEY
Yeah .. like if anything seriously messed up happens, they shut the school down and our season goes down the drain.

There is a COMMOTION, and they turn to see:

-- The POLICE pushing back a wedge of PROTESTERS that have broken through their lines.

INT TEACHER'S LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

HIGH ANGLE ON the CONFLICT OUTSIDE -- then we RACK FOCUS to BOONE, angry, turning away from the WINDOW He's standing beside YOAST -- surrounded by TEACHERS, all of them looking out the windows, muttering and mumbling in worry and fear

BOONE

You always hope that this time this time will be different this time they'll let it go Why, Yoast? Why is it so hard to let go of that hate?

YOAST

(uneasy)
It takes time for folks to change their ways

BOONE

How much time, Yoast? Is there a specific time frame given in that Good Book of yours, 'cause if there is, I'd like to know it!

Yoast is silent -- the teachers around them have turned from the windows, alarmed by Boone's outburst

BOONE (cont'd)

Until then, I'm just gonna go on the assumption that the time is now . you understand me?

(to the entire group)

The time is now.

Boone pushes through the group, leaving them to watch his retreating back with anxious expressions on their faces..

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - LATER

THE HALL is crowded with WHITE and BLACK STUDENTS A SKIRMISH BREAKS OUT BETWEEN SOME BLACK KIDS AND FARM BOYS.. then:

BERTIER (O S.)

Break it up! Take it easy!

Bertier pushes into the middle of the altercation, trying to separate the antagonists . The black kids get crazy, jumping all over Bertier, ripping his shirt, bloodying his nose . but then BIG JU is there, moving the black kids back like a pile-driver.

BIG JU

Cool it, man! Cool it!

BLACK KIDS
 (turning on Big Ju)
Traitor! Taking the white boy's side!
Uncle Tom!

BIG JU
 (almost losing it)
 Don't be callin' me no Tom! Back off,
baby!

A GROUP OF WHITE KIDS IN "AEX" FRAT JACKETS jeer at BERTIER, while Big Ju fends off his erstwhile buddies

AEX KID
 Looks like you went to the zoo and made some new friends, Bertier.

BERTIER
You better get out of my face, man.

The fratboys close in menacingly, backing Bertier up into Big Ju

AEX KID
 Hey, Bertier, up there at camp, did they spike your milk with integration juice?
 (laughter)
 You tell them tarbabies to stay away from us, or they'll end up dead in a ditch. Maybe with you to keep 'em company

The fratboys move on, sneering at the chagrined Bertier... the black kids finish cursing out Ju, and move on as well.

Bertier and Big Ju stand back to back in the clearing hallway, like two lone warriors... they turn and look at each other. . realizing their isolation -- but drawing strength from it as well.

EXT STADIUM; EDGE OF THE FIELD - TWO HOURS BEFORE GAME TIME - NIGHT

At first all we see are the bright stadium lights then a SILHOUETTE strides into FRAME, standing against the white glare. DR. FERDINAND DAY, the black school board member, stands behind him.

BOONE
 This is my church

DAY
 It is glorious

BOONE
 (kneeling)
 Just a game. But we got hate and turmoil swirling around us, and this is always right. Victory, defeat;

struggle, survival: the best and worst
of man God, but I love it I love
it too much

DR DAY

Coach, I I'm afraid I've put you in
a no-win situation The truth of the
matter is the board didn't even
think you'd make it out of camp Now
that you have, I've heard it said they
won't risk the season on you First
sign of trouble--

BOONE

Trouble?

DR DAY

Lose a game and they'll fire you
and turn it back over to Yoast

BOONE

One game just like that?
(stiff nod from Day)
What about my family we just got
here, man I don't want them to have
to pick up and move again what
about my girls?

DR DAY

I I don't know what to say. I'm
sorry, coach

INT. BOONE AND YOAST'S OFFICE - MINUTES BEFORE THEY GO
OUT

BOONE, alone, throws up in the trash can -- he
straightens up, trying to gather himself for battle

INT LOCKER ROOM - GAME NIGHT

PLAYERS mill about nervously. BOONE is conspicuously
absent. YOAST and FERRELL turn as Doc enters, shaking his
head.

DOC

I can't find him

Yoast looks up at the clock, then makes his decision He
steps up in front of the boys:

YOAST

This has been a very tough week for
all us. You handled yourselves like
men, and I'm proud of you
(pauses)
Let's show 'em some Titans football.

EXT T C WILLIAMS FOOTBALL STADIUM; THE FIELD - MINUTES
LATER

HERNDON HIGH is warming up: the defense lines up and runs
mock plays against the offense

NOTE: THE HERNDON PLAYERS ARE ALL WHITE -- AS WILL BE ALL THE FUTURE TEAMS THE TITANS PLAY; THE LEAGUE IS ALL WHITE

The STANDS ARE FULL OF HERNDON SUPPORTERS we WHIP PAN TO:

THE T C WILLIAMS SIDE: There is only a thin crowd there MR CAMPBELL, MRS BERTIER and the PARENTS OF THE T C WILLIAMS PLAYERS sit in one section The white and black parents don't acknowledge one another

FOLLOW CHERYL: Moving amongst the white parents, handing out small SHEETS of PAPER:

CHERYL

Isiah 41 To keep us strong while the offense is on the field

MR STUBBS

Never lost a home opener

MRS BERTIER

U of Maryland said they won't blame Gerry if the team loses games

MR BARKER

Well you can blame the School Board for the losing season we're gonna have.

MR. COSLETT

Don't count the board out yet. I hear Boone'll be gone after two, three games.

CHERYL

(hands him a paper)

Good afternoon, Mr. Coslett A selection from Isiah -- pray on it when our offense is running

EXT FIELD - MINUTES LATER; KICKOFF

BLUE

WE ARE HERE TO STRIKE FEAR! ARGGGGGH!

Blue has the kickoff team lined up LASTIK waddles up and kicks off.. the return is stopped at the 30 YARD LINE

SIDELINES-- YOAST and the DEFENSE look up, as BOONE strides up to them, clutching his clip-board. Yoast stares at him hard -- he's late to the season opener but he also knows Boone well enough to know there's a reason for it.

Boone nods at the boys:

BOONE

Don't stand there gawking at me Get out there and do what you were born to do.

BIG JU turns to BERTIER. They nod with determination and charge onto the field. YOAST looks at CHERYL in the stands; she gives thumbs up.

ON THE FIELD -- The teams line up.

 QUARTERBACK
GREEN 3 HUT!

BERTIER, anticipating the count, jumps off-sides -- WHISTLES BLOW.

 BOONE
Bertier! Stop anticipating that count!

 BERTIER
 (to the team)
It's alright. I'm just a little revved up.

Bertier signals to Yoast and Boone that everything is alright. The defense lines up again.

 QUARTERBACK
BLUE 55 99 HUT! HUT!

The Quarterback goes back to pass. Big Ju sheds his blocker and pressures him. He passes to a halfback. Bertier crashes into the halfback, knocks the ball loose, picks it up and runs it in for a touchdown -- THEIR TINY CROWD OF SUPPORTERS ERUPTS.

ON THE SIDELINES -- Yoast turns to Ferrell:

 YOAST
At least we won't get shut out.

VARIOUS SHOTS of the GAME: The offense sputters, but manages to score a FIELD GOAL.

ON THE BENCH: Sunshine fidgets nervously -- looking at stands:

SUNSHINE'S P.O.V. -- his father, COLONEL BASS, sits there impassively, eyes hidden behind dark RAY-BANS.

 PETEY
Sunshine, man -- what's wrong with you?

 SUNSHINE
I can't make that pitch, Petey.

 PETEY
Man, you take on a beast like Bertier with a smile on yo' face, and you scared of that?
(laughs)

Don't worry, you ain't never gonna
play, anyway, 'less we're up by fifty
points, or something -- and we ain't
never gonna be up by no fifty points

ON THE FIELD: Some good blocking, and Glascoe runs one in
from the 20 Lastik kicks a field goal Final Score 17-0
TITANS WIN

INT LOCKER ROOM - POST GAME

THE PLAYERS and COACHES are in a jovial mood -- some
pressure has been alleviated Boone hands the game ball
to the beaming Bertier

BOONE

Even though you did jump off-sides

THE TEAM

BERTIER! BERTIER! BERTIER!

A D REVERE

Congratulations Coach Yoast, your
defense was sterling. Coach Boone,
your running game is.. suspect

BOONE

It'll take a few games, but the
offense will come together

A D REVERE

You have to put more points on the
board, Coach. Can't just rely on Coach
Yoast's defense to win games for you

BOONE

(slow boil; then erupting)

You heard the A.D.! Stop celebrating!

(room stops)

There'll be no celebration until the
season's over!

EXT CAPTAIN JOHN'S CRABHOUSE - NIGHT

SUNSHINE and some of the other white Titans, along with
PETEY and BLUE, are walking down the street, taking
congratulations from various PASSERS-BY.

BLUE

Yo, boys, we ain't celebratin' -- but
we are having ourselves a good time!

The guys laugh and high-five.. Sunshine opens the door
to the CRABHOUSE.

PETEY

All right y'all, we'll see y'all
later.

SUNSHINE

Come on, bro', I'm buying We party
on

PETEY
Naw, it's alright, we got to get
going

SUNSHINE
(realizing something's up)
What?

Buck, white guy, is forced to say it:

BUCK
Man, you ain't from around here. This
place is it ain't cool with, you
know, all of us, and all

CAPTAIN JOHN comes up to Sunshine with his BASEBALL BAT

CAPTAIN JOHN
We're full tonight, boys

SUNSHINE
(incredulous)
This is they can't You can't do
this, man

CAPTAIN JOHN
This is my establishment, and I
reserve the right to refuse service to
anyone -- and that means you too,
hippie boy

The other guys pull Sunshine away, saying: "Come on,
man " "Forget it " "We'll head down to the 'Berg, y'all "
As Sunshine looks back over his shoulder, eyes gleaming
with anger.

INT BOONE KITCHEN - DAY

CLOSE on a FIRE being lit on the stove -- we PAN UP to
see CAROL, as she turns and asks:

CAROL
How do you like your eggs, Coach?

Yoast is sitting at the dining table, looking a little
uncomfortable.

YOAST
Over easy, Mrs Boone, if it ain't too
much trouble

CAROL
Less trouble than soft-boiling 'em.

Yoast smiles, as Boone enters, and spreads a COMPUTER
PRINTOUT on the table.

BOONE

I gave Mr Vernon, the math teacher,
some game film -- told him to analyze
our opponents, their tendencies
This's what he came up with

YOAST

This is tremendous Every quarter
broken down, every opponent,
percentage of times they run each
play

BOONE

Coaches have tendencies -- all of'em
except Ed Henry

YOAST

Heck, only time we'd meet Ed'd be in
the State Championship -- I don't
think we got to worry about that.

He chuckles then sees Boone is staring at him with
hard, ice-cold eyes Yoast folds the printout

YOAST

With this, we'll be even tougher
defensively

BOONE

I've been sitting on it for two weeks.
(pause)
Didn't want you to look too good..
Not saying "sorry." The team comes
first.

Yoast nods, then we hear a terrible SCREECH, and both men
spin around to see:

NICKY standing at the door to her room, holding a broken
doll, while CHERYL stomps toward the kitchen

BOONE

What the devil's goin' on?

NICKY

She busted my Barbie!

CHERYL

I dropped it. It was an accident

NICKY

Ain't no Barbie ever done this. .
(it's been broken in five
pieces)
-- from no accident!

CHERYL

Well I hate playin' with dolls!

NICKY

We weren't playing -- we were
accessorizing

BIG JU
 (stunned)
 Th thanks, officer

COP
 Best defense I seen in twenty years
 Now you just better tell that Coach of
 yours to put some points up on the
 board for you

BIG JU
 I'll do that

The cop-car pulls away Ju watches it in amazement,
 then continues across the street the song "WE GOT IT
 GOIN' ON" starts on the SOUNDTRACK, as Big Ju reaches the
 front door of Bertier's house and rings the bell Ju
 waits for a moment, then the door opens, and BERTIER
 steps out, grabs him in tight bear-hug, and leads him
 inside .

THROUGH THE WINDOW: We see Bertier introduce Big Ju to
 his reserved MOTHER who reaches her hand out but is
 instead grabbed by Big Ju in big HUG. Bertier then leads
 Big Ju out of FRAME, and we HOLD ON MRS BERTIER, hand on
 her chest, recovering from the experience

INT SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

Students wave and greet Coaches Yoast and Ferrell, as the
 two men walk through the corridor, wearing their game
 jackets

STUDENTS
Good luck! Go Titans! Good luck Coach!

They pass by a LINE OF BLACK KIDS waiting to use the
 BATHROOM; Yoast hesitates:

YOAST
 Why don't you boys use the bathroom
 upstairs?

BLACK KID
 That's *their* bathroom

Yoast's eyes narrow -- he's not sure what to do; Ferrell
 tugs on his sleeve.

COACH FERRELL
 Come on, Coach -- we got us a game
 waiting

Yoast hesitates . then follows Ferrell down the
 corridor.

EXT FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

BODIES FLYING -- CRASHING INTO EACH OTHER -- A WILD GAME
 IN PROGRESS:

THE SCOREBOARD READS: "HAYFIELD 7 T C WILLIAMS 0"
 Eleven minutes left; first quarter HAYFIELD is passing
 them to death ALLAN COSLETT, THE WHITE LINEBACKER, is
 too slow to cover the BACK out of the backfield Hayfield
 is moving

Cheryl is sitting with the Boone family, jumping up and
 throwing her head back in exasperation, pulling at her
 hair

CHERYL
*We're movin' like molasses out there,
 for crissakes!*

CAROL
 Now you watch your language, Cheryl

Cheryl hops up and down in frustration. . Nicky shakes
 her head and looks at her mother:

NICKY
 Are all white girls this crazy?

The TITANS huddle, in a panic.

BERTIER
 (glances at the scoreboard)
 Allan, they're gonna score a hundred
 points on us tonight if you don't
 cover that back!

YOAST is pulling his hair out. BOONE starts towards
 Yoast

BOONE
Yoast! Shape up that defense!

YOAST
Don't come down here, Coach!

BOONE
They score again, I'm taking over!

TIME CUT: THE OFFENSE RUNS A PLAY -- REV hands off to
 GLASCOE -- but Petey misplays his block, and Glascoe is
 nailed hard by the DEFENSE.

SIDELINES

Petey hangs his head, as Boone breathes fire at him:

BOONE
You missed that block by a country
mile, country boy! You didn't even
 have that ball in your hands to
 fumble, so you got no excuse, you hear
me? No excuse!

ANGLE ON YOAST and FERRELL -- watching as Petey throws
 down his helmet and walks away, while Boone rants?

BOONE (cont'd)
Pick up that helmet! Don't you turn
your back on me!

Yoast turns to Ferrell:

YOAST
 Take over for me, Herb

INT LOCKER ROOM - MINUTES LATER

PETEY, tears off his padding, holding back tears YOAST
 ENTERS

PETEY
 I was a two year starter at G W. All
 that yelling man, it does nothing
 but make me play worse I can't take
 it no more

YOAST
 Come play linebacker for me.
 (Petey is surprised)
 23 is killing us You're the only guy
 we got with the speed to cover him

PETEY
 You mean go in now? But. I
 haven't practiced with the defense.
 I can't

YOAST
 Just stay on 23 like stink. We'll work
 out the rest after we've put this one
 away . alright?

Petey nods.. determination filling his eyes

EXT FOOTBALL FIELD - MOMENTS LATER

Boone paces the sidelines, looking for the missing Yoast

BOONE
 Where did Yoast go? He's just lettin'
 'em score on purpose.

Doc shakes his head, disgusted that Boone would even say
 it . Boone knows it's bull, too... then:

Yoast trots back to the sidelines, followed by Petey --
 who runs out onto the field, signalling to Coslett, who
 turns and trots off.

BOONE (cont'd)
 What in hell .?

He starts down the sidelines, but Doc holds him back
 Doc shakes his head, and Boone reluctantly stays put

IN THE STANDS

MR COSLETT
He's taking Allan out!!!
(rising)
Yoast! Don't you take out my boy!

CHERYL
He's gettin' beat bad out there, Mr
Coslett!

MR COSLETT
You stay out of it, girl!

The Quarterback tries to pass to the speedy Halfback again, but Petey swats it away

Another play -- Big Ju over-commits, and the running back gets past him but Bertier charges in from the opposite direction, taking him down

-- The Quarterback throws a swing pass to the halfback
PETEY SLAMS INTO THE BACK WITH A THUNDEROUS TACKLE! THE
MODERATELY SIZED TITANS' CROWD ERUPTS.

BERTIER
BIG JU, WE GOT US A MONSTER HERE!

SCOREBOARD: "T C WILLIAMS 25 . HAYFIELD 7" FINAL SCORE

INT COACHES' OFFICE - DAY

YOAST sits in a chair, pained. MR. COSLETT stands over him haranguing him Mr. Coslett holds a fist full of press clippings.

MR COSLETT
Player of the week, Five times! Second
team all-metro! My boy's a star,
dammit!!

BOONE and DOC are there as well -- Boone starts to say something, but Yoast jumps in instead

YOAST
Allan was good enough to start for me
at Hammond... but here he's gotta sit.

MR. COSLETT
You're selling out your race, trying
to appease those liberals.

YOAST
(erupting)
I'm not selling out anybody! Petey
Jones is a flat out better player than
Allan!
(calming;sad)
Why'd you make me say it, Fred?
Allan's a good player and a fine boy,
but he can't start anymore

MR COSLETT
 (to BOONE)
 This is all your doing, you black son
 of a

YOAST
 (jumping up in front of Mr
 Coslett)
That's enough It's my call Now you
 go on home before you do something
 you'll regret, Fred

Mr Coslett exits in a huff Yoast is really unnerved

BOONE
 Well, at least you won't have to see
 him anymore

YOAST
 Yes I will He's on the deacon board
 with me

BOONE
 Listen, about Petey

YOAST
 It's all right, coach . no thanks
 required.

BOONE
 (sharp)
Thanks?
 (Yoast is taken aback;)
 You think you're doing me some kind of
 a favor? Taking 'em aside every time I
 come down on 'em, protect 'em from big
 bad Boone? You're cuttin' my legs from
 under me!

YOAST
 Some of the boys. just don't
 respond well to public criticism I
 tell 'em what they need to know, but I
 don't humiliate them in front of the
 team

BOONE
 And which "boys" might those be,
 Yoast? When I come down on Bertier,
 you don't coddle him. When I come down
 on Sunshine, you don't take him to the
 side and hold his hand Why is that,
 Yoast?

Yoast is stunned, silent

BOONE (cont'd)
 I may be a nasty son of a bitch, but I
 am the same nasty son of a bitch with
 every player on the team You think
 you're doing those black boys a favor?

The world out there don't give a damn how sensitive anybody is, especially not some negro kid from the wrong side of the tracks -- You ain't helping those boys by patronizing 'em, man! You are just crippling 'em for life!

DOC

Herman, if it weren't for Coach Yoast you wouldn't have a player left on this team to coach

BOONE

Who asked you?

DOC

Oh, now I got to be asked, before I speak my mind, is that it?

BOONE

Now you against me too, Doc?

DOC

Nobody here is against you, you paranoid nut! Nobody!

Boone brings it down to a boil, walking to the door

BOONE

He's killing me, Doc He's killing me with kindness.

(choked with emotion; to
YOAST)

You're killing me

Boone exits Tears glitter in Yoast's eyes He whispers:

YOAST

I'm a coward.

DOC

Not today.

YOAST

One day don't make up for a lifetime.

EXT. QUAD - DAY

AS BOONE moves across the quad, STUDENTS BLACK and WHITE walk up to him and nod

STUDENTS

Coach, congratulations! Way to go, coach! Power to the Titans!

Some black MILITANTS walk past him

CINQUE

Righteous football, Brother Boone 4-0 Now all you need to do put some more bruthas on the field.

(off BOONE's hard glare)
Or not

Boone continues on, passing:

SUNSHINE -- Who is on the lawn in the b g practicing Tai-Chi by himself -- Like David Carridaine in "Kung Fu "

A GAGGLE OF GIRLS -- black and white -- ogle him from the side PETEY and BLUE slide up to the girls:

PETEY
Hey, baby, what you lookin' at him for? I'm the one that won the game, y'all -- my man there ain't played a minute all year

BLACK GIRL
He gets bored, he can play with me anytime
(the girls laugh and high-five)

PETEY
Yo, you might as well forget about him, he's from California -- know what I mean?

WHITE GIRL
Yeah, a California dreamboat.

PETEY
(meaningful)
No-- I mean he's from California.

The girls look at Petey like he's out of his mind. as GLASCOE and BUCK step in, pulling Petey away

GLASCOE
Yo, come on, Casanova -- we got to take care of some team business.

Petey calls back at the girls as he's dragged off:

PETEY
You come to the next game, you'll see me dominate, baby! Dominate! Bring all your friends, cause ain't none of y'all want to miss it!

INT. LUNCHROOM - DAY

LASTIK sits in the middle at a table with REV They have their books open in front of them. Lastik is inhaling the second of six chili dogs that sit on his tray

LASTIK
I don't know, Rev! I can't even remember what a square root is, man!

REV

If you concentrated on your work
instead of your lunch, it might help

LASTIK

(through a mouthful of food)
It's my nerves, man! Coach is
pressurin' me, man! You know how hard
it is to get a "C+"?

SUDDENLY GLASCOE, BUCK, ALDERSON, BLUE and PETEY appear
They spread out in the room and approach

BUCK

Hey, Lastik -- it's gettin' so you
can't even waddle up a' kick a field
goal, man!

GLASCOE

The officials starting to count you as
three players every time you get on
that line, bro'! Won't even let the
rest of us on the field! You want to
play every position, Lastik?

Lastik knows what's up He starts eating faster, stuffing
the dogs in his mouth, chili spraying everywhere The
Players rush him -- Lastik jumps up with his tray and
waddles around the room trying to escape them. MASS
CONFUSION AND HYSTERIA. Lastik continues to eat

They close in on him. He dives under the table; munch,
munch They dive under the table, Lastik comes up,
escapes Glascoe's grasp and JUMPS ON A TABLE to evade
them BLUE sticks out an arm and grabs his leg LOUIE
CRASHES DOWN ON THE TABLE: FOOD AND PEOPLE FLY
EVERYWHERE EVERYBODY IS CRACKING UP

BLUE

(grabbing him)
NO MORE CHILI DOGS, LOUIE!

They lift up the groggy Lastik and carry him on their
shoulders from the lunchroom THE STUDENTS APPLAUD It
is the first time black and white kids have laughed
together

INT CAMPBELL HOME/KITCHEN - EVENING

A raucous family dinner is in progress; Bertier seated at
the table, mixing in like he is one of the family: Mr
Campbell is pushing a plate of PIGS FEET toward him

BERTIER

Uh uh, Mr C -- no way

MR CAMPBELL

You gonna insult my wife's cooking,
Gerry?

BERTIER
 Heck, no! I love your cookin', Mrs C,
 but a man's got to draw the line
 somewhere

MR CAMPBELL
 (to Julius)
 What kind of rude characters you
 bringing in this house?

Big Ju grins, standing up:

BIG JU
 Those pig's feet are nasty, though We
 got to go, Pop

BERTIER
 Come on, Mr C -- you're a militant
 you know that pig's feet was only et
 by black folks on account of it was
 the scraps white people tossed at 'em
 You're practically a traitor eatin'
 that stuff

MR CAMPBELL
 Julius, get this boy out the room
 before I'm forced to kick his behind
 right here and embarrass him in front
 of the women

Ju laughs, pulling Bertier up and dragging him to the
 door Bertier turns and gives Mrs. Campbell a hug, as Ju
 opens the 'fridge and pulls out a couple of beers

MR. CAMPBELL
 Hey! You don't sit here insulting my
 food and walk out with my liquor, too

EXT CAMPBELL HOME - NIGHT

Big Ju shoves Bertier out the door, waving at his father
 as he exits. . Bertier yells at some of the BLACK KIDS
 that are playing around his car:

BERTIER
 Hey, get away from there, y'all You
 people got no respect for property!

BIG JU
 You people!?
 (gives Bertier a shove)
 There you go with that "you people"
 thing again, cracker!

Bertier gives Big Ju a shove back, as they get into the
 car and peel off. .

EXT THE BERG (WATERFRONT) - DUSK

BERTIER and BIG JU sit on the hood of his car, drinking
 the beers, looking out at the water

BERTIER
 When this is all over, after college,
 I want you to move up to the Ridge; be
 my neighbor

BIG JU
 Why it's gotta be the Ridge?

BERTIER
 I don't care I'll move to The Berg

BIG JU
 (skeptical)
 You'll move down here?

BERTIER
 I don't know, man but we're going
 to college together, you know that U
 of M, all the way

BIG JU
 Heck no -- I'ma go to Ohio State, bro'
 -- play for Woody Hayes!

BERTIER
 All right, then I'm comin' with
 you.

BIG JU
 Shut up, man

BERTIER
 Naw, I'm serious, bro' -- Ohio State!
 Buckeyes, here we come!

Ju laughs, as Bertier hops up onto the roof of the car

BIG JU
 Now you messin' up your own thing,
 bro'

Bertier throws his arms up and howls out over the
 Potomac:

BERTIER
 BUCKEEEEYYYYEESSSS!! WHOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!!

EXT DINER - NIGHT

Neon light reads: "Good Food" -- a small sign in the
 window: "We reserve the right to refuse service to
 Anyone."

COACH FERRELL (o.s)
 What are you trying to say to me,
 Bill?

INT DINER - NIGHT

Yoast and Ferrell sit at a booth across from one another

YOAST

Just that, well, the team's been doing so well -- don't that make you feel like -- well, maybe this is a boat don't need to be rocked.

COACH FERRELL

You're talking about givin' up. Not taking the job when Boone loses.

YOAST

You really think we're gonna lose?

(pause)

"He that diggeth a pit will himself fall into it"

COACH FERRELL

Boone stole a job that was yours by right. We're gonna quote scripture, I'd call it "An eye for an eye."

A beat between the two men

COACH FERRELL

Marie was askin' about Cheryl -- you were supposed to bring her over before we met.

YOAST

Yeah. She's over at the Boone's. I'm gonna swing by there on the way home; go over some notes with Coach Boone.

COACH FERRELL

So that's the way it is.

(terse nod from Yoast)

You think you can just ride this out, don't you, Bill? Like you always do -- please everyone, be the good-guy. Well I got news for you.. a man's got to pick sides, sooner or later, if he's gonna call himself a man.

(pauses)

You gonna put yourself though the rest of the season with that amateur?

No response from Yoast.

COACH FERRELL

Ten years, I've followed you like a bloodhound. Now we're the laughing stock of Virginia football. I can't accept that.

YOAST

You do what you have to do, Herb.

COACH FERRELL

After all we been through -- that's all you got to say to me?

(Yoast nods)

Then you go to hell.

He turns and walks out leaving Yoast sitting there,
alone

INT BOONE HOME; LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Boone is sitting at the kitchen table, going over his
game plan; CHERYL sits beside him, sipping a coke, legs
dangling off her chair

 CHERYL
The veer's getting better I'll admit
that But you're still light on the
weak side If you don't .

 BOONE
 (looks up)
Cheryl, we got a rule in this house
When I'm in the kitchen, the kitchen
is my office When I'm in my office, I
need to be able to concentrate.

 CHERYL
I'll be quiet

 BOONE
 (exasperated)
When's your daddy pickin' you up,
anyway?

 CHERYL
I'll be quiet!

 BOONE
Cheryl... please. Why don't you go in
the other room and play with. . um. .

Boone has blanked on his own daughter's name

 CHERYL
Nicky. Your daughter's name is Nicky.

Boone is silent... shocked at himself -- then the moment
is broken as AN OBJECT FLIES THROUGH THE WINDOW. CAR
SCREECHES.

 BOONE (cont'd)
DOWN!

Cheryl drops to the floor. Boone KNOCKS OVER THE LAMP He
immediately throws his body over the object (thinking
it's dynamite or a bomb). Then he looks down, and sees
that he's lying on a BRICK.

 CAROL (O.S.)
Herman!

She's standing in the doorway, panicked. Boone gets up,
pulling Cheryl to her feet, and pushes her toward his
wife.

BOONE

Get her and the kids upstairs into the
bedroom and lock the door!

He runs to the closet and grabs his shotgun then turns
off the porch light and throws open the front door

EXT PORCH - CONTINUOUS

BOONE levels the gun and looks into the darkened street
Nothing He looks down THERE IS A BURNT DOLL Scratched
on it is "4-0-1 DEAD NIGGER "

Boone shakes his head then sits down on his stoop,
cradling his shotgun

EXT ATHLETIC BUILDING - NIGHT

Outside the building, for the first time, REPORTERS,
PHOTOGRAPHERS, FANS; AND STUDENTS, BLACK and WHITE

INT AUDITORIUM - CONTINUOUS

RADIO AND PRINT REPORTERS interview BOONE and YOAST TWO
BIG STATE TROOPERS stand on guard duty at the doors

BOONE

-- We're just gonna keep playing
Titans football . and we're not going
to be intimidated by hate and
ignorance

REPORTER#1

That why you need State Troopers,
Coach?

REPORTER#2

(to Yoast)
How do you like your prospects, Coach
Yoast?

Yoast stays silent, not answering.

BOONE

We should put up some more wins. I'm
hoping to make it to District if we
can get by Groveton.

There is an immediate CACOPHONY of disbelief from the
REPORTERS.

BOONE

District! Everybody hear me? See you
after the game.

He turns and leaves the auditorium, followed by Yoast

INT SCHOOL CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Yoast keeps stride with Boone, seething:

YOAST

I think it's time you stopped
antagonizing everybody, and learned a
little humility

BOONE

Humility?!

YOAST

You want to carry your sinful Pride
with you to your grave, that's your
business -- but when your sins
endanger my little girl, then it
becomes mine

BOONE

My sins!? You think my sins have
anything to do with what happened last
night!? My only sin is that I'm
winning football games in Virginia,
wearing the wrong shade of tan!

(cold anger)

I'm sorry your daughter was scared
last night. I really am. But she
just got a small taste of what my
girls've been going through every day
of their lives, in every town we ever
been in in this whole damn state

(pause)

Feels like hell, don't it -- the fear,
the anxiety, the constant stomach
achin' pain of it

(hard smile)

Welcome to my life, Yoast.

Boone steps into the:

INT LOCKER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The boys are gathered there, looking drawn and anxious
They look up silently at Boone and Yoast.

BOONE

What's going on?

BLUE

Well, coach. our biggest game so far
is comin' up. Some of the guys are
real nervous, and me and Louie wanted
to tell you um, we're gonna sing

YOAST

Sing?

EXT. THE STANDS - LATER

NEARLY PACKED. BLACK AND WHITE STUDENTS from TC. IT IS
INTEGRATED IN THE MIDDLE SECTION. BLACKS on one side;
BIG FARM BOYS and WHITES on the other side. The Two sides
SHOUT, trying to outdo one another.

EXT ATHLETIC BUILDING PARKING LOT - SAME TIME

WHITE KIDS wearing "AEX" jackets surround Boone's car
They take out tire irons and begin SMASHING HIS WINDOWS
and slashing his tires

EXT CENTER SECTION OF THE STANDS-- SAME

THE PARENTS sit in the center section, separated
racially, except for Cheryl, who is pointing down at the
field and talking to Nicky:

 CHERYL
That's Big Ju He's got so good, he's
got All-American written all over him
And Gerry Bertier is

 NICKY
I - do - not - care!

JEAN BERTIER ENTERS and moves to them

 MRS BERTIER
Mrs Boone, I'm Jean Bertier, Gerry's
mother Would you mind if I join you?

 CAROL
Of course not -- make yourself
comfortable

 MRS. BERTIER
(sitting)
Your husband's doing a fine job, Mrs.
Boone. It feels so good to be 5-0

MR CAMPBELL sits in the section with some BLACK PARENTS
THE BARKERS move down to them

 MR. BARKER
You're Mr. Campbell
(CAMPBELL nods)
I'm John Barker, this is my wife Mary
Kirk plays next to Julius... We'd like
to sit with you, if that's alright
(CAMPBELL nods)
Your Julius is a great player

 MR. CAMPBELL
Yeah .. that Kirk ain't bad, either.

 MR BARKER
Little chilly out here, why don't we
throw on an overcoat?

Mr. Campbell looks at him strangely. Mrs. Barker rolls
her eyes Mr Barker pulls out a fistful of miniature
liquors

 MR. BARKER (cont'd)
(grins)
Here's a full length leather job.

INT PRESS BOX - MINUTES LATER

A RADIO ANNOUNCER is working the mike with a COLORMAN
PACKED WITH REPORTERS

RADIO ANNOUNCER

"This is the biggest game of the
season for the T C Williams Titans,
undefeated after 5 games They're
going against the Groveton Lions also
undefeated after 5 "

DOLLY ACROSS the LIONS TEAM-- white -- tough -- as warm
up

COLORMAN (V O)

*"The Lions defense is double tough
Their All-State nose-guard Kip Tyler's
mean as a copperhead snake."*

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V O.)

"And here come the Titans!"

SUDDENLY WE HEAR LOUD "CALL AND RESPONSE" SINGING -- AND
THE TITANS APPEAR:

THE TEAM

"EVERYWHERE WE GOOOOO.. EVERYWHERE WE
GOOOO . PEOPLE WANNA KNOOOOW.
PEOPLE WANNA KNOOOWWW.. WHOOOO WE
AREEEEE. WHOOO WE AREEEEE.. "

COLORMAN

"Sangin'?! Who ever heard of a sangin'
football team?"

The players line up facing each coach. They do the
monkey roll, then move to Karoka, then rope drills A
synchronized performance No one's ever seen anything
like it:

THE TEAM (cont'd)

"SOOOO WE TELLLL THEM . SOOOO WE
TELLLLL THEM.. WE ARE THE TITANS!
WE ARE THE TITANS. THE MIGHTY
MIGHTY TITANS OOO AHH OH YEAH!, OOO
AHH OH YEAH!, OOO AHH OH YEAH!"

COACH TOLBERT looks on in anger His star player KIP
TYLER, the nose-guard warms up next to him

COACH TOLBERT

Who do they think they are, the
Beatles? That Boone is making a
mockery out of this game.

(to his TEAM)

STOP GAWKING AT 'EM! WARM UP!

(to Kip)

Shut 'em up Hard

EXT ON THE FIELD-- MOMENTS LATER

KICKOFF The Titans receive A TITAN catches the ball and is BLASTED BY A GROVETON PLAYER THE STATE TROOPERS have their back to the field and watch the stands during the game

BOONE talks to the OFFENSIVE TEAM

BOONE
Let's open with base 12 Feel'em out,
see how they're reading it Lastik,
audible if you think Tyler's stunting

The Titans move to the line As they set up LASTIK audibles to STUBBS

LASTIK
G-kick, 04

Stubbs hears him, but doesn't acknowledge him. They line up

REV
55, BLUE, HUT!

Lastik crosses to block the guard. Stubbs is supposed to cross and block the noseguard, but STUBBS FOLLOWS LASTIK. THEY BOTH BLOCK ONE MAN LEAVING TYLER FREE TYLER has a clean shot! HE CRASHES INTO REV SLAMMING HIM TO THE GROUND! THERE IS A GASP -- Rev is motionless.

TYLER
Song's over, Sambo

Buck slams into Tyler. THE OFFICIAL BREAKS IT UP The players surround Rev as BOONE and YOAST run on the field - Lastik is kneeling over his friend, tormented

BOONE
Lastik, what happened?!

LASTIK
I audibled! Rev, I audibled!

STUBBS
I didn't hear it Swear to God

ON THE SIDELINES

They crowd around REV -- who is still dazed. THE TEAM DOCTOR attends to him. He shines a light in his eyes, tries his reflexes

DOCTOR
He pulled something in his wrist. He's fine -- just won't be able to throw worth a damn for a while.

OFFICIAL
You got one minute, Coach.

YOAST

(sotto)

Coach, take another time out

Boone spins and turns to SUNSHINE who is frozen in shock -
- Boone steps over to him:

SUNSHINE

Coach, Rev's goin' back in, right?

BOONE

Not as Q B Not this season

SUNSHINE'S P O V WHIPS frantically across the CROWD

BOONE

RonnieBass When I was fifteen years
old, my mother and father died -- on
the same day Eight brothers and
sisters eight looking up to me,
waiting for me to do something
Anything You think I was ready? I had
to put my feet in some giant shoes and
walk that day.

(then)

You're gonna do the same thing,
RonnieBass You're the Colonel now
command your troops

Ronnie nods slowly trots over to the guys:

SUNSHINE

All right, let's go.

Sluggish, halfhearted response

SUNSHINE (cont'd)

Haven't you ever seen a football
injury, you wimps? Get up off your fat
behinds and get out onto that field!
Show some life in those legs, dammit!
Let's go!

The guys jump to it.. surprised and energized

IN THE HUDDLE

SUNSHINE (cont'd)

48 O Read. This is for Rev On one

They break the huddle then line up Sunshine looks, then:

SUNSHINE (cont'd)

Blue, 44, HUT!

This time the blocking is precise and ferocious
Sunshine pitches successfully to Glascoe, who flies down
the field for 30 yards THE CROWD ERUPTS. TYLER smacks
Sunshine in the facemask. The OFFICIAL WHISTLES and pulls
his flag -- Buck comes back, smacks Tyler, then helps
Sunshine up.

ANOTHER HUDDLE: Sunshine shakes the stars out of his eyes:

GLASCOE
You alright, Sunshine?

SUNSHINE
Yeah Buck, let 'im through this time

BUCK
What!?

SUNSHINE
Let him through Same play Let's go

ON THE SIDELINE

DOC
(to Boone)
Man, your folks died on the same day?

BOONE
Hell no My mamma's living down in
Charlotte My pops passed on last
year, though.

The play starts -- Tyler charges up the middle -- Buck "misplays" him -- the CROWD GASPS as Tyler roars toward Sunshine..

-- Sunshine coolly waits for Tyler to get there, then throws a purposely incomplete pass over his head And steps aside like a bullfighter just as Tyler get there, letting Tyler hit him only glancingly -- and as they go down, almost "accidentally," Sunshine catches Tyler's legs in between his own and twists -- Tyler ROARS in pain

DOC
Looks like we just got ourselves some offense.

-- Lions DOCTORS run out onto the field Coach Tolbert is yelling at the official:

COACH TOLBERT
Unnecessary roughness! That's a penalty!

OFFICIAL
What penalty? I didn't see anything!

Sunshine gets up, looking coldly down at Tyler Cook and Glascoe stare at Sunshine with something like awe in their eyes:

COOK
Damn man, you see that? This is a bad white-boy, man!

The Titans crowd SINGS, as Tyler is led limping off the field:

CROWD
 "NA NA NA, NA NA NA NA, HEY HEY, GOOD-BYE "

SONG CONTINUES OVER A SERIES of QUICK CUTS -- showing the TITANS dominating the rest of the game, Sunshine leading the offense with effortless confidence -- and we SWISH PAN TO:

THE SCOREBOARD: FINAL: TITANS 29 LIONS 0

INT LOCKER ROOM - POST GAME

Yoast steps in and hands the gameball to Sunshine -- who takes the ball and hands it to Rev, whose hand is heavily bandaged

SUNSHINE
 This is the real king
 (they hug)
 Thanks for teaching me the veer, Rev

THE TEAM
 REV, REV, REV, REV, REV!

Lastik raises Rev's arm in triumph -- but it's his hurt arm! Rev screams in pain, and the instantly sorry Lastik is buried under a pile of mock-angry players..

EXT ATHLETIC BUILDING PARKING LOT - A HALF HOUR LATER

STUBBS and KIRK BARKER walk together Barker stops, as he spots his father in a warm conversation with Mr Campbell.

STUBBS
 Come on, Kirk -- let's head over to my place Your old man looks like he's busy fraternizing with the enemy.

KIRK
 (hesitates; then)
 I'm going home, Ray

Kirk heads toward his family Stubbs shakes his head and continues on. . he grins as he walks by small crowd gathered around Boone's demolished car.

Stubbs opens the door to his own pickup-truck, then he's grabbed from behind by a furious BERTIER

BERTIER
 You just couldn't stand blocking for him, could you, Ray?

STUBBS
 Don't know what you're talking about, pardner Neither will Boone

Never know when another accident'll happen, 'though

BERTIER

I'm not gonna let you play another game on this team

STUBBS

Oh yeah, "Jerry Lewis?" You gonna tell Coach Coon what to do, just like last time, right? Isn't he your Daddy, now?
(climbs into car)
Boone don't cut anybody, remember? Especially not for no innocent mistake

STUBBS SCREECHES OFF Boone spots Bertier, and walks over to him Bertier turns and wipes his eyes

BERTIER

(long pause)

I said some things to you before the season started I'm sorry.

BOONE

We're past that now, Gerry Been past it for a while

BERTIER

I want Ray off the team, Coach.

BOONE

You know my policy, Gerry.

BERTIER

Coach. I know what you're doin' here -- and I respect it. But sometimes you just got to cut somebody loose

Boone studies Bertier, a newfound respect filling his eyes.

BOONE

All right. You're team Captain. This one's the Captain's call

INT. CAPTAIN JOHN'S CRABHOUSE - NIGHT

The door swings open, and Sunshine walks in, with an INTEGRATED group of TITANS. . Many of the PATRONS CHEER, starting to sing "NA NA NA, HEY HEY" . . others hiss angrily, trying to shut them up.

Sunshine strides through the aisle, open collar, love beads swinging, ignoring the offensive comments: "'bout time we had us a white quarterback." "that nigger had no arm. " He stops at the counter, where CAPTAIN JOHN is waiting, holding his bat:

CAPTAIN JOHN

I don't care how many games you win, boy them nigras ain't never comin' in here

SUNSHINE

(evenly)

You see that guy over there dude
with the jacket and buzz-cut? That's
my old man, Air Force Colonel Ronald
Bass

COLONEL BASS is visible outside the glass doors, looking
into the restaurant

CAPTAIN JOHN

I don't give a popcorn fart he's
Richard Nixon

SUNSHINE

I bet you don't But Colonel Bass just
put in a call to his buddies in the
Justice Department, as kind of a favor
to me for winning the game, and
all They pretty much agreed to make
an example of you throw so many
civil rights violations at you it'll
make your head spin

(pause)

You can fight it, too if you want
to spend about the next ten years of
your life in court

(cold smile)

Or you can be reasonable.

Captain John stares into Ronnie's eyes trying to call
his bluff: he ain't bluffing. Captain John backs down .
puts away the bat. He turns to his WAITRESS:

CAPTAIN JOHN

Louanne, if they can find a table,
they can sit in it

Ronnie walks back to the doorway; then he and the other
Titans walk in and find a table...

A number of hard-core RACIST PATRONS rise, and start for
the doors . then, to the Titan's disbelief, one of their
SUPPORTERS starts singing:

SUPPORTER

"Na na na, hey hey, good bye "

He is joined by another SUPPORTER and another, until the
whole place is ringing with song, mocking the stream of
racists filing out through the doors:

SUPPORTERS

"NA NA NA, NA NA NA, HEY HEY, GOOD
BYEE"

And the SONG MOVES US INTO:

A MONTAGE:

A party at Glascoe's sister's house Lastik, Bertier and
other white players dance in the all-black crowd.

HEADLINES: "Titans Win! Titans 6-0; SCOREBOARD READS:
TITANS 30 EAGLES 6 "

Lastik in class, sweating over an exam -- reaches under his desk we think he's going to cheat -- but he pulls out a CANDY BAR instead, chewing on it furtively as he writes

A pep rally at the school-- Black and white kids sitting and cheering together

TITAN PRIDE takes hold in the city: Everybody wears Titans caps, tee shirts On city buses "GO TITANS " Banners, billboards, etc In the stands, black and white students howl maniacally NEWSPAPER PHOTOS OF THE TEAM fly into the LENS, ending with the HEADLINE: "TITANS DEFEAT ANNANDALE, ADVANCE TO REGIONAL FINALS!" -- and:

INT COUNTRY CLUB BANQUET ROOM

YOAST and the OTHER NOMINEES for the VIRGINIA HIGH SCHOOL HALL OF FAME, stand in front of the PRESS CLUB REPORTERS, PHOTOGRAPHERS and A LONE TV CAMERA--a photo op A huge banner reads: "Virginia High School Football Hall Of Fame Nominees "

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (V O)
.. leadership on and off the field;
high moral and athletic standards; and
a long winning record--after all, we
are coaches and athletic directors--
(laughter)
Gentlemen, welcome your 1971 Hall of
Fame Nominees!

CHERYL squeezes Yoast's hand, beaming with joy

INT. BALLROOM - LATER

The EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR stands to the side with Yoast, while Cheryl entertains A D REVERE and several COACH'S WIVES a short distance away.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
One hell of a season the Titans are
having, Coach.
(then)
Too bad it's got to end.

YOAST
We're still in it, Lyle Coach
Gahagan's boys are pretty good, but I
think we'll take them in the Regional

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Not if we have anything to say about
it.
(Yoast looks up; surprised)
You've been patient, Bill, and the
time has come for your patience to be
rewarded

The Regionals are a trade off --
you're in this for long haul, aren't
you?

YOAST
I don't follow you, Lyle

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
I'll draw you a map You play the game
-- the fellas we hire will call it
You lose the Regional Boone is out,
you're head coach again And all roads
lead to the Hall of Fame

YOAST
Does Gahagan know about this?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
(tense smile)
You've worked your whole life for
this, Bill -- You deserve it

INT BUS STATION - DAY

YOAST strides through the station, carrying cannisters of
game film. REPORTERS, PHOTOGRAPHERS move with him

REPORTER#1
You like your chances in the Regional,
Coach?

YOAST
Wilson is a great team Coach
Gahagan's got five All-Americans on
his squad. But we'll show up to play

BOONE is standing at a PAYPHONE, boiling with anger:

BOONE
What do you mean, Gahagan's not
coming? We're here waiting to trade
game film with 'em, and --
(stops; listens)
He's not trading film? That's the most
unprofessional thing I ever . hello?

Boone hangs up the phone, frustrated -- then finds
himself facing several REPORTERS:

REPORTER#2
Coach Boone, how do you rate ?

YOAST
I got nothing to say right now

He pushes angrily through the throng of reporters,
leaving Yoast standing there. . guilt ridden.

EXT WOODROW WILSON HIGH (NORFOLK, VA); PLAYING FIELD - DAY

The PLAYERS work under the watchful eye of the COACHES
HEAD COACH GAHAGAN strides past his white, burly boys,
followed by a phalanx of REPORTERS

REPORTER#3

What do you think of the Titans,
Coach? Think you got a chance against
that defense they got over there at
T C ?

COACH GAHAGAN

(BLOWS WHISTLE)

TON, BILLY, RAY come on over here

TON DAVIS, a big fullback and TWO BIG TACKLES lumber
over

COACH GAHAGAN (cont'd)

Boys, Ton Davis, our All-American
fullback; 235 pounds of solid muscle
(then)

These are my All-American tackles
Prize bulls, who don't do nothing but
knock the chocolate outta folks

REPORTER#2

Is it true you're not going to trade
films with Coach Boone?

COACH GAHAGAN

I think we're done here

Reporter#2 gets in his face.

REPORTER#2

Why won't you trade game film with
him?!

COACH GAHAGAN

I'm not doing anything to help that
monkey.

(calming)

You print that and I'll come after you
with my bare hands You hear?! Now,
you're blocking my egress, son.

Gahagan moves brusquely away. followed by the throng of
journalists.

INT T C GYM - DAY

Wild PEP RALLY in progress. BAND PLAYS. Glittering
CONFETTI falls THE PLAYERS sit together on the floor
The Homecoming queen, a stunning black girl, appears with
her COURT, and the crowd goes wild.

ANGLE ON YOAST: looking around for Boone but he's
nowhere to be seen Yoast steps over to Buck, the tackle

YOAST
Buck, you seen Coach Boone?

BUCK
Naw, he ain't here Did you hear what
Coach Gahagan over at Wilson said
about

YOAST
I heard

INT HALLWAY T C WILLIAMS - MOMENTS LATER

Yoast strides through the hallway, passing a LINE OF
BLACK KIDS waiting to use the downstairs bathroom he
stops and turns around

YOAST
(boiling)
This is still going on?

BLACK KID
We ain't goin' up there to get killed

INT HALLWAY (UPSTAIRS) - MINUTES LATER

Yoast, followed by the black students, storms toward the
"white" bathroom

INT BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

The door flies open and Yoast bursts in -- It is
cavernous; twenty urinals. BIG FARMBOYS are hanging out,
smoking; a de facto lounge. . they look up, surprised as:

Yoast ushers in the sheepish black students from
downstairs, and barks at them:

YOAST
Get to those stalls and urinate!

The Black Players move to the urinals, just standing
there Yoast snaps forward, grabs cigarettes from the
Farmboys and stamps them out.

YOAST
This is not a private lounge! You --
you -- You're all suspended!!

He grabs them roughly, shoving them out of the door.

AEX KID (o s)
(inside stall)
Who the hell is that?!

Yoast BLASTS OPEN THE STALL with his foot and grabs the
AEX KID, who is just buttoning up his pants he throws
him out of the stall, knocking him to the floor:

YOAST

Your bathroom privileges have just
been revoked 'till the end of time,
boy! Next time you need to relieve
yourself, you will hold it in 'till
your head explodes!

The terrified teenager scrambles to his feet and flees
the bathroom

Yoast slowly gathers himself realizes the boys at the
urinals are looking at him as if he is a complete madman

INT BOONE'S HOUSE; DINING AREA/KITCHEN - NIGHT

BOONE sits next to a film projector on the table The
game film is projected on his refrigerator door
Canisters are strewn over the table He's been at this
for hours He's in a trance then there is a KNOCK at
the DOOR

LIVING ROOM

BOONE opens the door It's YOAST.

YOAST

Figured you'd be up.

DINING AREA/KITCHEN

They sit down. Boone continues watching the film. Yoast
notices the canisters are game films from Boone's teams
in North Carolina.. which surprises Yoast a little

BOONE

No one out prepares me Ever

YOAST

Not that North Carolina film is gonna
do us much good.

(tries a smile)

I got some info on Wilson. This year
they're running a Full House T, double
tight end...

BOONE

Monkey? Could a monkey do this?

YOAST

Coach Boone. .

BOONE

Prepare, execute, plan? See this film;
Carolina State Championship Led the
state in three of five offensive
categories... fourteen years of
coaching, never had a losing season

(then)

Not even a man? A monkey An
animal.

YOAST
 You have to let it go, coach We got a
 football game to think about

BOONE
 A game

Boone nods tears forcing their way into his eyes

BOONE (contid)
 Nicky Nicole I couldn't even
 remember my own daughter's name My
 own daughter
 (soft)
 This is no game

Yoast quietly moves to Boone hesitates then reaches
 out and puts a hand on his shoulder They share a
 moment then Yoast glances at the screen

YOAST
 Whoa That's a great block Who is
 that big ol' boy?

BOONE
 My All-State tackle in '69 I called
 him Biscuit, 'cause he was a biscuit
 shy of 300 pounds
 (both laugh)

YOAST
 He makes Louie Lastik look like Olive
 Oyl.

They laugh again. . and the film projected on the 'fridge
 dissolves into:

EXT PARKING LOT/FOREMAN FIELD; NORFOLK, VA - NIGHT

RAIN falls in TORRENTS -- the BUS ROLLS in, and the
 TITANS PLAYERS step out into the deluge, their eyes
 burning with purpose

EXT LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

The mood is restrained. BOONE is finishing his address to
 the players.

BOONE
 I wish we could've prepared you better
 this week but you boys all know
 your jobs by now Just keep doing what
 you been doing, and you'll be all
 right

YOAST
 It's just another game. We're gonna
 play Titan football and keep it on the
 field

EXT FOOTBALL FIELD - FIRST QUARTER

RAIN POURING -- a PLAY starts -- and the OFFICIAL blows his whistle on BUCK for holding - (a phantom call) Boone runs out onto the field, livid

BOONE

Mr. Official! I want to talk to you!

OFFICIAL

Back off, Coach! You watch your tone!

Boone retreats, boiling Yoast watches on, pained, as:

ANOTHER PLAY

And another garbage call on the Titans' defense Boone runs out and gets in the official's face:

BOONE

You just gonna cheat us out of this game, man? This is the Regional! Let my boys play!

OFFICIAL

(pulls flag)

15 more yards for unsportsmanlike conduct!

Doc pulls Boone away from the official, as another 15 YARDS are tacked on.

Yoast looks across the field: GAHAGAN is grinning then Yoast's P O V sweeps over to where:

CHERYL is hopping up and down in her seat, pulling her hair, FURIOUS.. and:

Yoast runs out onto the field, and confronts the official.

YOAST

I know all about it, Titus.

OFFICIAL

What are you talking about, Bill?

YOAST

Call this game fair, or I'll go to the papers. I don't care if I go down with you -- but before God, I swear I'll get every last one of you thrown in jail

The official glares at Yoast -- then runs off to break the news to his partners Yoast trots back to the sidelines waving an "it's all right" wave at Boone, who shakes his head, frustrated and confused

YOAST AND THE DEFENSE

HUDDLE on the SIDELINES Yoast is now agitated, excited, fiery

YOAST

All right, I'm gonna cut the crap here
--this is not just a another game!

(snarling)

I don't want them to gain another
yard NOT A YARD! Blitz all night! If
they cross the line of scrimmage, I'll
pull every last one of you out!

(then)

You make sure they remember, forever,
the night they played the Titans!

HE CLAPS -- and the defense storms out onto the field

QUARTERBACK

Blue, 29, 33, HUT!

EIGHT TITANS RUSH IN IT IS A FLOOD The Quarterback
can't make the hand-off BERTIER FOREARMS TON DAVIS
LIFTING HIM OFF THE GROUND Bertier and Big Ju chase the
quarterback to the sideline and the guy SLIDES TO THE
GROUND IN TERROR before the even reach him, right in
front of GAHAGAN THE CROWD ERUPTS

-- Bertier leaps right over the prostrate Q B , who
starts to pick himself up, but finds himself looking up
at Big Ju, who stares him right back down to the
ground.

Bertier passes right in front of Gahagan, glaring at him,
and points -- "You."

Gahagan squints . fear cracking his shell. .

SHOTS OF THE SECOND QUARTER -- Like something out of
"Raging Bull." The defense overwhelms Wilson The quarter
is played in the Prexies backfield -- THEY NEVER CROSS
THE LINE OF SCRIMMAGE

BERTIER comes off the field with BIG JU and the DEFENSIVE
TEAM.

BIG JU

This one's for you, Coach

And each player talks to Boone, encouraging him, pumping
him up, boosting him, slapping him on the back He's
moved beyond words

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V O)

" the most spectacular display of
football I have ever seen. Eleven
minutes of hell Tonight, the Titans
could beat Notre Dame "

YOAST yells down to BOONE:

YOAST
 RUN IT UP, HERMAN! LEAVE NO DOUBT!

QUICK CUTS of the TITANS OFFENSIVE LINE DEMOLISHING THE
 PREXIES -- and we WHIP PAN TO -- INSERT OF SCOREBOARD:
 TITANS 44--PREXIES 14

The Titan's players are SINGING, as the PREXIES drag
 themselves toward them in order to exit Boone snaps:

BOONE
Don't you mock those boys They gave
 it their all -- Show your foes the
 same respect you'd want them to show
 you

The Titans fall silent -- The Prexies' players file past,
 heads down but some of them actually step over and
shake hands with the Titans' players.. offering the
 surprised boys terse complements before continuing on

Gahagan pauses in front of Boone, but won't look him in
 the eye He stops in front of Yoast:

COACH GAHAGAN
 You just cost yourself the Hall of
 Fame, Bill

YOAST
 Maybe. But I bought me back my soul

INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

The Titans run into the locker-room, now whooping and
 shouting; giving vent to their joy- "We're going to
State!" "We're going to State, v'all!" -- CAMERA MOVES to
 reveal YOAST AND CHERYL huddled together further down the
 corridor

CHERYL
 It's just plain old jealousy, as old
 as Cain and Abel.
 (sniffling)
 I ain't gonna lie, I wanted it real
 bad.

Yoast wipes the tears off her cheeks.

YOAST
 Me too, sweetie... but there's always
 next year And the year after that.
 (smiles)
 Long as it takes for 'em to wise up.

CHERYL
 I wouldn't want it now anyway, bunch
 of ol' rednecks
 (slight grin)
 Let's give 'em hell at State, coach

EXT NATIONAL AIRPORT - NIGHT

An AIRPLANE DOOR SWINGS OPEN; revealing a THOUSAND CHEERING FANS -- BLACK AND WHITE waiting out on the TARMAC THE CITY AND THE SCHOOL HAVE TURNED OUT THE BIG FARM BOYS, THE MILITANTS, THE HIPPIES, EVERYBODY -- FULLY INTEGRATED A light snow is falling

BOONE, YOAST, and THE PLAYERS walk down the steps to the tarmac -- in awe at their reception When they hit the ground, each player and coach is lifted up by the crowd

INT BOONE'S CAR - HALF HOUR LATER

He rolls up to his house with CAROL and NICKY in the car

BOONE

I wish I could enjoy it more I still feel that cold chill between my shoulders like I'm being sighted by a sniper's rifle

CAROL

Herman, they love you tonight And you better enjoy it while it lasts, 'cause with your sparkling personality, it's not gonna last long

All the lights in the houses in the neighborhood come on HIS NEIGHBORS RUSH OUT OF THEIR HOUSES and surround the car

NEIGHBORS

COACH! CONGRATULATIONS! GO TITANS!

EXT T.C WILLIAMS HIGH; PARKING LOT - AN HOUR LATER

An impromptu block party. Everybody sings, dances on cars, in the street. The players are in the middle of the action. Whites from the ridge and black folks from the berg converge.

Bertier walks through the crowd, flushed with happiness... he spots STUBBS hanging out on the sidelines with a bunch of AEX FRAT GUYS. They exchange a look, and Stubbs turns away.

Bertier nods to himself. then continues on to where Big Ju, Blue and some of the others are surrounded by GIRLS

BERTIER

Come on, Big Ju This town is ours tonight. let's take in the sights

BIG JU

(laughing)

You can have your town, bro' -- I'm gonna stay for a while, keep what I got goin' right here.

EXT CITY STREETS - MINUTES LATER

The streets are covered with the falling snow and ice
 EVERYWHERE BERTIER DRIVES THERE'S A PARTY GOING ON --
 EVERYBODY SINGING "NA NA HEY HEY " THE RADIO IS PLAYING
 "NA NA HEY HEY "

BERTIER DRIVES PAST IN HIS CAMARO: looking out the
 crowds, a smile glowing in his eyes then he suddenly
 hits A SHARP TURN, HIS CAR SKIDS ON THE ICE THE CAR
 SMASHES INTO AN EMBANKMENT AND TURNS OVER

INT WAITING ROOM; INTENSIVE CARE - 1 A M THAT NIGHT

BOONE ENTERS LASTIK, SUNSHINE and OTHER TEAM MEMBERS are
 sitting in the waiting room, all of them STUNNED.

BOONE
 How is he?
 (silence)
How is he?

LASTIK
 He's hurt bad

BOONE
 How bad?

LASTIK
 Doctor said he's paralyzed from the
 chest on down

Boone's spirit sinks. He looks around:

BOONE
 Where's Big Ju?

LASTIK
 I don't know. He wouldn't come.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

BERTIER is sitting up in bed with large black x's on his
 abdomen (where paralysis begins). He's hooked to an IV;
 bandaged up NURSES hover YOAST IS THERE, holding his
 bible, sitting beside JEAN BERTIER.

BERTIER
 Big Ju?
 (then)
 Oh... Coach

BOONE
 How you doing there, Gerry?

BERTIER
 If you think I look bad, you should
 see my Camaro
 (weak smile)

I won't be playing Marshall, I know that much They got a couple of tough 'backs, too

YOAST

No more talk about football, Gerry
 (opens his Bible)
 "Be of good comfort, live in one mind, be at peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you "

BERTIER

Coach I'm injured, I ain't dead
 (to Boone)
 Coach Boone if Big Ju asks about me just tell him I'm all right

INT PRESS ROOM; PRESS CLUB - DAY

BOONE and YOAST sit at the table with ED HENRY, an affable fifty-five year old white man, the HEAD COACH of Marshall REPORTERS, ONE TV CAMERA, PHOTOGRAPHERS. HENRY'S ASSISTANT COACHES stand behind him.

REPORTER#2

Coach Boone, how's it feel to be playing against "The Legend?"

BOONE

Coach Henry is the finest coach in the state. I feel privileged to be getting the opportunity to play against him. I've read his book on the 50 Defense cover to cover fifty times

COACH HENRY

I hope you didn't have time to read it this week.
 (laughter)

REPORTER#2

You've lost Bertier, Coach Yoast Is your defense in trouble?

YOAST

You can't replace a Gerry Bertier, not as a player or leader But we'll do the best we can

INT. BOONE'S HOME; KITCHEN - NIGHT

Boone and Carol sit at the table. Boone has a drink in front of him

BOONE

I don't know, Mama -- maybe Yoast was right all along.. maybe I pushed too hard

(agonized)

I can't help feeling that boy took a bullet meant for me

CAROL

Nobody took a bullet for you Gerry
had an accident The world doesn't
always revolve around Herman Boone --
and that's a damn good thing, too
(Boone smiles slightly)
You're always lookin' to cast blame
somewhere -- even if it's on yourself
But sometimes life is just hard for no
reason at all We just got to keep
makin' the best play we can, with the
hand we been dealt

Boone covers his wife's hand with his own; then there is
a SOUND from beyond: Nicky is pulling 5 year old Karen
away from the kitchen, hissing:

NICKY

That's daddy's office! You never go in
there! Never!

Boone's face tightens with chagrin He stands up, and
walks into the living room

NICKY (cont'd)

I was trying to keep her out, Daddy

Boone kneels beside both his daughters

BOONE

(soft)

No need to talk to your sister like
that, Nicky. I know you learned it
from me, but there's some things you
should be smarter about than your dumb
old Dad, okay?

Nicky is wide-eyed, hanging on her father's every word

BOONE (cont'd)

Any time you girls want to go in that
kitchen, you go right on in there I
shouldn't plant myself right in y'all's
way anyhow. I'll find myself an office
somewhere, so's I can stew by my
lonesome, alright?

NICKY

But we like it when you're home,
Daddy

Boone is choked with emotion he grabs his daughters
tightly, hugging them to him. The DOORBELL RINGS

Boone releases his daughters, and walks to the front
door:

Mr CAMPBELL is standing on the porch.

MR CAMPBELL

Coach. we need to talk

INT CAMPBELL HOME/BIG JU'S ROOM - DAY

The door creaks open, and Boone looks inside; Big Ju is sitting at his desk, poring over some books. He looks up:

BOONE
Homework?

BIG JU
Marshall's stats. Memorizing 'em.

BOONE
That's good.
(pause)
You been to see Gerry yet?

BIG JU
You know I haven't. That's why you're here. I just can't see him now. I don't know why. and I don't want to talk about it, neither.

BOONE
That's natural, Julius.
(Big Ju looks up; surprised)
None of us wants to look into the face of our own mortality. be reminded of how frail we really are. But we got to do it sometime.

BIG JU
(torn)
I can't. I can't see him. Not now. not like that. we got to win that game, Coach. Maybe when it's over.

BOONE
It'll be too late, Julius. Gerry's never gonna walk again. He has to live with that. You also want him to live feeling like he's such a burden, his own best friend couldn't handle a visit to him before a damn football game? He had your back on the field all year. Now you got to watch his
(steps close to Big Ju)
This game is about more than learning how to win the battle, brother -- It's about learning how to win the war.

INT BERTIER'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Bertier is surrounded by nurses. he banters with them, complaining and cajoling. then his eyes open wide:

Big Ju is standing in the doorway. Gerry raises his fist in the "black power" salute, and Big Ju breaks into a smile, despite himself. and raises his own fist.

NURSE
Only kin is allowed in here.

BERTIER
That's my brother, Alice Can't you
see the family resemblance?

Big Ju moves him and hugs him warmly, gently

BIG JU
I should've been there with you

BERTIER
Then you'd be in the bed next to me
and Marshall'd have a field day on us

BIG JU
You can't be hurt, man You're
Hercules

BERTIER
(laughing)
Yea, now I'll be rolling Hercules
(pause)
You gotta bring me that state title,
Big Ju We need it. show 'em all we
were right and they were wrong

BIG JU
We were right, man We don't have win
nothing to prove that
(then a smile)
When this is over, I'm gonna be your
neighbor, Bertier We're gonna get old
and fat together. And there won't be
no black and white between us

BERTIER
LEFT SIDE!

BIG JU
STRONG SIDE!

TOGETHER
AAAAAAAARRRGH!!!

EXT ROANOKE STADIUM - NIGHT

A HUGE CROWD fills the stadium. The T C WILLIAMS FANS
fill up half the stadium .. completely integrated

SUPER TITLE: "VIRGINIA HIGH SCHOOL STATE CHAMPIONSHIP"

BOONE (v.o)
For many of you, this will be the last
football game you'll ever play
Remember these days. Cherish them

INT LOCKER ROOM - SAME TIME

THE TEAM and COACHES are gathered together

BOONE (cont'd)

You've been granted a special
privilege this year; for you have been
more than mere athletes-- much more:
You've been ambassadors of goodwill,
warriors against hate, and you will
never, ever be forgotten

(pause)

Now get out there and do some serious
damage

The guys all give a tremendous SHOUT, and run past the
coaches Only LASTIK stays where he is trembling

BOONE (cont'd)

Louie -- what's wrong?

Lastik holds up a sheaf of TESTS Tears flow down his
cheeks

LASTIK

I'm eligible

He suddenly grabs the surprised Boone in a tight hug

BOONE

That's great, Louie -- but I'm already
married

Lastik won't let him go . Boone just holds him, patting
his back

INT. BERTIER'S ROOM - SAME TIME

BERTIER sits up in bed. He has TWO RADIOS BLASTING THE
GAME on either side of himself A TV set sits next to
him tuned to the news; sound down

RADIO ANNOUNCER

"This is the granddaddy of State High
School Football Championships, the
Virginia AAA It just don't get no
better. We have upstart Coach Herman
Boone's Titans versus 'The Legend' Ed
Henry, 250 wins in 30 years "

COLORMAN

"I guess you call this matchup
tradition versus .. sangin' football
players."

EXT THE FIELD - CONTINUOUS

The Titans burst out onto the grass, SINGING:

THE TEAM

"WE ARE TC TITANS OOOOOOO, WE ARE OUT
TO GET YOU OOOOOO, WE HAVE TEETH BUT
CANNOT BITE, ON OUR HELMETS THE STARS
SHINE BRIGHT, DON'T YOU THINK IT'S
FUNNY OOOOO "

EVERYBODY from the city is in the stands: PARENTS, TEACHERS, STUDENTS, BUSINESS LEADERS, A D REVERE, MRS BERTIER ENTERS They stand and APPLAUD She nods to Boone, then to Yoast and then to Big Ju She sits next to CHERYL and CAROL BOONE who squeezes her hand

TIME CUT TO:

SIDELINES (YOAST'S END)-- YOAST WITH HIS PLAYERS:

YOAST
Let's run the 44 Stack for the first series feel 'em out, then put 'em away

They run out on the field -- THE MARSHALL TEAM LINES UP IN A VEER OFFENSE, EXACTLY LIKE BOONE'S OFFENSE -- Yoast is shocked So is Boone

YOAST (cont'd)
Veer?! He's never run a veer

BOONE
Damn! Unpredictable Ed

He turns to Doc, barking orders, trying to do damage control.

SERIES OF PLAYS -- Yoast's players are baffled Other than in camp, they've never faced a veer offense -- The Marshall back breaks for big yards on every play

RADIO ANNOUNCER (v o)
"Holy Moley, that's the number one defense in the state and Watson is tearing through the line for big chunks of yardage on each carry"

INT BERTIER'S HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V O.)
"They step up, and run the option again. This time the qb keeps it, races upfield 15 more yards!"

BERTIER
STOP HIM!!!! AIEEEEE!!

The Nurse sticks her head in

BERTIER (cont'd)
DON'T COME IN HERE!

EXT SIDELINES (YOAST'S END) - MINUTES LATER

The Marshall team scores from the five yard line

RADIO ANNOUNCER
"No one has scored on the Titans on first possession all year Marshall made it look easy

With Bertier out, the Marshall
offensive line is all over Julius
Campbell, taking him right out of this
game "

The frustrated TITAN PLAYERS trot off the field to Yoast
who is really flustered

YOAST
Blue, you're not plugging the hole
I'm pulling you

BLUE
He was running through Kirk too

KIRK
Shut up, boy

BLUE
Shut me up, cracker!

Kirk grabs Blue, but:

YOAST
Stop that! Break it up!

He separates them -- Blue moves away angrily

THE TITANS are on their own 40 yard line -- SUNSHINE
steps up

SUNSHINE
44, BLUE HUT! HUT!

Sunshine sprints right, eludes the defense, and hands off
to Glascoe, who makes it into Marshall territory

ED HENRY nods, not the least bit flustered, and confers
calmly with his ASSISTANT COACH, making immediate
adjustments.

THE NEXT TITAN PLAY is defended against successfully;
BLUE, LOUIE and the kicking team run on to kick the field
goal

RADIO ANNOUNCER (v.o)
"Well it's a football game, folks. But
Ed Henry looks supremely confident.
He's not worried one bit.. tonight,
or any night "

INSERT SCOREBOARD: TITANS 3--MARSHALL 7 (END OF FIRST
HALF)

RADIO ANNOUNCER (v o)
"The Titans go in at the half, down
for the first time all year "

THE TEAM walks off the field, subdued. YOAST and BOONE
still aren't talking The Defensive Team is bickering
along racial lines; pointing fingers of blame Cheryl
rushes from the stands over to Yoast.

YOAST

Sweetheart, you better get back to
your seat

CHERYL

I can't, Coach! Ed Henry's got Boone's
number, sure as shootin' -- and you
ain't doin' nothing against that veer!

(Yoast tenses)

Boone knows that veer, Coach Now
ain't the time to be proud

INT LOCKER ROOM - MINUTES LATER

YOAST ENTERS BOONE is in the corner with the OFFENSIVE
TEAM The DEFENSIVE TEAM is scattered about

BOONE

Alright We're in a fight Anybody
thought an Ed Henry team was gonna be
a pushover is a fool.

YOAST

Coach Boone, I'd like to speak.

(BOONE nods; then to TEAM)

Is this it? We're down a few points in
a game, and we go right back down that
ugly road we came from? Because if we
do, no matter what the outcome of this
game, we're losers Tonight and
forever Are we gonna be losers? I
said are we losers?

TEAM

No! Hell, no, Coach! Not the Titans!

YOAST

(then; to Boone)

Herman.. I need your help. Ed Henry's
kicking my ass out there

EXT SIDELINES - MINUTES LATER

EVERYBODY, the WHOLE TEAM is huddled in the middle, on
the sidelines. They are not separated as they have been
BOONE kneels in front of the DEFENSIVE TEAM with his
clipboard, diagraming the veer defense. YOAST is next to
him.

BOONE

The key to defending The Veer is
discipline. Buck, if you can't touch
him, don't try to tackle him, just
stretch it out. It's tough 'cause you
want to dive in and grab, but you
can't. You have to read .

VARIOUS SHOTS OVER THE NEXT QUARTER: ALL SHOT FROM BOONE,
YOAST, AND ED HENRY'S P O V.s; as they patrol the
sidelines, barking orders, like SUBMARINE COMMANDERS AT
WAR:

THE TITANS DEFENSE rallies and stops the MARSHALL TEAM repeatedly for short or no yards

ANNOUNCER (V O)
 " the Titans defense is mounting a comeback, despite the fact that Big Julius Campbell has been a total non-factor in this game "

But the Marshall team has changed its defense and now TITANS OFFENSE CAN'T SCORE Two fighters slugging it out; each not surrendering a yard

SCOREBOARD INSERT: TITANS 3--STATESMEN 7 4th QUARTER (5 minutes remaining)

The Marshall offense mounts a charge on their own 20 -- and the BLOCKERS manage to open a hole and knock Big Ju down; the RUNNING BACK breaks for the end zone

ANNOUNCER (contid)
 "Oh my! An open road to the goal-line This one should be history .!"

But Big Ju recovers, takes off after the running back -- and almost impossibly, as the crowd gasps, gains ground from behind-- and right at the fifteen yard line he leaps into the air, tackling the running back from behind AND THE BALL IS KNOCKED LOOSE. .

A MARSHALL PLAYER is about to recover it . but from nowhere PETEY JONES dives in, picks it up, and starts running back in toward the far goal-line. he's SLAMMED INTO by a COUPLE of TACKLES, and he goes down under a crush of BODIES.

YOAST
Hold on to that ball, Petey!

The REFS manage to pull the boys off Petey and he stands up, holding the BALL ABOVE HIS HEAD! The TITANS CROWD GOES NUTS!

The OFFENSIVE TEAM stands in front of YOAST and BOONE

BOONE
 What're they doing out there, Louie?

LASTIK
 It's a 44 stack. I've seen it a hundred times, but they're breaking us down.

YOAST
 Are they stunting?

LASTIK
 No. They're playing head-up.

Boone is baffled. So is Yoast

BOONE
C-Kick and try a quick pitch, then
come back with a base series

INT BERTIER'S HOSPITAL ROOM

Bertier clasps his hands together imploring the Heavens
to help

RADIO ANNOUNCER
"Five minutes left in the game This
could be the last series for the
Titans "

HARD CUT TO:

THE SIDELINES

BOONE is walking along the playing field . looking for a
clue, anything then he stops:

BOONE'S P O V -- of the opposing team. their SHADOWS
disappearing in an even pattern down the line -- giving
away that in fact:

BOONE
They're slanting

He runs back along the sideline, his excitement growing
as he reaches Yoast, huddling with the OFFENSIVE TEAM

BOONE (contid)
They're slanting!

YOAST
Are you sure?

BOONE
They're slanting. They're covering it
up with footwork.

YOAST
We gotta catch 'em in a stunt; but we
need to get that weak side linebacker
off the field first Throw one long,
make Ed go into a prevent.

BOONE
(hard;threatened)
Yoast.

YOAST
Coach, this is your team; ain't
nothing gonna change that. But Ed
Henry's on to your game Let me at 'im
-- throw something at 'im he ain't
ready for

BOONE
 (long hesitation)
 If you run one of them dipsy-doodle
 plays of yours

YOAST
 Let me at 'im, Coach

Boone relents, stepping back Yoast turns to Rev

YOAST (contid)
 Rev, you up for a couple of warm up
 throws?
 (Rev nods; confused)
 Don't worry Just make 'em look good
 (to the others)
 Glascoe, go out on a sideline fly
 Line up on the weak side. Ronnie, try
 to complete, but the main thing is
 throw it out of bounds to stop the
 clock

ON THE FIELD

SUNSHINE
 Blue, 32, HUT!

SUNSHINE sprints out as Glascoe flies down the field
 Sunshine reaches back and throws it as far as he can
 Bowling moves near the ball, but the DEFENDER slides over
 and smacks it out of bounds 2:00 left

ED HENRY looks out across the field -- REV is PASSING
 THE BALL to a TEAMMATE on the SIDELINES

COACH HENRY
 I thought he was injured.

ASSISTANT COACH
 Guess not? But why are they warming up
 the back-up?

The offensive team runs to Boone and Yoast Across the
 field, Ed Henry calls up two HUGE DEFENSIVE LINEMEN He
 puts in a LINEBACKER, and another DEFENSIVE BACK They
 take the field.

RADIO ANNOUNCER (v o)
 "As advertised, it's a white knuckler
 Just over a minute left Titans on
 their own 18 yard line, third down--
 still behind by five points. Marshall
 in a Prevent."

Then the Titans trot out onto the field -- with a small
 defensive line of nearly all RECEIVERS, and both REV and
SUNSHINE

ASSISTANT COACH
 What the hell are they doing?

ED HENRY
 Hail Mary playing both sides of the
 field! Our guys are slow out there
 (shouting at his boys on the
 field)
Cover pass! Counter 13!

THE TITANS line up SUNSHINE and REV behind LASTIK
 YOAST looks over at BOONE -- who has his eyes SHUT

SUNSHINE
 BLUE, 27, HUT! HUT! HUT!

SUNSHINE gets the ball -- The ENTIRE MARSHALL defense
 SLANTS into the gaps he fakes a pass, shifting the
 defense to the left -- then pitches it to REV Rev slides
 through the weakside hole

LASTIK barrels into the guys covering SUNSHINE, and
 Sunshine runs with REV up the sideline, blocking for
him and together, matching stride for stride, they
race upfield sixty yards for the TOUCHDOWN

BOONE OPENS HIS EYES, as if awaking from a dream, as the
 CROWD BEHIND HIM ERUPTS he walks down the sideline
 the glimmer of a fierce smile flickers in his eyes and
 then it's gone He stops in front of a grinning, euphoric
 YOAST They regard each other with barely suppressed
 emotion.

YOAST
 I could've handled the football.
 (pause; then)
 But I never could have done what you
 did with those boys You were the
 right man for the job, Coach

Boone gives the slightest nod. then:

BOONE
 We'll prep that defense better next
 time. We won't get caught with out
 pants down around our ankles again.

YOAST
 No we won't -- 'specially not once we
 get that offense running up to par

The two men exchange a silent look of mutual respect --
 then they are deluged by a MASS OF HOWLING TITAN
 PLAYERS . CHERYL runs up to him, and he sweeps her up in
 his arms, as THE TITANS FANS POUR ON THE FIELD -- Cheryl
 looks over Yoast's shoulder, to see:

Boone, sitting down on a bench in the sidelines --
 celebration all around him some fans pat his back
 others shake his hand -- but he is for all intents and
 purposes, alone

INT BERTIER'S HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Alone in his room, Gerry has his arms up in the air,
fists clenched eyes squeezed shut in silent gratitude

CHERYL AT 19 (V O)
And the Titans sang their way into
history

INSERT: NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL RANKINGS 1971:

MOHLER HIGH SCHOOL, INDIANA (National Champion); T C
WILLIAMS VIRGINIA (First Runner Up)

INSERT: "WASHINGTON POST FOOTBALL POLL"

1971 T C WILLIAMS Titans "Greatest Team in Northern
Virginia History" Final Record: 13-0. Produced four All
Americans: Earl Cook, Jim Brown, Julius "Big Ju" Campbell
and Gerry Bertier

CHERYL AT 19 (V O)
Gerry Bertier won a gold medal for
shot-put in the wheelchair games; my
Daddy coached him With the same
competitiveness he played with on the
field, Gerry dedicated himself to
fight for the rights of the
handicapped and mentally disabled.

EXT CEMETERY; GRAVESITE; 1981 - NEAR END OF THE SERVICE

A large PHOTOGRAPH OF BERTIER over the casket.

CHERYL AT 19 (v o)
He died when he was hit in a head-on
collision with a drunk driver in 1981.

WE SEE THE TEAM. EVERYBODY. COOK is wearing a police
Captain's uniform. KIRK BARKER, JERRY BUCK, AND FRED
ALDERSON wear Naval Officer's uniforms. The others wear
dark suits: SUNSHINE, GLASCOE, BLUE, et al BIG JU is
holding hands with Gerry's mother, MRS BERTIER. WE SEE
BOONE and YOAST, standing together, shoulder to shoulder
CHERYL stands next to NICKY BOONE, 19.

CHERYL AT 19 (v o.)
People say that it can't work: black
and white. Here, we make it work every
day. We have our disagreements, of
course And things are still far off
from being as they should be. But
before we reach for hate, always,
always -- we remember the Titans.

End of the service. Silence Then BLUE starts singing:

BLUE
"Na Na Na Naaaa ."

Then the big bass voice of Bertier's best friend chimes
in

BIG JU
"Heyyyy, goodbyyye "

THE TEAM
"Na na na naaaaa, na na na naaaaa,
heyyyyy goood byyye Na na na naaaa,
na na na naaa, heyyyy goood byyeee "

Mrs Bertier, Cheryl and the Coaches join in Everybody
sings

HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE CROWD THE CEMETERY, OLD TITANS' FANS:
BLACK AND WHITE HOLDING HANDS SINGING

EVERYBODY
"NA NA NA NAAAA, NA NA NA NAAAA,
HEYYYY GOOOD BYEEEE "

CLOSE ON BOONE

He steps forward STAY WITH HIM as he walks toward the
grave . the sound of the SINGING FADING on the
SOUNDTRACK, until we are left with stark, utter silence.

BOONE'S FINGERS

Touch the stone His VOICE, a WHISPER:

BOONE
Good bye

CUT TO BLACK