

THE WORLD ' S RICHEST MAN

Written by

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Based on the book by Joseph and Richard Bockol

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Based on a True Story.

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NANCY SINATRA & FRANK SINATRA - ON TV

Father & daughter framed in a wood-grain Zenith CONSOLE.
Singing their novelty hit *Something Stupid*. In glib two part
harmony -- with a double dose of smugness.

JERRY (V.O.)
Now here's a guy can do no wrong.
Even a really *dumb* song like this
is a smash hit. ...

SONG continues OVER --

WIDE SHOT - UPSCALE DEVELOPMENT - STREET - EVENING

Sprawling new colonial homes. Commuter aristocracy. Big
backyards, lush lawns. Every man a Prince in his own mind.

JERRY (V.O.)
'Course, if it's so dumb, why can't
I get it out of my head? ...

CARD: SUBURBAN PHILADELPHIA - NOVEMBER - 1967

A TAXI pulls away from the curb. Leaves us staring AT THE
BACK of a tall, slim MAN in a bespoke suit, cigarette in
hand. *Puff*, a smoke cloud drifts by a FACE we can't see yet.

JERRY (V.O.)
Frank gets it. Only one way to make
it through this life: '*Regrets, too
few to mention.*' ...

He looks UP at a blazing sunset over the homes. Sky gold and
purple. *Puff* ...

JERRY (V.O.)
Some guys are brooders. They eat
their insides out when things go
south. I'm a guy believes no matter
how bad I screw up ... tomorrow I
can fix it.

Drops the butt, crushes it with tasseled loafers. Starts
walking towards the biggest HOUSE on the block.

JERRY (V.O.)
If I sulked about my mistakes, I
wouldn't be the richest forty year
old in America. ... Keep moving
forward. And fast. Don't let the
past catch you. ...

EXTREME CLOSE ON: CUFFLINKS

Mother of pearl and ebony. Monogrammed: *ES* -- in small diamonds. CONTINUE ACROSS a velvet-lined JEWEL BOX. Ruby tie clip, gold money clip, sterling key fob -- all with *ES*.

JERRY (V.O.)
I try to remember that everyday.

We HEAR *humming* O.S. to the Sinatra song. INTO FRAME: a HAND rifles the accessories. A sleeve with *identical* cufflinks. Except this MONOGRAM is: *JW*...

TILT UP TO THE MIRROR. Now we see the FACE of the SLIM MAN IN THE SUIT. In fact, we're startled by it.

So is he.

Meet JERRY WOLMAN (40), long, limber, dark & great-looking. Clothes horse. Elegant. But right now his hair is disheveled. Shirt unbuttoned. Tie askew like a noose. Fury in his eyes.

JERRY (V.O.)
But *right now* I can't remember
walking into this bedroom. Man, I
look like I'm here to kill someone.

VOICE
Jerry? ... What the fuck?

Jerry turns -- Throat dry. Can't swallow. Can't answer.

JERRY (V.O.)
In fact, I am.

WIDEN: INT. BEDROOM - EDDIE SNIDER'S HOUSE - EVENING

EDDIE SNIDER (34), at his bathroom door. Boyish as a teenager. Boxer shorts. Shaving cream beard on his face.

EDDIE
Jesus Christ, Jerry. Why are you in
my bedroom?

Jerry distracted by: the TV CONSOLE. Beside an enormous bed.

JERRY
Great picture.
(hard grin)
That's why I bought two and gave
one to you. But it should go
against the *other* wall.

Jerry's eyes dart to OIL PORTRAITS of Eddie and his WIFE.

EDDIE

Jerry. You can't be here.

JERRY

... very flattering. You almost look like *goyim*. When did I commission them for you? Your anniversary?

EDDIE

Who the fuck do you think you are?

Moves towards Jerry, waving his razor. Wrong tack. Jerry hurls the jewelry box at Eddie in a spray of diamonds.

JERRY

I'm the guy who bought this house for you. And most of what's in it.

Now Jerry loses it: grabs Eddie's PORTRAIT off the wall and puts his fist through it. Lifts a dressing-table CHAIR and *smashes* it against the TV SCREEN until it cracks. But Father-daughter SINATRAS, continue to sing.

EDDIE

I'm calling the police!

The phone is on the end table. And Jerry in-between.

JERRY

You can try.

Beat. -- Eddie chooses discretion -- retreats for the bathroom door. Jerry charges. Eddie throws After Shave, soap bars, towels at Jerry. Manages to LOCK the door.

Jerry pounds with his fists. Then methodically starts kicking at the door ...

EDDIE (O.C.)

(*muffled*)

Help! Myrna! ... Help me!

JERRY (V.O.)

I'm already feeling sorry for this putz. Crying like a little girl stung by a bee.

Bam. Bam. Jerry CONTINUES to kick with his tasseled loafers. Suddenly stops. Breathing hard.

JERRY (V.O.)

See, I've got a problem with
empathy. That's what my son Alan
 told me it's called. Says I take it
 too far. Like the hooker who hangs
 around to snuggle after sex. I
 could use son-of-a-bitch lessons.
 ... Now there's one thing Eddie
 could teach me ...

EXT. EDDIE SNIDER'S HOUSE (CONTINUOUS)

CRANE OVER the development. Evening paints shades of blue
 over endless streets and cul de sacs. Far as we can see.

JERRY (V.O.)

Worst of all, I still can't get
 that fucking song out of my head.

We HEAR Jerry *sing along* --

JERRY (V.O.)

*And then I go and spoil it all by
 saying something stupid like 'I
 love you' ...*

PUNCH: B&W FOOTAGE: NEW YORK DOCKS - ARMY TROOP SHIPS

SOLDIERS streaming down gangways. Fresh from Europe. Falling
 on knees to KISS the ground. Home.

JERRY (V.O.)

You probably want to know how I
 ended up here? ... Actually, first
 you probably want to know how I got
 so rich. Write this down: want to
 make money? Do it when the world's
 changing.

PUNCH: PAN OVER BRICK TENEMENTS

An urban Purgatory. Congested, oppressive.

JERRY (V.O.)

When I started building houses in
 the Washington area, it changed *in*
a second. After five years of
 carnage, last thing soldiers wanted
 was cramped, dingy apartments.

PUNCH: SUBURBAN MARYLAND - HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Modest homes. Each with a patch of lawn. Brand spanking new. FAMILIES materialize in the shots.

JERRY

So I built new ones. On farmland.
In fresh air. Worked day and night.
Right along with my crews. My name
got known. Soon it was thirty
thousand apartments. Eight million
square feet of office space. ...

PUNCH: OFFICE PARKS, CONDO TOWERS, LARGER HOUSES

Fancy names that suggest aristocracy. *WEMBLEY TOWN, PEW GARDENS, MAGRUDER HUNT, HAMPSTEAD TOWERS.*

JERRY (V.O.)

Money flooded in like the
Susquehanna River. Well, you know
about men, money -- and toys.
Buying things you never had as a
kid. 'Course, all the money in the
world can't buy what you missed the
most ... Seem obvious? Yeah, let's
see what you'd buy, putz, if you
were the richest guy in America.

PAN ACROSS PILES OF MEN'S CLOTHES

Narrow lapel, pearl gray. A SHIRT. Pale blue. *Nice.* TIES,
silky eye candy. SHOES, hand stitched.

WIDEN: MEN'S STORE - WASHINGTON, D.C. - DAY

CARMEN, legendary Italian TAILOR, works on JERRY. Two button
suit jacket.

CARMEN

You know, I made this same suit for
the President.

Jerry, in the MIRROR. Sharp as a tack.

JERRY

A sophisticated guy, JFK.

CARMEN

... but he likes just one button.

PUNCH: THE WHITE HOUSE - OVAL OFFICE

JERRY going over blueprints with JOHN F. KENNEDY. Both wear identical ONE BUTTON SUITS.

JERRY (V.O.)
President Kennedy pressed me to
restore an old hotel in the
district as a personal favor.

Lights a cigarette for the President. One for himself.

JERRY (V.O.)
... 'Ask what you should do for
your country.' That's just how I
look at it. When your hand comes
out of your pocket ...

AERIAL SHOT - WASHINGTON, D.C. - NIGHT

Glimmering, capitol DOME in b.g.

EXT. DUKE ZEIBERT'S - WASHINGTON, D.C. - NIGHT

FIND JERRY, hand coming out of pocket. Hands a TEN DOLLAR
BILL to the PARKING VALET. Lot of money in those days.

JERRY (V.O.)
... make sure you share whatever
you got inside.

Coolness in his suit, Jerry lights a cigarette.

CARD - DUKE ZEIBERT'S RESTAURANT - WASHINGTON, D.C.

INT. DUKE ZEIBERT'S - CONNECTICUT AVE. - WASHINGTON, D.C.

Macher hangout. Men in suits. Many with beautiful women --
not always *wives*.

FIND Jerry, one eye on the TV over the bar. Talking with a
hostess -- ROCHELLE (20's, sharp, stacked).

JERRY
Miami is a fantastic spot for you.
You'd be a natural in sales.
(looks around)
I just saw Larry King. He's got
pull down there. Let me talk to him
for you ...

-- raises a hand to hail King, but Rochelle pulls it down.

ROCHELLE

Mr. King wants me to put out. I'm not sure I believe in premarital sex.

Jerry kisses her hand gallantly.

JERRY

It's only 'pre-marital' if you get married afterwards.

CHEERS O.S. from the guys at the bar -- Jerry looks up.

INSERT: TV - A FOOTBALL GAME

The old way. Single CAMERA. Long SHOT. The 1963 Philadelphia EAGLES offense on a HALF BACK sweep -- obliterated by a host of Washington REDSKINS. He fumbles. A Redskin DEFENDER picks up the ball -- and runs it back for a TD.

Jerry takes out a \$100 BILL -- slides it to the BARTENDER.

AT A TABLE - LATER

Holding court with a half dozen men is bald, voluptuary MO SIEGEL (50's). 300 pounds of sports writer. Ripping through a bloody steak like king of a lion pride.

MO

... the Eagles *promised* Van Brocklin the coaching job. Stabbed the best player they ever had in the back. Philadelphia has two industries: soft pretzels ... and *morons*.

Jerry's tight smile betrays vexation.

JERRY

We still have Jorgenson and McDonald.

MO

Today.

Mo *knows* he's caught Jerry by surprise. Chugs his Scotch. Digs back into his steak. Jerry's senses on fire.

JERRY

You overheard someone?

MO
 (insulted)
 Mo Seibert doesn't overhear. *People tell Mo Seibert*. I get more confessions than John XXIII.

The WAITER brings another SCOTCH. JERRY snags it. A trade.

JERRY
 Share, your Holiness.

MO
 My sources tell me the Philadelphia Eagles are for sale.

Grabs the Scotch back from JERRY.

MO (CONT'D)
 Jim Clark had a stroke. The partners are desperate to dump the team.

Jerry feigns calm. Lights a cigarette. This is a skill. Because inside -- a tempest.

JERRY
 Who's making a play?

MO
 Gossip is Jack and Bobby think it'd be a grand investment.

JERRY
 (*stunned*)
 The Kennedy's want to buy the Philadelphia Eagles?

MO
 ... move them to New England. Sell them later at a big profit. 'Course now, with this whole missiles-in-Cuba mess? Never happen. Team's up for grabs.

Mo knows he has Jerry's full attention.

MO (CONT'D)
 'Course a fancy-pants builder like you is too smart to throw money away on a *fershtunkinah* football team. ... You gonna eat that roll?

Grabs it off Jerry's butter plate.

JERRY

Who knows what's what?

Mo waves his whiskey glass and Jerry signals for another.

MO

You might be from Pennsylvania but in Philly -- you're an outsider. Who still hasn't confirmed the appearance of the Messiah, by the way.... The City of Brotherly Shove. Dirty, corrupt, second rank town.

JERRY

Third biggest city in the country.

Jerry is such a booster.

MO

Four sports make a *real* town. Baseball, football, basketball, hockey. ... New York. Chicago. Boston. All the rest are peasant villages.

JERRY

Who knows what's what?

Swipes his mouth with the back of his hand.

MO

Anyone who's anyone in Philly eats at Bookbinder's. Do you know John Taxin?

JERRY

I can if I have to.

SOUND CUE: Chubby Checker's *Limbo Rock*.

INT. JERRY'S HOUSE - CHEVY CHASE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

In one of Jerry's own developments. Comfortable, not palatial. *Limbo Rock* blares from a white, boxy RECORD PLAYER. Skinny HELENE (13) attacks JERRY as he enters --

HELENE

Daddy, how low can you go?!

JERRY

(OVER the music)

Where's mommy, sweetie?

Lime-mini, white eye make up, so Carnaby Street and irresistible. Helene pulls JERRY by the hand. His son ALAN (11) props a BROOM HANDLE between TWO CHAIR SEATS.

JERRY (CONT'D)
(re: pole)
Wait, it's really low ...

ALAN
That's the point, dad.

JERRY tosses his jacket away. Spreads his legs. Shimmies forward, bending back.

HELENE
Lower.

-- so he goes lower. And freezes.

JERRY
(winces)
Can't. Move.

IN THE BACKYARD - LATER

Tiki torches and Bridge by the pool. ANNE WOLMAN (40), handsome, demure brunette, with -- EARL FOREMAN, Jerry's lawyer (30's), high-forehead, higher black pompadour. And PHYLLIS FOREMAN (30's), all bosoms & *bouffant*. Earl sips Scotch. Jerry lights a fresh cigarette with an old cigarette.

Anne knows he's keyed-up -- and knows not to ask why. Yet.

JERRY
(some business with Earl)
... Ted Dailey wants to fly in to pitch us. I'll just play it low key. Bring him to the house.

EARL
(whines)
We don't know Chicago, Jerry.

More than risk averse, Earl is afraid to stick his hand in his own pocket for fear what it might cost him.

JERRY
People live indoors, I'm guessing.
Use bathrooms. Work in buildings.
What else to know?

Jerry is quick to light PHYLLIS' cigarette. PHYLLIS *sighs* as she exhales. That's all it takes.

JERRY (CONT'D)
You're kinda blue.

Anne urges Phyllis with a look.

ANNE
Tell him.

PHYLLIS
I'm embarrassed.

EARL
For Christ's sake. Maybe Jerry can help.

JERRY
Will *somebody* tell me?

Beat -- then ALL of them talk --

PHYLLIS
(overlap)
My brother, Eddie ...

ANNE
Her brother, Eddie ...

EARL
My idiot brother-in-law,
Eddie the bum. ...

PHYLLIS (CONT'D)
Oh God, I can't breathe

Jerry unleashes a deafening two-fingered WHISTLE. Silence.

JERRY
One at a time.

Jerry points to Phyllis with his cigarette.

PHYLLIS
My little brother, Eddie. He graduated from Maryland as an accountant. Instead, he started a record label. My parents gave him money to get things going ...

Voice rises, breaks.

PHYLLIS (CONT'D)
... Now he's thirty thousand dollars in debt.

Earl sets his jaw.

EARL
Punk kid.

JERRY

Is this about the money? Or is something deeper going on?

EARL

Deeper than money?

ANNE

Did you know you have to bribe radio stations to play records?

JERRY

(dry)

I'm shocked.

PHYLLIS

Sometimes he calls me late at night. Says he's gonna jump in the Potomac. My parents are terrified.

JERRY

I love your folks. Let me have a chat with little Eddie. We'll see what we can do.

Anne smiles at Phyllis. *See? Jerry can fix this.*

IN THE MASTER BEDROOM - LATER

JERRY slips in beside ANNE, already dozing. Rubs her shoulders, nibbles her ear.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Annie? Baby?

Startled, her eyes open --

ANN

I must've drifted off.

JERRY

Tired?

ANN

A little.

Exhausted actually. Jerry kisses her on the lips this time.

JERRY

What if I want to try something *different*? Something that risks all our money? Which makes it your risk, too...?

Anne, unfazed.

ANNE
... which is the part that's
'different'?

Smiles -- they never forget what they've been through.

ANNE (CONT'D)
You want to talk it through?

JERRY
No.

ANN
Good. That means you should do it.

Closes her eyes again.

ANNE
You gonna call Phyllis' brother?

JERRY
(distracted)
Sure, I got him on my list.

ANNE
(as she falls asleep)
Who *isn't* on your list?

WIDE SHOT - INTERSTATE 95 - PENNSYLVANIA - MORNING

JERRY speeding north in his Cadillac. Flicks his cigarette out the open window.

WIDE SHOT - PHILADELPHIA SKYLINE - CITY HALL TOWER - MORNING

Founding Quaker father WILLIAM PENN looms on TOP, charter/scroll in hand. Locals say from this angle it looks like he's pissing on his city.

CLOSE ON LOBSTERS IN A TANK

Crawling atop each other. JERRY'S FACE comes INTO FRAME. Taps the glass.

WIDEN: INT. BOOKBINDERS - LOBBY BAR (CONTINUOUS)

Upscale and over-priced Lobster house, an institution for bigwigs. JANITORS cleaning. KITCHEN STAFF straggling in. Chairs lifted off tables.

PAN THE WALLS -- covered with framed 8x10 PHOTOS of celebrities. Jerry steps closer -- EISENHOWER, DINAH SHORE, ERNIE KOVACS, JACK PAAR, even LASSIE. Each PHOTO features the same short prim MAN, as if he were the star.

END ON Eagles' QUARTERBACK NORM VAN BROCKLIN, HANDS joined on a FOOTBALL. CLOSER: '1960 CHAMPIONS', in white. ...

WIDEN. A BARTENDER notices Jerry.

BARTENDER
Need a reservation, pal?

JERRY
I'd like to speak with Mr. Taxin.

BARTENDER
Mr. Taxin isn't here.

-- but Jerry sees the guy from the PHOTOS, 4'11" JOHN TAXIN (60's), using the bar PHONE.

JERRY
(to Bartender)
Takes a very tall picture.

IN THE CLUB ROOM - PRIVATE BOOTH - LATER

Taxin lights a good CIGAR.

JERRY
... when I was a kid, I'd hitchhike down from Shenandoah and sneak into Franklin Field. This was where all the big shots came after the game.

TAXIN
Still is.

Tight-lipped. JERRY decides, *Why screw around?*

JERRY
How do I buy the Eagles?

Taxin takes his time. Blows a perfect RING from the CIGAR.

TAXIN
You won't.

JERRY
You mean they're *not* for sale?

TAXIN
... to you. Our Fire Commissioner
heads the shareholders committee.

JERRY
Can you get me in to see him?

Taxin scans the PHOTOS mounted by the booth. INSERT PHOTO:
TAXIN next to FRANK MCNAMEE, 6'7" block of Keystone slate.

TAXIN
I could send you to Harry Shapiro.
Top law firm. Very connected. Very
expensive. But you'd be wasting
money. Our Fire Commissioner, Frank
McNamee, doesn't like outsiders. He
doesn't like men who haven't
greased his palm. ...

Tilts his head back -- and a cloud of smoke escapes.

TAXIN (CONT'D)
And most of all, he doesn't like
Hebrews.

As if that would phase Jerry --

JERRY
How many shareholders?

TAXIN
Sixty-five men. Ninety-one shares.

JERRY
(testing)
Fifty grand a share?

TAXIN
They'll never take less than sixty.

This math a cinch for JERRY.

JERRY
5.46 million? Okay. I'm in.

That fast. Taxin can't hide his disdain.

TAXIN
Don't be crazy. It's far too much
for a football team. A lousy one at
that.

JERRY
Where's this McNamee do business?

INT. FIRE STATION 5 - 2ND FLOOR - PHILADELPHIA - DAY

A large room with card tables -- FIREMEN eating fast. FRANK MCNAMEE, forearms like fire plugs, openly hostile to Jerry. The only man not in a uniform.

FRANK MCNAMEE
The Eagles need an owner who
understands this city.

JERRY
I've spent a lot of time in Philly.

FRANK MCNAMEE
(CUTS him off)
... our fans aren't rich kids. They
watch football 'cause it's like
them. No bullshit. A game feels
like smashing your head against a
hard wall ...

*Which he then proceeds to do -- WHAM! -- bangs his forehead
against the wall. Jerry winces.*

JERRY
Our backgrounds aren't that
different.

McNamee gives Jerry a slow look over: suit, shoes, cufflinks.

FRANK MCNAMEE
Uh-huh. Thanks for your interest.
I'll show you out.

Jerry has no choice but to follow him -- THROUGH A REC ROOM.
A POOL TABLE fills the floor. Jerry stops -- flamboyantly
spins the 8 BALL on the felt.

JERRY
The boys fool around with this?

FRANK MCNAMEE
We don't have a golf course, Mr.
Wolman. We take pool seriously.

JERRY
How seriously?

Beat. McNamee feels challenged. Jerry sets the 8 BALL in the
center. Takes a cue stick and the cue ball. Lines up a shot.

FRANK MCNAMEE
Say fifty for the right-side?

JERRY
Say five hundred?

FRANK MCNAMEE
(startled, but won't back
down)
Shoot.

Now other FIREMEN gather to watch. -- CLOSE ON JERRY, sweat on his cheek. Tough shot. Fires the stick. -- FOLLOW THE BALL -- it leaps into the POCKET as if it had eyes. Cue ball ricochets off three banks. Ends where it started.

FRANK MCNAMEE (CONT'D)
Did you just fucking hustle me?

JERRY
I don't know. I haven't played in
twenty years.

ONE FIREMAN
About time somebody took *your* money
for a change, Frank.

McNamee not happy taking out his roll. Jerry stops him.

JERRY
One dime's all I want. Use it to
call the committee. Let me bid.

CUT TO:

EXT. 16TH & K STREET - WASHINGTON, D.C. - DAY

People walk in the capital -- so the streets are always crowded. Men in suits. Women in heels.

ANGLE. FIND JERRY, by the curb in his blue CADILLAC. Singing full-throat with Wayne Newton's *Danke Schoen* on the RADIO.

JERRY
*... how you tore your dress, what a
mess, I confess ... what a shame.*

Checks his watch. Stuff he needs to get back to *beside this*. Finally spots HIM -- a disheveled EDDIE SNIDER (27) khakis & Keds, hands in pockets. Skinny, almost frail. Jerry winces seeing him. *Honks*. Power windows zip down.

JERRY (CONT'D)
(warm smile)
Hi, kid.

EDDIE
Mr. Wolman?

Tremor in his high voice.

JERRY
'Jerry'. ... Get in.

CONTINUE: INT/EXT. CADILLAC (MOVING)

EDDIE's nervous habit is adjusting black-rimmed glasses with one finger. Pushing them back. Over and over.

JERRY
How you doing, Eddie?

EDDIE
Um, okay ...
(then)
I'm scared.

Eyes down.

JERRY
So's everybody, kid.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - WASHINGTON, D.C. - DAY

Four BLACK GIRLS, none older than eighteen, bored on folding chairs. Flipping through magazines as --

IN THE CONTROL BOOTH. Jerry hangs back -- watching Eddie with an ENGINEER (50's), playing back a cheesy MOTOWN knock off. 'Baby, baby, oh, Baby'. Eddie suddenly full of bravado, snaps his fingers in time.

EDDIE
(to the Engineer)
That's not bad, right? Sounds like a hit?

ENGINEER
Sure, Eddie. If we just sweeten those vocals. I can book another session today. Four hours, on your tab? ...

To the side: Jerry accidentally-on-purpose flips switches on the board, till the SOUND stops.

JERRY
Huh, looks complicated.

EXT. RECORDING STUDIO - PARKING LOT - A MOMENT LATER

Jerry lights Eddie's cigarette.

JERRY

(singing)

*Baby, baby, oh baby. Doesn't the
girl have a name?*

Can't make Eddie laugh.

EDDIE

I owe a lot people a lot of money.

JERRY

Not anymore.

Eddie's eyes widen. *You took care of it?*

EDDIE

No, it's thousands of dollars.

JERRY

Thirty thousand. I think you could
use a break from the music
business.

EDDIE

Then ... what do I do?

JERRY

Vegas casinos. Start with slots.
Then Blackjack. Build to roulette.

Eddie stares. This kid is too easy to tease.

JERRY (CONT'D)

How 'bout we start by looking like
a grown up?

INT. BARBER SHOP - CHEVY CHASE, MD - DAY

Eddie in a chair while a BARBER (40's) with simian black hair
on his forearms finishes clipping round the ears.

BARBER

Jerry helped me set up shop when I
was working for a dickhead in the
city. Gave me the down payment.

Holds a small mirror to the big mirror so Eddie can see
behind his head. Eddie finds the Barber's eyes in the mirror.

EDDIE
 (anxious)
 How fast did he make you pay him
 back?

Looks OVER at -- Jerry, down the hallway. On a PAY PHONE.

BARBER
 Wouldn't take a penny from me. So I
 cut his hair, his boy's. A friend
 or two. He says we're even. I say
 ... Jerry is something else.

OFF EDDIE, not saying a word. But he heard.

INT. WOLMAN HOME - DINING ROOM TABLE - DAY

Tray of cold cuts. Eddie next to -- Alan who's sipping Coke
 from the bottle through a brightly-striped straw. Alan pops a
 straw in Eddie's Coke.

ALAN
 Try it. Makes the bubbles tickle.

PAN TABLE. Jerry entertains TED DAILEY (30's), elfin, frizzy
 red hair, freckled skin. Upbeat. Mouth full of corned beef.

TED
 Think of Chicago as a field full of
 scarecrows -- suits, ties 'n straw-
 for-brains. Trying to close a deal
 is exhausting. Won't put their
 hands in their pockets. ... You
 call them *schnorrers*? Am I close?

JERRY
 The Bal shem Tov.

TED
 Chicago never saw a builder like
 you. Million dollar deals with a
 handshake.
 (*snaps his fingers*)
 A man with lightning in his heart.

Ted tries to include Eddie.

TED (CONT'D)
 You interested in building, Eddie?

Eddie pushes his glasses back.

EDDIE
I don't know anything about
building.

Okay. Enough of him.

TED
Come out, Jerry. Look around.
Diamonds laying on the ground.

JERRY
I just might pick up a few.

Anne sets down a bowl of pretzels. Looks at Jerry. Jerry shrugs, re: Eddie. *This won't be easy.* Takes Anne's hand.

TED
A grand home and a beautiful wife,
Jerry.

JERRY
We always hold hands. Soon as I let
go, she starts shopping.

EXT. EDDIE'S APARTMENT - WASHINGTON, D.C. - NIGHT

Jerry drops Eddie in front of a brick, three-story building in the District.

EDDIE
Jerry, I don't know how to thank
you ...

Jerry pats Eddie's shoulder.

JERRY
Think harder.

EDDIE
Earl says you might try to buy a
football team?

JERRY
Over his dead body.

EDDIE
Are you scared?

JERRY
Oh, I would be if I thought about
it. But I've got a knack for not
thinking things over.

Eddie stares -- simply not a guy who can *kibbitz*. Finally, a smile.

EDDIE

I think it's out of sight.

PAN ACROSS A SIGN: WOLMAN CONSTRUCTION

A series of LOW BUILDINGS on an parking lot.

FILLING SCREEN: DIGIT BY DIGIT - A NUMBER APPEARS

TYPEWRITER KEYS reverberate like THUNDER:

\$5,305,000.00

INT. WOLMAN CONSTRUCTION - OFFICE - DAY

Jerry's secretary, CLAIRE (20's, petite blonde) pulls the company CHECK from the roller. Eyes wide -- handling it feels like dynamite. She folds it into a company ENVELOPE.

Jerry and Earl watch her lick the flap. Seal the bid. Hand the ENVELOPE to Jerry. Jerry puts it in his INSIDE POCKET.

CLAIRE

I never typed so many numbers on one check.

Earl beside himself.

EARL

What do we know about running a football team? There are just too many ...

(searching word)

... complications.

JERRY

It's a corporation, right? Besides, I think football might overtake baseball one day.

EARL

The national past time? *C'mon*. Think about it. Player personnel, contracts, advertizing and, well, I don't know ... helmets.

JERRY

Helmets.

EARL
It's all Greek us.

JERRY
When I built my first house I
thought a 2 x 6 was a shoe size.
What's the Greek word for
ignoramus?

EARL
We can't tie up all our cash in a
football team, Jerry. Business goes
in cycles. Sure, there's money to
burn today -- but we've seen it
vanish in a quarter.

JERRY
I'm not using company money.

Stops Earl cold.

EARL
What?

JERRY
Anne and I will co-sign the note.

Earl, even more emphatic.

EARL
That's crazy talk. Never risk
family money. *Ever*. It's the wrong
way.

JERRY
It's the fast way.

INT. FIDELITY BANK BUILDING - PHILADELPHIA - LOBBY - DAY

JERRY enters with Earl. FINDS HARRY SHAPIRO, 70's, pencil
mustache and a bow-tie. Shapiro hooks Jerry's arm.

HARRY SHAPIRO
You're late. Our competition is
already here.

ORIENTS Jerry so he can see -- several GROUPS OF MEN, like
street gangs, each in its own corner. PAN THE GANGS:

HARRY SHAPIRO (V.O.)
That's Jack Wolgin, thinks he runs
Philadelphia. He may be right. ...
(MORE)

HARRY SHAPIRO (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Leo Stein from Food Fair
supermarkets. And Joe McCrane, but
he's just a Charlie McCarthy for
Gene Mori, from the Garden State
Race Track. You understand the kind
of man with money in the ponies?

JERRY

(turns to Earl)

Hey, are we the Sharks or the Jets?

Earl frowns.

EARL

Doesn't everybody die at the end of
West Side Story?

HARRY SHAPIRO

And the bid is 5 million, 3-0-5?

JERRY

That's right. You think that'll do
it?

Jerry registers a quick look from Harry to Leo Stein. Might
be nothing. After all, in Philly, everyone knows each other.

HARRY SHAPIRO

I don't think anyone else is going
that high. They're waiting for me
upstairs. The others have already
submitted their bids. Give me your
check.

Harry Shapiro extends his hand. Jerry reaches in his SIDE
POCKET. Hands it to Harry.

HARRY SHAPIRO (CONT'D)

Wish me luck.

Harry steps on the ELEVATOR. Jerry sees his own REFLECTION as
the brass DOORS CLOSE. Paragon of a poker face.

JERRY

(to Earl)

I promised I'd call Annie.

LOBBY PAY PHONE BOOTH - LATER

Jerry slipping change into the slot.

INTERCUT: ANNIE, in the LAUNDRY ROOM ironing Helene's hair as
the phone rings. A towel between hair & hot iron.

Anne walks to a wall phone.

ANNE

Hello?

JERRY

I'm very busy. I can't talk now.

ANNE

Oh, I thought the phone rang.

The back-and-forth, *the silliness* -- how they get through.

JERRY

Everything okay?

ANNE

(knows he's nervous)

Garbage can is over-flowing. I'd contact U Thant at the U.N. but I can't pronounce his name. ... And you?

JERRY

I'm swell.

ANNE

Then there's nothing to worry about.

That's how Jerry expects it. *No big deal* -- whenever a huge deal is going down.

JERRY

See ya later.

ANNE

Don't see why not.

DISSOLVE: INT. FIDELITY BUILDING - LOBBY - LATER

Jerry checks his watch. ANGLE. A gray-haired BANK ATTORNEY appears. The GROUPS collect. A scrim of very aggressive and ambitious men.

BANK ATTORNEY

Gentleman. We have a winning bid.
If you'll please assemble upstairs.

A stampede for the elevators. HARRY SHAPIRO puts a hand on Jerry's shoulder, offers a stage *sigh* --

HARRY SHAPIRO
 Jerry, don't take it too hard if
 our bid fails. This is
 Philadelphia. Business is kind of
 funny here.

Jerry so calm Harry isn't sure how to read him.

TWELFTH FLOOR - CONFERENCE ROOM - A MOMENT LATER

LOCAL and NATIONAL PRESS. WOLGIN, STEIN and CORI GROUPS up
 front. -- IN THE BACK -- JERRY, EARL, EDDIE and HARRY
 SHAPIRO. Tense as the OK CORRAL.

ANGLE. FRANK MCNAMEE, sweating through a wool suit and tie.
 Fat fingers gripping a PAPER.

FRANK MCNAMEE
 Okay, shut up. Please. Thanks. How
 yuze all doin'? ... This was the,
 um, winning bid for the
 Philadelphia Eagles ...

Surge of CAMERA *clicks* ...

FRANK MCNAMEE (CONT'D)
 The shareholders have accepted a
 bid of five million, five hundred
 and five thousand dollars.

Harry Shapiro bows his head theatrically -- Olivier would be
 proud. Clenches Jerry on both shoulders. A *tragedy*.

HARRY SHAPIRO
 I'm terribly sorry, Jerry. I did my
 very best but sometimes the best
 isn't

FRANK MCNAMEE
 ... submitted by Jerry Wolman.

REVERSE. Silence in the room. Takes a beat to sink in. Heads
 on a swivel. *What did he say?*

Now it's Jerry who clasps Harry by the shoulders. HOLDS him
 so he can't move. JERRY WHISPERS INTO HARRY'S EAR.

JERRY
 Business is a hoot everywhere,
 Harry.

FLASHBACK: WOLMAN CONSTRUCTION

CLAIRE, at her desk. Sets a new CHECK SHEET in her TYPEWRITER. Jerry over her shoulder as he dictates.

JERRY (CONT'D)
... Five. Five. Zero. Five ...

A SECOND, HIGHER BID appears on the CHECK: **\$5,505,000.00**
Claire licks the envelope. Jerry sets it in his side pocket.

CLAIRE
Which check you giving them, Jerry?

JERRY
I don't know yet.

RESUME - SCENE. The ROOM ERUPTS -- *shouts*, accusations. WOLGIN and CORI's LAWYERS, *screaming* OVER each other.

VARIOUS LAWYERS
Mr. Wolgin objects! ... Default!
Postpone the bidding! ... Mr. Cori
demands new bids! ... Mr. Stein
intends to sue everyone in this
room! ...

FRANK MCNAMEE lets the shouting go *one* more second. Slams the PODIUM -- Frank knows how to intimidate a room.

FRANK MCNAMEE
Fifty shareholders vote 'Yes'. The
bid conforms. Mr. Jerry Wolman is
the new owner of the Philadelphia
Eagles.

DISSOLVE:

EDDIE SNIDER

Having a fit. Jacket, shirt & tie, no pants ...

EDDIE
Jesus, Myrna, where'd you put my
pants? He's gonna be here any
second ...

WIDEN: INT. EDDIE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Cramped, weary. His wife, MYRNA (30, petite as a ten year old boy) holds the pants over her arm.

MYRNA
Eddie.

She opens them for Eddie to step into. Now we see Eddie's sister PHYLLIS leaning out the window. Then. --

PHYLLIS
He's here. *He's here.* ... Where's
he taking you?

EDDIE
(laces knotted, can't
untie them)
Jesus fucking Christ.

Jumps up. Stamps down on the shoe.

PHYLLIS
Did he say anything to you?

HONK. Eddie hops into the second shoe -- and out the door.

MYRNA
Call me when you get there ...
(he's gone)
... wherever it is.

Beat. -- BOTH WOMEN run to the window. TILT DOWN INTO POV:
EARL idling his CADILLAC. Eddie races out -- jumps inside.

DISSOLVE: A BANK OF MICROPHONES

JERRY sits INTO FRAME.

WIDEN: INT. EAGLES OFFICES - PRESS CONFERENCE - DAY

Dingy, years past prime. And too small for the number of
people jammed inside. Jerry at a small table up front.

TO THE SIDE: About 20 CURRENT EMPLOYEES, suspicious of Jerry
like an alien visitor from a distant planet. ONE MAN ('JIGGS'
DONOHUE, 68) leans on a cane.

FIND EDDIE, standing behind Earl on the *other* side, watching
the strobe of FLASH BULBS from the press.

EDDIE
(whispers to Earl)
This is cool.

EARL
Shut up.

ON JERRY. Fielding questions.

FIRST REPORTER
Feel like a million, Jerry?

JERRY
Five million, five hundred, five.

-- the old employees can't fathom this cockiness.

SECOND REPORTER
What's the secret of success?

JERRY
Work like a dog twelve hours a day
until you're the boss ... so you
can work like a dog fourteen hours
a day.

Lights a cigarette.

THIRD REPORTER
You'll be the youngest owner in the
league. You're only thirty-six and
you're worth thirty-six million
dollars. Any thoughts?

JERRY
Can't wait till I'm fifty?

Titters round the room.

THIRD REPORTER
A guy like you might piss off some
older men.

JERRY
Do I piss you off?

THIRD REPORTER
A little.

JERRY
Would an NFL championship in
Philadelphia make you feel better?

A dribble of APPLAUSE from the hard-edged SPORTS HACKS. Jiggs
Donohue suddenly limps in front. Raises his cane. His VOICE
slow, difficult, slurred by a stroke.

DONOHUE
What about us?

Dead silence. Jerry rises. Walks around the table to Jiggs.
ON EDDIE, watching intently.

JERRY

If you want to keep your job ...
you'll have to accept a raise in
salary.

Beat -- then hoots from the EAGLES STAFF. Eddie applauds with
them. Earl mumbles ...

EARL

What the fuck did he do that for?

As Jerry accepts handshakes --

FIRST REPORTER

(SHOUTS over)

Hey, Jerry, you need the other
owners to approve the sale. What if
they don't like you?

Arms spread, big smile --

JERRY

Who doesn't like me?

PUNCH:

JERRY AND JOHN TAXIN, posed like the other celebrity wall
SHOTS in Bookbinders. *Flash!* PHOTO taken --

REVEAL: INT. BOOKBINDERS - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Jerry & John accept applause from a roomful of GUESTS.
WAITERS circulate champagne flutes. Several boxy TELEVISIONS
set up on tables showing the last EAGLES GAME of 1963.

FIND JERRY, moving through the room -- at least trying to.
Every MOVER & SHAKER in Philly wants a word. Jerry shakes
hands, gives hugs ... Then a *moan*. Room FREEZES.

ON TELEVISION. MINNESOTA VIKING HB TOMMY MASON weaving
through the Eagles' defense -- breaking free -- gone. The
crowd looks to Jerry. Beat. He raises a champagne flute.

JERRY

To next year! 1964!

CHEERS -- the good mood returns. Earl offers Jerry an urgent
whisper. Jerry looks across AT --

EDDIE, by himself on a BAR STOOL. Digging nervously in a dish
of OYSTER CRACKERS. Socially bereft. INTO FRAME: Jerry sits
next to him. Eddie offers a stiff handshake.

EDDIE
Congratulations, Mr. Wolman. Jerry.
Phyllis said you were a smart
builder. But now. *This*. Who'd ever
think of buying a football team?
Wow. It's ... outta sight.

Jerry reaches *past* him -- for an OYSTER CRACKER, dense as
stone. Hands behind the back. Out come CLOSED FISTS.

JERRY
Choose right -- and win a prize.

Eddie reaches -- pulls his hand back.

EDDIE
What happens if I lose?

JERRY
Don't be a *putz*, choose.

Eddie taps the wrong HAND. Jerry pops the cracker into
Eddie's mouth.

JERRY (CONT'D)
You win anyway! *Hooray!* How'd you
like to be team treasurer for the
Philadelphia Eagles?

Eddie *coughs* out cracker. Suspicious.

EDDIE
You mean it?

JERRY
No, I'm trying to pick you up.

Eddie just stares.

JERRY (CONT'D)
You have a degree in accounting,
Eddie. From a good college. You'll
be a big help.

Eddie both amazed -- and insecure.

EDDIE
There are other guys who know more
about football than me.

JERRY
But I don't know '*other guys*'. I
know you. Eddie, when I get a
feeling I just go, go, go.
(MORE)

JERRY (CONT'D)

'Thinking' never got me anywhere.
Wait, that came out wrong.

Jerry head-swivels as TWO lovely YOUNG WOMEN stroll by.

JERRY (CONT'D)

So, are we done here?

EDDIE

So ... what exactly do I do?

JERRY

I figure we'll lose a quarter a million a year for the first five years. But eventually we'll get going. I think TV money is only going to get better. Till then, watch over the books. And watch over *me*. My dad used to slap my face 'cause I was too happy spending money. You just slap my wrist when you need to. ...

Jerry holds out his wrist. Eddie can't imagine he means it.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Try it.

Jerry shakes his hand. *Do it*. Eddie slaps -- and Jerry pulls his wrist back so fast Eddie smacks the bar.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Next time, do it faster ...
(jumps off the stool)
Now I got to convince some old men
I'm not a *schmuck*.

INT. IDLEWILD AIRPORT - NEW YORK - DAY

Jerry, carrying a briefcase, exits on the tarmac. Fresh off the \$25 flight from D.C. Chatting up THREE STEWARDESSES. The BLONDE taps a few ASPIRINS into his palms.

BLONDE STEWARDESS

I hope you feel better, Jerry.

JERRY

Not many pretty young women like you follow football. You have a team?

BLONDE STEWARDESS

Which one did you say you own?

JERRY
The Philadelphia Eagles.

She slinks her arms in the air, bump-and-grinds for Jerry--

BLONDE STEWARDESS
(slow and sultry)
Eagl-es, Eagl-es, yeah, yeah, yeah!

Jerry, dry-mouthed. Slips aspirins in his pocket

JERRY
My headache's already gone.

A PITTSBURGH STEELER HELMET -- MADE OUT OF CAKE

63 CANDLES blaze. ART ROONEY, a cigar showering ash, leans in to cut a slice. One side of the cake caves in as he pulls out the long knife ...

ART ROONEY
Geez-Louise ...

WIDEN: INT. NFL NATIONAL OFFICES - NEW YORK - DAY

Celebrating with the gentlemanly FOUNDER of pro football are some of the 14 league OWNERS, including GEORGE HALAS (68). The new, young COMMISSIONER PETE ROZELLE (37), various STAFF, and -- all-but-ignored in the room -- Jerry.

GEORGE HALAS
Collapsed like your fucking defense
this year, Rooney.

As foul-mouthed as Rooney is decorous.

ART ROONEY
Up and down, the wheel of *Fortuna*
ever spins, Halas.

GEORGE HALAS
I want to vomit when you talk like
a schoolmarm, Rooney.

Rozelle is young and slick. He hooks Rooney's arm.

ROZELLE
Can I borrow our birthday boy?

ROZELLE'S PRIVATE OFFICE - IN A MOMENT

Halas, a plate of cake on his lap, glares as Rooney lets Jerry light his cigar.

ART ROONEY
Where you from, kid?

JERRY
Shenandoah, Pennsylvania.

Rooney stops *puffing*. Looks at Jerry.

ART ROONEY
That's coal country. Hard country.

JERRY
Yes, sir.

Rooney exhales. This changes things. Suddenly --

GEORGE HALAS
What kinda fucking fool would spend
five million bucks on a fucking
2&12 team? If you're giving away
your fucking money, kid, give me
some.

First time we've seen Jerry lost for words. Rooney grips Jerry's hand as he *puffs*.

ART ROONEY
Mr. Halas is inquiring what
qualifies you to oversee an NFL
franchise?

Jerry looks to his briefcase, on a chair.

JERRY
I've brought a detailed resume.
I've constructed numerous large
developments. Negotiated very
complicated building contracts ...

ART ROONEY
Ever negotiate with a fullback?
Drive you batty.

Warm, friendly. But Halas snips at Commissioner Rozelle.

GEORGE HALAS
Listen, Rozelle. I say we fucking
check this fucking kid from head to
toe before we fucking approve
anything ...

ART ROONEY
How's the cake George?

Distracting Halas before the rant catches fire.

GEORGE HALAS
What? ...
(snaps)
It's dry. Like fucking sawdust.

Rooney uses a finger and swipes icing from Halas' plate.

ART ROONEY
George, if every man who tried to
purchase a football team were
'checked out head to toe' neither
of us would own our own teams.

Halas just grumbles. Rooney drops the avuncular tone and
talks straight-up to Jerry.

ART ROONEY (CONT'D)
We've been doing things the same
way for a long time. It seems to be
working fine. Just don't upset the
owners -- like young Rozelle here
is trying to do. Vote the way we
tell you. And we'll all make money.

AT THE ELEVATOR - LATER

Rozelle and Jerry, almost the same age. Cool suits. Big
dreams. *Simpatico*.

JERRY
How'd I do?

ROZELLE
You survived. This league needs new
blood like yours.

JERRY
Long as it stays inside my veins.

ROZELLE
The owners like our clubs
structured with minority
shareholders. For show -- and to
keep the IRS off our backs. Give us
a list. We have to vet each guy.

Jerry reacts.

JERRY
How long does *that* take?

ROZELLE
Depends how many names you give us.

JERRY
I'll give you one for now. Clear him fast. I'm not waiting, Pete. I got lots of new ideas I want to try.

Elevator door OPENS.

ROZELLE
Are any of these 'new' ideas gonna give me a migraine?

Jerry reaches in his pocket. Hands Rozelle the ASPIRINS.

INT. EAGLES OFFICES - ELEVATOR (MOVING) - DAY

Eddie in the suit Jerry bought for him. Steps off with Earl.

EDDIE
I don't get it. ... Jerry gave you part of the team he just bought?

Eddie's peppy mood annoys Earl.

EARL
It's just book-keeping.

EDDIE
Man, Jerry just throws it around, here, and there. Like he couldn't care less.

EARL
Jerry has to break off smaller pieces to, you know, adhere to the requirements of the league by-laws, etc., etc. ... You're too stupid to get the legalities.

Waves his hand. Self-evident.

ELEVATOR DOORS OPEN. They step off. -- Immediately SOUNDS of something like small EXPLOSIONS echo.

EARL (CONT'D)
Christ, what's that?

INTO THE EAGLES OFFICE (CONTINUOUS)

Eddie follows Earl. They freeze at *Bam! Bam! BAM!* -- PAN THE OFFICE: WORKERS put up new wainscoting, punch out walls. Add expensive finishes. Carry in new furniture. All while EAGLES STAFF tries to work ...

FIND Jerry. In coveralls. Utility belt. ON TOP of a desk, wiring a CHANDELIER -- while Claire holds up CARPET SAMPLES.

JERRY

Go darker.

(as she flips the book)

No, no, no ... that one.

EARL

(approaching)

Jerry ...

(louder)

Jerry.

Jerry finally looks down.

JERRY

Pick out an office, Eddie.

Eddie just stares, then --

EDDIE

What would you choose?

Jerry points a screwdriver.

JERRY

Western corner. Nice sunsets, and
it's bigger than Earl's.

INT. JERRY'S OFFICE - LATER

PAPERS strewn across the floor. Every PLAYER CONTRACT. Eddie on his knees, searching for *something*. Earl on the sofa flipping pages. Jerry at his desk, on the phone.

JERRY

(into phone)

... I'd never talk to George Allen
without your permission, Mr. Halas.

ORIENT to Eddie, scoots closer on the sofa. Studying Jerry. Jerry winks at him.

EDDIE
 (stage whisper)
 I found it. Skorich got three
 years, at 30 K.

JERRY
 (covers mouthpiece)
 I can go higher.

EARL
 (reacts)
 How much higher?

INTERCUT: GEORGE HALAS - IN HIS OFFICE

Surprisingly friendly.

GEORGE HALAS
 George Allen is a damn good coach.
 But. Look. I like you, kid. I do.
 So I'm going to share something
 with you. And you only. ...

He hesitates. Jerry waits.

EDDIE
 (intense whisper)
 What's he saying?

GEORGE HALAS
 Defense is like herding cattle. Not
 much strategy goes on. Fits George
 Allen to a T. He is not head coach
 material. Trust me. A head coach is
 a fucking Prince on a white horse.
 George Allen is just another guy
 shoveling shit behind the horse.
 (then)
 There's another guy.

JERRY
 What's his name?

GEORGE HALAS
 Kuharich. At Notre Dame.

JERRY
 You think he's good?

TILT DOWN. Halas pages through a SPORTS ILLUSTRATED. ECU:
 COVER. 'NFL'S NEWEST AND YOUNGEST OWNER' over a PHOTO of
 Jerry. Halas never had a cover like this.

GEORGE HALAS
 Another Vince Lombardi. If I were
 you, I'd get him before somebody
 else does ...

Jerry makes 'Okay' to Eddie, who jumps to his feet.

WOOD CARVING OF JESUS - ON THE CROSS

Head fallen forward. Tears stream in bright blue paint.
 Bright red under his ribs. Agony and sacrifice.

WIDEN: INT. CATHOLIC CATHEDRAL - PHILADELPHIA - DAY

A PEW at the opposite END of the NAVE. Jerry with Eddie,
 who's fidgeting as if he's gonna be nailed up there next.

EDDIE
 Why'd he have to stop at a church
 on the way from the airport? A nosh
 I'd get, but ... It's not even
 Sunday.

JERRY
 I grew up in Shenandoah with men
 like this. Guys with faith. Rock
 solid. This is a good man.

Eddie nods, then.

EDDIE
 Thinks he knows we're Jews?

Who they're talking about is --

-- on his knees. JOE KUCHARICH (30's) crosses himself by the
 ALTAR. Pushes to his feet. Not old, but already jowly. Plus:
he wears DARK SUNGLASSES, even inside the church. Turns and
 begins the long walk down the aisle.

INT. BELLEVUE STRATFORD HOTEL - BAR - PHILADELPHIA - NIGHT

A TABLE with Kuharich, Jerry, Earl, Eddie -- and the Eagles'
 star quarterback, SONNY JURGENSON (20's). Sonny is round,
 already balding, canny. Good ol' boy with a rocket-arm. His
 chair oriented to a chesty YOUNG WOMAN at the next table.
With her husband.

SONNY
 ... football isn't really about
 thinking.
 (MORE)

SONNY (CONT'D)

It's all about *not*-thinking. And that's my specialty, princess.

'PRINCESS'

I like a man who doesn't think.

Gimlet wink.

SONNY

And here I thought you were a rocket scientist.

The husband, in awe of Sonny, laughs hard. ORIENT TO: Kuharich, quietly sipping his beer. Inscrutable behind his shades. Jerry tries to steer the discussion back to football.

JERRY

Sonny, we want to extend you. I'm just giving Joe some time to settle in.

Sonny twists back -- at the same time taking 'Princess's hand below the table.

SONNY

Extend me. *Don't* extend me. No difference. I ain't a penny-counter. Ninety per cent of my pay goes for women and booze. ... The rest I just kinda waste.

-- to 'Princess' for an 'audience' reaction. She laughs on cue.

KUHARICH

(suddenly --)

I'm instituting a curfew. Like I did at Notre Dame. 11 PM for practice. 10 PM on games days. Winning starts with healthy habits.

Sonny in a stare down with those dark glasses.

SONNY

In my experience ... early to bed, early to rise ...

(back to 'Princess')

... means you're on the second team.

LOBBY - LATER

Jerry helps a blotto-ed Sonny Jurgensen into an elevator. Eddie props up 'Princess' but she lurches onto Sonny and they fall back as the DOORS CLOSE. No sign of her Husband.

Jerry's in a good mood.

JERRY

That's a man who knows how to
launch a forward pass.

Kuharich stays silent -- as they walk ACROSS THE LOBBY.

EDDIE

(looks around)

Wow. This is a top shelf hotel.

JERRY

'Kick up, kiss down.' That's what a
good boss does. Fight the bigshots,
pamper your employees. They'll
repay you with loyalty and hard
work.

EDDIE

'Kick up, kiss down.'

Likes the sound of it, until --

KUHARICH

Don't kiss Sonny. He won't be here
that long.

EXT. EAGLES OFFICES - PHILADELPHIA - MORNING

Eddie walk-running down the street. There's -- JERRY, by a
pole-thin black NEWS BOY (GREGORY, 14), taking a PHILADELPHIA
INQUIRER off his stack. With his drifting left eye, old
clothes, Gregory is living hard.

INSERT HEADLINE: *JERRY PICKS JOE!*

Eddie, out of breath --

EDDIE

You can't believe traffic into the
city. Bumper to bumper ...

Stops -- reacts to front page. INSERT: JERRY.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

Hey, that's you.

JERRY
So we'll get you a driver.

GREGORY
Ten cents, Mr. Wolman.

EDDIE
(holding a paper)
Everybody knows who you are.
Doesn't it make you nervous?

JERRY
No, would it make you nervous?

Eddie entertains this notion for the first time.

EDDIE
No. ...
(then)
My own driver?

Jerry takes out a \$100 DOLLAR BILL.

JERRY
Give me the stack. Go home and get
some sleep, Gregory.

INTO THE BUILDING

Eddie hurries after Jerry.

EDDIE
A hundred bucks?

JERRY
Remember this, kid. If you're nice
to somebody, they tell three
people. If you're a putz, they tell
ten.

EXT. EAGLES SUMMER TRAINING CAMP - HERSHEY, PA - DAY

Hot, humid. Early drills. Shorts & T's. Team divided into
units. 'Up-downs', wind-sprints, stretching. ORIENT TO:
KUHARICH (with staff: EVANS, STANFEL, BRUNEY) pushing the
team hard, charging behind LINEMEN.

KUHARICH
Hit the man with the ball! If a
blocker's in your way, he goes
down! I want the man with the ball
on the ground!

Fierce, short *bursts* on a whistle.

CLOSE ON A FOOTBALL

Tumbling end over end -- against a cobalt sky. Lands in the arms of Eagle HB TIMMY BROWN, takes off downfield. Leaving the DB (DEFENSIVE BACK) behind.

KUHARICH

Run it back! Run it back!

FIND QB NORM SNEAD (20's) and a SINGLE FILE of RECEIVERS, ONE-ON-ONE drills against DB's. The next guy steps up: JERRY, lanky and lean, in shorts. No one sure who he is.

SNEAD

Hut, hut ... *Hut*.

CRANE UP: Jerry sprints up field. Runs hard against DB IRV CROSS. Good head fake. Surprises Cross. Beats him by a step. But Snead over-throws. The ball tumbles away.

Jerry scoops the ball up.

ORIENT TO: SIDELINES. EARL and EDDIE, dress shirts & ties. As Jerry sprints back weaving against imaginary blockers --

EDDIE

Jerry's fast. You ever play sports,
Earl?

Sincere.

EARL

I decided to read & write instead.

Dismissive.

NEW ANGLE. Two massive LB's (MAXIE BAUGHAN, RALPH HECK) notice Jerry 'running it back'. In a training camp tradition, Baughan leans a shoulder -- *wallops* Jerry off his feet, flat on his back. Heck lets out a cackle.

HECK

Hello, rookie.

Kuharich and Bruney hurry over.

BRUNEY

(to Baughan)

This is our new owner, morons.

Baughan and Heck hurry to help Jerry up.

KUHARICH
(appearing)
What the hell's going on here?

Jerry finds his feet.

BRAUGHAN
Sorry, Mr. Wolman.

Slaps Baughan in the back. Upbeat.

JERRY
We're playing football. Not ping
pong. Hit everyone the way you hit
me.

EXT. OPEN HOUSE - CHELTENHAM - SUBURBAN PHILADELPHIA - DAY

Stone colonial. The one we saw at the beginning of the story.
FOR SALE SIGN -- on the lawn.

BACKYARD

Helene cross-legged on the grass. Scribbling furiously in a
composition book. ORIENT TO: Alan, rolling wildly down the
slope. Bumps Helene.

HELENE
Al-an. You made me smear.

ALAN
Dad will never let you do it.

HELENE
He already said I could.

ALAN
No, he didn't.
(then)
I want to do it, too.

INT. OPEN HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Empty, which makes it look bigger. Eddie and Myrna. Earl and
Phyllis. Jerry and Anne. The REALTOR (blue blazer, summer
hat) carries a clipboard.

REALTOR
Cheltenham public schools are the
finest in Pennsylvania. Ezra Pound
attended school in Cheltenham.

ANNE
Wasn't he a Nazi?

JERRY
... but a Pennsylvania Nazi.

ANNE
That's a relief.

Jerry takes her hand. Earl dismisses the whole house away.

EARL
Too much. Liz Taylor doesn't have a living room this big.

MYRNA
Yes, she does. I saw it on Person to Person.

PHYLLIS
It's wonderful. Perfect for someone social. Who throws parties. With caterers.

Directed at Earl.

ANNE
I just adore it.

EDDIE
We don't have enough furniture.

JERRY
I hear there are guys who'll sell furniture to you. If you give them enough money. ... Take the fucking house.

Having a great time. Eddie, timid, intoxicated.

EDDIE
What're they asking?

REALTOR
Only eighty-three thousand.

EARL
(an obscenity)
'Only'.

JERRY
A good home says you believe in yourself. In your family. Take it, kid.

He means it. Eddie, as always, inspired by Jerry. ANGLE.
Helene and Alan storm in -- shoving each other to be first.

HELENE

Alan. Cool your jets.

Shove. He ducks under her arm.

ALAN

You cool your jets. The Redskins
have a fight song. So we wrote a
'Fight Song' for the marching band.

Anne looks at Jerry.

ANNE

They worked very hard on it.

EARL

There are no 'marching bands' in
the National Football League.

EDDIE

Music would be cool.

EARL

Did you ask the League's
permission?

JERRY

Band. Team flags. ... Cheerleaders.

News to them all.

EARL

Jerry, you have to call Pete
Rozelle first. Let him talk to the
other owners. You can't just do it
yourself.

MYRNA

Cheerleaders? Like, high school
girls?

JERRY

A wee bit more mature.
(off Anne's smirk)
... a few girls to help ticket
sales.

Looks at Eddie -- sets him off. Now they're giggling.

PHYLLIS

What are you two up to?

Anne nudges Jerry -- *the kids, remember?*

ANNE

Shush. They're going to sing their song. Ready? Go.

HELENE

(looks at Alan)
Ready? One, two ...

Deep breath, Helene opens her mouth...

PUNCH WIDE: EXT. FRANKLIN FIELD - PHILADELPHIA - DAY

... as the 110 piece EAGLES MARCHING BAND and CHORUS stride across the grass singing the Eagles' fight song.

EAGLES CHORUS/BAND

*Fly, Eagles, Fly,
On the road to victory.
Fly, Eagles, Fly
Score a touchdown, one, two, three!*

TRACK PAST LEGS. Long legs. Bare legs. Shapely legs. --
REVEAL: FIFTY CHEERLEADERS in tight, spangled costumes kicking like Vegas SHOWGIRLS.

TRACK DOWN STADIUM CONCOURSE

FANS head for seats. VENDORS selling food. FIND Jerry, Eddie, Earl with families. Watching from an AISLE ENTRANCE.

Anne looks at Myrna.

ANNE

*Just to clarify. A 'few girls' with
no clothes on to sell tickets.*

Jerry is decked out like a Rat packer. Eddie isn't sure what Jerry is looking at. Jerry pulls Alan closer.

JERRY

*See that row? Aisle U? Section 312.
When I was your age me 'n Johnny
Robel would hitch all the way from
Shenandoah -- three hours. Talk our
way into the second half of games.
Yep. Right down there. That was our
spot.*

-- and there Jerry goes, pulling Alan with him. Down into section 312. Earl grabs Jerry.

EARL
What are you doing? The owner's box
is upstairs.

JERRY
We're watching the game from the
stands.

EARL
With them?

Meaning: FANS.

JERRY
It's the only way.

EARL
We're going up. Eddie?

Eddie takes Myrna's hand.

EDDIE
We'll sit with Jerry.

MYRNA
We will?

IN THE STANDS - LATER

Jerry, head on a swivel. Soaking it in. Dizzy, giddy. Taps
his toe on Alan's toe.

JERRY
You're sitting in my seat.

ALAN
Your seat?

JERRY
I always stuck a piece of gum under
the seat to prove I was here. Take
a look.

Alan sheepishly folds UP the seat.

ALAN
(grimaces)
Yuck.

Anne catches Jerry's eye. Kittenish.

ANNE
Are you a *passionate* football fan,
Mr. Wolman?

JERRY
 (turns it to a kiss)
 I'm passionate about lots of
 things, Mrs. Wolman.

Helen, watching them kiss. Embarrassed. Thrilled. She likes
 that her folks are in love.

ALAN
 When do we get popcorn?

HELENE
 It's not a *movie*. At a football
 game you eat hot dogs.

ALAN
 They make me throw up.

ANNE
 Don't. These are new shoes.

JERRY
 Okay, okay, first play!

Jerry cups hands to mouth: SHOUTS.

JERRY (CONT'D)
Here we go, Eagles, here we go!

Urges Eddie to join the chant --

EDDIE
... here we go, Eagles!

-- till it's spreading through the crowd. Jerry is *howling* --
 overwhelmed by this moment.

ON THE FIELD - SCOREBOARD 0 - 0

EAGLES in a huddle. NEW YORK GIANTS on defense. EAGLES line
 up. Fullback EARL GROS takes a handoff. One cut, broken
 tackle, and he's racing for the END ZONE ... SCORES. *On the
 first play.*

IN THE STANDS. Jerry leaps to his feet. The whole CROWD up.
 Eddie is knocked back in his seat.

EDDIE (CONT'D)
 I can't see! Did we score?

Jerry points to the SCOREBOARD. EAGLE 6 GIANTS 0. 14:50 left
 in the first quarter. Jerry accepts hugs from Anne and
 Helene. ... Alan *taps* his dad's arm.

ALAN

Dad? What's the quarterback doing?

What? Jerry looks back down field.

ON FIELD: EAGLES QB NORM SNEAD, *writhing* on his back. Can't move his leg. Kuharich and Coaches rushing from the sideline.

IN THE STANDS. Anne looks at Jerry.

ANNE

Look how it's bent. It has to be broken.

Helene, confused.

HELENE

But how can he break his leg if no one touched him?

ALAN

Don't we need a quarterback?

JERRY

Jack Concannon is a solid back up.
A sharp kid. It's a long season.
We'll be okay.

Eddie feeding off Jerry -- *upbeat*.

EDDIE

(shouts)
Here we go Eagles!

EXT. EAGLES OFFICE - PHILADELPHIA - AT THE CURB - MORNING

Jerry buying another *entire stack of papers* from Gregory.

INSERT HEADLINE: *EAGLES STUN GIANTS!*

JERRY

Gregory, give 'em out for free.

ORIENT TO: a black CADILLAC, driven by a CHAUFFEUR (MACK, 50's, Irish). Jumps out quickly. Opens the rear door. Eddie slides out. Jerry shows him the HEADLINE.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Is that 'cool'?

EDDIE

Very cool!

PUSH IN ON ANOTHER STACK OF PAPERS

Gregory cuts off the twine ...**V/FX:**THE HEADLINE DISSOLVES INTO ANOTHER: *49er SNEAK PAST BIRDS!* ... which morphs into ... *BROWNS STEAL ONE!* ...

PAN UP TO JERRY. Handing Gregory another \$100 bill. And Eddie, watching for Jerry's reaction. Same smile finally appears.

JERRY

We'll bounce back. Against the 'Skins.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - WASHINGTON, D.C. - DAY

Jerry leads the TEAM into a plush, Victorian hotel. The PLAYERS looking up at a sprawling CHANDELIER -- bright as a starburst. END PETE RETZLAFF almost *bumps* into BAUGHAN.

BAUGHAN

Is this coming out of our paychecks?

Retzlaff grins.

RETZLAFF

Finally, an owner who treats his players like himself.

BAUGHAN

I hope we don't stink up the place.

DISSOLVING TO A NEW HEADLINE: *REDSKINS SNEAK BY BIRDS!* ... and then ... *KUHARICH DROPS THE BALL!*

ON BROAD STREET

Jerry lifts an INQUIRER off the stack. Eddie reads his own. HEADLINE: *RAMS STUN BIRDS! KUHARICH BLOWS LEAD!* ... Gregory pockets his \$100.

GREORY

You want me to give 'em out free today, Jerry?

JERRY

(softly)

Don't give 'em out -- throw 'em out.

ON KUHARICH

Dark glasses. Cigarette, two-finger grip Euro-style. Facing REPORTERS. We can SEE them shouting at Kuharich. But we don't HEAR a word.

REVERSE: JERRY'S OFFICE

Jerry and Eddie on the sofa, watching a PRESS CONFERENCE on local TV with the SOUND OFF. Earl stands. Flips through a CONTRACT --

EARL

A fifteen year contract? Making him G.M.? Plus a raise? This season is a disaster.

JERRY

The papers are crucifying Joe. How much can a guy take? He can't go out to a restaurant. If he chooses a sirloin the waiter says, '*Fuck you, wrong choice!*' He needs a boost.

EARL

So *hug* him.

Tone more than jokey. With an edge. He looks to Eddie to back him up. Eddie squirms, embarrassed for Jerry.

EDDIE

Well.

Nothing.

JERRY

Joe's raise isn't guaranteed, Earl. ... But *yours* is.

EARL

What raise?

JERRY

The one where I let you keep 7% of the team -- for free.

EARL

Jerry ... I.

JERRY

Anything else, boys?

EDDIE

Joe drafted Ray Rissmiller. The guy's knee is shot. He's picking up Meyers from Dallas. No push to the passer. None at all. We still need a punter and a kicker.

JERRY

Eddie, let Joe handle the draft. Besides, you'll be busy. You're my new Vice-President for Operations.

EDDIE

I am?

EARL

He is? Since when?

JERRY

Since I gave Eddie a piece of the team, too.

EARL

Him? Don't be ridiculous.

Eddie turns on his brother-in-law.

EDDIE

Kick up, kiss down.

Earl would punch him if he knew how to throw a punch.

EARL

Shut up, moron.

He leaves.

EDDIE

(to Jerry)

I'm going to work even harder for you. I won't forget what you've done for me.

Chokes up. Jerry opens his arms. Eddie needs this hug.

INT. EAGLES OFFICE - HALLWAY - LATER

Jerry on his way out. Walks with Earl.

EARL

Eddie is a child.

JERRY

That's what they say about me.

(then)

I want to put my Eagles' stock in a trust. For Helene and Alan.

Earl knows the implications immediately --

EARL

A trust? Jerry, that will freeze your stock. What if you have to make a move later on?

JERRY

No moves. I'll never sell the Eagles. No matter what happens to my buildings. The team stays with my family.

No debate. AT ELEVATOR, slaps the down button.

EARL

I'll set it up right away.

JERRY

Nobody does it better. Or faster.

Jerry pulls Earl into a hug -- because Earl *hates* hugs.

EARL

You're running around like a guy whose hat's on fire. It's too much. The construction company and the team. Something has to give.

JERRY

It will. Soon.

He steps onto the elevator.

AERIAL OVER CHICAGO

Sunlight glints off the LAKE & SKYSCRAPERS on MICHIGAN AVE.

INT./EXT. LIMOUSINE - CHICAGO - MICHIGAN AVENUE - DAY

Jerry in back with TED DAILEY. Jerry oriented to the properties they pass by; Ted oriented to Jerry.

JERRY

Washington, I know. Philly, I know.
But Chicago ... Hard to figure out
a place you don't know.

TED

You're a man of vision. Like Mies
van der Rohe. Fazlur Kahn.
Virtuosos in concrete and steel!

JERRY

Oscar Levant is a *virtuoso*. Not me.

TED

Jerry, there are nuggets of gold
waiting to be found. A *maven* like
you has the instinct where to dig!

Ted's ass-kissing euphoria ends. Grin disappears.

TED (CONT'D)

Christ, I can't close a deal,
Jerry. Can't make my mortgage.
Buried alive, that's me all over.

Ted's troubles are catnip to Jerry. *Someone to save.*

JERRY

We'll find something, Teddy. I mean
it. Something big. Something to
remember us by. A fond *adieu*.

TED

Ain't that a froggy way of saying
'good-bye'?

Jerry has thought about this.

JERRY

I couldn't belt a song to show how
much I love running my Eagles.

TED

They stink, or so I'm told.

JERRY

It'll take time. But I have plans.
For the team. For Philly. Don't
tell anyone. But I'm already
thinking. Sell the construction
company. Live the rest of my life
in the locker room.

Teddy, horrified.

TEDDY
They say locker rooms smell like
piss and sweat?

JERRY
Perfume and roses.

ORIENT OUTSIDE: Passing through downtown. Then -- Jerry
twists in his seat.

JERRY (CONT'D)
What's this?

THROUGH WINDOW: a FENCE runs an entire city BLOCK.

TED
That parcel? Not for sale.

JERRY
If they're not building, it's for
sale.

TED
Forget it, Jerry. This guy John
Mack is a *gonif*. Wants five million
plus a million dollar deposit. In
cash. ...

Jerry twists round as the property recedes ...

TED (CONT'D)
And a signed contract. No
negotiations. Cash, Jerry! Who
could even lift a million dollars
in cash?

OFF JERRY's *reaction* --

EST. SHOT - SHENANDOAH, PENNSYLVANIA - NIGHT

Coal country. Ringed by MOUNTAINS mined for a century.

EST. JOHNNY ROBEL'S POLKA PALACE - SHENANDOAH - NIGHT

Sprawling restaurant off a two lane highway. Above door:
'*Home Of The Pennsylvania Polka!*'.

SOUND CUE: Most polarizing music in the world! *Oompa-oompa-*
oompa of POLKA.

INT. JOHNNY ROBEL'S POLKA PALACE (CONTINUOUS)

Beyond LOUD. TABLES filled with big families. COSTUMES & INSTRUMENTS on the wall. JUKE BOX with only POLKA RECORDS.

FIND JOHNNY ROBEL (40's) Paul Bunyan massive, stuffed in a white & red POLKA outfit. Weaves through tables, balancing a tray of *kielbasa* above his head. His wife, WINNIE, intercepts him. She has to speak lips-to-ear so he can hear her.

Beat. -- Johnny hands her his tray. Hurries away fast -- fleet, for a giant.

INT. O'HARE - GATE - AT THE DOOR

Throng of PASSENGERS deplane. Beat. -- And here comes Johnny Robel, firm grip on a large SUITCASE. Just behind, Eddie and Earl. Keeping distance, like they're following a bear.

EXT. O'HARE - PARKING LOT - AT THE LIMOUSINE - DAY

Johnny pops the suitcase in the back seat. One million dollars. CASH. Ted pokes it, giddy.

TED

Jerry, boy, in Chicago you'll be legend.

EARL

You realize what I had to do. One day. To find a million dollars cash?

EDDIE

I couldn't even lift it.

JERRY

That's why God made this *shaygetz*.

JOHNNY

... who whipped you like potatoes first time we met.

JERRY

Never knocked me down.

Jerry and Johnny in their own bubble of old friendship.

TED

I'll deliver these lovelies, gentlemen.

(MORE)

TED (CONT'D)

What should I tell the boys at John Hancock? Regarding schedule, Jerry?

JERRY

Now, Ted. Tonight.
(when Ted boggles)
Go, go, go.

Ted jumps inside the Limo. Jerry steps back as it departs.

JERRY (CONT'D)

(re: Johnny)

Meet our new head of uniforms and equipment. And Eddie, pay off the mortgage on this prick's bar.

JOHNNY

Not a bar. A polka 'emporium'.

Eddie and Earl share a look.

EARL

Does Mr. Robel know anything about football?

JERRY

Mr. Robel knows how to sneak into the stadium. That's a start.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - MICHIGAN AVENUE - NIGHT

Burger dive. Earl, Eddie, Ted -- exhausted. And Jerry, accelerating. Johnny finishes one burger. Starts another. Sees Eddie *tap-tapping* the ketchup bottle. Won't flow.

TED

... the lot is zoned for a seventy story apartment and a forty story office beside it.

JERRY

With the right rental leases ...
it's a ten million dollar site.

Jerry takes the bottle from Eddie. Hands it to Johnny -- who wallops it with his beefy paw. Ketchup floods out.

TED

You already doubled your money.

EARL

Jerry, we can handle this later.
Let's get back home. I'm beat.

Johnny takes an immediate dislike to Earl.

JOHNNY
... and your money, Earl. I bet
that doubles, too.

JERRY
Of course. And Eddie gets the same
cut.

EARL
Him?

EDDIE
Me?

Eddie embarrassed -- but excited.

JERRY
You work for me, you share in
everything I do.

TED
John Hancock is worried about the
set back. Side by side, you fill
the block. They want you to shrink
the footprint. So the city doesn't
stab you in the back. Pull your
permits.

JERRY
I'll lose too much square footage.

Air rushes out of the balloon.

JOHNNY
Salt 'n pepper.

To Jerry. Jerry grabs them in one hand -- reaches out to
Johnny -- pulls them back.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)
Did I do something?

Jerry takes the PEPPER -- SETS it ATOP the SALT SHAKER.

JERRY
I'll build the apartments on top of
the offices. Save digging a second
foundation. And doubling utilities.

EDDIE
Wouldn't it be kinda ... tall?

Jerry plants a kiss on Eddie's head.

JERRY

Very tall. The kid's smarter than you, Earl.

INT. PAN AM - FIRST CLASS CABIN - NIGHT

Going home. Earl asleep with an EYE COVER.

Jerry stands in the aisle with FAZUR KHAN (32), black-haired and blue eyed, white shirt, sleeves rolled up. Khan sketches with pencil on a TABLET -- balanced on Eddie's tray. Eddie drowning in paper.

JERRY

I appreciate you flying back with us. I don't want to lose a day.

FAZLUR KHAN

Time is the one thing no one can buy.

(as he DRAWS)

... We'll use the same support structures Eiffel developed in Paris. A hundred and twenty stories. 2.8 million interior square feet. Parking for 1100 cars, 49 floors of condos. 34 floors of offices. Plaza,. Observatory, 48,000 gallon pool. ... And the fastest elevators ever built.

Directed to include Eddie, who now has to say something --

EDDIE

You're English is swell, Mr. Khan.

FAZLUR KHAN

I was born in Evanston. Go Bears.

Khan sets a DRAWING on the tray. INSERT: SKETCH of a TOWER, in pencil, soaring over the Chicago skyline.

FAZLUR KHAN (CONT'D)

When I first heard your idea, Mr. Wolman, I thought you were crazy. Now I can't stop thinking about it.

JERRY

Neither can I.

FAZLUR KHAN
 If they accept this, Mr. Wolman,
 you'll be the man who created the
 tallest building in the world.

Eddie looks up at Jerry.

EDDIE
 Cool.

JERRY
 Outta sight.

PUSH TO WINDOW, and the building lights far below.

SOUND CUE: DRONE OF AN AIRPLANE

WIDE BLUE SKY

SOUND comes LOUDER. INTO FRAME. The nose of a BI-WING SINGLE
 ENGINE CESNA. Riding air currents. Leaves FRAME. -- For a
 moment all we see is a GUIDE WIRE ...

... which is pulling a LONG BANNER. Easy to read, even on the
 ground.

JOE MUST GO!

Beat. Then -- O.C. a ferocious ROAR of approval.

EAGLES FANS
*JOE MUST GO! JOE MUST GO! JOE MUST
 GO!*

REVEAL: EXT. FRANKLIN FIELD - IN THE STANDS - DAY

FIND Jerry and his family, Eddie and Myrna. The CROWD
screaming around them. Eddie shouts INTO Jerry's ear to be
 heard.

EDDIE
 Should we do something?

JERRY
 Pay for a ticket. Say what you
 want.

Forced smile. CHANT gets human sacrifice loud.

EAGLES FANS
*JOE MUST GO! JOE MUST GO! JOE MUST
 GO!*

ECHOING round the stadium. Thirty thousand VOICES.

ON THE SIDELINES. The PLAYERS clearly HEAR the chant. JOHNNY ROBEL, by the helmets. Staring UP at the stands. Unnerved. He goes over to Baughan.

JOHNNY
These idiots sound like they want
blood.

Baughan just points to: KUHARICH, pacing. Stoic, behind his dark glasses. Ignoring the tumult.

BACK TO JERRY, tries to bury the jeers -- rises.

JERRY
(clapping)
Here we go, Eagles. .. Here we go!

Alan's eyes are on THREE LARGE FANS, a few rows in front. Sullen, beery -- they answer JERRY's cheers.

THREE LARGE FANS
*Eagles suck/Eagles suck! Bring back
Sonny! Eagles suck!*

Alan suddenly decides to be like his Dad -- drown out the negativity. Rises.

ALAN
(shouts)
Here we go Eagles!

FIRST LARGE FAN makes EYE CONTACT with Alan. Alan averts his eyes. But that doesn't matter now --

FIRST LARGE FAN
(LOUDER)
Eagles play like sissy Jew boys!

SECOND LARGE FAN stares at Jerry. A discovery made. Info shared. All THREE LARGE FANS focus on the Wolmans.

SECOND LARGE FAN (OVERLAP)
How can a Jew own a football team?
It's pigskin! Know why Jews have
big noses? Air is free!

Eddie looks to JERRY. Jerry *knows* guys like this. What it takes to shut them up. A HAND, touches his -- Anne. She knows, too.

ANNE
Jerry, please, let's just go up to
the box.

Jerry relents, turns to his kids.

JERRY
Go. Now.

ANNE
We're going to sit with Uncle Earl.

ALAN
But those men said ...

HELENE
Go already.

Eddie and Myrna are already moving.

EDDIE
This way.

They have to walk DOWN the aisle past the LARGE FANS to get
to the EXIT. Passing their ROW -- WHIP RIGHT: The FIRST LARGE
FAN suddenly in ANNE's face.

FIRST LARGE FAN
Jews out! Jews out! Jews out!

In an instant: JERRY launches himself OVER the seats -- with
a FIST that *connects*. Knocks the LARGE FAN into the NEXT ROW.
FANS scramble -- sweeping Eddie, Anne and the kids DOWN THE
AISLE.

Eddie pulls Myrna quickly towards the CONCOURSE. Anne pulls
the kids right behind them.

ON JERRY

Trading punches with all THREE LARGE FANS. They pin his arms,
so JERRY KICKS OUT -- *cracking* one in the ribs. A brutal
tangle. A *blur* of violence.

Eddie looks to Anne for some explanation.

EDDIE
Why the hell is he fighting?

ANNE
Why the hell aren't you?

DISSOLVE:

A PULL UP SCREEN

The kind elementary schools use to project slides. *Whir* of a PROJECTOR. ON COMES -- an NFL GAME, black & white. The 'JOE MUST GO' Cesna drifts by.

QUICK CLOSE-UP'S: EAGLES PLAYERS craning necks to see it. BAUGHAN making a silly face. KUHARICH sneaking a look under his dark glasses. Then. -- IN SLOW MOTION: JERRY swinging like a prizefighter.

JERRY (O.S.)
How the hell you'd get this?

REVERSE AND REVEAL: INT. HOTEL SUITE - NEW YORK - DAY

Jerry with a profoundly black eye. Swollen cheek. Wrapped knuckles. Taped ear. INCLUDE Eddie, Earl, and short, skinny ED SABOL (30's), all dreams & enthusiasm.

ED SABOL
(holds up three fingers)
My three secrets: 'Trees, Moles and Weasels'.

Earl checks his watch.

EARL
Jerry, you have to get to the meeting.

JERRY
On my way. Go on, Ed.

ED SABOL
When I watch how the league shoots games, I want to vomit. Look at this. Steelers/Bears.

ON SCREEN: Tiny figures collide far BELOW. CAMERA never moves.

ED SABOL (V.O.)
The NFL hires some *schmo* who shoots the games like it's 1910. Like *The Jazz Singer* hasn't happened yet. John Philip Sousa, for Christ's sake!

SOUNDTRACK: the military syncopation of *Stars and Stripes Forever*.

ED SABOL (V.O.)
 This is how I shot the same exact
 game ... Watch!

NEW SOUND CUE: Henry Mancini's jazzy SCORE for the hit TV
 series *Peter Gunn*; the mood? throbbing, slick -- sexy.

ED SABOL (V.O.)
 'The Tree' hovers the 50 yard line.
 The old angle. My "Mole" is a
 handheld camera I adapt for close
 up's ...

FLASH CLOSE UP'S. Vicious HITS. Devastating TACKLES.
 Explosive BLOCKS. Stunned PLAYERS.

ED SABOL (V.O.)
 'The Weasel' is my cherry on top: a
 guy I send burrowing in the crowd.
 People love hands.

FLASH SHOTS: FANS with HANDS in prayer. A PLAYER crying. A
 bloody CUT dripping down a FACE. FOOTAGE, stops.

JERRY
 (looks at Eddie)
 Whadja think?

EDDIE
 Outta sight.

JERRY
 Ditto. I want to hire you.

ED SABOL
 The owners won't approve me. They
 think my office is too small for
 the volume. And they ain't wrong.

Earl, beside himself.

EARL
 You can't keep Rozelle waiting.
 They're going to fine you. Maybe
 suspend you.

Jerry lets Eddie help him on with his suit jacket. *Winces*.

JERRY
 Did you tell Pete I got the first
 punch in?

He winks at Eddie, leaves. Eddie looks to Earl.

EDDIE

Would they really suspend him? I mean, how long? What would happen?

EARL

(shrugs)

Nothing. We'd just run the team till he got back.

Silence. Eddie lights a cigarette. Considers this --

INT. NFL OFFICES - OWNERS MEETING - NEW YORK - DAY

OWNERS, round a conference TABLE. Stone-faced, as Pete Rozelle takes a vote ...

PETE ROZELLE

... the motion is in favor of suspending Jerry Wolman for conduct detrimental to the league. Ayes?

ORIENT TO Jerry, a portrait in black & blue. Watching. But no one raises a hand yet. They're all watching Art Rooney. Even Halas. ON ROONEY, starts to raise his hand --

-- but he's just lighting his cigar. Halas' hand is half way up. He puts it down.

PETE ROZELLE (CONT'D)

Nays?

Rooney holds his cigar up -- and the other hands follow.

PETE ROZELLE (CONT'D)

The motion does not pass.

-- but that doesn't mean Halas doesn't erupt.

HALAS

And stop the fucking jet planes. What's wrong with props? And steak dinners on the fucking plane. And first class hotels. My players are whining like virgins on a wedding night.

Rooney flicks his cigars.

ART ROONEY

Jerry, I infer that George suggests you go slowly.

JERRY

Slow and easy does it, that's me.

Rozelle rises. Prompting the others to stand.

PETE ROZELLE

So if there's no other business?

Jerry raises his hand. The owners freeze.

JERRY

I have a motion.

JOHNNY (PRELAP)

*One and-a two and-a off we go! ...
Strike up the music the band has
begun ... Everybody! ...*

EXT. JERRY'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - NIGHT

Johnny Robel and a twelve piece POLKA BAND, in costume, entertain a black-tie PARTY at Jerry's house.

JOHNNY

... The Pennsylvania Polka!

Half the GUESTS are dancing crude imitations of a polka. The other seem slack-jawed.

A BONFIRE, built with logs. Jerry, sharp in a tux, strikes & tosses a MATCH -- *whoosh!* FLAMES arc into the sky. CLAIRE comes over with a silver platter. On top: MORTGAGES and MARTINIS. Jerry drains a glass ...

JERRY

Okay, let's burn some mortgages!
You now all own your own houses!

Jerry tosses the Mortgages into the flames -- the CROWD cheers wildly. Johnny amps up the polka.

JERRY AND ANNE - LATER

In the middle of the portable, wood dance floor. Wildly, bounding in sync to the polka beat. Shouting out the REFRAIN as it comes around ...

JERRY AND ANNE

... The Pennsylvania Polka!

Eddie and Myrna fumble their way to them.

MYRNA
You're on my toes!

EDDIE
Your toes are under my shoes!
(shouts to Jerry)
I think there's a call for you.

INT. JERRY'S HOUSE - PRIVATE OFFICE - LATER

Jerry sips Scotch-rocks. Sits on a desk as he uses the phone.

JERRY
(into PHONE)
... it's the fourth largest market
on the continent. Isn't that reason
enough?

Earl enters. Eddie slips in behind him.

EARL
I just heard you bought a *movie*
theater? For a million dollars?
When were you going to let me know?

JERRY
(into phone)
Hold on, Bill.
(to Earl)
It's for Ed Sobol. The owners
thought his office couldn't handle
the volume. We got lucky. There's
twenty three thousand square feet
there.

EDDIE
How much are we charging him?

JERRY
First year, nothing. Then whatever
he wants. He's calling it 'NFL
Films'.

EARL
Christ, Jerry, slow down.

JERRY
Hold on, Earl.
(into PHONE)
I'm here, Bill. Tell the owners if
they want an arena with twelve
thousand seats, I'll build them one
with fifteen thousand.

EDDIE	EARL
Why do the NFL owners want an arena?	A hundred story building <i>and</i> a football team is already too much.

JERRY
You're right, Earl. Easy does it.

Earl starts to go. Turns back --

EARL
Oh. I checked with the league office. Rozelle says there's a strict NFL rule. Team stock can't be sequestered in an irrevocable trust. You have to hold back 52%. The league needs the leeway.

JERRY
Okay, Earl, I appreciate that you
tried.

He leaves. Jerry gestures to Eddie to sit. Once Earl is gone, Jerry goes back on the phone.

JERRY (CONT'D)
(into PHONE)
In a year. Tell them I'll do it
fast. Thanks, Bill.

Jerry gets up. Closes the door. Sits next to Eddie. Big smile. Sharing a secret.

EDDIE
What's going on?

JERRY
The NHL is expanding. I'm bringing
a hockey team to Philadelphia.

EDDIE

You?

JERRY
Once I build a new arena. The NFL
won't like it so I can't be
majority owner. I need to split off
some shares for you, Jerry Schiff,
Hal Freeman, a few others.

EDDIE
Wait, you said 'hockey'? Does Earl
know? Of course, not.

JERRY

Eddie, you now have 22.5 per cent ownership of Philadelphia's hockey team. Is that's okay? Once things calm down, I'll buy them back from you at twice the price.

EDDIE

If that's what you want. But. I'm confused.

JERRY

Earl is old-fashioned. But you and me, we're cool.

Eddie nods -- then.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Once the Hancock Tower goes up, I'm selling off all my construction interests. The Eagles will be my full time job.

Eddie can't process this.

EDDIE

Oh. Okay. ...

(then)

Where does that leave me?

JERRY

Stay right by my side. We're having fun, right? It's a long way from *Baby, baby, oh, baby.*

PAN ACROSS DETROIT LIONS DEFENSIVE FRONT FOUR

ROGER BROWN, LARRY HAND, DARRIS MCCORD, SAM WILLIAMS. Hands on hips. Uniforms muddy, grinning, as --

REVERSE: THE EAGLES OFFENSE breaks huddle and comes to the LINE. The Lions are cocky, schoolyard-bully gleeful.

ROGER BROWN

(taking stance)

I smell pussy. You smell pussy, Larry?

LARRY HAND

(digging in)

I smell Eagles' pussy. Stinks so bad you got to bury it fast.

ON Eagles QB NORM SNEAD, under center. In his eyes -- less a player than *prey* -- before a Lion pride.

FIND KUHARICH, on the SIDELINES.

KUHARICH
Protect, protect, protect!

LONG SHOT POV: the ball *snapped*. Snead steps back. -- And the Lions' defense breaks through. *Panzers* into Poland fast. Snead fumbles -- the ball bounces and bounds, this way, *that* way, into Roger Brown's arms.

IN THE STANDS. Jerry and Anne, the kids. Fall into their seats like the rest of crowd. Now silent.

ANNE
Why design a ball to bounce like that? Unless you're a guy who enjoys surprises.

JERRY
Surprised me when you said 'Yes'.

ANNE
Me, too. But I got used to it.

Fast kiss -- but then Jerry pulls her tight. Makes it a *real* kiss. Alan covers his eyes. Helene studies it. When they break, Anne, usually cool and calm, is flustered.

JERRY
Doesn't matter how the ball bounces. I scored a long time ago.

WIDE SHOT: PHILADELPHIA CITY HALL - DAY

The city CHRISTMAS TREE going up.

CARD: CHRISTMAS - 1965

INT. EAGLES' LOCKER ROOM - DAY

Pre-game. JOHNNY ROBEL finishes putting on a SANTA COSTUME. The girth is the easy part. He lumbers towards the PLAYERS.

Eddie stands with Coaches Stanfel and Bruney.

JOHNNY
(claps)
Listen up. 'Tis the season, guys.
(MORE)

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

Santa's gonna deliver presents to the children's hospital. The team is shelling out but it'd be a ...

Turns to Eddie.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

What's it called again?

EDDIE

A *mitzvah*.

JOHNNY

What he said. You guys should all throw in something. We have special team cards. Write down how much you wanna give and drop it in Santa's hat. Mr. Snider will be one of Santa's helpers.

FOLLOW JOHNNY. Holds out his hat. VARIOUS PLAYERS write something down, toss it in SANTA'S HAT.

WITH EDDIE. Stops by prodigious TACKLE, JIM SKAGGS, half-dressed and leafing through a PAPERBACK BOOK.

EDDIE

(holds out a card)

How much you in for?

Skaggs stares at Eddie hard enough to unsettle him.

SKAGGS

(finally)

Charity is for chumps.

Eddie adjusts his glasses. Uncomfortable.

EDDIE

(*mumbles*)

It's for some sick kids.

SKAGGS

So you want to teach them to be fucking helpless? The ones that want to get better, will. The others? Won't make it anyway.

Skaggs taps his paperback.

SKAGGS (CONT'D)

Ayn Rand. ...

(reads)

(MORE)

SKAGGS (CONT'D)

"Charity is a doctrine extremely offensive, leaving men sacrificial victims or moral cannibals."

EDDIE

Isn't that kind of selfish?

SKAGGS

Right on. If everybody were selfish, nobody'd need charity.

He hands the BOOK to Eddie.

SKAGGS (CONT'D)

Want some real Christmas spirit?
Stop letting other people spend
your money.

ON EDDIE, *reacting* -- then opening the book.

CLOSE ON A GOLDEN SPADE

Set in hard-pack dirt. INTO FRAME: A TASSELED SHOE, stomps down hard. The SHOVEL bites earth.

WIDEN: EXT. VACANT LOT - PHILADELPHIA - DAY

Ground-breaking for the expansion team PHILADELPHIA FLYERS. TRACK DOWN A ROW OF CITY OFFICIALS -- to JERRY, in the middle. Next to him, MAYOR JAMES TATE in a fedora and long coat. REPORTERS take photos.

The backdrop, a long SIGN: *FUTURE HOME OF THE SPECTRUM*

Jerry hefts the shovel on his shoulder. Poses for photos.

ONE REPORTER

(SHOUTS)

What's harder on your nerves?
Building a hockey arena in
Philadelphia or a hundred story
tower in Chicago?

JERRY

Ever sit near hockey fans?

SECOND REPORTER

They're saying the FAA is going to
block you. The Tower is in the
middle of O'Hare's flight space.
Have you spoken to Mayor Daley?

JERRY

Yes, and he spoke to someone
'higher' than the flight space.

Now he has them chuckling. ORIENT TO: Eddie, anonymous in the crowd. A TV REPORTER bumps him aside to get to Jerry.

TV REPORTER

There are rumors you're buying the
Yellow Cab company. And a hundred
acres in Camden to redevelop. Is
there a strategy here, Jer?

JERRY

We'll be bringing fans to the
stadium in our cabs. Building them
new homes in Camden. Only one
strategy. The Eagles are committed
to Philadelphia.

PUNCH TO:

CLOSE ON A BOTTLE OF BUSHMILLS

Half empty. Poured into a glass.

WIDEN: INT. TED DAILEY'S OFFICE - DAY

He shoots back the whiskey. Not having a good day. Hands
shaking -- he picks up the phone.

INTERCUT: INT. EAGLES OFFICES - JERRY'S PRIVATE OFFICE

Stacks of MAIL in discrete piles on the floor. Claire and
Johnny on the floor sorting it.

CLAIRE

(reading letter)

*"Dear Mr. Wolman. My wife gave
birth last week to twin girls, one
of them is blind. The medical costs
are drowning us ..."*

JERRY

Yes. Get in touch personally,
Claire.

CLAIRE makes notes on a steno PAD. The PHONE RINGS.

CLAIRE

(answering PHONE)

Mr. Wolman's office ...

JOHNNY
 (reading)
*'Dear Jerry. Can you send me fifty
 dollars for new high top Converse
 sneakers. The extra money is for
 replacements 'cause I wear them out
 every month.'*

Claire hands the phone to Jerry.

CLAIRE
 It's Mr. Dailey.

Jerry brightens. Takes the receiver.

JERRY
 (into PHONE)
 Hey, buddy ...

INTERCUT: TED DAILEY - IN HIS OFFICE

Sparkle gone from his VOICE.

TED
 Oh, fuck me. We've got a problem.
 Jerry ...

Pause. Jerry knows Ted is *never* at a loss for words.

JERRY
 How bad can it be?

PUNCH TO:

INT. TWA AIRLINER - FIRST ROW - NIGHT

Jerry can't get comfortable -- the plane can't move fast
 enough. Keeps looking at his watch.

EXT. JOHN HANCOCK BUILDING - CONSTRUCTION SITE - DAWN

BEHIND THE BLOCK LONG FENCE. The mood of a medieval city
 under siege. HUNDREDS OF WORKMEN stand around. Not sure what
 to do.

FIND JERRY, TED DAILEY and a CITY INSPECTOR, hurrying to keep
 up with FAZUR KHAN, striding over rubble and dirt.

FAZLUR KHAN
 I saw it myself. Two hundred feet
 deep -- it *moved*. Almost an inch.

TED

But only at one corner ...

Damage control mode.

FAZLUR KHAN

A six foot solid caisson *moved*.

Jerry recognizes *panic*. His job: stay calm and rational. They reach the immense FOUNDATION. Stare down into the HOLE.

JERRY

Can we dig down to the caisson to strengthen it?

Khan *snaps* back. Stress and fear in his voice.

FAZLUR KHAN

Don't you understand what it means for the foundation of a building *this size* to be moving?

Jerry looks UP at the FLOORS already finished. INTO V/FX: Jerry imagines the giant structure -- SLIPPING -- like a drunk on shaky legs. Sees it rumble down into the hole.

FAZLUR KHAN (CONT'D)

Lives are at stake.

Ted hates the theatricality. Feels himself sinking.

TED

Calm yourself, girlie. No one's losing his fucking life.

Jerry sets a gentle hand on Khan.

JERRY

What do you recommend?

FAZLUR KHAN

I don't *recommend*. I'm telling you. I'm shutting the damn thing down.

HOLD ON JERRY, staring at his LOAFERS, sinking in the mud.

JERRY

We can't.

FAZLUR KHAN

I just did.

Jerry watches him stride away, hands waving hands in air.

INT. ARCHITECT'S OFFICE - OWINGS & GRAHAM - CHICAGO - DAY

Jerry, Ted, Fazur Khan and BRUCE GRAHAM. Sketches, schematics, blueprints spread out. Mood is ugly.

FAZUR KHAN

Twenty-six of the fifty-seven concrete shafts failed. We found fourteen voids under the building. It's as if a hundred-story structure was sitting on ... air.

BRUCE GRAHAM

Instead of pouring concrete into one long steel sleeve ... they filled a section at a time. Waited till the cement dried, and pulled the sleeve higher to pour again. To cut costs.

FAZLUR KHAN

The sleeves were pulled too quickly. The cement never dried.

JERRY

It doesn't make sense.

FAZLUR KHAN

Sure it does. You told the contractors they'd get paid more if they could save time.

JERRY

Save time. Not cut corners.

Welcome silence. Or someone would throw a punch.

FAZLUR KHAN

(finally)

Every caisson has to be pulled out.

BRUCE GRAHAM

A million man-hours of work *vanished*. It'll take as many to fix it.

JERRY lights a cigarette.

JERRY

Who pays?

F/X: NEWSPAPER HEADLINES - FONT SPINS from *Chicago Tribune*, *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal* to the *Philadelphia Inquirer* ... but the gist is the same:

FAILURE UNDERGROUND AT JOHN HANCOCK SITE

EXT./INT. PHILADELPHIA AIRPORT - EDDIE'S CADILLAC - NIGHT

Parked on the tarmac. Eddie reading through the pile of newspapers. Like a kid studying for SAT's. Slowly, intently. From up front, Eddie's DRIVER starts to get out.

MACK

He's here, Mr. Snider.

Eddie looks out. THROUGH WINDOW: JERRY, briefcase in hand, crossing the tarmac. Eddie doesn't move yet. Studies Jerry. Maybe he looks older, not as smooth, polished.

Now Eddie slides out.

BY THE LIMO

Jerry brightens as soon as he sees Eddie. So easy to find his sparkle. He pulls Eddie into a big hug.

JERRY

How you doin', kid?

EDDIE

We haven't heard a word from you.

Jerry falls into the back seat.

JERRY

I'm fine, too, thanks. You hungry?

INT. BOOKBINDERS - BOOTH - NIGHT

The PRIVATE BAR room. Jerry in a bib. *Cracking* blue claws. Eating with gusto. Eddie nibbles on celery.

JERRY

Repair the foundation. Get the tower built. I can ride this out.

EDDIE

Won't that take time? How are you going to service the loan?

JERRY

I have a hundred-thirty-five million in equity -- buildings across the country. I'm dumping them all. Even if I take a fifty million dollar hit, I'll be okay.

Unbridled optimism. Eddie just nods. JOHN TAXIN appears.

TAXIN
Need anything, Jer? A Swedish
hooker and a hotel bed?

JERRY
I'd take the bed all by itself.

Taxin offers a smile as he leaves -- but Eddie ruminates.

EDDIE
Doesn't debt grow even while you're
paying it down?

JERRY
So I need to do it fast. I've been
through a fight like this a hundred
times.

Jerry *snaps* a crab leg. Points it at Eddie.

JERRY (CONT'D)
Know what a real fight is? It's not
like in the movies. It's one punch.
At full speed. When your nose
cracks. You spurt blood. Most guys
drop not from the pain. But from
the fear. Okay, I feel the pain.
But I'm never afraid.

EDDIE
So you've told me. Lots of times.

What? Eddie unusually flip. He averts his eyes.

JERRY
Just pay attention to the Eagles.

Maybe a hint of umbrage in his voice, but quickly --

JERRY (CONT'D)
Christ, order a strip steak. Put
some meat on your bones.

INT. JERRY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Late. Jerry just home. Taking off his shoes. Anne at the
table with a NOTEPAD and PENCIL.

JERRY
... but even if I dump every last
building, I'm still a little short.

ANNE
How little?

JERRY
Ten million.

Anne writes \$10 MILLION!!! on the LEGAL PAD.

ANNE
Itsy-bitsy.

Sharing a smile -- to comfort each other.

JERRY
I can ask our friends to return
some of the stock shares I gave
away.

ANNE
Are we sure they're friends?

JERRY
People who work for me are family.

ANNE
Snakes have families, too.

She laughs -- then yawns.

JERRY
I'm talking too much.

Anne slides over and sits on Jerry's lap. Nuzzles him.

ANNE
Most guys talk to women so they can
sleep with them.

JERRY
And women?

ANNE
Women sleep with men so they can
talk to them.

JERRY
Which is this?

ANNE
We'll see.
(then)
Hey, sweetie.

JERRY

Yeah?

ANNE

Don't punt yet.

WIDE SHOT - EAGLES PRACTICE - FRANKLIN FIELD

Players run drills. Kuharich *shrie*ks.

KUHARICH

HOLD THE BLOCK! HOLD THE BLOCK! I
don't care if you heard the
whistle. Put fucking wax in your
ears. Like fucking Ulysses.

ANGLE. JERRY, high in the stands. Siting alone. UP THE AISLE.
Johnny Robel comes running up. Jerry starts down towards him.

JERRY

Slow down ...

Johnny stops. Sweating through his clothes. Can't catch his
breath.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Hold off the heart attack till you
tell me.

JOHNNY

Chicago. On. The. Phone.

SPLIT SCREEN: TED DAILEY, in Chicago.

TED

Are you drunk?

JERRY, in his Franklin Field Office.

JERRY

(confused)

No.

TED

See what you can do about that.
Follow me here. I think I found a
way through the bog.

FLASH CUT: A NATTY EUROPEAN (60's) with STEEL-RIMMED GLASSES.

TED (V.O.)
 The Rouse Company uses an
 international broker named Dr.
 Seiler. Don't ask what kind of
 doctor.

FLASH CUT: GRAND CASINO - MONTE CARLO - NIGHT

DR. JOSEF SEILER greeted by STAFF as he crosses the MAIN
 FLOOR towards a PRIVATE ROOM.

TED (V.O.)
 Struts like the fucking Prince of
 Shangra-La. Big clients. Jet set
 types. Potentates. Sells them real
 estate, mostly.

Various INTERNATIONAL HIGH ROLLERS rise to greet DR. SEILER.

TED (V.O.)
 ... and other things.

... with stunning, bosomy 'grand-daughters'.

JERRY
 (into PHONE)
 I'll be bankrupt by the time an
 Irishman finishes a story.

TED
 So the doctor is with a bunch of
 clients in Paris. Oil men.

JERRY
 Texas?

FLASH CUT: RESTAURANT - PARIS - NIGHT

DR. SEILER hosts FOUR MEN, couture suits, black hair.

TED (V.O.)
 Kuwait.

JERRY (V.O.)
 Arabs?

TED (V.O.)
 As opposed to Kuwait-upon-Avon? ...
 Dr. Seiler takes them on a shopping
 spree in the City of Lights.
 Apartments ...

FLASH CUT: APARTMENT. SEILER throws open FRENCH DOORS to a glorious balcony -- and a sumptuous view of *la Tour Eiffel*.

TED (V.O.)
... jewels ...

FLASH CUT: CARTIER. SEILER smokes while velvet TRAYS of rubies, sapphires and diamonds are presented to the KUWAITIS.

TED (V.O.)
You name it. The Kuwaitis are
buying it. Bugatis, thoroughbreds,
speed boats ...

FLASH CUT: A SOW'S NOSE digs IN SOIL.

TED
(on PHONE)
A thousand acres of Normandy just
for the truffles underground.

PAN RIGHT: EDDIE, steps into Jerry's office.

EDDIE
Kuharich wants to cut Skaggs. Can
you talk to him.

JERRY
Ted. ...

JERRY stands, ready to hang up.

TED
Guess what they're really, really
interested in buying ...

JERRY
I have to call you back.

TED
(SHOUTS)
An ice hockey team.

Freeze. Jerry sinks back into the chair.

JERRY
The Arabs want to buy an ice hockey
team?

Eddie reacts.

EDDIE
Ice hockey?

INT. PAN AM TERMINAL - LOUNGE - JFK AIRPORT - NIGHT

Jerry waiting to board the overnight to PARIS. Meets with Earl, BILL PUTNAM, JERRY SCHIFF, and Eddie. And Johnny, closest to JERRY.

JERRY

... I'll need to buy back all your shares of the Flyers. But I'll make sure you each clear a million dollars.

No one is prepared for *that* number.

SCHIFF

A million?

PUTNAM

A million is ... wow ... more than I ever expected. Or deserve.

Johnny watches Eddie and Earl exchange looks.

JOHNNY

Jerry, their shares were gifts from you. You got to tip them, too?

JERRY

This deal will save me. I can pay off everyone and still keep the Eagles. The rest is just money.

He looks from face to face. *Nods.*

SCHIFF

You've been carrying all of us. It's the least we can do.

JERRY

Eddie?

EDDIE

Whatever you need, Jerry. But ...

JOHNNY

What the fuck do you mean 'but'?

EDDIE

I'm just saying these guys are Arabs. You're a Jew. Israel just kicked their asses in six days. You sure they'll do business with you?

JERRY
I'm not asking them to read
haftorah. I'm making a deal.

EARL
You're boarding.

Jerry stands. One by one he hugs them all.

JERRY
They swore me to secrecy. Don't say
a word. We'll arrange the buy-back
when I come home.

He saves the last hug for Eddie.

JERRY (CONT'D)
(big smile)
Ever seen Paris, Eddie?

EDDIE
No, Jer.

Jerry suddenly pensive.

JERRY
Me neither.

EST. CHAMPS-ELYSEES - PARIS - NIGHT

Lights and love make the city glow.

INT. ZAVAN'S RESTAURANT - PARIS - EVENING

Louis XVI would be comfortable in this room. A six piece BAND
plays moody French jazz.

AT A TABLE, discretely hidden. Seven MEN in dinner jackets.
FOUR KUWAITIS, TED DAILEY, DR. SEILER -- and JERRY.

DR. SEILER
I was enchanted by this American
film. *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner*.
I'd give up everything I own for
one night with this Katherine
Houghton.

AYUB MALIK (30's, heavy-set, bearded) reveals himself leader
of the Kuwaitis.

MALIK

Better to bring home a Negro than an Arab. Katharine Hepburn would bolt the door and Spencer Tracy would pour hot oil from the upstairs window if the girl brought home an Arab.

Nervous laughs. Jerry, insides churning, lifts his wine, sets it down without drinking. MALIK notices. He notices everything.

MALIK (CONT'D)

I prefer Peggy Fleming. I would mount her with her skates still on.

DR. SEILER

One kick and you'd be *castrato*.

MALIK

I love the ice. As does my prince. Dubai is sun and heat, heat and sun. Ice is cool.

TED

You should see the ice *before* an NHL game. Smooth, clean, perfect. Just begging for blades.

DR. SEILER

NHL teams are very hard to acquire.

MALIK

At some point in your life you either have the things you want or the reasons you don't.

Now Jerry gets Malik. Maybe not so different.

MALIK (CONT'D)

You own the Philadelphia Flyers.

JERRY

I do.

MALIK

Philadelphia is not Montreal or Boston.

JERRY

Philadelphia fans are passionate. Sports to them are life and death.

MALIK

In Dubai, we feel the same. Players
who fail us simply -- disappear.

Jerry doesn't know how to *react*.

JERRY

Oh, well, in Philly, we just shoot
them on the spot.

Titters, turning to full out laughter. Jerry relaxes. Malik
raises his glass for a toast.

MALIK

Mr. Wolman, I like a man to finish
his wine before I talk numbers.

EXT./INT. LIMO - BACK SEAT - LATER

Ted with Jerry, racing across to the airport. Both
thunderstruck by these events.

TED

Get those outstanding shares of the
team under your control. Fast.

JERRY

Forty-five million. He didn't even
blink.

Jerry giggles -- and for a change Ted is cold sober.

TED

They'll still make money on the
deal. They get the Flyers and the
Spectrum.

JERRY

They can have them. With this cash
I clear my debts. You did it, Your
Holiness.

Ted slumped & rumped.

TED

My last miracle. Next time call a
bloody rabbi.

CLOSE ON JERRY, as they pass the ARC DE TRIOMPHE.

JERRY

I wanted to move to Paris once.
Annie didn't trust the world away
from home.

TED

I don't either.

WIDE SHOT - PHILADELPHIA SKYLINE - DAWN

About as 'not Paris' as you get -- but almost pretty in the
soft morning light.

INT. EAGLES OFFICE - LOCUST STREET - DAY

DOOR bangs open. Jerry, still in his dinner jacket. Unshaven.
Sees Johnny, sprints -- jumps his arms.

JERRY

(sings)

*Roll out the barrel ... Give
everybody a raise.*

Fits the tune. Starts to polka around the office.

JOHNNY

Whoa, down boy.

Claire tries to interrupt. Jerry dances with her next.

JERRY

(signs)

*Claire take the day off. Go
shopping and spend lots of dough!
... Are the boys here?*

CLAIRE

Mr. Snider is here. Mr. Foreman
isn't in yet.

JERRY

Tell Eddie to meet me in the
conference room. Reserve the
banquet room at Bookbinders.

CLAIRE

For who?

Jerry spreads his arms wide.

JERRY

For everybody. And call my wife!

IN THE EAGLES CONFERENCE ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Jerry looks out at the Philly. If he opened the window and jumped -- he's sure he'd simply float above the skyline.
ANGLE. Jerry doesn't see Eddie enter.

EDDIE
How'd it go?

JERRY
I'm beat. Mine shaft beat.

Jerry sits at the long table. Eddie on the other side.
Jerry's eyes well up. He can't help it. Exhaustion, euphoria.
He starts to cry in front of Eddie. Vulnerable. Can't stop.

JERRY (CONT'D)
What a fucking *pussy* I've turned
into!

Giddy. Swipes at his eyes with his sleeve. Now he laughs.

JERRY (CONT'D)
Eddie, Eddie, Eddie. I'm going to
hold on to the Eagles.

Jerry takes papers from his briefcase.

JERRY (CONT'D)
I need everybody's piece of the
Flyers today. Call them. I'm giving
you all another million dollars on
top of the first million.

Before Eddie can speak ...

JERRY (CONT'D)
Don't argue. I want to do it. The
checks are already being cut.

Jerry slides the papers to Eddie. Pats his pocket for a pen.

JERRY (CONT'D)
Earl will have to sign as soon as
he comes in ...

Eddie jabs his black-rimmed glasses.

EDDIE
I'm not signing.

Soft but clear. Jerry finds the pen. Extends it to Eddie --

JERRY
What, kid?

EDDIE
I want to keep the Flyers.

The way the morning light catches EDDIE'S GLASSES makes them opaque. Hidden eyes; hidden guy.

JERRY
No, no, Eddie, we all agreed.

EDDIE
You didn't ask me. You told me.

JERRY
It's not about one ice hockey club.
I'll lose everything I own if this
deal doesn't close. You don't know
the way things work ...

EDDIE
Sure, I do.

JERRY
Take the fucking pen and sign.

He almost shoves it in Eddie's face. And Eddie slaps Jerry's wrist. The pen falls.

EDDIE
Is that fast enough?

Jerry struggles to tamp down his rising fury.

JERRY
Is it money? It's money. Okay, name
a number. Any number.

No response.

JERRY (CONT'D)
If not for the money, for *me*.
Eddie. Do it for me.

Eddie smirks.

EDDIE
Charity is for chumps.

JERRY
Not charity, Eddie. Decency.

EDDIE
I'm not fucking signing it.

Eddie is up -- leaves JERRY breathless.

INTO THE EAGLES OFFICE (CONTINUOUS)

Johnny and Claire watch Eddie exit. Jerry charges out after.

JOHNNY
What's going on?

ANGLE. Earl just coming in -- Eddie and Earl exchange *whispers*. Jerry goes right to them. Eddie steps behind Earl, like a child hiding. Jerry, assuming Earl will sort it out --

JERRY
Earl, talk to your brother-in-law.
He won't sell back his Flyers'
shares back ...

Earl shifts his briefcase nervously. Says nothing. It takes JERRY a second to clue in.

JERRY (CONT'D)
... but you already knew.

Planned. *Conspired.*

EARL
I'm not selling either.
(suddenly LOUDER)
How you live. Well, we're not
throwing away everything because
Mr. Jerry Wolman has to be the
first. Be the fastest.

Johnny takes a step at Earl. Jerry waves him back. Maybe he can reason with Earl.

JERRY
Okay, okay. Look, I can wait a few
days. We can negotiate our way
through this. Hire a lawyer. I'll
pay for it. At least try to work
something out while there's still
time.

JUMP TO: EAGLES OFFICE - AT THE ELEVATOR DOORS

OVER JERRY'S shoulder. He's waiting for someone. And Johnny, crazy with worry.

JOHNNY

Don't negotiate with these pricks.

JERRY

Johnny, as long as they're talking,
I have a chance.

Surprisingly calm. Checks his watch. Lights a cigarette. --
ELEVATOR DOORS OPEN. Jerry can't hide his surprise.

Stepping OFF first, Eddie and Earl. Followed by HARRY
SHAPIRO, smug, testy.

HARRY SHAPIRO

Jerry. ...

JERRY

Harry. I hope you'll listen to my
offer.

HARRY SHAPIRO

I start with the assumption that
any offer you make has no
collateral to back it up. Like a
building with no foundation.

CUT TO:

INT. PARIS - VAN CLEF & ARPELS - MORNING

Ayub Malik with his entourage. A DESIGNER displays MALIK a
SOLID GOLD HOCKEY STICK. Rubies & diamonds, in a FLYERS LOGO.
Malik hefts the extravagant stick. Heavy.

INT. TED DAILEY'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Ted Dailey, pajama bottoms and fuzzy chest hair. Fingers
can't negotiate these damn *espresso* cups.

SLIT SCREEN: JERRY. BACK OF A LIMO. NIGHT. On the PHONE as he
speeds along the WEST RIVER DRIVE. Past the PHILADELPHIA
BOATHOUSES.

TED

They say once a hyena tastes blood,
it won't let go. Not even with a
bullet in the head. You brought
the hyenas with you on the way, bo-
yo. Like pets, sad to say.

JERRY

I guess I did.

TED

And now?

Jerry, reaching desperately.

JERRY

The Spectrum booked four million in its first year. Truth is, the Prince can make more money from the building than the team.

TED

You don't own the whole building. You gave wee pieces as gifts to your friends, like Eddie, remember?

JERRY

Eddie's lawyer says he doesn't want the Spectrum.

TED

What *does* he want? Besides *fucking* you in the arse. Are you that hot in the sack?

JERRY

Every customer satisfied.

Exhausted.

JERRY (CONT'D)

I'll swap Eddie my shares in the Flyers for his share of the Spectrum. He'll snap at it.

TED

Not the headline. The headline is: Will Dubai buy the ice without the team?

CLOSE ON EAGLES FULLBACK IZZY LANG

So close we can see his EYES scan left and right. The exquisite suspense of knowing *I'm getting the carry*.

CARD: EAGLES VS. BEARS

SLOW MOTION, as IZZY LANG, moves forward. Takes the BALL in his gut. Veers OFF TACKLE. Like a blessing, finds *freedom*.

INT. JERRY'S HOUSE - CHEVY CHASE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Alan and Helene are watching NFL FILMS coverage of the Eagles. Heads rest on Jerry, propped against the sofa.

ALAN

That's so cool. The way he runs.

Alan pops up -- starts to imitate *running in slow motion*.

HELENE

He's not really running that slow,
moron.

ALAN

I know, apple sauce brains.

... Anne runs into the room in bare feet. Her look to Jerry sends him right to -- the PHONE.

INTERCUT: CLAIRE - IN THE OFFICE

CLAIRE

(gasping)

Telegram from Ted in Dubai.

JERRY

... so read it.

Her voice *cracks* as she reads --

CLAIRE

'Deal for Spectrum. Yes. Meet in
Geneva. Tomorrow.'

INT. AIRPLANE - FLYING OVER THE SWISS ALPS - DAWN

Jerry looks out the window. POV: Snow-capped MASTIFFS, cold and white, against heavy clouds.

JERRY

(*softly*)

Looks like Shenandoah ...

WIDEN TO INCLUDE TED, next to JERRY.

TED

Those are the mighty and glamorous
Swiss Alps. Not Coal town, PA.

JERRY

Could've fooled me.

A smile shared. A dream coming true.

CARD: GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

EXT. CHATEAU - GENEVA - DAY

The LIMO, with Jerry and Ted, glides down an *allee* of groomed cedars. Turns into an 18th century ESTATE with a cobblestone COURTYARD.

TED
It's Friday the 13th. And
everything is grand.

Jerry looks at his watch. VOICE sinks.

JERRY
Christ, Teddy. Tonight's *kol nidre*.
I'm supposed to be fasting for *Yom Kippur*.

TED
Tonight you're saving mankind. You
can't insult these boys. They'll do
no business until after we share a
meal. Your father will forgive you.

LIMO stops. A row of ESTATE STAFF waits for them.

JERRY
My old man would close the deal.

A SERVANT OPENS the door for JERRY.

JERRY (CONT'D)
... but he wouldn't swallow.

INT. PRIVATE DINING ROOM - CHATEAU - NIGHT

PAN THE TABLE: Malik cuts into *canard Bourbon*. Ted mops *selle de veau* with crusty bread. Dr. Seiler savors *steak tartare*. The other KUWAITIS all eat hardy. ...

END PAN ON JERRY, holding a forkful of *boeuf*. Stares at it. OPENS his mouth. Wave of bile in his throat. Can't do it. Malik is watching him.

MALIK
Is something wrong with your dish,
Jerry?

Jerry's fork hangs mid-air. Can't get the words out. Ted ready to faint. *Swallow that fucking boeuf, Jerry.* Malik barks at a WAITER.

MALIK (CONT'D)

Mr. Wolman's food is unacceptable.
Take it away. Bring him something
edible.

Ted stares at Jerry, wide-eyed. *What the fuck are you doing?*
WAITER, MAITRE'D, SERVING STAFF surround JERRY, whisk away
his plate -- as if their lives were at stake.

MALIK (CONT'D)

I apologize, Mr. Wolman. You're
right. This food is a horror.

He pushes his plate back. Stands. The KUWAITIS freeze.

MALIK (CONT'D)

My appetite is ruined. Let us flee
this pigstye and finish our
business in the library

JERRY

(*whispers*)

Amen.

EXT. CHATEAU - COURTYARD - MORNING

Jerry saying good-bye. Offers his hand to Malik -- who pulls
him into cheek-by-cheek kisses.

MALIK

Arrangements are made. Forty-five
million dollars will be wired to an
escrow account in Switzerland.

JERRY

Please thank the Prince for me.

MALIK

This is a brilliant deal. A heroic
deal. The world will take note.

JERRY

And bring the Prince to an Eagles
game. As my personal guest.

MALIK

Now that we own The Spectrum, I
would love to see the Ice Capades.

(MORE)

MALIK (CONT'D)

Such women, to me, are angels on
skates.

INT. AIRPLANE - NIGHT (HEADING HOME)

Jerry watches the SUN SETTING off the wing. Ted is fast asleep. Jerry looks at his airplane MEAL. Checks his watch. Watches the SECOND HAND sweep. The HOUR change.

Yom Kippur ends. Starving, Jerry shovels food in.

PRELAP: A CROWD BOOING ...

EXT. FRANKLIN FIELD - DAY

FANS on their feet. Boos echoing around the stadium. The Philadelphia art form.

FIND KUHARICH, cupping his mouth to be heard.

KUHARICH

(SHOUTING at the field)

... one more play, for God's sake!
It's in your hands! Grab it!
Squeeze it! Crush it! Finish the
goddamn game!

SCOREBOARD: EAGLES 27 - FORTY-NINERS 21

CLOCK: 0:18

FIND JERRY IN THE STANDS

Watching his OFFENSE run off the field. Alan, Helene and Anne beside him. He stands and SHOUTS.

JERRY

Let's go Eag- ...

But travel has eroded his VOICE; it breaks. He can't do it. So he just starts CLAPPING. Alan jumps up.

ALAN

Let's go Eagles!

Anne is turned in the other direction. Staring Up at the --

OWNER'S BOOTH. Eddie, Earl, Myrna and Phyllis. In their seats. Like a statue. Eddie sips a Coke.

ON FIELD: The EAGLES PUNT UNIT on the field. *Kick!* -- FOLLOW THE PUNT end-over-end. Taken by the 49ers PUNT RECEIVER on their 10 yard line. He retreats first, makes a cut, reverses.

And suddenly there's a LANE. In a flash, he scores.

Around the stadium. Boo-o-o-! So LOUD the stands seems to shake.

ON JERRY, watching these FANS. Overwrought, fevered, passionate. He'll take these *nutcases*. This loopy intensity.

Jerry starts to laugh. Low, at first.

HELENE
(OVER *booing*)
Are you okay, dad?

He catches Anne's eye. She starts laughing, too.

ANNE
A curious person could wonder how
you got out of this jam?

JERRY
Behind every great man is a wife
who's a smart aleck.

ANNE
Lucky you.

DISSOLVE TO:

TED DAILEY - FACE RED AND DRENCHED IN SWEAT

Steps out of a car. Soaked through his suit jacket.

CARD: DUBAI - UNITED ARAB EMIRATES - NOVEMBER, 1967

WIDEN: EXT. DUBAI - HOTEL - DAY

Not the ultra-modern city of architectural splendor today. A small desert port then. With grand ambitions.

Dr. Seiler steps out next. Dabbing sweat with a silk hanky.

DR. SEILER
We'll freshen up before we see the
Prince. He's an ebullient fellow.

Ted runs a hand over his forehead. A fine coating of SAND.

TED
I'll never complain about Chicago
winters again.

SF/X: WHEELS ROLLING ACROSS A FLOOR. CONTINUES OVER:

INT. PALACE - DUBAI - DAY

Ted waits with Malik and Dr. Seiler in a vaulted room with tiled arches. They HEAR the PRINCE before they see him.

Exploding INTO the room, the PRINCE OF DUBAI (40's), on ROLLERSKATES. TWO ATTENDANTS run after, trying to keep up with him. The PRINCE wears a FLYER'S JERSEY over his jallabah. Wields the SOLID GOLD HOCKEY STICK, pushing a rubber HOCKEY PUCK. *Whack!* Slap shot, bounds OFF the wall.

Ted watches the puck *smash* VASE.

MALIK
Your Highness ...

PRINCE OF DUBAI
I want to drop the first puck next
season. Very first game.

Dulcet tones of a British education. Spins with puck.

PRINCE OF DUBAI (CONT'D)
I hear the fans in Philadelphia are
obstreperous. So am I! I'll win
them over. Maybe I'll play, too!

Dr. Seiler looks at Malik. *You told him, didn't you?*

MALIK
(tactfully)
Attend any event you desire,
Majesty. After all, it's your
arena. ...

The Prince *whacks* the puck down a HALL. Ted listens to the
its diminishing *scrrrrp* on the tiled floor. His heart sinking.

MALIK (CONT'D)
You read our latest agreement,
Majesty?

The Prince skids to a racer's stop.

PRINCE OF DUBAI
Of course, not. Tell me all about
it.

ON TED, closes his eyes. Almost did it. Knows it won't
happen. Not now. Not ever.

INT. CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL - PHILADELPHIA - 4TH FLOOR - NIGHT

Eagles CHEERLEADERS dressed as elves. Circulate with gifts.

IN A ROOM

Jerry, suits and Santa hat, sits on a bed of a very sick
YOUNG BOY (6). Watching Johnny Robel, born to be Santa, digs
out a STING RAY model car.

JOHNNY
Santa loves Sting Rays. Santa wrote
to Uncle Jerry to bring him one for
Christmas.

Jerry sets the car gently in the Boy's hands. A wan smile.

JERRY
Has Santa been naughty or nice?

JOHNNY
Santa is always nice. Except after
the third Rolling Rock.

JERRY
Santa is a *putz*. He'd better find a
second toy for our friend here.

Johnny is digging in the bag -- PAN TO DOOR. Claire, in an
overcoat. Manages to smile.

CLAIRE
Mr. Wolman, Ted has been calling
you from overseas.

At that moment a few CHEERLEADER/ELVES *click-clack* past the
open door. Seem to take the holiday cheer with them. Jerry
knows immediately. Johnny sees it.

JERRY
Be right there.
(smile for the sick young
kid)
(MORE)

JERRY (CONT'D)
... after Santa delivers his
goodies.

DISSOLVE TO:

FILL FRAME: JOE KUHARICH

Dark glasses. TALKING TO CAMERA.

KUHARICH
I didn't even know who Jerry Wolman
was when he hired me. I never asked
for this job. He wouldn't leave me
alone. Begged me, really. Now I
hear he's bankrupt, drowning they
say ... But whoever runs the team,
if it's Mr. Snider, so be it ...
Well, I am confident I can right
the ship. Turn the corner. ...

REVERSE: INT. EDDIE'S OFFICE - DAY

Eddie and Earl are watching KUHARICH's press conference.

EDDIE
Him I'll fire in person.

KUHARICH (ON TV)
... and continue the special
relationship I have with the fans

INT. JERRY'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

Watching his TV. He turns it off. Straightens his tie. FOLLOW
JERRY out of his office --

INTO THE MAIN ROOM

-- where the STAFF is gathered around another TV, watching
Kuharich. Polite, supportive smiles to Jerry.

As Jerry passes Eddie's office, the DOOR CLOSES. Jerry keeps
walking.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - LAW OFFICES - DAY

Fifteen people, including LAWYERS, SECRETARIES, ACCOUNTANTS
around an enormous table. Piles of DOCUMENTS. All facing
Jerry, at the far end. Everyone *waiting* while --

Up front, SAMUEL 'SHUGGIE' GORMAN (50's) lights his cigar. Takes his time. His opinion comes in stone like Ten Commandments, only more expensive.

SHUGGIE GORMAN
(*exhales*, then --)
There are two paths to bankruptcy.
You can only follow one. But the
truth is ... one of them is a
mirage. There's really only one
path, Jerry.

JERRY
So I'm in a fairytale?

SHUGGIE GORMAN
No, a nightmare.

Jerry likes this guy.

SHUGGIE GORMAN (CONT'D)
If you file Chapter VII, you'll
come out with your personal assets
intact. Clear. Without debt. You'll
be able to start over. Build. Get
loans. You're still young. You can
be great again.

Very willing to stop there. Not Jerry.

JERRY
What happens to the people who own
a piece of my holdings? The ones
who invested with me? Would they be
paid back?

Lawyerly looks around. *This is crazy talk to them.*

SHUGGIE GORMAN
No. For that you'd have to follow
the *other path*.

He makes Jerry wait.

JERRY
Are you going to tell me what this
other path is?

SHUGGIE GORMAN
I don't want to. Because only a
schmuck would be interested. But.

Shuggie blows a smoke ring.

SHUGGIE GORMAN (CONT'D)
 You could file for Chapter XI. Then
 your creditors would have to be
 paid off in full before you. The
 creditors would form a committee.
 Determine what you could sell and
 how much for.

JERRY
 Could they make me sell the Eagles?

SHUGGIE GORMAN
 At this point, Jerry ...

JERRY
 If they ordered me to sell off the
 Eagles, could I refuse?

Shuggie taps his ash into his hand. Signature move. Buys time
 so he can think of the right response in court.

SHUGGIE GORMAN
 (finally)
 No.

CUT TO:

EXT. EAGLES OFFICE - LOCUST STREET - LATE AFTERNOON

Jerry drifting down the street into the building. Not sure
 what he's feeling.

ANGLE. A LIMOUSINE parked at the curb. On the VISOR:
 PHILADELPHIA EAGLES CARD. Here's Mack, reading a paper by the
 open BACK DOOR. Sees Jerry. Awkward. So he says --

MACK
 Hey, Mr. Wolman, what's the good
 word?

JERRY
 Guy walks into a restaurant and
 asks, 'How do you prepare your
 chickens?' So the Chef says,
 'Nothing special. We just hug 'em
 then tell 'em they're gonna die.'

Mack and Jerry both pretend to smile.

MACK
 Good one, Mr. Wolman.

Jerry knows who he's waiting for.

INT. EAGLES OFFICE - HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Jerry walking slowly. As if the Gods planned it: here comes EDDIE, walking towards him. Leaving for the day.

MATCH SHOTS: JERRY and EDDIE. Closing in on each other. Eddie keeps his eyes straight ahead. *This bomb too volatile to ignite.*

EVEN CLOSER. As Eddie passes Jerry, he pushes back his black-rimmed glasses -- and smirks. Then he's gone.

Jerry can't breathe. Puts one foot ahead of the other -- till he reaches his OFFICE.

IN JERRY'S OFFICE (CONTINUOUS)

Jerry rips off his tie. Grips his desk for balance. The world tilting beneath his feet. CLAIRE peeks in.

CLAIRE
(gently)
I have ten pages of calls for you.

Jerry spins around, darts past her -- DOWN THE HALLWAY.

AT THE ELEVATORS. Jerry punches the DOWN BUTTON. Too slow. He shoulders open the STAIRWAY DOOR.

DOWN THE STAIRS. Around the LANDINGS. Jerry flies, round and round. Leaps the last four steps.

EXT. EAGLES OFFICE - LOCUST STREET (CONTINUOUS)

Jerry bursts outside. EDDIE'S LIMOUSINE already turning the corner. Jerry runs INTO THE STREET -- blocks a CAB.

TAXI DRIVER
Off duty.

Jerry takes out a HUNDRED DOLLAR BILL.

JERRY
You're back on.

WIDE SHOT - SUBURBAN STREET - EVENING

The TAXI pulls away from the curb. Leaving Jerry, cigarette in hand. He looks UP at the blazing sunset over the homes. Sky gold and purple. *Puff ...*

Drops the butt, crushes it with bespoke loafers. Starts walking towards the biggest HOUSE on the block.

AT THE FRONT DOOR. Unlocked, like most suburban homes in those days. Jerry walks right in.

INT. EDDIE'S HOUSE - STAIRWAY

Plush carpet. Jerry walks up, in a daze.

MASTER BEDROOM - IN A MOMENT

Jerry looks around at all the furnishing. The *opulence*. ON the ZENITH CONSOLE: FRANK AND NANCY SINATRA, *singing*.

Jerry walks to Eddie's jewelry box. Touches the monogrammed CUFF LINKS that Jerry made for him.

EDDIE (O.C.)
Jesus Christ ... Why are you in my
bedroom?

Father-daughter SINATRAS continue to *sing* on the TV.

JERRY
Great picture.
(hard grin)
... that's why I bought two and
gave one to you. Me, I'd have put
it against the other wall.

Jerry's eyes dart to OIL PORTRAITS of Eddie and his WIFE.

EDDIE
Jerry. You can't be here.

JERRY
... very flattering. You almost
look like *goyim*. When did I
commission them for you? Your
anniversary?

EDDIE
Who the fuck do you think you are?

Moves towards Jerry, waving his razor. Wrong tack. Jerry hurls the jewelry box at Eddie with a spray of diamonds.

JERRY
I'm the guy who bought this house
for you. And most of what's in it.

Now Jerry loses it: grabs Eddie's PORTRAIT off the wall and puts his fist through it. Lifts a dressing-table CHAIR and *smashes* it against the TV SCREEN.

EDDIE
I'm calling the police!

Alas, the phone is on the END TABLE. And Jerry in-between.

JERRY
You can try.

Beat. -- Jerry charges. Eddie retreats for the bathroom. Throws After Shave, soap bars, towels at Jerry, a brush at Jerry -- which stuns him. Manages to LOCK the door.

Jerry methodically *kicks* at the door ... *Bam! Bam! Bam!*

EDDIE (O.C.)
(*muffled*)
Help! Myrna! ... Help me!

Jerry STOPS. Catches his breath. -- FOOTSTEPS, fast. *Someone* dashes into the room --

VOICE
Hi, Uncle Jerry!

Eddie's six year old daughter, TINA. Wearing feet-in pajamas. Jerry tries to clear his head. Conjures a smile.

JERRY
Hey, cutie-pie.

Hands trembling. Reaches in his suit pocket ...

EDDIE
(*muffled, from bathroom*)
Go to mommy, Tina. Now.

Jerry pulls out a wrapped MINT. Folds it in his fist. Hands behind his back.

JERRY
Guess.

Delighted, Tina rushes over. *Pokes* his LEFT arm. Jerry shifts the candy -- right to left.

JERRY (CONT'D)
A Lady Einstein. Too smart for me.
Open.

Jerry unwraps the mint. *Pops* it in Tina's mouth. Pinches her nose. He's coming down now. Talks to the DOOR --

JERRY (CONT'D)
(calm, strong)
You're fired.

EDDIE
(*muffled*)
You can't fire me. I have a contract with the Eagles.

JERRY
I still own fifty-two per cent of the team. Which means I can fire you. ... *Do not come to work tomorrow.*

With that, Jerry walks out. Eddie waits till Jerry is safely down the carpeted stairs before he runs to --

SECOND FLOOR BANNISTER. Shouting down --

EDDIE
I'm calling the NFL. Pete Rozelle wants *me* to own the team. 'Mr. Big spender'. Moron. *Loser*. Who's your friend now, Jer? Can't afford to buy a few dozen more, can you? We're all laughing at you ... We always were!

BY THE FRONT DOOR. Myrna appears wide-eyed --

JERRY
Million dollar *punim* on that little one. Which she gets from you.

And exits.

EXT. EDDIE SNIDER'S HOUSE (CONTINUOUS)

Evening paints the street shades of blue. Jerry stands on the curb and lights another cigarette. Long, slow exhale and --

JERRY
(sings)
... *and then I go and spoil it all by saying something stupid like 'I love you.'*

Laughs. Still can't get it out of his head. CRANE UP, higher and higher over the neighborhood. HOUSES, as far as we can see. And we --

CUT TO:

INT. NFL LEAGUE OFFICES - NEW YORK - DAY

Eddie, pacing. Earl, sitting. Shouting over each other at Pete Rozelle, at his desk.

EARL
Eddie has a contract ...

EDDIE
I have contract ...

EARL
... with twelve years remaining ...

EDDIE
Twelve years ...

PETE ROZELLE
With a clause for termination.

Rozelle, perfect aplomb.

EARL
You can order him to do what you want.

EDDIE
You're the fucking NFL. Who the hell does he think he is?

PETE ROZELLE
A guy who gave you both a fifteen year contract. Like Kuharich.

Rozelle's poker-face makes him more formidable.

PETE ROZELLE (CONT'D)
... and a guy who still owns fifty-two per cent of the Eagles. Most of our owners think that means something. The one who owns the most shares owns the team. You'll find business relies greatly on mathematics.

IN ROZELLE'S OFFICE - LATER

After Eddie and Earl have left. Rozelle dials himself.

PETE ROZELLE
(into PHONE)
I never liked those guys.

SPLIT SCREEN: JERRY, in his BEDROOM. Anne strokes his back as he speaks.

JERRY
Earl was like a brother.

PETE ROZELLE
Drinks up the good whiskey and
wrecks the car?

JERRY
Pete, I usually don't look back. If
the league had only allowed me to
put my Eagles stock in trust ...

PETE ROZELLE
What are you talking about?

Jerry staggered. He can't bear what's coming.

JERRY
Earl said he asked you. I wanted to
set up an irrevocable trust for my
kids. It would've kept the Eagles
out of reach from my creditors.

PETE ROZELLE
Earl never asked me. Most of our
owners keep their stock in trust.

Now Jerry gets it.

JERRY
This isn't about the Flyers. Never
was. They want to break me so they
can get the Eagles. I've got to
find a way to hold on.

PETE ROZELLE
Is it true you're paying Eddie his
salary for the rest of the year?

Jerry is almost embarrassed.

JERRY
He's got kids.
(defensive)
It's not about him. It's about me.

PETE ROZELLE
Then go see a fucking analyst.
There's something wrong with you.

INT. EAGLES - CHARTERED AIRPLANE - NIGHT

TRACK DOWN the CENTER AISLE. PLAYERS too tense to eat their steak dinners. *BUMP!* The plane drops, *pitches*, shivers. One of *those* flights. Johnny Robel grips his seat eyes closed.

FIND JERRY, in the rear. Doesn't *react*. Lazily working through a pack of cigarettes.

Now the PLANE gets a good *ten second shake* like a toy. Big OT BOB BROWN *yelps*. Jerry, unflappable, meets his wide eyes.

JERRY
Losing to Dallas 38-17 makes me
want to vomit more.

Cracks Bob up -- and calms him down.

INT. PHILADELPHIA AIRPORT - AT THE GATE - NIGHT

PLAYERS stagger OFF, exhausted. Jerry comes out dead last. Eyes barely open. Walks with Johnny, lugging his duffle bag. The scrim of wide-bodied PLAYERS clears --

Eddie and a short, stout man named LOU STEIN (50's) waiting. Takes a moment for Jerry to process.

JERRY
What are you doing here?

Eddie holds out a CONTRACT. And a pen.

EDDIE
You're selling the team to us. Lou
here is buying it for our group.

Stein's high-pitched voice pierces like a child's tantrum.

LOU STEIN
If you don't sign it, I have the
best bankruptcy lawyers in the
country ready to go to court.
(MORE)

LOU STEIN (CONT'D)

I'll make so much trouble you'll
beg me to take the team off your
hands.

Johnny drops his duffle bag -- *thump*, at Eddie's feet.

EDDIE

Don't touch me. I have witnesses.

JOHNNY

After I 'touch' you, I'll 'touch'
your witnesses.

Jerry holds Johnny back.

LOU STEIN

One way or the other, Jerry. We're
taking the Eagles.

JERRY

They're seizing my construction
company. Foreclosing on my house.
Scaring the hell out of my kids.
You think I'm worried about a prick
like you. ... You'll never get the
Eagles. Never.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - BALTIMORE, MARYLAND - DAY

Jerry waits while Shuggie Gorman huddles with JUDGE KAISER
(60's).

CARD: BANKRUPTCY REFEREE - JUDGE JOSEPH KAISER

Judge Kaiser keeps looking over AT JERRY, as if he's not sure
he's hearing things right. Perplexed, then amused, then
amazed. Finally, in a voice like a trumpet --

JUDGE KAISER

If your client can find someone to
pay him sixteen million dollars for
a football team, I will be
supremely impressed ... as I would
be when pigs fly.

(rises)

I grant Mr. Wolman ninety days to
find this theoretical buyer.
Otherwise, the court will entertain
new bids to satisfy Mr. Wolman's
creditors from the sale of the
Philadelphia Eagles.

Jerry turns -- knows who's behind him. IN THE BACK: EARL and EDDIE, waiting like jackals.

INT. JERRY'S HOUSE - CHEVY CHASE - NIGHT

Jerry walks in. Tosses keys on the vestibule TABLE. A GIFT BOX, wrapped crudely, unopened. Confused, Jerry opens it. IN THE BOX: an ENVELOPE.

INSERT: TWO CHECKS. And a big home made CARD: **TO OUR DADDY**

Helene and Alan appear.

JERRY
What's this?

HELENE
We went to the bank. That's the money you gave me to buy a car.

ALAN
And my bar mitzvah money.

Jerry can't keep his hands from trembling. When he averts his eyes they run to him. After a silent embrace --

ALAN (CONT'D)
Daddy, are they going to shut off the electricity?

JERRY
No. Who said that?

Helene tries to sound peppy -- but breaks down instead:

HELENE
Don't sell the team, dad. We'll move. I'll get a job. We're as tough as you. Please. Don't sell.

VF/X SHOTS: ELEVEN EAGLES LOSING GAMES IN HIGH SPEED

A Fast Forward *blur ... fumbles, interceptions, dropped passes, sacks, missed assignments ...* Too fast for any single PLAY to register. Just one general sense: disaster.

CLOSE ON A BOTTLE OF JOHNNIE WALKER BLACK

Swinging lazily, back and forth, like a pendulum.

WIDEN: INT. BOOKBINDERS - PRIVATE BAR - NIGHT

A character out of a 'B' film noir is what we think. Fitted overcoat. Hat. Slick hair. Crossing the bar is LEONARD TOSE (40's) his own whiskey bottle loosely in his hand. Hooded eyes, lanky. TWO YOUNG WOMEN bookend him: BRUNETTE. REDHEAD. He waves them away. And enters --

JOHN TAXIN'S OFFICE (CONTINUOUS)

Leonard Tose CLOSES the door. Jerry offers a polite smile.

JERRY

Nice to meet you, Leonard.

Tose ignores Jerry's hand. Prompts Jerry to look at Taxin, at his desk.

LEONARD TOSE

Is this gonna take long?

Tose gets comfortable on the couch. A cocksman's grin.

LEONARD TOSE (CONT'D)

I don't want to keep my associates waiting. They have an hourly rate. But I always say, 'A penny saved is a penny too much.'

Jerry sits across from him. Taxin sets up three glasses.

JERRY

I think we've used some of your trucks from time to time.

LEONARD TOSE

I wouldn't have a clue.

Not much for small talk. Tose pours three GLASSES, whiskey neat. Hands Jerry one.

LEONARD TOSE (CONT'D)

You said sixteen million? That's the asking price? Is that what I heard?

Jerry startled. *He's not sure?*

JERRY

That's right. But I'd like to go over some of the ways you can make it back relatively quickly ...

LEONARD TOSE
We'll let the lawyers handle the
details. But I'm in. Okay?

Tose *shoots* his whiskey back.

JERRY
You know, when I was growing up in
Shenandoah, we'd hitch-hike three
hours down to Philly and sneak into
games ...

LEONARD TOSE
Are we done? I own the team, right?

He's already up. Jerry is slack-jawed. Softly sets his GLASS
back on the table.

JERRY
Sure. Congratulations.

FADE TO WHITE.

And the lovely *jangle* of BELLS ...

FADE IN AGAIN: TO SNOW

FALLING over PHILADELPHIA. CITY HALL. The DELAWARE. The MAIN
LINE. NORTH PHILLY. Rich and poor alike. Heavy, white FLAKES,
coating concrete and brick in a fleeting, magic cloak.

EXT. FRANKLIN FIELD - DAY

SNOW in flurries. SNOW on and under seats. SNOW on the
SIDELINES in massive mounds ...

CARD: EAGLES VS. VIKINGS - JERRY WOLMAN'S FINAL GAME - 1968

VARIOUS SHOT AROUND THE STADIUM

FANS *booing*. FACES of ordinary people. Family-of-man types.
Watching the VIKINGS dismantle the EAGLES.

FIND KUHARICH, phlegmy and hoarse from screaming.

KUHARICH
Watch the QB sneak. Sneak! Sneak!
It's coming your way, goddammit!

Everybody knows it's coming. But Vikings' QB JOE KAPP rolls
into the END ZONE from TWO YARDS OUT anyway.

BOOING throttles up. Vigilante *booing*. Revolutionary *booing*.

NEW ANGLE. ON THE FLAGPOLE: A FAN sneaks up and manages to raise a homemade BANNER: **JOE MUST GO**

FIND JERRY, by JOHNNY'S EQUIPMENT BENCH, hands in pockets. Not watching the game. Gazing around the STADIUM.

JERRY

Santa needs to cheer these people up.

Johnny *winces*, looks up at the truculent FANS.

JOHNNY

Santa doesn't need a new asshole ripped out of Santa's fat ass.

JERRY

Who can resist jolly St. Nick?
C'mon, put on the costume. I'll tell the band to play some Christmas medley. The girls will dance ...

Jerry slips his arm around Johnny.

JERRY (CONT'D)

We'll turn this place into one big Love In.

JOHNNY

'Love In'? Lynching is more like it.

Jerry leads JOHNNY away to the LOCKERS.

PUNCH: HALF TIME

The EAGLES BANDS plays the shivering CHEERLEADERS off the field. INTO THE TUNNEL. -- Beat. -- Out comes JOLLY SAINT NICK! Johnny Robel, as Santa. Toy BAG over his shoulder. Waving joyously to all the Philadelphia Eagles fans.

FOLLOW JOHNNY parading around the field. *Blowing kisses* to the kids.

ON JERRY, watching from the sideline. Then something catches his eye. On the periphery. He looks UP --

NEW ANGLE. A ROUND WHITE BALL, on an elliptical trajectory, dropping fast. *Bam!* HITS Johnny in the cheek. Startled, Johnny looks back at Jerry. -- Beat.

The single snow ball unleashes the mob. FANS start packing the icy snow around the seats. Santa is a dead duck.

WIDE SHOT: SHOW BALLS, criss-crossing from every section of the stadium. Pummeling Johnny. Exploding in frozen particulates. Johnny's hat is knocked off. He twists and turns. *It's got to stop.* But it doesn't.

IN THE TUNNEL

The PLAYERS are afraid to come out. Bob Brown peeks past Jerry.

BOB BROWN
They're attacking Santa Claus?

ON THE FIELD

Johnny ducks. Bobs & weaves. The snow is wet and mostly ice. ONE SNOW BALL makes a direct hit to his chin. Johnny goes down. Doesn't move.

Jerry explodes from the tunnel. Braving the barrage. Zig-zags to mid-field. Helps Johnny to his feet. Arm-in-arm Jerry and Johnny manage to reach safety in the tunnel.

Once Santa is gone, the snowballs quickly peter out. For one long moment, the field is empty. Eerily silent.

CAMERA ZOOMS IN ON TUNNEL. Jerry steps one more time. Gazes UP at the STADIUM -- one long last loving look --

JERRY (V.O.)
When I looked up at the stadium for the last time, I knew I'd never come to another game. Maybe I thought I'd let them down. I had a million dreams. For the team, for the city, for these people ...

-- the SNOW starts to fall again. Jerry is gone.

JERRY (V.O.)
... but now it was time to wake up.

SLOW DISSOLVE:

THE PHILADLEPHIA SPECTRUM - NIGHT

KATE SMITH bellows her very loud, signature version of *God Bless America* at the start of the FLYERS game against the BOSTON BRUINS.

JERRY (V.O.)

Eddie took control of the Flyers from me. And my Spectrum. They even won a couple Stanley Cups. But the putz never got the Eagles.

IN THE OWNERS BOX: Eddie Snider, arms crossed, watching the game. Inscrutable, far away from the fans.

JERRY (V.O.)

In 2011 he was voted into the NHL Hall of Fame. For bringing the Flyers to Philadelphia all by himself. ... You know what they say: There are lies, damn lies -- and Sports statistics.

SF/X: JOHNNY ROBEL, *amplified with reverb.*

JOHNNY'S VOICE

And a-one, and a-two, and a-here we go! ...

EXT. SHENANDOAH CITY PARK - DAY

Johnny fronts his POLKA BAND, all wearing black BOOTS and white balloon KNICKERS. WIDEN AND REVEAL -- several THOUSAND PEOPLE, prancing in couples.

JOHNNY

(*singing*)

Strike up the music the band has begun ...

Everyone joins the REFRAIN ...

VOICES

The Pennsylvania Polka! ...

FIND HELENE and ALAN, dancing alongside JERRY and ANNE.

JERRY (V.O.)

Me? America was moving too fast for me to get back in the game. Soon as any guy got rich, he thought about buying a sports team. I never could elbow my way back through the crowd. Hell of a lot of rich guys around these days ...

The MUSIC slowly FADES OUT, as they keep dancing. CRANE UP, and we lose Jerry & Anne in the throng. *Whirling* to the goofy, ebullient music ...

JERRY (V.O.)
But I don't look back. I've spent
my life with the people I love.
Helping who I can, when I can.
Family, friends, strangers. ...

AND DISSOLVE TO: TWO BOYS

12 and 14, hopping out of a DELIVERY FLAT BED. ONE skinny,
wiry; the OTHER already barrel-chested. Hefty. They dodge
traffic across a street --

JERRY (V.O.)
But once in a while, I'll think
back to a time long gone. ...

TILT UP TO: FRANKLIN FIELD - 1939. JERRY and JOHNNY slow down
as they reach one of the GATES. *Stalk* like thieves. They HEAR
CHEERING inside the stadium.

JERRY (V.O.)
... and I know I've loved my life
and the people I've met. .. Well,
except for one.

They peek to see if any GUARDS are watching. Then they dash
inside.

FADE OUT