

THE STUNTMAN

Screenplay by Lawrence B. Marcus

Adaptation by Richard Rush

From the novel by
Paul Brodeur

FINAL SHOOTING SCRIPT

Melvin Simon Productions Presents A Richard Rush Film

THE STUNTMAN

FADE IN:

1 EXT. ROADSIDE DINER - EARLY MORNING

A strip of two-lane highway runs through a tall pine forest. There is a truck-stop coffee shop beside the roadway. A few 14-WHEELERS are scattered across the big dusty parking lot. Morning sunlight glints off their chrome stacks. It bakes the asphalt and warms the mangy hides of stray DOGS asleep in the dirt. A HELICOPTER hovers about the treetops like a lazy hummingbird. It's the beginning of a perfect day.

A highway PATROL CAR slowly trolls among the trucks and dogs and parks beside the slat and shingled building.

TWO TELEPHONE LINEMEN are scaling a power pole at the forest's edge.

2 POWER POLE - ANGLE ON TELEPHONE LINEMEN

High on the pole, the linemen lean back against their safety straps to work, their bodies forming a "Y." One of them suddenly turns, pointing at a nearby treetop.

FIRST LINEMAN

Lookee there!

He grabs a PORCELAIN INSULATOR from his belt, cocks his arm and hurls it across the open stretch. It lands smack in the middle of the tree. SQUAWK! A rattle of leaves, a rustle of feathers and a HUGE BUZZARD comes flapping out. The lineman cackles over his marksmanship.

3 CLOSE ANGLE ON BUZZARD - MOVING SHOT

3A The big, frightened beady-eyed bird is lumbering through the sky, flapping for its life and suddenly...SPLAT! It crashes head-on into the bubble of the passing HELICOPTER.

4 INT. HELICOPTER

The ship rocks as the PILOT wrestles the controls. There are THREE OTHERS in the cabin. The man beside the pilot, ELI CROSS, is sketching in a manuscript and eating an apple. He glances up in irritation.

ELI

Hey, will you stop wiggling?!

PILOT

Don't yell at me...yell at the
goddamn crazy bird! It tried to
kill us!

ELI

(back to his manuscript)
Oh yeah, that's your story. What's
the bird got to say about it?

Eli bites into his apple, grimacing at the mushy mouthful. He tosses
it out the hatch.

5 EXT. FOREST - TREETOPS

The apple drops into the trees, bounces down from branch to branch
and falls on the slanted roof of the ROADSIDE DINER beneath. It
rolls down the eaves, off the edge and lands on top of the parked
Highway Patrol car.

6 INT. PATROL CAR

FIRST POLICEMAN

Something hit the roof.

SECOND POLICEMAN

So will the Chief...if we don't grab
this guy Cameron.

They climb out as we see a SECOND PATROL CAR sliding up behind them.
MORE POLICEMEN emerge from the second car.

7 EXT. DINER - ON POLICEMEN

They huddle, then move toward the diner entrance. As they pass an
open WINDOW the CAMERA HOLDS.

8 INT. DINER

A FRY COOK serves behind the long counter where MEN on stools eat
watching the overhead TV. There is a PINBALL MACHINE in action.
The policemen are seen ENTERING b.g. A TRUCK DRIVER ambles up and
straddles a stool.

TRUCK DRIVER

Gettin' hot early. It's gonna be a
scorcher.

The fry cook fills the driver's empty water glass from a pitcher,
then move down the counter.

9 ANGLE ON CAMERON

He sits a few stools away. He's about 25, even-featured, bone-weary. His appealing face needs a shave. The cook fills his water glass. The ice cubes rattle as Cameron's hand trembles. His eyes are riveted on the policemen.

10 CAMERON'S POV

Two policemen take seats at a booth across from the counter; one policeman moves to a WALL TELEPHONE, another stands near the CASH REGISTER looking at a magazine. They seem nonchalant, but are placed to block all avenues of escape.

11 ANGLE ON CAMERON

Suddenly startled as someone slaps him on the arm. He whirls to face the man beside him.

MAN

That's really a beaut...really a
beaut!

The MAN is staring at the TATOO which shows below the rolled-up sleeve of Cameron's shirt, a large American Eagle with elaborate scrollwork and a patriotic slogan. The man pulls up his own sleeve to show a small tatoo of an anchor.

MAN (CONT'D)

My wife still yells about this...but
yours -- that's some eagle...like a
billboard.

CAMERON

(eyes on police)
Yeah, that's the grand old bird.
(a half-smile)
Right now I just wish the son-of-a-
bitch could fly.

Cameron rises and moves across the diner to the pinball machine.

12 ANGLE ON PINBALL

The PLAYER wiggles and contorts, using body English to influence the balls.

HECKLER

Hey Morton, you think your ass is connected to the machine? You wiggle, it's gonna make the ball go where you want?

12A Cameron's eyes scan the room, passing the TV above the counter. On
it, the commercial shows a beautiful girl (who we'll later know as
12B NINA FRANKLIN) bending over a bowl of dog food. Her ass, too,
wiggles engagingly. The pinball player leaves the machine.
Cameron, stalling for time, works the plunger while a cop stalks
closer; like the cat to the mouse hole.

POLICEMAN

Hey, you're lucky. Somebody left a free ball.

CAMERON

Uh huh.

Cameron shoots. The ball bounces crazily inside the machine, lights and buzzers flashing. Another policeman approaches.

SECOND POLICEMAN

You got 20,000! You're gonna win...

CAMERON

Win what?

SECOND POLICEMAN

A free game!

CAMERON

Terrific...

He rests his hands on the machine, glancing about. Escape seems hopeless.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

...that's just what I needed...one more chance to lose.

In a lightning-swift motion, the cop clamps his hands down over Cameron's wrists, snapping the HANDCUFFS on. The trap has sprung.

13 CLOSE ON COP AND CAMERON

Cameron nods his head in resignation. A big uncontrollable grin breaks and spreads over the cop's face.

Then suddenly, Cameron bolts, desperately springing full speed for the back door. He flings it open. The cops are moving toward him. One has almost got his gun out.

POLICEMAN

Cameron! Halt! I'll shoot!

Cameron lunges through the doorway, not realizing in his frenzy the screen door still blocks his path. He tears through it, but gets stuck halfway.

CAMERON

(panicked)

No!...God, don't shoot!

Swinging his manacled arms like a club against the tangled mesh, he breaks free and runs.

14 EXT. REAR OF DINER

As Cameron flies down the back steps, a COP stationed at the rear door, caught off-guard, tries to stop him but is shoved flat on his back. Cameron weaves and scrambles across the yard, over fences, between the shed and the barn, rolling beneath a building, out the other side. Behind him, distant shouts and a gunshot.

15 INT. FOREST - MOVING SHOT ON CAMERON - DAY

As Cameron runs, he moves with a skill that suggests forests are not alien to him. He crouches low, following tiny avenues in the maze of tree trunks, scrambling on all fours over needles and fallen cones. Sweat pours down his face. His breath rasps in his throat. He breaks into a clearing and FREEZES...suddenly face to face with a MAN who crouches, blocking his path. It is one of the telephone linemen we saw earlier.

16 WIDER ANGLE

The lineman, kneeling at his tool chest, is surprised by Cameron. The other lineman is halfway up the power pole. They both stare at Cameron's handcuffs. Cameron edges back, his escape route blocked. The man on the ground grabs a WRENCH and moves forward with the same gleam in his eye we saw when he scared that bird from the tree.

LINEMAN

Stand right there like a good old boy and do what I say. You wanna try and mess with me, you've had fair warning. I was a combat Marine in Korea. Okay?

The lineman advances on him as Cameron backs away.

CAMERON

Korea? No shit, so was my old
man...

(he suddenly stamps his
foot and shrieks)

Aaaaaaaargh!

The lineman jumps in surprise. Then, enraged like a startled bull, he lunges forward with the wrench. Cameron uses the man's weight against him, his moves those of a trained fighter. A hard knee to his stomach doubles up the lineman. The handcuffed arms slam down like a club between his shoulder blades driving him to the ground. A kick thrown sideways to his head and the man is out. The other lineman who had started to descend the pole freezes and takes one step back up. Cameron grabs the lineman's toolbox in his handcuffed grasp and dashes off into the forest.

17 MOVING SHOT - ON CAMERON

He slides down a slope on a carpet of fallen leaves, tumbling to the bottom and falls face forward into a running stream where he holds his head and drinks. CAMERA MOVES ACROSS the terrain. There are no pursuers, the forest is silent.

18 CLOSE UP - HANDCUFFS

The jaws of a wire-cutter clamp down severing the chain connecting the cuffs around Cameron's wrists. He lifts his knee from the cutter handle. His arms are now free. He wedges a chisel against one bracelet and swings a sledgehammer against it. We hear his sharp outcry.

19 ANGLE ON CAMERON

Doubled up, holding his wrist in pain. The bracelet is still intact. He buttons his shirt cuffs over the metal bands and climbs the slope to the bright sunlight on the road above.

20 EXT. OLD ABANDONED ROAD - DAY

Cameron is trudging along the old road winding down through the mountainous pass. He crosses a bridge. Through the arches of its low stone railing, he sees a BLACK RIVER twenty feet below rushing toward the sea. Then, glancing back, he is suddenly alert.

21 CAMERON'S POV

In the far distance, almost lost in the shimmering heat waves from the road, is a tiny speck moving toward him.

22 ANGLE ON CAMERON

He clambers down the embankment behind the railing, peering out from this hidden vantage.

23 ANGLE ON ROAD

The speck grows larger. The SOUND of the engine is faintly audible now. Sunlight flashes from metal and glass. Cameron's apprehension suddenly changes to wonderment, for the vehicle is not the police as he had feared, but something else. Moving in the shimmering heat wave is a splendid, high, humpbacked World War I vintage DUESENBERG SEDAN with gleaming brass headlights, roaring towards him.

24 ANGLE ON CAMERON

He scrambles up the embankment to thumb a ride. The Duesenberg roars past him, filling his eyes and mouth with dust. Suddenly there is a screech of brakes.

25 ANGLE ON CAR

The Duesenberg goes into a skid and then bounces to a stop. Running, Cameron reaches the car, pulls the front door open and climbs in beside the DRIVER.

26 INT. CAR

CAMERON

Thanks. I thought you didn't see me.

The driver, BURT, is a husky, red-haired man about Cameron's age and deeply agitated. Pounding his fist against the steering wheel, he talks half to Cameron, half to himself.

BURT

Damn it. Screwed it up. Lost my nerve.

Fishing a Vick's inhaler from his pocket and shoving it in his nostril.

BURT (CONT'D)

Goddamn sinuses. Can't even see straight.

Cameron looks at him, puzzled.

CAMERON

You want me to drive?

Burt whirls on him, enraged.

BURT

What the hell is that supposed to mean?!

CAMERON

(confused)

No offense...thought you might...

BURT

Every one of you jerks is a goddamn hotshot expert! Thanks for the vote of confidence. If you think you can do any better, just come and try it!

He puts his boot in Cameron's stomach and shoves hard.

27

EXT. CAR

Cameron comes flying out and lands on his back in the road as the Duesenberg squeals forward, its open door slamming shut from the momentum.

Stunned, the wind knocked out of him, Cameron rises to his elbows. Before the old relic has gone thirty yards, again the brakes screech, swinging the car into a sliding salute turn, one hundred-eighty degrees and it is suddenly screaming back toward Cameron.

28

INT. CAR - ANGLE ON BURT

Driving with one hand on the door handle, his head halfway out the window watching the bridge railing and the water beyond.

29 ANGLE ON ROAD - CAR AND CAMERON

Cameron, sprawled on the road, is momentarily paralyzed at the sight of the Duesenberg's great brass grill bearing down. His hand closes over a rock and with the same illogical gesture that a soldier flings a Coke bottle at a tank, Cameron hurls the rock in the direction of the car and frantically rolls sideways. The big spinning tires brush him as they pass. We catch a momentary glimpse of the rock smashing against the gleam of the passing windshield.

As he stops rolling, once more face down in the dust, eyes closed, expecting death, he becomes aware there is only silence. He opens his eyes, climbs to his feet. The road is empty. The Duesenberg is gone. Astonished, confused -- he walks to the side of the bridge where the railing ends and the car might have plunged off. There is nothing below but the rushing black water. Here and there bubbles swirl to the surface. They could be from a sinking car or could be caused by the current.

30 ANGLE ON CAMERON

His thoughts racing. Was it the sun, has he imagined the whole thing? Suddenly a HELICOPTER appears, hovering, almost at eye level. Sunlight flashes through the spinning blades like a strobe.

31 WIDER ANGLE

It is the same helicopter we saw in the opening sequence. It has swiftly descended beside the bridge just beyond the railing, catching Cameron with no chance to run or hide. FOUR MEN Can be seen inside the plastic cockpit barely a few feet away. The man beside the PILOT is ELI CROSS. He grabs the radio microphone and begins speaking into it. Cameron whirls, scrambles down a bank to a field. The helicopter drops to within a few feet of the water, hovers. Protected from sight, Cameron runs between the tall stalks, away from the road.

32 CAMERON - MOVING SHOT

Glancing back through the stalks as he runs, Cameron sees a STAKE TRUCK barreling toward the sight of the accident. In the back, THREE MEN are frantically putting on black wet-suits. They look, from this distance, like little black toys tumbling against each other. Cameron runs on.

33 EXT. BLUFF - OVERLOOKING SEASHORE TOWN

A few hotels, like a cluster of old Victorian gingerbread, surround a sandy cove beyond which is the sea. There is a fishing pier, boardwalk, hot dog stands, pizza parlors, all swarming with sunbathing TOURISTS. The town's bucolic, turn-of-the-century charm might even survive these, if not for a monstrous yellow CONSTRUCTION CRANE, which juts ten stories into the sky from the center of the sandy cove. Cameron appears on the bluff.

34 ANGLE ON CAMERON

Surveying the town -- expressionless, a jungle beast going to survive no matter what -- at least for a few more hours. He reaches down and rips off his trouser legs at the thigh, turning them into cutoffs a vacationing bather might wear. He pulls off his worn boots and flings them into the brush, his eyes never leaving the town below. There are crowds to get lost in down there. He unbuttons his sleeve and looks at the handcuff still encircling his wrist. Stopping beside a large rock, he smashes the bracelet against it. It won't open. Grimacing in pain, he re-buttons the sleeve, opens his shirt and begins descending the palisades toward the town.

35 EXT. BOARDWALK

The SCREEN is yellow and on it are the words: 'HAVE A NICE DAY.' THE ANGLE WIDENS and we realize the words are on the back of a YELLOW HAT that jiggles as its wearer walks. It is Cameron. Beyond him we see the tide of tourists in oils and ointments flirting with the sun. Teenage girls at portable toilets adjusting their bikinis. The boardwalk cops in white shirts, looking like ice cream vendors, whom Cameron deftly avoids. Then, he looks up at the sky, perplexed: the helicopter from the bridge is overhead, circling. Cameron watches it warily as he walks.

35A ANGLE ON BOARDWALK

A BIG CROWD has formed at the railing of the pier. Many of the people with CAMERAS CLICKING at the sand below. Cameron notices the helicopter is now sharing the sky with a brightly painted open cockpit BIPLANE. It is a WORLD WAR I FIGHTER with BRITISH INSIGNIA.

35B ANGLE ON BOARDWALK AND SKY

Cameron works his way through the crowd. All eyes now look upward at the plane. A LOUD VOICE is HEARD coming through an electric BULLHORN.

VOICE

All right, people. Quiet! We're losing the sun! This is a take! You're welcome to watch, but please, no flashbulbs. They'll spoil the shot.

Cameron's world has become more ordered again. It's a film company shooting on location -- this somehow must explain the Duesenberg. His eyes go to the scene below.

36 ANGLE ON COVE

A CAMERA RIG suspended from the end of the yellow construction crane is PHOTOGRAPHING the surf where EXTRAS in German WWI uniforms unload ashore. The bright little plane has started a lazy dive toward the soldiers, its engine whining. From here it looks as fearsome as Snoopy and the Red Baron.

37 ANGLE ON THE BEACH

As the British plane pulls out of the dive, there is a tremendous explosion. In the flash of smoke and flame, barge, rowboats, ammunition and people are blown sky-high. The smoke from the exploding ammunition momentarily obscures the scene.

38 ANGLE ON CROWD

The onlookers are very impressed and pleased and then abruptly their pleasure turns to horror and disbelief.

39 ANGLE ON COVE

As the smoke lifts, the Tom and Jerry violence has become a horrifying reality. Bodies are scattered about. One man has been severed in half, drenched in blood. Chunks of meat, arms and legs litter the beach.

40 ANGLE ON CROWD

Paralyzed by the sense of catastrophe.

MAN

(shouting)

Something went wrong.

Then, people begin to moan and scream.

41 CLOSE ON CAMERON

Staring tensely at the carnage. By reflex, a shout escapes his lips.

CAMERON

Medic! Get the medics!

41A A WOMAN sags into a faint. A small child in the crowd is crying and clutching Cameron's leg.

42 ANGLE ON COVE

As the scene continues we hear a voice on the Bullhorn.

VOICE (O.S.)

Cut! I said CUT! That's a print.

Suddenly the reality of the horror turns into an obscene, absurd farce as what appear to be the missing parts of bodies begin wriggling out of the sand where the extras were partially buried to create the macabre effect and now the extras become whole human beings before our eyes once again.

43 ANOTHER ANGLE

The crowd reacts in various ways. Sighs of relief, laughter, anger. The exhumed extras wipe sand from their eyes and shake it down their trouser legs.

A.D.

(yelling)

Beautiful, Harvey. You gave everybody a heart attack.

HARVEY, the Second Unit Director, yells back.

HARVEY

Eli will hate it. He said he wanted the shot in one? Now watch, he'll do six hours of pick-ups.

The crowd disperses. A TOURIST turns to Cameron.

TOURIST

Great...but why do they always use so much blood? It ruins the realism, don't you think?

CAMERON
(still shaken, quietly
mutters)
...asshole...

The tourist stiffens as Cameron turns away, his attention now drawn by the beating sound of the helicopter. He glances up.

44 CAMERON'S POV

The helicopter is descending toward the beach while the FILM CREW rapidly moves equipment from the last scene into piles to clear a landing site.

45 ANGLE ON FISHING PIER

Wary of the men in the chopper, Cameron is moving down the pier away from the landing site. Suddenly he stops short, caught by something he sees O.S. Excitedly he points and begins to shout.

CAMERON
Hey! Hey you...!

46 CAMERON'S POV

Below him, walking away on the sand is one of the actors with the same red hair, the same old British army jacket as Burt -- the man in the Duesenberg. Hearing the shout, the actor stops and tentatively turns. It's a mistake. Clearly the features are different. It's not Burt.

47 ANGLE TO INCLUDE CAMERON

Cameron is puzzled. He watches as the red-haired actor looks about to see who called and finding no one, starts off, but is stopped by a LITTLE OLD LADY holding a parasol and offering her autograph book.

LITTLE OLD LADY
Mr. Bailey! Aren't you Raymond
Bailey, the actor? Would you please
sign your autograph? Write 'to
Emily...for eternal peace.'

Raymond signs the book with the easy charm of a man who's done it a million times. He has those special rugged good looks that belong to Marlboro men and movie stars.

LITTLE OLD LADY (CONT'D)
I'm certainly glad you're all right.
I lost my husband and my son in the
wars...

The sound of the chopper blades has become deafening as it hovers for a landing. The Old Lady snatches her autograph book and heads for the landing site.

48

ANGLE ON HELICOPTER

As it touches the ground and its doors fly open. Out step the CREWMEN and ELI CROSS. The ASSISTANT DIRECTOR rushes up and shouts over the hissing blades of the idling chopper.

A.D.
What happened on the bridge?!

ELI
(deeply upset)
All the divers found in the car was
the goddamn camera.

A.D.
(stunned)
And Burt?

ELI
(anguished)
No Burt! All gone...caught in the
current probably and...they're
diving downstream and searching the
riverbanks, but...don't say anything
to the crew yet...

A.D.
(softly)
Jesus Christ.

ELI
Yeah, Jesus Christ.

A.D.
What do you want to do?

ELI

I don't know...call my mother and
have her tell me it wasn't my
fault...

(desperately)

...What the hell could have
happened?

Their words are lost in the sound of the rotor as the chopper slowly rises. The sudden WIND from its blades blows some screening off a pile of equipment. It falls on the Little Old Lady who has been approaching Eli and topples her into the surf. She is trapped in a tangle of ancient skirts and petticoats. Before she can regain her balance, a wave tumbles her further into the sea.

49 ANGLE INCLUDING CAMERON

Cameron, sitting on the edge of the pier over the water, has watched this mini-disaster. The undertow from the wave has swept the Old Lady directly beneath him. Reaching down toward her, he yells:

CAMERON

Hey! Hey, give me your hand!

He can't quite reach her. As a last resort, he drops off the edge into the water by her side.

50 ANGLE ON WATER

He grabs for the struggling Old Lady.

CAMERON

Don't be afraid! You're gonna be
okay.

Like groping through seaweed, he reaches past her tangled skirts, grasps her waist and lifts her to keep her head above water. She is choking, gasping for air. She turns her face toward him.

51 CAMERON'S POV

Her features are distorted; they seem to be melting away. She frees her hand and violently tears at her face, pulling away the RUBBER MASK on which is the melting putty and make up. With it goes her wig and what is left is a startlingly beautiful young girl.

CAMERON

My God!

(choking on water)

You're...I know you...that girl from
TV...the actress. Nina...

NINA

(sputtering)

...Franklin.

The sun glistens on the wet, wild young perfection of her face, ingenuously sparkling laughter and for an instant it's breathtaking - a universal boyhood fantasy to suddenly be thrown this close to that kind of "movie star" beauty. It's something Cameron feels in the pit of his stomach.

CAMERON

My God!...Why the hell...?

NINA

(laughing and choking)

...Makeup test...it's for the
film...

Regaining his composure enough to attempt flattery, but he means it.

CAMERON

They gotta be crazy to cover that
face.

NINA

(laughing)

I'm only old at the end of the
story.

As they are only in a few feet of water, there is no longer any reason to hold her. He starts to put her down.

NINA

No, don't do that. Rescue me!

CAMERON

In three feet of water?

NINA

Oh come on, please. I always wanted
someone to rescue me from
something...

Grinning, he carries her toward shore.

ANGLE ON BEACH

Eli, surrounded by the crew and dozens of tourists, is standing at the water's edge as Cameron wades in and sets Nina down.

ELI

Nina! You damned near scared me to death!

At the sight of Eli, she becomes like a little girl who, having skinned her knee and run to daddy, now can allow herself to cry.

NINA

Oh hell, it's all ruined now and I wanted you to see the makeup, Eli. Where were you?...I even got Raymond's autograph and he didn't know...You'd have been proud...

Nina is surrounded by people who are rubbing her with towels, taking pictures, all shouting at once. The CROWD closes in, excluding Cameron to the outskirts.

ELI

(to the A.D.)

Get her into a tub, then bed...and I want to see her in makeup and costume again before dinner.

THREE CREWMEN hustle her off, as she searches the crowd for Cameron...then spots him.

NINA

Hey! Thank you! That was really gallant...rescuing an old lady!

Cameron waves and starts to wander off as they whisk Nina away.

53

ANGLE ON ELI

He moves toward Cameron.

ELI

Wait a second! I want to thank you, too!

As Eli trots up, Cameron tenses, finally facing this man who saw him from the helicopter.

ELI (CONT'D)

Don't run away. What is that, a habit with you?

CAMERON

Yeah, I also smoke too much.

ELI

You and Burt on the bridge...how about telling me what happened?

Eli begins to stroll along the sand toward the pilings which support the pier. Cameron hesitates, but Eli's manner compels him to follow.

CAMERON

I don't know. He must've gone crazy. He tried to run me down.

ELI

Oh?...Why would he do that?

CAMERON

(flustered)

...I didn't ask him why! All I know is he was comin' at me very fast.

(quoting an axiom spouted by top sergeants in a thousand boot camps)

'You want to get home for Thanksgiving, you better figure the guy comin' at you is tryin' to kill you'...That's one thing I learned from the gooks.

ELI

Gooks?...That has a nostalgic ring...

They have reached the pier. Eli stops, he is watching something O.S.

ELI (CONT'D)

You guys really used to call them gooks? I thought that was just Time Magazine.

CAMERON

That was 'Nam. What should I call 'em, WOPS? Nobody'd known what I was talkin' about.

He turns to follow Eli's gaze.

54 CAMERON'S POV - POLICE CAR

A POLICE CAR has driven onto the beach. From it, THREE OFFICERS have emerged. They are armed and efficient looking. The PRODUCTION MANAGER moves to greet them. Eli takes Cameron's wrist and gently pulls him back into the shadow of the pilings, (privately reacting to the handcuff he feels beneath the shirt). JAKE, the Chief, is irate enough to be clearly heard from this distance.

JAKE

All right, this time you've had it!
Where is he?!

PRODUCTION MANAGER

Chief, I'm glad you dropped by. Eli says you gotta do something about all these people on the beach.

JAKE

(bellowing)

Thirty minutes is what you've got to get your goddamn equipment off this beach and out of town!...You tell Eli Cross if your men are on the streets after four o'clock, I'll throw their ass in jail!

55 ANGLE ON ELI AND CAMERON

Eli squats down on his heels and leans back against a piling, smiling up at Cameron.

ELI

Speaking of jail...would you get upset if I asked how many cops were after you?

CAMERON

(suddenly grim)

What are ya talkin' about?

ELI

(off-hand)

Your I.D. bracelet...the look on your face...the way you ran from the bridge...

(with exaggerated delicacy)

I...don't suppose you want to tell me what you did.

Cameron studies Eli, not knowing what to make of him.

CAMERON

No...I don't.

ELI

(brightly, with humor)

...Could I try categories?

Cameron half laughs despite himself.

ELI (CONT'D)

(glancing O.S.)

Ever done any stunt work?

CAMERON

What?

ELI

How'd you like to be a stunt man?

You look like you're in pretty good shape, fast on your feet. You could do it.

(getting to his feet)

Besides, You're not gonna have much choice.

WIDER ANGLE

Jake has spotted them and is approaching with his men and the Production Manager. Eli puts his hand on Cameron's shoulder and steps out into the sunlight.

ELI

(softly, to Cameron)

Now, don't get hasty. And, remember your ass, it's just like mine... maybe I can save them both.

PRODUCTION MANAGER

(trailing after Jake)

...but we've gotta have three days
to finish this picture...

JAKE

(striding toward Eli)

You said you'd be gone four days
ago, before the season started. You
lie, break promises...

(he is now close enough
and shouting at Eli)

Cross, I've gone out of my way, but
this time...

A TRAM beeps, clangs and passes between them, interrupting Jake and
leaving him sputtering. As it departs, Eli seizes the moment.

ELI

Jake, it's been a rotten morning.
You're hot and tired. Let's go in,
have us a drink and find out what's
eating you.

JAKE

(turning beet red)

Don't treat me like these other
morons! You know goddamn well
what's eating me is that Duesenberg
on the bottom of the river with the
dead man in it!

There is silence. Eli stands thoughtfully kicking the sand with his
toe. Then Jake starts shouting again.

JAKE (CONT'D)

I mean, that is a goddamn public
bridge and a public river! You go
there without permits, without any
precautions and get a man killed!

ELI

(gently)

Jake...

JAKE

No more bullshit explanations. Just
go...before I figure out how to hang
you with a manslaughter charge!

ELI

(after a pause; quietly)
No explanations...don't have any.
But, maybe he does...
(staring at Cameron)
Go ahead, ask him, Jake.

Eli's words are exploding in Cameron's mind -- that illusory event on the bridge has crystallized into hard reality.

CAMERON
(wide-eyed)
...Now wait!...You're not blaming me
for...

ELI
(wheeling on Cameron)
Why not, Burt?! Because you're a
fake?! Because you're just a
goddamn daredevil with a head full
of marbles?!

Cameron vaguely understands that Eli is trying to pass him off as Burt and that he, somehow, may be saved by going along with this madness. Eli, turning to Jake, continues passionately...

ELI (CONT'D)
He grabs the bread, blows the shot,
screws you up...screws me up. He's
dumb, Jake, but thank God, he ain't
dead yet. So do me a favor, put
your handcuffs on this son-of-a-
bitch and put him some place where
he can't get hurt!

The Chief is dazed. If this is Burt, the stunt man, he is obviously alive. Jake goes to Cameron.

JAKE
How did you get out of the car?

ELI
He didn't get out. Our divers got
him out...and brought him back in
the chopper.

The Chief stares at Cameron. His clothes and hair are wet. There is a small bruise on his cheek from when he fell out of the Duesenberg. He looks the part. Jake turns to Eli with resignation.

JAKE

Cross, when these three days are up,
I'm going to arm my men with
shotguns and tell them it's open
season on any fruit carrying a
camera.

He walks to the waiting police car, surrounded by TOURISTS snapping pictures. He glares at them, angry at the world. Eli puts his arm on Cameron's shoulder and leads him through the dispersing crowd toward the hotel. Eli is now easygoing and friendly.

ELI

You did that very well.

CAMERON

I didn't get a chance to say a word.
I just listened.

ELI

There are only a few actors in the
world who have mastered that art.
Anyway, it was a good audition. You
landed the part.

CAMERON

How? What about the crew? They
going to look at me and say, 'Hi,
Burt?'

ELI

Unless you prefer, 'Hi, Elizabeth.'
Don't worry about my crew, they'll
call you anything I want 'em to.
Look, I'm not being callous. Burt
is a fucking tragedy, but there's
nothing in the world I can do about
it...I've gotta have this location
for three more days...and you need a
place to hide.

They have reached the steps of the HOTEL. A BUS has stopped in front. TOURISTS are piling out. The POLICE CAR pulls up and parks nearby. Jake and his men can be seen surveying the crowd.

A.D.

(shouting in b.g.)

Eli! The crew's waiting. We need
the next setup!

ELI

The hand! Close-up of the hand! Be there in a minute!

A.D.

An Eli minute or a real minute?!

Eli turns back to Cameron as they mount the steps.

CAMERON

By tomorrow the local cops'll know what I look like. I can't hang around.

ELI

(expansively)

"Burt," stop worrying! Haven't you heard of "movie magic?"

(pointing to the etched glass doors of the hotel)

That door is "the looking glass," and inside...is Wonderland. You're gonna pose as a stunt man, who's posing as an actor, who's posing as a character in a movie...who's posing as an enemy soldier...In that big a crowd, who's gonna notice you? People like to believe in things and cops are just people.

The have reached the front door. Eli holds it open for Cameron.

ELI

(with mock confidentiality)

Frankly, your problem's so simple, it's almost beneath me. Have faith, 'Alice.' Close your eyes and enjoy.

In exhaustion and resignation, Cameron nods and wearily closes his eyes.

SCREEN GOES BLACK

DENISE'S VOICE

Open your eyes...and don't touch.
It's wet.

56 INT. HOTEL BASEMENT - CLOSE ON CAMERON'S REFLECTION

His eyes open. He stares at his face in the mirror, pleased at the subtle transformation. His hair has been cut shorter and dyed red, somehow changing his whole aspect. He rubs the red mark on his wrists where the bracelet has been removed.

56A WIDE ANGLE

Part of the laundry room is being used for the film's Hairdressing Department. Cameron sits in a barber chair wearing a plastic apron, surrounded by dryers, wigs, etc. In b.g., washing machines churn constantly. DENISE, the Hairdresser, an attractive earthy woman of thirty-two, stands over him. He is still wary and trying not to show it.

CAMERON

(looking in mirror)
...Could be worse...could be
green...I think I like it.

DENISE

Of course you like it...ask
anybody... Denise gives great hair.
Got any grass?

CAMERON

(shaking his head)
Nope.

She touches his hair to test the dryness, holding her hand there for a moment longer than seems necessary. He grins at her, rises and crosses to the wall mirror to get a better look.

DENISE

What else don't you have that I
need?

She moves to a basement window and gazes out.

57 POV - BEACH

Through the window, the crew is setting up a shot while Eli rehearses with Nina and his red-haired male star, RAYMOND BAILEY, (who Cameron earlier saw on the beach). Bailey is dressed as a World War I British aviator and Nina as a young girl of that era.

DENISE'S VOICE

Our male star isn't going to like
you...

TWO SHOT - CAMERON AND DENISE

CAMERON

(moving toward window)

Why not?

DENISE

You're too good looking. His idea of a perfect stunt double is two-hundreds pounds of hamburger in a red wig...

He studies the view, his attention focused on Nina.

CAMERON

What's she like? I've seen her on TV.

DENISE

(irritated by his interest in Nina)

At selling douche powder, she's fabulous; dog food?...I'm not sure she's sincere.

CAMERON

What are you sore about?

DENISE

I'm not sore. Isn't that what you wanted to know?

(with sarcasm)

...Or did you mean, what's the real Nina Franklin like--without the greasepaint and tinsel...

Moving to a pile of laundry heaped on the floor, she pokes around with the toe of her shoe.

DENISE (CONT'D)

...You mean, what's she like -- underneath?

Snaring a crumpled garment, she kicks it toward Cameron, who catches it instinctively, then holds it up for inspection -- a pair of (Nina's) lace panties. He grins, mildly embarrassed by the charade.

DENISE (CONT'D)

(moving toward him)

What do those say about the girl who wears them? Shy? Delicate? Sensitive?

She reaches for the panties, but instead takes his hand and yanks sharply, pulling him off balance, falling back on the laundry pile with Cameron on top of her, their faces inches apart; surprise on his, amusement on hers.

DENISE (CONT'D)

(touching his hair)

Still wet...very wet.

Cameron is trying to remember: what was it Eli said? "Close your eyes, relax and enjoy." Across the room the washing machines churn, whirl and heave.

59

EXT. BEACH AREA

Eli and his crew are shooting a scene: a "pick-up" shot for the explosion sequence we saw earlier. Eli and GABE, the cameraman, are lying beside the camera. Before them, the "severed" arm protrudes from the sand in which its owner is buried, out of sight.

ELI

You sure he can breathe?

(a mumbling assent from beneath the sand)

Where's Raymond?

(Raymond kneels beside him)

Remember, you just crashed...you were wandering the beach behind the German lines looking for a place to hide when you saw the explosion. You're stunned by the carnage. That bomb was dropped by a guy in your squadron. Okay? Roll the film.

60

POV THRU CAMERA

Through the CAMERA, WE SEE the 'arm' protruding from the sand. We HEAR o.s. VOICES yelling: "Turning"... "speed"... "action." We see the fingers begin to move spasmodically. Eli's voice yells: "Okay, Raymond!"

Suddenly the fingers on the hand start to swell, bigger and bigger...like a rubber glove filling with air...then BANG! BANG! BANG! The (balloon-covered) fingers EXPLODE.

61 ANGLE ON BEACH

Everyone has broken up with laughter at the prank, including Eli. Gabe is patting Eli's face, Raymond squeezing his jaw affectionately as one would a pet dog's.

RAYMOND

(cackling)

Gotcha that time! Didn't we?

ELI

(through his laughter)

Yeah, you got me another half-hour behind.

Eli climbs to his feet as the laughter subsides. Cameron, now wearing a uniform exactly like Raymond's, watches from the sidelines.

RAYMOND

(gently, grinning)

Thought the chief could use a little cheering up today.

ELI

(turning quiet and serious)

...So you heard the news about Burt...

RAYMOND

(nodding)

Any more word?

ELI

(bitterly)

Afraid not...there's no picture ever made that's worth it.

RAYMOND

(shaking his head)

I'll never understand why these guys do it -- take the chances.

ELI

(thoughtfully)

Don't know. Trying to beat the system, I guess...we all know that some day we're gonna die of nothing more important than wrinkles...and that makes us so scared and crazy, we'll do anything. Go off bridges...fight windmills...wars... anything.

There is great sadness among them. Eli breaks the mood lightly.

ELI (CONT'D)

That's what our film's about -- or didn't you know?

(sees Cameron)

Hey, Burt, come over here.

Cameron crosses to them. He and Raymond stand appraising each other, red-haired men in identical uniforms. As Raymond offers his hand:

RAYMOND

(to Eli)

My new cock and balls?

ELI

(quickly)

Not new...It's important not to let that get around as yet. So, for the time being, let's make like he's the same guy.

(adding a touch of color)

But no longer known as "Bad-assed Burt." Ever since his 'fortunate rescue,'...we call him "Lucky."

62 EXT. CHURCHYARD - ANGLE ON CHUCK - LATER THAT DAY

CHUCK BARTON is a tall, rugged-looking man in his mid-thirties, the Stunt Gaffer on Eli's film. A MESSENGER trots up and presents a receipt book. Chuck sets down his stunt bag and signs it absently.

MESSENGER

Your film from that camera in the Duesenberg's on the way to the lab. Put it on the plane with my own little hands.

CHUCK

When do we get it back?

MESSENGER

Don't know. Stamped it "rush."

CHUCK

If I stamp "rush" on my mare's ass, she'll still take eleven months to foal. Call the lab and find out when!

(quietly)

I lost a man today. I wanna see that footage and find out why.

As the Messenger leaves, Chuck strolls over to where Cameron stands waiting, circles around him, sizing him up. Cameron is no longer wearing the uniform, but now is in jeans and a work shirt.

CHUCK

Done any stunt work?

CAMERON

Not really.

CHUCK

Not really? You have or you haven't?

CAMERON

(good-naturedly)

I got out of Vietnam in one piece. Let me tell you that wasn't a bad stunt.

CHUCK

(skeptically)

That's ancient history.

CAMERON

Seems like yesterday.

CHUCK

(pointing at church steeple)

Could you jump from that tower to the that roof?

63 ANGLE ON CAMERON (AND STEEPLE)

Gauging the fifteen-foot gap between the CHURCH STEEPLE and the roof of the nearby MUNICIPAL BUILDING. He unconsciously grimaces at the four-story drop between them.

CAMERON

(being glib)

Once, to save my ass, I jumped out of a banana tree into an oxcart full of buffalo shit. Does that count?

CHUCK

We'll see. Put these on.

He throws Cameron some knee pads from his stunt bag and begins marking off two lines on the bare earth between the gravestones in the churchyard.

CAMERON

(puzzled by the pads)

Where do they go?

CHUCK

(tapping his knee)

Under the pants.

(pointing to lines he has drawn)

I want you to jump from here...to there.

Cameron hops up to the starting line, finishing with the knee pads clumsily, surveys the distance of not more than seven feet.

CAMERON

Okie-dokie.

Makes a casual jump, landing on the line and looking at Chuck for approval.

CHUCK

Very good. Except you're dead!! Your brains are scattered all over the goddamn pavement. You landed on the edge and fell backwards four stories. Where do we send the body?

CAMERON
(returns to the starting
line)
Don't bury me yet.

He takes a running start and leaps hard. While he's still in mid-air, Chuck yells.

CHUCK
You're still dead! You fell over
the other side of the building.

Cameron has landed three beyond the mark and looks up at Chuck a bit shaken.

CHUCK (CONT'D)
You wanna try it right, once? You
should land in a tuck-and-roll.

CAMERON
Show me, sergeant.

Chuck launches himself head-first. His hands touch the ground just beyond the second mark to break his fall, easing him into a shoulder roll, he somersaults to his feet.

CAMERON
Very fancy.

He takes a running start and does the same. Not quite as well, but well enough. As he rolls to his feet:

CAMERON
Okay?

CHUCK
Better.

CAMERON
My speciality is Hopscotch.

Chuck turns on him enraged, overreacting.

CHUCK

And Burt's specialty was drowning. You know one goddamn daredevil on this picture was enough! What the hell was Eli thinking, giving me a smart-ass, cocky, amateur kid when I need a stunt man! It's a little different running across that roof when they're pumping tracer bullets over your head.

CAMERON

(eloquently pleading his case)

I was running for twenty-six months with guys shooting at me...not over my head...at my head and I'm alive. I knew daredevils. I got nothing against them...it's just they're all dead. So ease off and give me a chance...

Cameron is surprised to see that Chuck is grinning.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

(genuinely)

Hey, were you putting me on?

CHUCK

Me? I wouldn't know how to do that.

Chuck starts to walk away, then stops and looks at Cameron.

64

EXT. ROOFTOP MUNICIPAL BUILDING - CLOSE ON CHUCK - MINUTES LATER

CHUCK

(pained)

Can you imagine Eli doing a World War I picture without horses? Do you know the gags I could do with four runaway horses pulling a caisson?

Cameron sailing into the SHOT. Chuck ducks slightly, catching Cameron on his back and flipping him into a somersault. Cameron lands on the sharply slanted slate roof of the municipal building. Chuck stands beside him straddling the peak. The church steeple can be seen in b.g. (and we now realize time has passed and we are no longer in the graveyard of the previous sequence, but atop the building).

CHUCK (CONT'D)

...Next time hit me higher.

CAMERON

(climbing to his feet)

What's Eli got against horses? I love horses.

CHUCK

Don't butter me up.

Cameron goes running at Chuck and once again flies over his shoulder. Sprawling on the slippery slate, he looks up to see Chuck strolling down the hazardous incline like a mountain goat. Cameron scrambles to follow.

CHUCK

(as he walks)

We'll draw a sight line for you to follow down the roof here, while you're rolling. Now there's nothing very difficult. But this is where you gotta think. Your mind can't be on snatch. It's gotta be on grabbing that gutter.

They have reached the lower edge of the roof. Cameron looks down at the drop.

CAMERON

Or my brains are all over the pavement again, right?

CHUCK

(walking away)

You know a good falling horse makes more money in four minutes than a bank president does in a year?

CAMERON

Picture's not over. Maybe you'll still get your chance.

Chuck has stopped and they peer down through a skylight to where the crew is setting up a shot in a room below.

CHUCK

(sadly)

Naw, all they care about is story.

They move to another edge of the roof overlooking a NARROW CENTRAL COURTYARD. They gaze down at a WINDOW AWNING two stories below that juts from the side of the building-wing across the court.

CHUCK (CONT'D)

Now here's where the scuffle ends. When the pipe breaks loose, you fall and hit that awning. Then Eli yells "cut" and old Raymond takes your place for the close-ups and the glory. That's where the German soldiers catch him and throw him in the nuthouse. They're shootin' that scene downstairs now.

CAMERON

(staring at awning)
That's supposed to hold me?
Probably doesn't hold rain.

CHUCK

It's not a real awning, it's a catcher.

65 EXT. MUNICIPAL BUILDING ROOF - CLOSE ON CAMERON - DAY

Cameron's face is beginning to sweat and the veins are bulging from the growing strain of some physical effort.

CHUCK'S VOICE

It's no harder up here than it is on the ground...

CAMERA PULLS BACK to reveal Cameron dangling from a section of rain gutter, four stories above the ground.

CHUCK'S VOICE (CONT'D)

It's the same gag...it's just a little scarier. And that's what you get paid for.

CAMERON

(alert)
Yeah, how much?

CHUCK

You're stealing candy with this gag. You get six hundred bucks.

CAMERON

(almost falling)

Jesus!...

CHUCK

...Christ! Watch it, will ya?
(helping Cameron onto
roof)

What did you think a stunt man is?
He's a professional. If the camera
jams, that's another six hundred and
if Eli says "try it again," six
hundred more.

CAMERON

(exultantly)
Yahooo! Six-fucking-hundred-bucks!!

66 INT. MUNICIPAL BUILDING - ASYLUM SET

In a large vacant hall on the ground floor of the municipal building, a movie set has been erected representing the ward room in a World War I military asylum. In it, Eli's crew is filming a sequence -- a dozen enraged INMATES in tatters, heads shaven, wild-eyed, advance toward Raymond, shrieking (as though in echo of Cameron's exultant yell).

67 CLOSER ANGLE

Raymond, dressed as a British Flyer, his face bloodied, crouches and retreats in terror, a man caught in a nightmare, as these mutilated derelicts suddenly swarm over him. One, like a mad dog, goes for his throat, another wields his own artificial limb as a club. Raymond (in character) breaks free and screams.

RAYMOND

...STOP!...Get away!!

For an instant, the inmates stop in stunned silence -- broken only by a distant shout overhead.

CAMERON'S VOICE

(on the roof overhead)
...Six-fucking-hundred, gorgeous,
beautiful dollars! I can't believe
it!

The slaving madmen look up, then out at the camera, madmen no longer, simply bewildered actors.

ELI'S VOICE

All right. Hold it! Hold it!

ANGLE ON CREW

Eli stands amidst the camera crew photographing the scene. He is waving for order.

ELI

...Save it, everybody.

A.D.

(storming in)
Jesus Christ, what the hell was that? Somebody get their ass up on that roof...

ELI

(cutting him off)
...Never mind. I didn't like it anyway.

As Eli steps down from the DOLLY, a solemn, quiet man approaches him from among the onlookers. It is SAM BAUM (the writer).

SAM

What's wrong?

ELI

The scene's wrong.
(yells to the A.D.)
Call a break.

The A.D. Calls "Five minutes" and the crew moves toward the coffee urn. Eli wanders toward the door, Sam pursuing.

SAM

(fighting for his scene)
Eli, it played like a dream. My God, it was Marat-Sade.

ELI

(glumly)
It played like shit!

SAM

(desperate)

Well, who was that on the phone in the middle of the night when you first read it, raving about the magical madhouse scene, the upstairs maid?

Eli rips the page with the "madhouse scene" from his screenplay as they stride out of the building.

69

EXT. MUNICIPAL BUILDING

There, beside the rear entrance on a pile of construction sand, sits Eli, cross-legged, staring morosely at some kids who play nearby. He is absently folding a torn script page into a paper airplane. Behind him, at a respectful distance, stand the Production Manager, A.D., half a dozen assorted crew chiefs and Sam Baum, all looking concerned. Sam looks at the others, shrugs and approaches Eli, squatting beside him on the sand pile.

SAM

What do you wanna do, Eli?...
They're all waiting.

While Sam talks, Eli takes a fistful of sand and pours it in Sam's shoe. Suddenly noticing, Sam yanks his foot away.

SAM (CONT'D)

(irritated)

Being childish isn't going to help your movie...You know, there's nothing wrong with the story.

(removing his shoe and shaking the sand out)

The real problem is since I wrote this thing two years ago, you've had Watergate, the energy crisis, Women's Lib, the economy is down the tubes...You want to talk about burning issues?...There's arsenic in the glue on the back of food stamps! That's why you don't like the "madhouse scene." Your goddamn war story has lost its relevance.

ELI

Don't be negative, Sam. We can start a new one in time for the preview.

Sam has finished replacing his shoe and Eli pours a fistful of sand into Sam's other shoe.

SAM

Cut it out, will ya?

70

INT. HOTEL DINING ROOM - THAT NIGHT

Eli is at the head of a long table, CAMERA PULLING BACK TO REVEAL a dozen members of the company dining with him. Nina sits beside Eli listening with rapt attention to Sam's monologue, her dessert fork sensuously lingers at her lip.

SAM

Two years ago you were all charged up to make a great big anti-war statement and they wouldn't let you. Now they let you, but you haven't got a war. What you've got is egg on your face because Vietnam's long gone and it's too late!

ELI

Our picture's not about fighting wars...

SAM

Oh?

ELI

...It's about fighting windmills.

The truth in Eli's statement registers on Sam. Cameron sits farther down the table, watching Nina watch Eli...and wishing she were watching him.

ELI

War isn't the disease...It's only one of the symptoms.

SAM

(hooked)
What's the disease?

ELI

That's the big question, Sam. Name the disease and you've licked the screenplay.

(indicating Cameron)

Ask him. 'Cause he knows what the film is about. Right Lucky? Tell 'em...How'd you like Vietnam?

CAMERON

How'd you like bubonic plague?

ELI

You drafted?

CAMERON

No.

ELI

See, Sam? Here's another one who hates war...but he enlisted.

(to Cameron)

You fought in Vietnam for two years? ...I mean actually were out there killing people...

CAMERON

...Hey, I didn't kill that many people...

ELI

Don't be modest, Lucky. Everybody digs a little violence...What was that you said on the beach?

Cameron is starting to bristle at Eli's needling, particularly with Nina watching.

CAMERON

About what?

ELI

About getting home for Thanksgiving?

CAMERON

(tentatively)

...that you better figure the guy coming at you is trying to kill you...?

ELI

Yeah. See, Sam?...That's what the disease is about...being scared shitless. Inventing enemies. Whistling in the dark. I wish you'd talk to the kid, Sam, I mean it. You know, really, you guys should room together.

SAM

(getting the last word)
Hey, Lucky, give me your cot by the window and I'll let you read a great madhouse sequence.

They all laugh.

SAM

(surrendering)
All right, Eli. I'll write you another scene. What difference does it make? The studio will cut it all out anyway and what you got left is a lot of swell battle scenes, which, when I was back there they said were "just terrific."

ELI

(simply)
No, they won't.

SAM

Yeah, what makes you different?

ELI

(quietly)
Because they know if they cut my picture, I'll kill 'em.

The deadly in Eli's voice was more than intended and there is suddenly an awkward silence at the table. Cameron eyes Eli with a wry smile.

CAMERON

You mean, bang? Kill 'em, just like that?

ELI
(matter of fact)
No. I'll kill 'em and eat 'em...I
hate to waste anything.

SAM
(laughs)
They call him "Eli the Terrible..."

ELI
Sam, my picture is the only kid I've
got! If the studio said your
daughter, Jennifer, would look
better with her fingers chopped off,
what would you do?

SAM
Being an insecure writer, I'd call
my agent...and get another opinion.

Everyone laughs.

Jake, the Chief of Police, is seen in the background approaching the
table. Cameron spots him and starts to rise.

CAMERON
...If you'll excuse me...

JAKE
(arriving)
Don't go away, Burt. I want you.

ELI
(broad welcome)
Jake! Long time, no see. You taken
care of my problem with the beach?

JAKE
I'm not talking to you.
(to Production Manager)
I understand you got that film out
of the Duesenberg...

ELI
(cutting in)
It's at the lab, Jake.

JAKE

I'm talking to this gentleman.
(to Production Manager)
We want to see it.

Cameron, realizing the film might disclose his presence on the bridge, reacts with alarm, which increases as Eli says...

ELI

Tell the Chief it's our pleasure.
Soon as it gets back...but ask him
why.

JAKE

(choked up with its
importance)
You can tell your Mr. Cross this
inquiry comes from a source so high
it is not his to question...
(now at a loss for proper
words)
...it is his to do it, or else.
Someone they're looking for may have
been on that road when the car went
off.
(to Cameron)
Burt, you see anybody?

Then, suddenly noticing something different about Cameron's appearance...

JAKE (CONT'D)

Hey, did you have red hair
before?...

CAMERON

(indicating Denise)
She sprays it every day so I look
like Raymond...I didn't see a soul.

ELI

(to the rescue)
Tell the Chief that Burt was so busy
being brilliant, he wouldn't have
noticed Jesus Christ walking on the
water.

Jake pulls a PHOTOGRAPH from a manila envelope and hands it to Cameron.

A wire photo, front and side views of Cameron, taken at his military induction. War ages a man...he looks younger and quite different in his GI Haircut.

ELI (V.O.)

Hey, Burt! You got it upside down.
The eyes go on top.

72

ANOTHER ANGLE

Cameron hands the photo back to the Chief, who passes it around the table. Denise receives the photograph, studies it and glances up at Cameron, expressionless. He returns her gaze.

JAKE (V.O.)

A couple of telephone linemen say
they saw him headed this way.

Eli takes the photograph.

ELI

Looks like a nice clean-cut kid.

JAKE

I know about fifty guys who don't
think so.

ELI

What'd he do?

JAKE

(to Production Manager,
ignoring Eli's question)
The minute that film gets here you
give me a call.

CAMERON

(yawning and rising)
I don't know about those fifty guys,
but I know one weary guy who's gonna
crawl upstairs and hit the sack.

Eli looks at Cameron with grudging admiration.

GABE

I know a weary guy who's driving to
Cape Long to dance and booze all
night...

RAYMOND

(camping, takes Gabe's
hand)

I know a weary gay who's going with
him!

They mince off (the fag act all the more amusing because of
Raymond's strictly masculine looks). Eli shouts after them.

ELI

So long as you're back in ninety
minutes. It's a work night for some
of us.

(loftily)

...Those who give a shit.

Raymond "gathers" Nina along the way, wrapping his arm about her
shoulders -- Cameron watching silently. Then, charging from across
the dining room like a tanker steaming in their wake, comes a
gushing, overwrought, blue-rinsed MATRON.

MATRON

Miss Franklin! Miss Franklin! Your
'Feminique Spray' commercial is on
TV. My God, it's simply heavenly!

73 INT. CAMERON'S HOTEL ROOM - CLOSE ON DRESSER - NIGHT

Drawers are slamming open and shut as Cameron hurriedly stuffs his
few belongings into his pockets.

WIDER ANGLE

It's a mean little bedroom, with Sam's clothes, typewriter, etc., in
evidence. Seeing Sam's wallet, Cameron pulls a wad of money from
it, at the same time accidentally knocking Sam's false teeth off the
dresser. He hesitates, then stuffs back all the bills but a twenty.
He strides to Sam's closet, pulls out shirt and slacks, stuffs them
in a cloth beach bag, also belonging to Sam and starts out the door.
Then he stops, gets on his hands and knees, looking for the false
teeth, which he finally finds. Now, annoyed at himself for being a
"nice guy," he throws them carelessly on the dresser and quickly
exits.

74 EXT. HOTEL - LATER THAT NIGHT

As Cameron moves down the steps, the returning company STATION WAGON pulls to a stop in the driveway. Nina, Raymond and a few others emerge from the car. Cameron turns away so as not to be seen as they pass him on the steps heading for the entrance.

DENISE

Bet they're looking for that nut who killed all those campers in Montana...

RAYMOND

(drunk)

...Too many campers, weed 'em out!
...Imagine, sitting an hour at a roadblock.

NINA

We should have waited, it wouldn't have been an hour.

74A They've entered the hotel. Cameron continues to the bottom of the stairs, hesitates, looking back at Nina.

75 CAMERON'S POV

Silhouetted through the etched glass doors (on the other side of "The Looking Glass") he sees the lithe, gay, exquisitely beautiful figure of Nina -- light sparkling from the cut glass dances about her face -- a hauntingly romantic image.

76 ANGLE ON CAMERON

He watches for a moment with hopeless longing. Finally, turning from her, he looks about at the dark water and deserted boardwalk. There come some of Eli's crew, laughing, joking, cutting a swatch through the stillness, pushing their heavy brutes toward some nearby spot to light a night shot. There's the CHURCH TOWER. He stares at it, wavering in his resolve to leave, wondering what would happen if...

NINA'S VOICE

What next? Do you rescue the maiden from the tower?

She has come up behind him, unnoticed. He turns, startled, and there she stands.

CAMERON

(smiles)

Hi.

For a moment they search each other's eyes -- for intentions. Then she glances at the tower.

NINA

Yes. It does look pretty high.

(with concern)

Are you worried about tomorrow?

Cameron's mind is racing over all the things he'd like to say so she would know him instantly. But his answer is simple and sounds sincere.

CAMERON

Not much. I guess if there were any real danger, Eli wouldn't let me do it, would he?

NINA

(quickly, reassuring)

No. I'm sure it's safe.

CAMERON

(abruptly, with a boyish grin)

Good. Then you jump.

NINA

(laughing)

Okay.

She understands the slightly jealous rebuke for her blind faith in Eli. Her laughing answer hangs like a challenge.

CAMERON

Well, come on.

NINA

(willing, but flustered)

What, right now?

For a moment he weighs it: whether to "run" or stay. Then acts on his decision. Starting to laugh, he takes her hand and pulls her toward the tower. She holds back, struggling playfully.

NINA (CONT'D)

Wait, I'm afraid of heights! What if I freeze up?

CAMERON

(pulling her along)

Don't worry, I'll give you a push. Isn't that what a pal's for?

77

INT. BELL TOWER - NIGHT

It is crowded with bells, a small walkway and railing surrounded them. The city lights are seen beyond. Below are the sheds where crewmen are preparing the next day's shooting. Just beyond is the overwhelming silhouette of the huge CRANE. Nina and Cameron reach the top of the stairs winded and laughing, as they rush to the railing and lean over. Nina gasps, clutching Cameron in genuine fright.

NINA

(gasps)

Oh, my God! It's terrifying! You can't jump from this...you'll get killed! It's crazy!...

CAMERON

(laughing)

...It's not that bad. It looks worse at night... Chuck says it's like robbing a candy store.

NINA

(getting angry)

Now stop that! ...I'm going back.

She whirls to go. He stops her, taking her by the shoulders.

CAMERON

...What's wrong?

Her concern for him has turned to anger, like a mother slapping her child for running in the street.

NINA

It's just dumb...to strut around trying to talk brave...

His arm still restrains her. She takes hold of it, then suddenly softens with a look of slight surprise.

NINA (CONT'D)

Oh...you are scared...aren't you?

CAMERON

(seriously)

Not really.

NINA

Yes. You are...You're trembling.

After a moment, he answers quietly.

CAMERON

So are you...and you're not even
gonna jump.

It's true. She is trembling and so is he -- not from fear. He slowly draws her toward him, her mouth reaching up to his. And then they are devouring each other. Abruptly, they're illuminated by a fierce blast of white light. They separate and stare, blinking in shock and confusion.

ELI (V.O.)

Okay, hit two and three.

They are pinned in the crossbeams of two more giant arcs. Quickly she yanks him down with her out of sight behind the railing.

78

EXT. CHURCHYARD - ELI AND CREW - NIGHT

Eli is lounging in the bucket suspended from the crane. Beside him Gabe adjusts one of the giant brutes.

GABE

(business as usual)

I could kill this brute and fill
with juniors. You'd get a halo
around the tower.

ELI

(struggling to resist)

Got no time...it's an establishing
shot...two seconds on the screen.

(giving in)

...You got six minutes.

Gabe smiles, scurries off. Eli glances at the tower, grins, having toyed with them long enough, he yells.

ELI

Hey! While you're up there, be useful. We're lighting. Stand up and look towards the sea so you're in profile!

79 CLOSER ANGLE ON TOWER - NIGHT

As Nina's arm raises into view with the middle finger extended.

NINA (V.O.)

(hollering)

Light this, Eli!!!

80 EXT. CHURCHYARD - BENEATH THE TOWER - NIGHT

The church door swings open. Nina and Cameron emerge, covering their embarrassment with bravado. Nina is prattling as though to a tour guide.

81 CLOSE ON CAMERON AND NINA

NINA

...And those bells are so interesting. Imagine four hundred years ago by boat from Amsterdam. Thank you for the tour. It was so informative. I'm going to write my father. He's so interested in God and things like that.

ELI'S VOICE

Hiya. Want a lift?

Eli miraculously appears from above. He descends and rides around beside them in the bucket of the crane.

NINA

(ducking)

Oh, for Christ's sake...

ELI

There once was a maiden fair,
smooching a guy with red hair...

NINA

Eli, get away with that thing!

ELI

...Could it be Raymond who's turning this dame on? ...Or his double, young Lucky Pierre?

Unable to elude Eli in his basket, Nina turns on him in mock frustration.

NINA

It's gotten to the point where I have to look under the stopper of the bathtub when I take a shower to make sure I've got some privacy!

(broadly gesturing to group)

Thank you one and all and good night!

Privately, she gives Cameron's arm an affectionate squeeze, then disappears around the corner of the building. He is left holding the beach bag, pursued by the Peter Pan in the basket. It has now dropped to ground level so Eli is looking up at Cameron.

ELI

Step right in, folks...the "Killer Crane" ride of the century.

CAMERON

Thanks, I'll walk.

Eli's basket now moves up a few feet so he's looking down at Cameron, riding beside him while he walks.

ELI

Ah, youth. Six hours in town and caught with the leading lady. Not bad. Shouldn't be so upset.

CAMERON

Okay to be upset about what happened in the dining room? Why'd you promise to show that cop the film? He'll recognize me.

ELI

You really don't trust me, do you? Hop in. I got a present for you.

He pulls Cameron into the basket beside him so unexpectedly that Cameron drops Sam's bag. Eli picks it up and plops it into Cameron's lap. Suddenly Cameron finds himself soaring skyward at a stomach-churning rate -- while Eli rattles on...probing, disarming, quixotic...

ELI (CONT'D)

You constantly amaze me. You don't go to movies. What's that tatoo, a disguise? You a Commie? Don't you know that King Kong was only three feet tall? He came up to Fay Wray's belly button. If God could only do the tricks we can. What are you worried about the film and the cop for?

Now, hanging ten stories above the city, Eli is adjusting his viewer, looking at a cluster of RED FLASHING LIGHTS IN THE DISTANCE. He hands the viewer to Cameron, who looks through it.

81A We see a telescoped view of THE POLICE ROADBLOCK at the end of a highway with cars waiting to get past ARMED POLICE.

CAMERON'S VOICE

(muttering)

What am I worried about the cops for?

ELI'S VOICE

Another one over there.

81B THE VIEW WHIPS to a second police roadblock at the other entrance to town.

ELI'S VOICE (CONT'D)

It's a pair.

81C TWO SHOT

CAMERON

(puts viewer down)

Is this my present?

ELI

No, your present is a piece of good advice.

CAMERON

Keep it.

ELI

(patting Sam's beach bag)
You've got that look again. That gleam of the sprinter about to set a record for the 50-yard dash. Is that why all those cops are chasing you? What are you, some kind of sex freak running across America with your fly open? Is that why they're after you?

CAMERON

You're close. What's your advice?

ELI

Button your fly and be at the airport on Sunday at three o'clock with the rest of the crew. Climb aboard our chartered 707 and fly away with us to where the setting sun bleeds into a million swimming pools a man can hide in. You do swim as well as run?

CAMERON

(overwhelmed by the offer)

I'll swim like a fish. You really mean it?

(Eli nods)

Why are you trying to save my ass?

Eli hesitates, then answers quietly -- for him there is great meaning in it.

ELI

...Because you're as crazy as the guy I'm doing the picture about.

(then grinning archly, the mood broken)

...Besides, I've fallen madly in love with the dark side of your nature.

82 EXT. CHURCH TOWER - NEXT MORNING - BRIGHT DAYLIGHT

The thunderous clang of bells! Cameron ready, coiled tight, heart pounding as loud as the bells. A burst of machine gun bullets tears through the railing beside him, sending splinters flying against his face.

83 CAMERA CREW

HARVEY (Second Unit Director) and CAMERA OPERATOR behind the MITCHELL, looking up tensely. Harvey gestures, yelling.

HARVEY

Now!

84 IN BELL TOWER

Near Cameron, the SECOND A.D., crouched out of sight with a walkie-talkie, stabs a finger at him.

SECOND A.D.

Go!...Go!

A burst of tracer bullets streak past Cameron. Sparks fly, as stray bullets seem to bounce and ricochet off the bells.

85 MACHINE GUN

A 50-calibre MACHINE GUN, a SPECIAL EFFECTS MAN in Levi's and sport shirt, pumping tracers past the bell tower.

86 TWO SHOT - BELL TOWER

The Second A.D. slams his hand down on a PLUNGER, setting off a series of explosive squibs. Like machine gun bullets, they start shattering the railing, moving toward Cameron, forcing him to the edge of the tower.

Vaulting over the rail, he clings to the side of the bell tower. Explosive bursts disintegrate the railing in his hand. He shoves out, launching himself into space. Twisting, hurtling across the gap between the buildings, falling, crashing to the slate roof, crawling and scrambling for a hand hold. The relentless tracer bullets chip the slate beside him. Crouching low, Cameron, like an animal, moves across the roof to the safety of a water tower. Squibs burst over his head and spouts of water stream from the tower.

Moving around the tower, suddenly there are TWO GERMAN SOLDIERS running at him with bayoneted rifles. He wheels and there stands ANOTHER GERMAN (Chuck), who leaps toward him, slamming down his rifle butt. The blow glances off Cameron. They grapple, kicking, clawing, rolling down the steep slope, picking up momentum.

87 RAIN GUTTER

The roof's edge rushes toward them, below it a fearsome drop. Cameron's hands reach out desperately grabbing for the railing as Chuck, screaming, hurtles off the edge, writhing as his body tumbles in space toward the ground.

88 CAMERON

Sweat pouring from his face, a gash on his cheek gushes blood, his eyes glazed, he pulls himself back on the roof.

89 CATCHER

Chuck, lying relaxed on the straw and mattress safety pad which caught him on the ground, looks up, cups his hands and shouts at Cameron.

CHUCK

Go!...Go!

90 ROOF

Cameron, running for his life along the edge of the roof, the soldiers shooting down at him from the roof's peak. He reaches the far end, looks down. There is the awning jutting from an adjacent wall two stories below. He scrambles off the roof. Clinging to the down spout, he starts descending it.

91 SPECIAL EFFECTS MAN

Looking up from the ground, he yanks a control rope.

92 CAMERON

The bracket holding the down spout breaks loose. The spout starts to fall away from the side of the building. Cameron clings to it, riding its downward arc as though it were a falling tree.

93 AWNING

At the end of the arc, Cameron throws himself free for a safe landing and smashes against the awning. Instead of holding, it rips apart like paper and, in that unexpected instant, Cameron's eyes widen in genuine terror as he plummets through the shredded canvas toward a skylight one floor below.

94 SKYLIGHT

Exploding in a shower of glass and wood as it is struck by Cameron's body. He hurtles downward toward a blur of images.

95 ANGLE ON COT

Collapsing from the impact of Cameron's fall. The MAN and WOMAN who were making love on the cot have been flung to the ground and roll entwined with him. Cameron is dazed. Like a drowning man, he rages to free himself from the tangle of naked limbs and smothering flesh. A painted face shrieks in laughter -- as the door to the room he is in is thrown open, revealing:

96 BROTHEL SET - INT. MUNICIPAL BUILDING

Cameron has fallen into a cubicle in what appears to be a World War I German army brothel. In the high-ceilinged room, there is a row of cots separated by makeshift screens. COUPLES jump up from the cots startled. A line of partly naked GERMAN SOLDIERS waiting their turn at the whores have broken into shouts and laughter at Cameron's unorthodox entrance. They crowd around the cubicle where Cameron fell and now struggles with the couple.

97 ANGLE ON CAMERA CREW

Gabe at the EYE PIECE, Eli beside him, photographing the scene.

 ELI

 Keep rolling!

 (calling out to soldiers)

 The clothes!...Do the clothes!

98 ANGLE ON CAMERON

The men tear him free from the couple shouting playfully.

 ONE MAN

 (dialect)

 What are you a field marshal?

SECOND MAN

(dialect)

Wait your turn like the rest!

Cameron's confusion changes to helpless fury as he kicks and struggles against a forest of grasping hands ripping his clothes away, passing him back toward the rear of the line.

THIRD MAN

(dialect)

Where are your manners?

WHORE

(dialect)

This is a whorehouse, not a stable.

Whores have left their cots to join in the assault, screeching in glee. As he maniacally lashes out at his good-natured molesters, the blood from Cameron's face smears a whore's body.

ELI'S VOICE

Cut!

Instantly everything stops. Cameron is sprawled half-naked on his knees at the end of the line. Enraged, he whirls toward Eli who has caused this humiliation. Then the CLAPPING begins, the CAST and CREW applauding his stunt. People slap him on the back admiringly. A robe is thrown around him. He is helped to his feet. Suddenly Nina is there flinging her arms about him and kissing him on the mouth.

NINA

I'm so proud of you...I could just die!

He is pulled away from her by the backslappers. Now Cameron is responding to this strange new sensation -- the warmth of public acclaim. He regains his poise, hoping his embarrassing anger wasn't noticed. Chuck is now beside him, reaching up to the wound on Cameron's face and pulling away the plastic makeup patch with fake blood inside; the "wound" is gone. He starts feeling Cameron's shoulders, arms and ribs for possible damage.

CAMERON

(quietly to Chuck,
wincing in pain)

Why didn't you tell me about the awning? I could have been killed.

CHUCK

No chance. You were in your mother's arms from the time you hit the sugarglass skylight. Those stunt men you fell on would have got you out of anything.

CAMERON

Stunt men?

CHUCK

The one with the tits and the other guy.

CAMERON

Why didn't you tell me? Afraid I'd chicken out?

CHUCK

Eli likes some things spontaneous. Makes 'em more believable. You're okay. Whaddya want?

CAMERON

Not to think I'm going crazy.

99 ANGLE ON ELI

He is moving through the crowd.

ELI

(yelling)

Where's Raymond? Raymond, were you watching that closely?

RAYMOND

(appearing)

What can I tell you? I'm a brave son-of-a-bitch.

There is general laughter. Eli, raising his arm like a referee.

ELI

All right. We're doing the coverage. Camera here.

Eli continues toward Cameron. Chuck is spraying ethyl chloride on his bare tattooed shoulder.

ELI (CONT'D)

(to Chuck)

Careful. Don't blind the eagle.

(to Cameron)

I owe you six hundred bucks.

CAMERON

(acknowledging the
compliment)

If anything bothered you, be happy
to do it again.

Eli laughs and moves off, Cameron staring after him.

CAMERON

(to Chuck)

I can't take my eyes off the son-of-
a-bitch. Everybody does what he
wants them to, even me. I feel like
thankin' him 'cause I fell on my
ass.

CHUCK

(sarcasm)

...It's just a crush. You'll get
over it.

99A ANGLE ON SAM

Approaching Eli, who turns to Sam, eager, vulnerable.

ELI

What did you think?

SAM

You are a smug, insufferable son-of-
a-bitch. When I read the insane
asylum scene to my wife and four
children, my wife cried, my oldest
son shook my hand for the first time
in his whole life. So, why is it,
Eli, that this vulgar little scene
turns out to be so much...stronger,
more moving?

ELI

(touched)

God knows, Sam. Maybe...because you get the feeling that the enemy might just be some poor horny slob like you, lookin' for the nearest whorehouse.

(putting his arm around
Cameron)

How about that, Lucky? When that stunt man's boob hit you in the mouth, was it just another boob...or did it taste like kraut?

The crew laughs and so does Nina. Cameron feels humiliated by Eli's patronizing tone.

CAMERON

It tasted lousy. But what do I know? You try it, Eli. You're the expert in bad taste.

ELI

(for the group)

Uh-oh, sounds like the soldier's got his feelings hurt.

CAMERON

Naw, naw. I just don't know about Germans. Where I was we only raped gooks.

100 INT. HOTEL GARAGE - CLOSE ON ELI

As though continuing previous dialogue.

ELI

(genially)

Oh, is that why the cops are after you? ...After all this time?

CAMERON

(sarcastic)

Damn! You finally guessed it!

100A WIDER ANGLE

Revealing Eli and Cameron walking through the hotel GARAGE toward a replica of the lost Duesenberg which a MECHANIC works on.

ELI

...Really? Rape? No. I think you're putting me on. Come on, now, no more hints.

(he thinks)

Let's see...Christ, could be anything. I know a guy in this state got 20 years for having cunnilingus with his wife.

(studies Cameron)

No...I guess you're not the type. More likely some hideous crime of violence...

Eli is getting under Cameron's skin. They stop at car.

ELI

(to mechanic)

Have you seen Harvey?

MECHANIC

I think he's in there.

Mechanic nods toward a door at the rear of the garage. Eli pats the fender of the Duesenberg. Cameron views it with a strange sense of unease. Putting his arm around Cameron's shoulder, Eli leads him toward the back door yelling to mechanic.

ELI

You'll have it ready on time?

MECHANIC

Yeah, but don't look under the hood or you'll find a Chevy.

100B At the door, Eli can barely open it to squeeze through.

101 INT. STORAGE ROOM

An incredible number of people have wedged themselves into this tiny smoke-filled room, peering over each other's heads toward a lighted area at the far end.

ELI

(shouting)

Harvey in here?

OFFSTAGE VOICE

(yelling)

Quiet. We're shooting.

(then back to business)

Come on...let me have a little more
face...a little more face!

Eli squats on his haunches peering between the legs of the onlookers and tugs on Cameron's sleeve to join him.

102 POV

Hazily, through the restless shifting limbs, male and female, like the first rays of morning sun breaking through to the depths of the forest, we glimpse Raymond and Gabe shooting their eight millimeter epic: Two people screwing in a rowboat. Raymond suddenly throws his hands up in despair.

RAYMOND

(screaming)

Cut!

(indignantly)

Jesus, Kenneth. Great control. All right, who's doubling for Kenny on the inserts?

103 ANGLE ON ELI AND CAMERON

Cameron and Eli rise to their feet.

ELI

Can you believe this? They spend the whole day working in a warehouse and look how they relax? That's dedication. You think sex can save the world?

(grins at Cameron)

CAMERON

That's not my bag, Eli.

ELI

Sex, or saving the world?

CAMERON

...The world, that's your special job. And Jesus, are we all lucky to have you around...

Suddenly Cameron is shoved backwards by the door as someone pushes against it to get in.

104 ANOTHER ANGLE

It is Harvey standing in the doorway with Nina.

HARVEY
(to Eli)
Hey Chief, ya lookin' for me?

Nina tries to peer over the heads of the crowd, pushing into the room. Cameron steps toward her without thinking. He wants her out of there.

NINA
What's happening? What's going on?

GABE
(joking)
Look who's here! Nina, we need you.
Still got your makeup on?

Nina, who by now has seen what's happening, laughs.

NINA
That's a daring touch, Raymond! The
rowboat. Terribly symbolic.

There is general laughter, but not shared by Cameron. He surprisingly finds himself angry at Nina's presence here and everyone's easy familiarity toward her. She sees Cameron and Eli through the smokey dimness and works her way toward them smiling. Eli puts his arms about her shouting over the din.

ELI
(kidding her)
Just like the old days, huh kid?
Remember the sunglasses and garter
belts back when we got our start?
Make you nostalgic?

More laughter. Nina turns to Cameron.

NINA
Hi Lancelot. What's a nice boy like
you doing in a place like this?
Going to rescue the maiden from the
boat?

ELI
He just asked if he could do the
rowing. Didn't you. kid?

CAMERON

Having fun with me, aren't you?
It's Eli's potty training class.
Show little Lucky the pretty lady.
Make dirt on the pretty lady. Watch
little Lucky puke. Trouble with you
is you think the whole world is your
own personal crapper.

(Cameron starts to exit)

Have yourself a time...Just wallow
around in it, man. Watching you
makes me feel like Mr. Clean.

Cameron storms out in a rage. Eli watches with a thoughtful smile.
Sam, who has witnessed the outburst, turns to Eli, furious:

SAM

...Goddamn little prudish bastard!

ELI

No more than you and me...it's the
human condition. We just hide it
better.

SAM

...Are you kidding?...If That guy in
the rowboat was a Marine sticking a
bayonet in her instead of a cock,
that uptight son-of-a-bitch would
have saluted.

Eli starts laughing.

SAM (CONT'D)

Fucking Fascist. What are you
laughing at?

ELI

It's just...that girl in the
rowboat, she looks exactly like your
daughter, Jennifer.

SAM

(outraged)

Goddamn you, Eli. That's not funny!

He grabs Eli by the shirt front, cocking his fist.

ELI

(laughing and wrestling)

Get 'em, Sam! Sic 'em! Kill 'em,
boy! That's my uptight killie
doggie...

Sam's anger fades to a sheepish grin, realizing he's fallen into Eli's trap. Where his daughter is concerned, he's just as prudish as Cameron. Eli snaps an affectionate headlock around Sam's neck.

SAM

Son of a bitch.

ELI

(still laughing)

See what I mean? Old Victoria's still got us all by the balls. God save the queen!...Only difference is, we like to make movies about it.

With hardly a pause, he turns.

ELI (CONT'D)

Harvey, dailies at six o'clock tomorrow morning. We're shooting at seven.

Rubbing his hands together (the old pro taking over), he starts pushing his way through the crowd.

ELI (CONT'D)

All right now, let's put a little bit of class into this production!

He elbows his way to center stage.

105

INT. BASEMENT SCREENING ROOM - NEXT DAY

On the folding chairs facing the PORTABLE SCREEN, a dozen people are silhouetted against the light from the projected dailies. Cameron enters, pausing so his eyes can adjust to the dark.

106 POV

In the dimness, Nina sits separated from Eli, Sam and a few others. On the screen, a World War I British biplane in steady flight is interrupted by a couple of subliminal cuts. Another subliminal flash holds and replaces the scene on the portable screen. It's a "NUDIE" SHOT -- a rear view of the lady taken in the rowboat the night before.

 VOICE

 What the hell is that?

The watchers all break up, recognizing the work of Raymond and Gabe.

 GABE

 Hey Nina, there's your toothpaste
 commercial!

 RAYMOND

 I love her smile...

As Nina laughs good-naturedly, the airplane is back on the portable screen.

107 ANGLE ON CAMERON

Involuntarily smiling to himself and now less uptight about last night, he walks over and sits down beside her.

 CAMERON

 (whispering)

 How they get the film developed so
 fast?

Without even glancing at him, Nina gets up and moves to a chair some distance away. He is stunned, then angry. Then confounded. Then resigned to the ways of women, he goes over and sits beside her.

 CAMERON

 What's the matter?

 NINA

 (turning on him)

 Don't let the fact that Eli treats
 you as an equal go to your head.
 You're not!

 CAMERON

 Thanks.

 ELI'S VOICE

Nina, we're watching dailies.

NINA

I'm sorry, Eli.

CAMERON

But he can say anything and that's okay...

NINA

...That's right...

CAMERON

...That's great...

NINA

...What goes on in that dim little head of yours? How dare you open your mouth to him like that? Have you the vaguest idea what he's trying to say to people with this film?!...That man is the most dedicated, kindest...!

Eli's voice interrupts, angry, like a schoolteacher dismissing a child for talking.

ELI'S VOICE

Nina, you can go now.

Nina, close to tears, quickly gets up and hurries out of the theater, as Cameron sits there numbly staring at the screen.

107A POV

On the portable screen, Raymond in helmet and goggles is in the cockpit of an airplane. He stuffs a bottle of champagne into a leather flying boot, dangles the package over the side and lets it go. Raymond looks down and salutes (like that famous scene in "WINGS").

PRODUCTION MANAGER'S VOICE

Who says nothin' changes? Like to see one of our boys in a B-52 try that.

Eli's voice yells 'cut' on the sound track. The angle on the portable screen widens and we see that the airplane sits on the ground with an electric fan blowing wind in Raymond's face.

Now the scene on the portable screen changes: from the ground, we see the same biplane flying low. An object drops from the cockpit (the boot). Then there is a burst of flame in the engine. Trailing smoke, the plane wobbles, crash-lands (sliding alarmingly close to CAMERA). It ground-loops, goes up on one wing and, as it crashes down, we see that the pilot who we assumed was Raymond, is really a dummy that is flapping absurdly and falling to pieces before our eyes during the crash. There are groans, laughter and raspberries O.S.

107B INT. SCREENING ROOM (AS THE LIGHTS GO UP)

HARVEY

Jesus, Eli, I'm sorry. I'll do a pickup.

ELI

(laughing)

It's so awful, it's beautiful. Wish I could use it.

SAM

(sarcastic)

That's all we'd need.

107C ANGLE ON GROUP

ELI

(getting morose)

We goddamn well need something, Sam. Something better than we got...

SAM

(tight-lipped)

Better? How better?

ELI

Wilder, crazier.

SAM

(starting to shout)

Dropping a dead man's boots over his own airfield, out of chivalry... that's not crazy enough for you?!

ELI

They did it in "Wings." Even the dummy was bored.

PRODUCTION MANAGER

(anxiety at the breaking
point)

...Eli, please! You simply will not
accept the fact that we are living
on borrowed time...

But Eli and Sam are not listening.

ELI

You can't shake your finger at 'em,
Sam. If you've got something to
say, you better slip it in while
they're laughing and crying and
jacking off over the sex and
violence. He should do
something...outrageous!

SAM

(belligerent)
Like what?

ELI

Something to catch the stink of
madness behind all that good clean
fun. Why the hell did we pick World
War I in the first place?...The
ultimate romantic insanity!

SAM

(shouting)
Like what?!

ELI

Like...I don't know what! What
would Lucky do if he were on the
wing of that plane? Picture that
because it would be a hell of a lot
realer than that flapping dummy.

108 Cameron is startled. He was not aware that Eli even knew he was in
the room.

SAM

Is that what you're after, reality?
I thought you wanted something
outrageous!

ELI

Reality can be pretty outrageous.
Look at soldier boy there, jumping
off fucking buildings, risking his
ass every day, doing stuff way over
his head!...What would you do in
that plane, Lucky, if you were about
to die?

CAMERON

(off guard, embarrassed)
What else? I'd dance for joy...I'd
probably do a jig.

ELI

Great! That's what we'll do.

SAM

Eli...

ELI

All right, not a jig...a
Charleston...

SAM

A Charleston?

ELI

...On the wing of the airplane!

SAM

(contempt)
...That's ridiculous.

ELI

You're damn right...

SAM

The Charleston is silly...They won't
believe it.

ELI

(excited)
I'll do it so they'll believe it!

SAM

(smugly)
You'll get a laugh, Eli.

ELI

Only when I want them to laugh!...

(toward rear of the room)

Right, Lucky?

109 (SHOCK CUT TO SKY) - CLOSE ON GERMAN FIGHTER PLANE - DAY

It screams down vertically, full power, machine guns blazing, then smashes into the earth, shredding to fragments hurled in every direction. The dead German pilot is flung crumpled to the ground. The plane's carcass explodes, filling the screen with fire and black smoke through which we see a brightly colored PARACHUTE descending. The FIGURE dangling beneath it passes through the smoke and flames and tumbles to the ground, rolling, his parachute now ablaze. It is Cameron dressed in a British flyer's uniform.

110 ANGLE WIDENS

To show the hand-held Arriflex at Gabe's eye, Eli behind him, steering Gabe by the back of his belt and carrying the battery pack as they photograph Cameron shedding the harness. With the camera, they crouch and move together like a three-headed, four-armed, four-legged creature.

Banking steeply, a British fighter roars past Cameron, its wingtip almost brushing the ground, machine guns rattling, driving some advancing German soldiers back toward the woods.

The plane touches down to rescue Cameron, the pilot beckoning. Cameron has pulled off the dead German pilot's boots and helmet. Stray bullets strike about him as he sprints to the idling British plane. It is a single-seater. It starts to pick up speed. He grabs a strut and scrambles up onto the lower wing.

111 ANGLE ON CONSTRUCTION CRANE

The bucket hanging from the giant CRANE descends. Smoothly Eli guides Gabe backward, seating him in the bucket. The bucket rises, lifting Gabe while he photographs the scene, as the plane with Cameron on the wing becomes airborne.

112 ANGLE ON PICKET FENCE

Behind it is a CROWD OF SPECTATORS who jump up and down shrieking. CAMERA PANS to show Nina among them, her excitement hardly more controlled.

113 ANGLE ON CRANE BUCKET AND BRITISH AIRPLANE

The giant arm of the crane swings and rises with the plane, completing Gabe's spectacular shot. Now we see a HELICOPTER drop into frame, photographing the plane from the other side. The chopper and the vintage British plane bank together in perfect tight formation with Cameron standing spread-eagled between the wing struts like a flying Christ, as they soar into the sun.

114 ANGLE ON CAMERON

Seated on the wing, his back against the fuselage, legs firmly against the struts. His white silk scarf streams into the tearing wind. Jamming a champagne bottle into the German's boot, he holds it up. The pilot grins approval, popping the cork on a second bottle which spouts foam into the slipstream. Laughing, he passes a glass to Cameron and pours from above. The liquid is lost in the wind. Shrugging, he swigs from the bottle and hands it to Cameron. Cameron drinks. The champagne pours down his throat and face and, holding the strut with one hand, he rises to his feet.

The pilot waggles his wings, giving Cameron a seesaw ride to get his bottle back. Cameron now seems drunk. He lets go of the strut and stands leaning against the wind. As the pilot toasts his courage, Cameron's balance falters and he grabs the strut.

Now, Cameron picks his way through the guywires toward the end of the wing. Then he bounces up and down, rocking the plane. The pilot starts to sing to Cameron's rhythm, "How ya gonna keep 'em down on the farm..." And Cameron dances the Charleston.

115 INT. HELICOPTER

Gabe at the eyepiece of the Mitchell, slowly tilting up and down to follow the action.

GABE

Fan-fucking-tastic. Whaddya been feeding that soldier-boy...brave pills?

Through the plastic bubble, the biplane can be seen in the distance going through its antic maneuvers.

ELI

It's not what he's eating...it's what's eating him...that makes it sort of interesting.

(through intercom)

Okay, drop the package.

CLOSE ON BIPLANE

Cameron holds the boot poised, lets go. Then, the pilot is struck by a bursting shell. As he slumps over, the plane skids and slips and drops off into a spin. Cameron clings for his life as the sickening momentum grows, until his feet are flung out from under him and he dangles from the wing, whipping in space.

117 WIDE ANGLE

Suddenly it becomes clear how what we are seeing is possible -- the airplane is no longer in flight, but is dangling a few feet above the ground, suspended from the cable of the huge crane. The crewmen shove at its tail and wingtips to keep it revolving. Cameron is, indeed, clinging to the wing strut, his feet held in space by the centrifugal force. But, if his hands slip, he will fall ten feet instead of to certain death.

118 ANGLE ON ELI AND CAMERA CREW - SHOOTING FROM GROUND

ELI
How is it?

GABE
(panning and tilting)
Su-fucking-perlative.

ELI
(into walkie-talkie)
Okay, now level out.

119 ANGLE ON CRANE OPERATOR

Easing some levers back.

120 POV THROUGH LENS

As the spin slows down and the plane appears to level out, Cameron regains his footing, perches on the wing and looks forward in growing horror.

121 WIDER ANGLE

As the swinging arm of the crane glides the plane forward toward a stand of trees at the edge of a clearing.

122 PAST CAMERON - MOVING SHOT

We see the rapidly approaching trees. Closer and closer, until with a horrendous crash, the plane sails between two trunks, shearing off the wingtips, the nose smashing into another, hurling Cameron off the wing like a crumb flicked from the table.

123 EXTREME CLOSE UP - CAMERON

Apparently hurtling through the air, his eyes widen at the impending impact. A gasp and then a sharp cry. But instead of the crash...the ANGLE WIDENS and we see it is Cameron reaching orgasm. With extreme contentment on his face, he rolls over revealing Nina, who, it is clear, has also had a lovely time.

124 WIDER ANGLE - INT. NINA'S HOTEL BEDROOM - NIGHT

They are in bed in a pleasant large room (the Queen Anne Suite), untidy, with script pages, wigs, costumes, fresh flowers, the leftovers of a room service dinner. Nina caresses his back, noticing bruises. She kisses them gently and starts to giggle. He looks at her quizzically.

NINA

That's twice for me today. Now.
And when I watched you do the stunt.

The ALARM CLOCK on the dresser BEGINS RINGING. He sits up, puzzled.

NINA (CONT'D)

I have to study my scene for
tomorrow. The Old Lady at the
cemetery. It's brutal. I set the
clock in case we dozed off.

Cameron gets up, moving toward the dresser to turn off the clock, but instead stops at the stand holding the Old Lady wig. He runs his fingers through it as the clock continues to ring.

CAMERON

How come they cast you as an old
lady?

NINA

I start out as a young girl hiding
this American flyer. I'm Austrian...
Will ya turn off the clock?

Subtly, we sense something is bothering Cameron. He ignores the still-ringing clock.

NINA (CONT'D)

Anyway, his patriotism is stronger than his love and he leaves me with another little patriot in my belly.

During this he has taken the wig and puts it over his head, glancing in the mirror.

CAMERON

Why can't I double for both of you? I could use the money and I don't look half bad.

NINA

(seriously)

Honey, you'll ruin it. Take it off.

He does.

NINA (CONT'D)

The clock's electric. It'll ring forever.

Instead of turning off the clock, he crosses to the Old Lady's dress on a hanger. He looks at the dress appraisingly.

CAMERON

Eli might really go for that, the big soldier as a little old lady.

Disturbed, Nina leaves the bed, turns off the alarm clock and adjusts the wig properly on its stand.

NINA

What's wrong?

CAMERON

Everything's beautiful.

They embrace and cling to each other. She starts back for the bed, but he detours for the clock and pulls out the alarm again, and again it BEGINS RINGING.

NINA

What are you doing?

CAMERON

We've got to consider Eli. If you don't study the scene, he'll be mad...then you'll get mad...and I'll get shot out of a cannon.

With the alarm still ringing, he starts toward the bed.

NINA

Did you fall on your head today?

CAMERON

I want it to ring.

NINA

Why?

CAMERON

For me, that's why. That's Eli yelling for you to work on your scene and us saying, "Up yours, Eli," and I like that.

NINA

Do you want to leave?

CAMERON

I want to make love to you while Eli is screaming his head off.

The whole idea is so incongruous that she starts laughing. He gets on the bed with her. THE ALARM CONTINUES TO RING. They struggle about, giggling at the absurdity.

NINA

I can't make love with the clock ringing.

CAMERON

Betcha can.

While he moves over her body, she grabs a pillow and hurtles it at the clock. It falls over, but keeps on ringing. By now, Cameron has entered Nina and she is rapidly becoming more involved in that, than in the clock.

CAMERON

(to ringing clock while making love to Nina)
You tell 'em, Eli.

CLOSE ON MOVIOLA

In the darkness, the machine is like an ominous hunchback, splattering shards of light against Chuck's intensely watching face. He is highly disturbed at the unseen image.

CHUCK
(to himself)
Crazy bastard!

ANGLE WIDENS, showing a small STORAGE ROOM has been converted to a makeshift EDITING ROOM, where Chuck sits working the MOVIOLA. Slowly becoming aware of someone, he glances up through the spinning reels and dimly sees Cameron leaning in the doorway.

CHUCK
There was no way it could go
wrong...unless he just went ape.

Cameron ambles over as Chuck reverses the film to see it one more time. Even as he catches a glimpse of the film whirring backward, he realizes he's seeing BURT'S DEATH SCENE in the water. Now Chuck has reached the beginning of the film and is moving it forward again.

125A CLOSE UP - VIEWER OF MOVIOLA

The film whirs as we see through the windshield over Burt's shoulder, the car flying through the air, hitting the water and sinking beneath the surface. Burt goes through the motions of a man trying to free himself.

CHUCK
The harness is okay...the roof is
holding...it all seems fine.

CAMERON
But look at him struggle...

CHUCK
...Badly. Eli wouldn't use a foot
of it...poor slob died for nothin'.

126 ANOTHER ANGLE

Sweat is running down Cameron's face. Finally, with dread...

CAMERON
That crack...in the windshield...

CHUCK

What about it? Probably from the impact. No water coming in.

Cameron's face reflects immense relief. At least he's not guilty of that. The flung stone was not the cause. Now, abruptly, Burt's body begins to move more violently.

CHUCK'S VOICE

There! Look at that. He's starting to panic. Will you, for Christ's sake, tell me why?

As Chuck slows the film, we see Burt's head duck beneath the view of the underwater camera, leaving only the steering wheel and windshield. For an instant, the current changes the light and the crack glows brightly, like a spider web. Burt reappears, his face now toward camera, wild with terror. The slow motion lends a bizarre elegance to his agony. Abruptly, the FILM GOES BLACK.

CHUCK

Shit. That's where it stops. That fuckin' Henry...got spooked and took his finger off the remote button.

CAMERON

Is this how the story was supposed to end, with the flyer dying in the water?

CHUCK

Sure as shit ended that way for Burt, didn't it?

127 INT. REHEARSAL HALL - DAY

In one of the private DINING ROOMS off the lobby, tables and chairs are pushed against the wall to make room for a rehearsal now in progress. Some early morning TOURISTS have gathered outside the entrance, watching. A few members of the kitchen staff peer through an inside doorway. Sam and key crewmen stand on the sidelines as Eli rehearses with Nina.

ELI

(gesturing)

The graveyard's over here...

(he takes a few steps)

...Her car's parked here.

(sets down a folding
chair)

...Lots of these little graveyards
along the roadside...most of the
stones are unmarked...

He takes Nina by the hand and pulls her down beside him, kneeling on the floor.

ELI (CONT'D)

You're tired...you're broke...all
things which meant so much are gone.
What's left is a single memory...
that brief bright love.

Nina's listening intently but something catches her eye. Among the tourists at the doorway stands Cameron, who has paused to watch, his costume slung over his shoulder. He nods to her with a small tender smile. Subtly, so Eli won't notice, she smiles back, then renews her concentration.

ELI (CONT'D)

...You spent your month's pension in
hiring the car. You just can't look
for his grave any longer...so you
pick one...any one. You kneel...
then lay the flowers down.

(yells to the prop man)

What have we got for her?

PROPERTY MAN

I got roses.

ELI

No...something she picked herself...
wildflowers or something.

Sam crosses over to them and kneels beside Eli and Nina.

SAM

(hesitantly)

Eli. An idea, maybe. Instead of flowers, what if she brought him the things of their life together...of their sexuality...like her nightgown, her underclothes...

Eli looks at him thoughtfully.

SAM (CONT'D)

'Course they'd be rags by now, but let me show you this...

From a paper bag, he takes a SMALL BRONZE CASTING of a BEAR and A GIRL on a SWING beneath a tree. He sets it down.

128 INSERT ON THE BRONZE

Sam's hand presses a lever on the side of the bronze. There is a whirring of the clockwork and a music box melody plays. The girl begins to swing. The bear slides toward her. She mechanically lifts her bronze dress until they meet, performing their clockwork love rite. Nina giggles.

SAM'S VOICE

It's authentic. Early Victorian. Mechanical bronzes were quite a thing.

129 ANGLE ON GROUP

Eli shakes his head patiently, kindly.

ELI

Sam, you'll get a belly laugh.

SAM

What do you mean? It'll break their hearts!

Eli begins to beam. Sam, realizing he has again fallen into the trap, winces, chagrined. Eli grabs him in a bear hug.

ELI

Welcome to the picture, Sam!

Sam struggles to escape from the iron grip as Eli dances him about in joy.

130 INT. BASEMENT - HAIRDRESSER SECTION - CLOSE ON CAMERON'S HEAD

Denise, with spray can and fingertips, is massaging in red dye, as the CAMERA PULLS BACK.

CAMERON

Naw, nothin' too unusual today...get run over by a tank, blown up by a land mine, a house falls on me... Easy stuff, but I can use a rest.

DENISE'S VOICE

...And some manners. As one of the world's greatest middle-weight lovers, I hate to play a one-night stand. I heard you been busy, but you know the old saying...like, if you can't come, call?

CAMERON

(appeasingly)

I wanted to, but I was scared. They're so square where I hail from. Twice is considered a love affair...didn't want to rush you.

DENISE

...Three times is a love affair. Twice is nice...

VOICE (O.S.)

(yelling)

Hey Denise, for Christ's sake! We got a set call in forty minutes.

131 ANOTHER ANGLE

To include a MAKEUP TABLE against the far basement wall with THREE ACTORS sitting at it, wearing plastic aprons to shield their uniforms.

DENISE

(to Cameron)

You just sit here...dry...and repent.

She crosses to the men at the makeup table.

ACTOR

Glad ya could tear yourself away.

DENISE

Don't panic. He's still got that whole big emotional thing to do with the dog food lady before they even get to you. You may not work 'til midnight.

ACTOR

You wait. Eli'll wave his wand and get it out of her in five minutes.

DENISE'S VOICE

(trimming his hair)

You're confused...He got it into her in five minutes. To get it out of her...it takes longer.

There is general knowing laughter as Denise crosses back to Cameron and sees by the look on his face she has hit her target. The thought of Nina and Eli as lovers had never occurred to Cameron.

DENISE'S VOICE (CONT'D)

Oops...somebody didn't know...

The effect is stronger than she had expected. Now compassion sets in.

DENISE (CONT'D)

(softly)

Hey. C'mon, Red...I'm a woman scorned...I'll say anything.

Cameron just sinks back in the chair, slowly dying.

132

EXT. GRAVEYARD - CLOSE ON "MECHANICAL BRONZE"

Over the tinkling sound of the music box, the BEAR and MAIDEN perform their ritual as the CAMERA PULLS BACK revealing the GRAVESTONE decorated with the worn filmy lace undergarments of another era. They flutter in the soft wind and amber light of a summer afternoon, strangely beautiful against the mossy granite marked "UNKNOWN." Somehow these rotting women's underthings have the dignity of a sacred tapestry draping an altar.

OLD LADY'S VOICE

...You terrible bear... so impatient... tearing something so beautiful...

The ANGLE WIDENS and we see Nina, now made up to look wrinkled and gray, tragically old, her eyes moist as she kneels beside the grave.

OLD LADY (NINA)
(sudden deep sincerity)
Why do I lie? I couldn't wait
either. I think both of us are
bears.
(a soft nostalgic smile)
Go, young maiden, you'll be late for
your piano lesson.

An elegantly-dressed CARIBINERRI (ITALIAN POLICEMAN) appears.

CARIBINERRI
Signora...signora...

OLD LADY (NINA)
I'm almost finished.

CARIBINERRI
Signora. This desecration... some
flowers perhaps...would be
permitted.

OLD LADY (NINA)
But, we want these.

CARIBINERRI
Please, signora. It's not right.
The grave is unmarked.

OLD LADY (NINA)
Ask the driver how many graves we
visited today. I could have chosen
five hours ago. I came here and my
soul said, "Oh yes." I know that is
hard to believe...

CARIBINERRI
(shrugging)
Anything is possible, signora.
(tries urging her to her
feet)
Now, you must permit me to escort
you to your car.

OLD LADY (NINA)
As soon as I am gone, you will take
everything away.

CARIBINERRI
No...

OLD LADY (NINA)
(tears streaming down her
face)
You will, and I can't stop you, and
it's wrong. We loved each other...
Where else should these go?

The unexpected sound of laughter makes her turn to see a SMALL GROUP OF PEOPLE who've gathered beside their PARKED CARS watching.

OLD LADY (NINA)
Yes, I know I'm ridiculous, but you
laugh without knowing anything. You
would buy a plastic wreath for a man
of such importance.

She pulls free of the Caribinerri and, trying to kneel down, stumbles and falls. Now, like some confused child, she searches among the garments. Taking a SCROLL from a wooden box, she shakes it at them like a schoolteacher would a ruler.

OLD LADY (NINA)
President Wilson...from the
President of the United States...for
heroism. To me for sheltering
him...
(smiling to herself)
How silly. I 'sheltered' him to be
with him. He was my beloved...Where
is it?...Oh, here, did you see this?

She now holds up a fist from which dangles a swastika on a sash.

OLD LADY (NINA)
Given to me by Adolf Hitler...for
our son. Our son...

Her voice suddenly fierce with the pain of that memory.

OLD LADY (NINA)
...Our son!!!
(then, with simple
reverence)
...A thousand years of peace...is
what he said. That would be very
nice.

The Caribinerri, spellbound, has taken a backward step, bumping into a REFLECTOR, which now teeters and falls into the scene, knocking off his hat, barely missing the Old Lady and crashing across the grave and shattering all illusion. The Caribinerri stands there

with his eyes closed and his fists clenched, wishing he were in the grave. Nina stands in speechless horror.

133 WIDER ANGLE - INCLUDING CREW SHOOTING

ELI
(quietly)
Cut...

CARIBINERRI
Eli, I'll kill myself.

ELI
...and print.

It's deadly silent as Eli walks over to Nina. They stare at each other for a moment.

ELI
(eyes brimming over)
Thank you, baby.

They fall into each others arms like lovers never do.

134 MEDIUM - CAMERON WATCHING ELI AND NINA EMBRACE

Everybody is applauding, wild with joy over Nina's great performance. Tears of happiness run unabashedly down Sam's nose. Only Cameron is sullen, seething with anger and jealousy as he views them in the light of his recent information.

A.D.
(through bull horn)
All right, that wraps the graveyard.
Don't pack it...just stick it in the
truck. Come on, we're losing sun,
everybody. In ten minutes at the
farmhouse!

Cameron is standing aside, while Nina vainly looks around for him. Denise is unpinning her wig. Chuck approaches Cameron.

CHUCK

Change of plans. We're making the stunt a fire gag. When you come out of the barn, you're in flames...wanna try it.

Cameron, still watching Nina and Eli in the now dwindling circle of admirers, doesn't answer.

CHUCK (CONT'D)

Look, don't do it if you don't wanna...

CAMERON

What does Eli say?

CHUCK

You know Eli... "Tell the soldier it's an extra hundred bucks and he'll do it without the asbestos." Whaddya say?

CAMERON

Tell Eli to do it.

CHUCK

Hey, what the hell is wrong with you?

CAMERON

I'm tired of being somebody's goddamn clown!

ELI

(moving into the shot)

Hey, you don't want to do it, don't do it, but be happy! It's a great day! Did you see her performance? Terrific. It's a day for humility and brotherly love!

CAMERON

Fine, Eli. Let's be brotherly. Milk brothers, sucking from the same tit.

135 ANGLE - EXT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

As it explodes, Cameron is BLOWN THROUGH THE WALL -- ON FIRE. He tumbles to the ground, frantically writhes, rolls, trying to smother the flames, finally collapsing in some wagon tracks filled with muddy water. Cameron lifts his head at the approach of a THUNDERING SOUND...an ENGLISH CAISSON hurtles toward him, the driver dead and mangled over the barrel of the gun, the horses insane with terror. Before Cameron can move, the charging horses are on top of him. He rolls between their hooves, the giant steel wheel of the caisson barely missing him. Shells from a cannon barrage are bursting all about. Cameron staggers to his feet and scrambles over a low stone wall for protection, drops to the other side and then hurtles into the air as the wall is shattered by an exploding shell.

136 CLOSE ON TRAMPOLINE

As Cameron falls into the shot, landing on a hidden TRAMPOLINE near the stone wall, bouncing up and down 'til he finally comes to rest.

OFFSTAGE VOICE

CUT!!

137 ANGLE TO INCLUDE ELI AND CREW

ELI

Who said that?

Cameron stares over the edge of the trampoline as Henry, the assistant cameraman, uneasily faces Eli.

HENRY

We had a film run-out.

ELI

(to Gabe)

How many feet are left in that camera?

GABE

(checking the Mitchell)

Thirty-six feet.

Eli advances murderously on the assistant cameraman, building to a rage we have not seen in him before.

ELI

Goddamn you! How many times are you going to do this to me? How dare you yell cut on my set?

HENRY
(defensively)
Thirty-six feet is nothing...

ELI
It's twenty-two seconds! In twenty-
two seconds, I could break your
spine...I could pinch your fucking
head off like an insect and smear it
on the pavement...I could put
twenty-two bullets in that fat gut
of yours! The only thing I can't
seem to do in twenty-two seconds is
keep you from fucking up my film!

Cameron is so intrigued that he hasn't realized an EMBER is burning through his asbestos protector, until suddenly he feels the flame and frantically begins beating it out and thus, is even denied the pleasure of savoring Eli's anguish.

138 EXTREME CLOSE UP - NINA (INT. SAM'S AND CAMERON'S ROOM - NIGHT)

Rosy-faced and dewy-eyed and wearing a big floppy hat. Sensing trouble with Cameron and that she might be at fault, she has decided to do a campy, cutesy Blanche Dubois stepping off "THE STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE" number, ten years too soon.

NINA
(southern-belle sarcasm)
...I can't tell you how pleased I
was with your conduct. When you
congratulated me after my scene this
afternoon, all the other glowing
tributes faded to nothing...

139 WIDER ANGLE - INT. CAMERON'S AND SAM'S ROOM

Sam has stopped typing and sits silently, waiting for the storm.

Cameron lies on his bed in a T-shirt and shorts, an elastic bandage around his knee and an ice bag at his neck, coldly watching Nina's performance as she grandly moves through the doorway into the room.

NINA (CONT'D)

...Nevertheless, I'm cancelling your invitation to an intimate party given by my parents, who arrived unexpectedly to honor me on the occasion of my birthday...but don't feel too badly. As consolation for a lovely evening missed, I'm presenting you with the "good-sport-of-the-month" award.

From behind her back, she takes an APPLE with a tiny cocktail parasol stuck in it and holds it out to Cameron. Cameron lies glaring at her with mounting rage.

NINA (CONT'D)

Mr. Baum, will you notify this young savage that it's customary to cover one's privates when accepting an award? It's one of the common courtesies, like...congratulating people.

CAMERON

(coldly)

What should I congratulate you for? The fucking scene or for fucking the director?

Nina stands there shaken, looking at him sadly.

NINA

For fucking the director, honey.

(biting into apple)

Didn't you know that's how little girls get into the movies?

She leaves. Cameron lies there seething, then abruptly leaps up and storms into the bathroom. Sam sits rubbing his head, resumes typing. Cameron rages out of the bathroom, flings himself onto the bed. Unwinding the elastic bandage, he sprays ethyl chloride on his knee. Sam's typing stops.

SAM

(quietly)

Young man, taking my life in my hands, I must inform you that you are an asshole.

Cameron ignores Sam.

SAM (CONT'D)

Being a devout masochist, it follows that I'm Eli's best friend. I know quite a lot about him and Nina.

CAMERON

You and the entire crew, buddy.

SAM

(wryly)

He met her three years ago. Two lonely people rattling around New York. A brutal winter. Eli's marriage had just broken up...

CAMERON

(interrupting in anger)

...All she had to do was tell me!

SAM'S VOICE

She could have done that in four seconds. They went to bed once and they were lousy as lovers. But they had a problem. They liked each other. They recognized some area of mutual sensitivity. I'm boring you.

CAMERON

You telling me he banged her once three years ago?

SAM'S VOICE

(disgusted)

I'm going to see if they can put me up in the employees' toilet.

He begins to type again, then philosophically...

SAM'S VOICE (CONT'D)

I think he 'banged' her twice to confirm the awful truth...Was she supposed to be a virgin?

CAMERON

Yeah...

But he says this so sadly and looks so miserable that Sam knows he has reached him and it touched.

SAM

I had a virgin once. Had to go to Guatemala for it. She was blind in one eye and had a stuffed alligator that said, "Welcome to Miami Beach!"

Cameron sits there feeling dumb and full of regrets. Then he gets up, goes to Sam's closet and begins rummaging through the clothes. Sam watches him curiously.

CAMERON

So how's the new ending coming?

SAM

I got fourteen versions. Take your pick.

(worried about his clothes)

What are you doing in there?

CAMERON

(overly casual)

...Fourteen gory ways to die?

SAM

Thirteen. In one version he lives...turns the girl in, opens a gay bar in Berlin, gains fifty pounds and changes his name to Goering...

(now deeply concerned)

...Please, anything but the sweaters. You'll stretch the hell out of the sleeves.

140 INT. RESTAURANT

The pleasant SEAFOOD RESTAURANT is on the pier over the water. Cameron, now wearing Sam's sweater after all, is searching about the crowded room trying to find Nina and what might be her family. He is about to leave when he sees a group at a window table, a MAN and WOMAN in their early fifties and a FOURTEEN-YEAR-OLD GIRL, attractive despite the baby fat. Something about the composite of all their features is familiar enough to give them a second look. In doing so, he sees a half-eaten BIRTHDAY CAKE on their table, in front of an empty place. He goes to the table.

CAMERON

(hesitantly)

I was sort of invited to a birthday party and I can't seem to find it...and this seems to be a birthday party...

The FATHER, a hearty, bluff, good-natured man, looks at Cameron amiably and with a father's intuition.

FATHER

A birthday party is a birthday party...sit down.

(Cameron does)

Who was this birthday party for... animal, vegetable or mineral?

NANCY, the fourteen-year-old, giggles.

NANCY

...Mineral.

MOTHER

Will you stop teasing this young man?

CAMERON

She's really worth finding, ma'am. She's a very rare mineral.

FATHER

(pleased with Cameron)

How old is this mineral?

CAMERON

This morning she was acting about ninety, but she might be lying a year or two.

The father now really comfortable, recognizing a fellow humorist.

FATHER

No, you got the wrong table...this one's acting like she's six...but the missus tells me birthdays are very emotional for the ladies.

At this moment Cameron can tell from their faces that they've seen Nina behind him. He turns.

Nina has emerged from the ladies' room looking miserable and is walking toward them. At the shock of seeing Cameron, her hand flies to her mouth in such embarrassment and joy and confusion at the way she feels, that she starts back to the refuge of the ladies' room. Catching herself, she turns back to face him, her eyes now glowing with tears of happiness.

142 HOTEL CORRIDOR - CLOSE ON CAMERON - LATER THAT NIGHT

He moves forward and kisses Nina. We now realize we are at her HOTEL ROOM DOOR. She on the inside, he on the outside, kissing through the doorway, which stands slightly ajar. With their mouths barely parting:

NINA

I'm sorry it got so late...that damn five o'clock makeup call...I feel as bad as you do...

CAMERON

In the same place I do?

NINA

Will you take a raincheck?
(slipping her room key in
his pocket)
...A permanent one?

He puts his hand on the pocket and grins at her.

CAMERON

A season pass.

NINA

(smiling)
Good night.

Closing the door.

143 INT. HOTEL BAR - LATE NIGHT

On HENRY (the ASSISTANT CAMERAMAN who Eli screamed at), his luggage beside him, his elbows, empties, loose change scattered before him on the bar top.

HENRY

(looking up)
Lucky...hey Lucky, come over here!

ANGLE shifts to include Cameron a few stools down. He looks up from his beer and crosses to Henry.

HENRY (CONT'D)

Guess who tole 'em to take their job
and stuff it?

CAMERON

Ya quittin'?

HENRY

Fuckin' A. Gettin' out tonight.
But not without splittin' a Schlitz
with the one guy, 'cept me, who
wouldn't take shit from that
screwball.

As the BARTENDER is taking away the empties, Henry puts his finger down on a DIME.

HENRY (CONT'D)

Change is for you, except that.
That's a very special dime.
(holds it up for Cameron
to see)
Know what this is? Ask me!

CAMERON

It's a dime...am I close?

HENRY

It's Eli Cross' ass. People think
'cause you're easygoin' they can
walk all over you. Bull-shit...I'm
blowin' the whistle with this dime
in that phone...killin' a man and
hiding it from the police...are you
kiddin'...? Who is he think he is?

Cameron pales, knowing that drunken Henry's desire for revenge can expose him to the police. He grabs the dime from Henry's fingers and drops it into a PEANUT VENDING MACHINE.

HENRY

What the hell you doin'?

Cameron stuffs the bag of peanuts in Henry's shirt pocket, grabs his suitcase and hustles him out of the bar toward the FRONT DOOR.

CAMERON

I'm putting you in a cab for your own good and sending you to the airport. He's mine, Henry, all mine. Just leave that son-of-a-bitch to me!

They have reached the HOTEL DOORWAY. By now, Henry is convinced Cameron means business. He stops.

HENRY

Do whatever you wanna do, but I better do it with ya! You'll need help 'cause that goddamn looney is dangerous.

CAMERON

(blustering)

Not to me, he ain't. I'm going to the cops. You gotta earn your living in pictures, but I don't give a shit. He can't hurt me.

HENRY

Don't be too sure. Damned psycho nearly strangled me! Don't believe me? Wanna see marks...?

(tears open shirt collar
to show bruises)

...Lucky to be alive!

CAMERON

(confused)

Henry, what are you talking about? I watched that whole thing today, he didn't even touch you.

HENRY

Not today. When Burt went into the water.

(Cameron is wide-eyed)

I could tell from up there in the chopper something' was wrong. So, I stopped shootin' and that crazy man gets me by the throat and starts screamin' to roll the film...I mean that guy's down there dying and he's screamin', "Keep shooting! Keep shooting!" Then, he starts fighting me for the switch and it falls down...like a crazy house up there, with him thrashin' on the floor...He didn't care about Burt. All he cared about was to get that man dyin' on film! Sickest thing I ever seen!

As Henry's last words sink in, Cameron stands pale and shaken.

HENRY (CONT'D)

I better grab that cab.

Henry takes the suitcase from Cameron's numb hand and pushes through the door, looks back for a parting shot.

HENRY (CONT'D)

You tell 'em everything...don't mince words...

As he goes towards cab, some MERRYMAKERS push their way into the lobby.

144 CLOSE ON CAMERON

Staring ahead, Henry's words echo like his own death warrant. The merrymakers jostle past him, discussing suntan ointments. Cameron turns and walks across the HOTEL LOBBY and UP the STAIRS...his pace increasing until he is taking them three at a time.

145 CLOSE ON DOOR LOCK

Cameron's hand thrusts KEY into the hole, flings open the DOOR TO NINA'S BEDROOM and barges in.

CAMERON

(overwrought)

Nina...your crazy Eli...

He FREEZES. Over his shoulder, we see Nina, naked, lying on the bed. Raymond, also naked, sits slumped on the edge of the bed, utterly disconsolate. The three stare at each other, an absurd tableau. Cameron whirls and leaves, slamming the door behind him, almost off its hinges.

146 INT. HOTEL LOBBY

He comes down the steps like a madman. Raging, Cameron stomps across the lobby toward the glass doors that will take him out of Eli's grotesque wonderland. He collides with a group of returning night FISHERMEN still in their slickers, carrying their equipment, their catch wrapped in newspapers. For a moment he is tangled in their tackle, FISH TUMBLING AND SLIDING along the marble floor.

FISHERMAN

Jesus...don't step on 'em.

Cameron stares at them, whirls and rushes back across the lobby and up the stairs.

147 INT. NINA'S BEDROOM

As Cameron bursts in. She stands in her robe in the center of the room, glaring at him.

NINA

(screaming)

Get out of here!

Hearing WATER running in the bathtub, he dashes in, but finds the bathroom empty. He moves to the closet and slides the door so violently that it almost falls off: No Raymond.

NINA (CONT'D)

Get out!!!

(raging)

I'll have you thrown out!

She crosses to the phone.

CAMERON

Is there anybody in this whole
company you haven't screwed?

147A In the HALLWAY, a little group of PASSING TOURISTS turn in wonderment at the tumult through the open doorway. Nina leaves the phone, crosses to the door and kicks it shut in the people's faces with all her strength.

NINA

(furious)

You stupid, ignorant bastard! How dare you storm in here like you won me in a raffle?!

Cameron, realizing for the first time that instead of being ashamed or frightened, she is livid with rage?

CAMERON

(coldly)

My girl gave me her key!

NINA

I am not your girl! I am that man's girl! That man and I have been lovers for six months! I've known you two days!

CAMERON

(ironically)

Then gee, ma'am, I sure hope you didn't tell him about all that ballin' last night.

NINA

Don't you dare be clever with me! He came scratching at the door tonight like a beaten dog, begging me to say that you were some twenty-four hour nonsense.

(against her will she starts to cry)

...and I had to tell him I thought I was falling in love with...

CAMERON

(not giving an inch)

You couldn'a said that with your clothes on?!

Nina lets out an incoherent roar of rage.

NINA

Goddamn you! The wounded stud! He is entitled to some dignity! To lose his "pure and faithful lover" without the new boy barging in! Where do you suppose he is now?

CAMERON

Did va look in the laundry hamper?

NINA
GET OUT! Get the HELL OUT!!

Cameron crosses to the door. Searching through this madness for some kind of logic, turning on her.

CAMERON
I don't have any rights? I don't have the right to be pissed off...?

NINA
You don't have the right to breathe! I knew him before I met you! Do you understand that?! Before I met you!! If we were frightened, we woke each other in the dark...we slept in each other's arms...

CAMERON
(interrupting)
The word is "fuck!"

NINA
All right, the word is fuck! You narrow, insensitive, stupid...!

CAMERON
(interrupting)
Don't. Don't push me. I don't know this freaky world you live in, but I know that there still must be a couple of places where people somehow believe in...

He is at a loss for words.

NINA
Believe in what? You're blushing. A place where what? Don't get embarrassed at this late date!

CAMERON
...A place where a guy has a right to blow his top if he finds his lover screwing...

NINA
(interrupting)
Raymond's lover! Raymond's lover!
Sav it! Ravmond's lover!

Cameron, exhausted, slides down the wall and sits on the floor.

NINA (CONT'D)

I'll have it typed up and
notarized...! Raymond's lover! And
you will sign where it says, agreed!

He says nothing. She on the bed and he on the floor, are drained of all strength and emotion.

NINA (CONT'D)

(quietly)

You won't turn me into some rotten
whore because your papa once told
that a woman is a certain way "and
that's how it's gonna be 'til
Gabriel blows his horn..."

CAMERON

(wearily)

Okay...okay. I just want to sit a
couple of seconds without having to
say a word. Because if I start
trying to say, "I'm sorry I caught
you and Raymond fucking," I'll start
laughing and when I laugh too hard,
I get the hiccups and they can last
for days.

NINA

(after a long beat;
softly)

Don't get hiccups.

CAMERON

(quietly)

Isn't anything what it seems to
be?...

NINA

(quietly)

No...

CAMERON

(quietly)

Don't you think that's kind of
lousy?

NINA

(quietly)

Yes...

They sit there unable to leave each other, unable to move to each other. They just sit there.

148 INT. BASEMENT SCREENING ROOM - MORNING

Dailies are in progress. Eli watches, surrounded by a few crew members. Cameron sits in the back row with Nina's MOTHER, FATHER and SISTER. Nina is not present. On the PORTABLE SCREEN is a shot of Nina as a wild, radiant eighteen-year old Austrian girl running pell-mell along a willow-lined VILLAGE STREET, dodging children and bicycles. She collides with an OLD MAN, her basket falls, its contents scattering; his momentary anger vanishing as he is infected with her joy of life. He helps her refill the basket and she rewards him with a sausage and a kiss. The old man watches her wistfully as she runs away.

149 ANGLE ON PARENTS

There's a tear of pride in Nina's mother's eye. Father gently puts his hand on top of hers as the room lights come on.

ELI'S VOICE

You okay back there?

FATHER

Happy as clams.

150 ANOTHER ANGLE INCLUDING ELI

MOTHER

(brightly)

She's so beautiful. Isn't it
amazing how they put it all together
and...

But Eli is already involved in the SCRIPT GIRL's notes.

ELI

...132 through 40 next? Sam should see this. I think I left in a line of his dialogue.

(yelling to
projectionist)
Go ahead.

151 ANGLE ON PORTABLE SCREEN

The room dims and the film starts. We see a slate board reading "150A Take 1." The clapper claps and the board is removed, revealing an ATTIC. Nina sprawled on her stomach, stark naked, atop Raymond's naked body, her breasts resting on his chest, her legs apart, interlocked with his. They look directly at the CAMERA awaiting their cue with the calm resignation of two people waiting for the Wilshire bus. The MAKEUP GIRL appears in the shot spraying Nina's back and ass with glycerin sweat from an aerosol can. She disappears as Eli's voice on the sound track calls, "ACTION." The ANGLE TIGHTENS into a less revealing, more artistic composition. Their mouths meet. Their bodies writhe.

152 CLOSE ON NINA'S PARENTS

They stare at the screen in open-mouthed shock and horror. Their once gentle hands grip each other like iron claws, trying to squeeze away the nightmare.

153 ANGLE ON CAMERON

In shock and anger, leaning forward on the edge of his chair, looking from Eli to the parents, not knowing what to do to stop this.

154 ANGLE ON NANCY

She sinks down in her seat, her surprise becoming malicious pleasure at the reaction of her parents.

155 ANGLE ON ELI

ELI

(upset)
Sweet Christ! I told 'em to hold that...

SCRIPT GIRL

(starting to leave her
seat)
I'll stop it.

ELI
(restraining her,
resigned)
Too late now...only make it worse.

We hear the passionate murmurings from the screen as Eli scrunches down in his seat.

156 ANGLE ON PORTABLE SCREEN

The lovers convulse with erotic abandon as they approach orgasm.

157 ANGLE ON NINA'S PARENTS

Like a Charles Addams' rendering of a Brady tintype. Their faces wear the stiff frozen smiles of the hopelessly insane.

158 EXT. MOVIE SET - CLOSE ON NINA

She's now made up to look like a woman in her forties. Everything about her tells us these have been brutal years, filled with pain and loss. She is reacting in anguish to something O.S. But, even though she manages a few tears, it doesn't quite ring true. Eli steps into the shot.

ELI
(to the crew, O.S.)
All right, save it.

159 ANGLE TO INCLUDE CAMERON

On the sidelines, as he coldly watches Eli put his arm around Nina and stroll her away from the crew so they are out of earshot.

160 ANGLE ON ELI AND NINA - MOVING

ELI
Nina. The shame of it...the shame!
You've lost your son, your lover.
You want to tear his throat out...
but you stand meek...your guts
burning with the shame of it.

NINA
God, I don't know what's wrong with
me.

She has looked up at her parents, who stand off to one side like zombies, watching.

NINA (CONT'D)

Maybe it's them...I feel like I'm in a zoo. Let me say bye-bye and get 'em on their way. It might help.

She starts to move towards her parents but Eli puts a restraining hand on her.

ELI
(upset)
Honey...you better know this...don't get all shook up now...

Nina looks at him with foreboding.

ELI (CONT'D)
Something got screwed up...the dailies...

NINA
What?

ELI
The attic scene. The bare-ass attic scene... I'm sorry... I don't know how... it was too late to stop it... your parents...

161 CLOSE ON NINA

She has not blinked, not turned her head, for fear that her father's eyes might meet hers. She is like a statue trembling in an earthquake, about to shatter. The sick, loathsome shame that fills her, brims over and the statue's blind eyes flow tears.

162 CLOSE ON ELI

Tense, barely breathing.

ELI
(an urgent whisper)
...Roll film.

He eases back out of view. The ANGLE SLOWLY TIGHTENS.

163 CLOSE ON NINA

As she falls apart before our eyes, and an O.S. VOICE on a PLAYBACK TAPE insinuates into our consciousness, echoing as though heard through many loudspeakers.

VOICE

I envy you the pride you must feel
today. A young hero has fallen
gloriously on the field of battle.

Hands reach in and drape a sash around Nina's throat. From it dangles a SWASTIKA. For Nina, there is still no voice, no camera, only the obliterating shame for that image of her naked body burned into her father's memory. And yet, that shame is so similar to the shame she should be feeling as the woman in Eli's film at this mockery of her son's death.

VOICE (CONT'D)

A nation has lost a son! A mother
has lost a son!

The sound has now grown to a proportion reminiscent of those German newsreels of Hitler victory rallies.

VOICE (CONT'D)

This sacrifice in blood brings
closer man's noblest dream...a
thousand years of peace!

The THUNDEROUS SOUND of ten thousand voices shouting: "Sieg Heil! Sieg Heil!" has shattered Nina's isolation. She is now aware that her personal despair has been used to accomplish an acting trick, and it only adds to her degradation and sense of shame, ironically making her performance even more poignant. The crowd on the playback roars with fanatic zeal.

164 EXT. HALL - CLOSE ON CAMERON - LATER

Striding rapidly down the hall, looking like a man who hopes to find a fight, to dissipate his residual anger. He rounds a corner, almost colliding with Eli, who comes rapidly from an intersecting corridor. Eli puts his arm around Cameron's shoulder, hurrying him along even faster.

ELI

Giddyap, soldier. Last one there's
on Medicare.

Cameron shrugs his arm off in annoyance as they round the corner and hurry down some STAIRS.

CAMERON

Where are we rushing to? I Was
asleep...

ELI

Trouble staying awake, huh?

They reach the bottom of the steps and move swiftly down another
corridor, as Eli fishes through his pockets and comes up with a
PIECE OF CHEWING GUM.

ELI (CONT'D)

Stick of gum? Makes you hum!
(ignored, he chews it
himself)
Do you read?

CAMERON

Short words.

Eli finds a BOOKLET he has been looking for and hands it to Cameron.

ELI

Schickel and Bergenstadt... couple
of Dutch comedy writers. See, it's
got pictures. But don't skim.
Chuck's gonna quiz you. If you
pass, you get a free trip to
Amsterdam and you can stick your
finger in a dike.

CAMERON

(looking at the book as
he walks)
What the hell is this?

ELI

A pamphlet on how to get out of a
sunken car. You know, they got this
problem in Holland...those canals.
So these guys are experts.

CAMERON

Did Burt read this?

ELI

Off hand, I'd say no, wouldn't you?

CAMERON

(hands it back to him)

No chance.

ELI

There you go rejecting me again.

Eli pushes open the double doors and they find themselves standing in the MAKESHIFT SCREENING ROOM.

ELI (CONT'D)

You've gotta think positive, Burt.

165

INT. SCREENING ROOM

Jake is there with SEVERAL OTHER MEN. But before Cameron can even register who they are, Eli is saying...

ELI

I'm sorry, gentlemen, but I've got exactly two minutes of borrowed time. I'm in the middle of a scene.

(to projectionist)

Get it started.

Immediately the lights snap off and the film is projected on the screen. In the dark, the men in the room fumble their way to seats. On the projection screen we see a helicopter SHOT OF THE DUESENBERG APPROACHING THE BRIDGE. Cameron is suddenly alert like a jungle beast who's just heard the trap slam shut behind him. His eyes dart around at the official-looking faces staring at the O.S. film. One face looks disturbingly familiar, but in the dark he can't place it.

JAKE

(addressing a man next to him)

This fellow here is the stunt man driving that car.

(to Cameron)

Thompson is from the FBI. They wanted you here in case they have any questions.

On the projection screen, we see the DUESENBERG GO OFF THE EDGE OF THE BRIDGE, disappear in the water.

THOMPSON

I don't see anybody else on the road...did you, Burt?

CAMERON

No.

The MAN Cameron couldn't recognize speaks out.

OTHER MAN

My buddy and I saw that son-of-a-bitch break out of the woods and head that way, down the road.

The lights go on and Cameron looks at the speaker, recognizing him as one of the TELEPHONE LINEMEN. Apparently, the lineman doesn't recognize Cameron in his new identity.

LINEMAN

...I had a clear view. I was on top of the pole.

THOMPSON

Do you mind if we see that again?

ELI

Help yourself, the room is yours. But I've got thirty people on the set being paid for doing nothing.
(moving toward the door
and calling)
Come on Burt, you've got some reading to do.

Cameron follows Eli as the lights go out and the film begins again.

JAKE

Hey Burt, glad you're still alive, considering who you're working for.

166 INT. HALL

Cameron moves swiftly down the corridor behind Eli, who starts up the stairs, still blithely chewing his gum.

ELI

Something wrong? Why are you lagging?

CAMERON

I'm trying to figure it out. That film. Where was I?

ELI

How tall is King Kong?

CAMERON

Three-foot-six.

ELI

Good boy. I got all kinds of versions. Wanna go back and see some?

Cameron understands the implied threat and Eli, knowing he has made his point, continues good-humoredly.

ELI (CONT'D)

I've even got a version where you fly the helicopter and I'm driving the Duesenberg. It's a dilly.

166A

They have now charged out of the building and are racing across the grounds toward the set.

CAMERON

What about the version where I go over the bridge and die in the water?

ELI

(chewing gum)

Hey, kid, what is this with you? That red dye must be eating through your scalp and affecting your brain. Why would I want to hurt you?

CAMERON

Because you don't like my tatoo.

ELI

I think it's beautiful. It's heroic! I think it's a major work that may rank with the Edsel grill! Now goddamnit, I gotta go back and do my picture! Will you take this thing and read?!

He holds the booklet out to him and it is very hard for Cameron to reach out and take it. Out of the corner of his eye, he sees the FBI MEN leaving the building, heading off in another direction. He stares at the booklet.

CAMERON

(softly)

I knew a guy...who stepped on a bouncing Betty booby trap. Stepping on it wasn't his problem...they explode when you step off. So all

he could do was just stand there.
It was getting light. If we didn't
get out, we'd of been shot up. So
we left...

Eli has been watching him thoughtfully.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

...He had this screwy West Texas
accent, I remember, "Hey
fellas...hey fellas..."

Eli blows a BUBBLE with his gum that POPS on cue as though it were
the explosion of the bouncing Betty. Grinning, he sticks the
booklet in Cameron's shirt pocket, turns and walks off.

167 ANGLE ON ELI - MOVING SHOT

Sam catches up and walks beside him toward the set.

SAM

Why don't you let the kid go before
he gets hurt?

ELI

Chuck keeps an eye on him.

SAM

He's dangerous to have around. Stop
playing games, Eli. Tell Jake
you've replaced him. What are you
so hooked on?

ELI

He helps me understand the kid in
our story.

SAM

Bullshit.

ELI

He's like one of those land mines left over from a war, that go off from time to time. You read about it in the paper two or three years later...some kid in a bell tower shoots a dozen students for no reason at all...his mother says he was always such a good boy...I guess I'd like to know what he really did.

As they reach the set, Gabe, the cameraman, charges up.

GABE

Did you bring the tampax? Raymond's still acting like he's got the "curse."

ELI

(with black humor)

You suppose Raymond knows how to drive a Duesenberg?

168

INT. NINA'S BEDROOM

Scattered about the room are suitcases, a wardrobe trunk, the almost completed packing for tomorrow's departure. Nina lies in bed staring into nothing, Cameron beside her. Each is talking aloud to himself, adrift in his private world, unaware they have lost contact with the other. The room is semi-dark, except for the nightstand light on Cameron's side, by which he studies the BOOKLET Eli gave him.

NINA

...It was so unnecessary...For Christ's sake, I'm not shrinking violet...I've had my ass pinched black and blue by account execs for not showing enough enthusiasm for Vitalis. But this from Eli...it was so pointless...sadistic...

CAMERON

(reading)

..."Open All windows slowly to keep pressure from caving in the roof, should an unexpected skid achieve aquatic consequences..." That's kind of witty.

NINA

(still in her own world)
...Could've handled it later on. It
doesn't look so raunchy after it's
cut...Maybe I'd of got them
stoned...something...but for Eli to
trap them like that...

CAMERON

(eyes on the book)
Beautiful...There's a second school
of thought that says the first
school is all wet. It says, "Keep
the windows rolled up tight and wait
for the air bubble."

NINA

Say it was an accident...benefit of
the doubt. But then to use me that
way...like a gadget...Why would Eli
do that? He's not a cruel man...

CAMERON

(not looking up)
He's not a cruel man. He's a crazy
man. A maniac.

NINA

What?

CAMERON

(reading)
"The water pressure at two hundred
feet can crush a man into the size
of an egg." He wants to get that on
film....so he's gonna kill me.

NINA

(jumping out of bed)
What in God's name are you babbling
about?!

CAMERON

It's a rotten shame about your folks
and your naked ass, but dying always
scared me a little, okay?

NINA

...and you are beginning to scare me. You're talking like a wild man!...

CAMERON

Did you know that Eli almost strangled a man because he stopped the camera when Burt got killed?!

NINA

What is going on in that head of yours?! You take the word of some...malcontent...technician!

CAMERON

...I saw the bruises!

NINA

...And I saw Eli that night when he had to tell Burt's brother on the phone...I saw the tears.

CAMERON

She saw the tears! Did you ask him what he was crying about?! 'Cause you can bet your sweet tits, it wasn't over Burt. He was crying over losing his fucking shot!

To keep from exploding, Nina opens her luggage and furiously starts repacking.

NINA

Didn't they give I.Q. tests in the army? What did you get...minus twelve? Haven't you figured out yet why he's working himself to death? What his film is all about? He's trying to tell people not to kill each other!

CAMERON

And you know what? You want the shock of your life...? I understand what the son-of-a-bitch is saying, and he may be right...which makes me what? Minus twelve, the dumb schmuck with a gun. That doesn't change the fact that he's crazy. If he had his way, there wouldn't be a soldier left alive by mornin'. But

all he's got on hand is me. I don't know if he is doing it consciously, but it's a hell of an idea. If he can really get it on film, a genuine dumb fuck grunt cashing in, before your very eyes, I mean the real McCoy...that's gotta help his picture...Then he's killed two birds with one stone. It's got a nice logic. Trouble is, both birds are me.

Against her instincts, Nina is emotionally affected by what Cameron says.

NINA

Stop it...sweetheart...I'd die if anything happened to you.

The TELEPHONE RINGS. Her head whips to look at it. It continues ringing, but she doesn't move.

NINA

It's my father...I won't talk to him...You're all driving me crazy...I won't talk to him.!

Cameron calmly picks up the phone.

CAMERON

Hi...hello?

NINA

(whispering)

Tell them I'm not here. Tell them anything. Tell them I'm working.

CAMERON

(glancing at Nina)

Okay, Chuck. I'll meet you in an hour.

(he hangs up)

For me. Amazing how they keep secrets around here.

He walks over to the still-stricken Nina and tenderly embraces her. She leans against him, the trembling subsiding.

CAMERON

What if I told you I wasn't going to do the stunt?

NINA

I'd say fine.

CAMERON

And what if I told you I was gonna
get out of here tonight...and that I
want you to come with me?

NINA

(upset and confused)
But there's just one more day of
shooting...

CAMERON

What if I can't wait?

NINA

I...I have two more scenes...

CAMERON

That's a shame.

NINA

...I could meet you...

When he doesn't answer, Nina resorts to her last defense, irrational anger.

NINA (CONT'D)

...Look, don't do the stunt! If you
believe Eli's a killer, call the
police...Why are you doing this to
me? That's all I need right now,
with all I've been through!...For
you to give me now-or-never
ultimatums and tell me my director
is insane!...

By now she is stalking about the room throwing things from one
suitcase to another as Cameron silently watches her.

169 INT. GARAGE - LATE NIGHT - LOW ANGLE ON THE BLACK DUESENBERG

Which stands alone like Moby Dick awaiting its victim. Chuck and Cameron appear from behind the car, stalking it like it were the Sunday Special on a used car lot, Chuck the "hearty" salesman, Cameron the reluctant customer.

CHUCK

Look at this mother...I'll bet these guys could build an Arabian out of a jackass.

CAMERON

Why not? You built a stunt man out of one.

CHUCK

Stunt man? Three days and you've already grown those big brass balls? Jump up and down and let me hear 'em clang, and then do me a favor and leave 'em home for this gag.

(yanks open the door)

There's just enough room in that Duesenberg for a normal guy...who thinks!

(Cameron slides in)

Show me how long you can hold your breath.

Cameron inhales deeply and Chuck clicks his stopwatch.

CHUCK

Now, look around. Whaddya see?...No roll bar in the roof. That's because the roof caving in really looks gassy on film. You got your protection in the back of the seat...steel sheeting. If the roof goes too far, you get your goddamn head down quick! You listening to me?!...Nod Your head.

(slapping Cameron on back)

You got good lungs.

(buckles Cameron's seatbelt)

You got no shoulder harness because it would show on camera. So when you hit the water, you brace yourself against the steering wheel. It's reinforced. You couldn't break it loose with dynamite...you gettin' light-headed yet?

Cameron shakes his head, "No."

CHUCK

Keep your hands off the doors... You're leaving through the window. You lower them slowly as you sink to equalize the pressure. What are you waitin' for? I'm not gonna be down there holding your hand.

(Cameron lowering windows)

Slower. When you hit bottom, the windows are open and you're gonna make like a minnow. But first, a little fresh air wouldn't hurt. You reach down under the seat and, what do you know, a respirator...Make like you're reaching for it. There'll be one there tomorrow.

Cameron reaches for the non-existent respirator.

CHUCK (CONT'D)

No, keep your face forward, the camera is behind you and it's still running.

By this time, Cameron's breath is giving out and he's struggling to hold it.

CHUCK (CONT'D)

You feel like your lungs are gonna burst? Good. That's the way you're supposed to act like you feel. The moment that water gets above your nose, you gotta look like you're drowning. Remember? Burt wasn't so good at that.

That knocks the wind out of Cameron.

CAMERON

He sure as hell convinced me.

Chuck clicks his stopwatch and scowls.

CHUCK

(defensively)

Things happen crossin' the street!
If somethin' goes cockeyed...screw the scene! Get that mask on.
There's enough oxygen to get you to China.

(rolls up the window)

We'll try it again.

CAMERON

(still panting)

Let me catch my breath.

CHUCK

What you'll catch is a lungful of water! You're at the bottom of the river!...You breathe when I goddamn tell you to breathe!

CAMERON

(the pupil tricking the teacher)

Hey, Chuck, you blind?...Can't you see I've got my respirator on?

CHUCK

You just goddamn remember you don't have gills!!

169A

Chuck has stalked over to the WORKBENCH and angrily picks up the PHONE. which has been ringing incessantly over the last few lines.

CHUCK
(shouting)
What?!!
(listens, then yells to
Cameron)
Eli's at the police station!

CAMERON
That's the best news I've heard.
Let's hope it's a felony.

CHUCK
He needs Gabe. They're lookin' for
a driver so I'm gonna take him.
Come on with me.

CAMERON
For what?

CHUCK
(climbing into the
company car)
You and me are gonna talk about
windows and oxygen and seat belts
and things like that. And if you're
a good boy and listen and don't be a
smart ass, maybe I'll let you sit in
the back seat with Nina Franklin.

CAMERON
Nina?

Chuck, already in the car, is grinning. Now he's even for the
"respirator" bit.

CHUCK
You might even get to hold hands.

170 EXT. POLICE STATION - MOVING SHOT ON CAMERON

The POLICE STATION comes into view, seen through the window of the
company car, which slows as it moves toward the curb. Eli, sitting
on the front stoop, leans wearily against the stone lion. As he
sees the car approach, he moves toward it quickly, opening the door
almost before it stops.

ELI
(beckoning)
Gabe, Nina...

Eli pulls Gabe and Nina toward the police station, yelling back to Cameron and Chuck.

ELI (CONT'D)
You two better wait here.

Cameron watches them, confused, as they start up the steps toward the station house.

171 ANOTHER ANGLE - ELI, NINA, GABE - MOVING SHOT

NINA
I hate this, damn it! Couldn't you have done it without me?

ELI
Let's say you owe it to him. Until two or three days ago, I had a pretty good actor on my hands. Next time you take out the clippers, be a little humane, make sure the guy's got one to spare.

NINA
(furious)
What did you want me to do? Take him in the back room and unzip his fly every time he fluffed a line? What else can I do for your film?

ELI
Just get your greedy little ass inside and make sure you give the performance of your life.
(icily)
This next number, I dedicate to you...dear.

172 INT. POLICE STATION

As the three enter. The station is old with a high sergeant's desk and wooden benches against the walls. Raymond, beyond tears, destroyed, sits among the other refuse of the night: derelicts, stoned kids, etc. On one bench is a SAILOR, with that adenoidal look that betrays the weakness he tries to hide with his "butch" arrogance. Jake, in the doorway of his office, savors the fact that he has finally nailed Eli Cross. Eli captures the setup in a glance...then, instant theater. He strides across the police station to Raymond, takes his head in his hands and kisses him smack on the mouth.

ELI
(vehemently)
Who's better, booby...him or me?

Gabe has come up behind a PATROLMAN, grabs him by the hips and starts humping like a dog in heat. The policeman shrieks in dismay and tries to escape, but Gabe trots along as if they were locked.

ELI
(shouting)
Jake! Throw some water on him,
quick! Only way to get 'em apart!

Gabe is now distracted by the sight of the sailor, who is agape with growing disbelief. Gabe ogles him.

GABE
Yummy...look at the seafood! You're
a humpy little number.
(then to Raymond,
stamping his foot)
You nasty boy. You could've died of
mercury poisoning.

The sailor leaps to his feet in horror, screaming.

SAILOR
Jesus Christ, they're all faggots!

173 ANGLE ON SERGEANT'S DESK

Eli has stormed to the counter and slams his fist down on it furiously, confronting Jake.

ELI

(shouting)

I'm registering a complaint! Thirty-two members of my company got V.D. from your local virgins. The Chamber of Commerce didn't say anything about that in their brochure.

JAKE

You can stop clowning, Eli, I've got a sworn complaint from this sailor...

(jabbing his finger in
Raymond's O.S. direction)

...Your man over there touched his genitals.

174 ANGLE ON RAYMOND AND NINA

She is snuggled against him tenderly, her open mouth kissing his neck and cheek. Raymond, although aware of his desperate situation, is too sick with self-loathing to respond.

175 ANGLE ON ELI AND JAKE

ELI

Oh, Jake! Come on! You wouldn't know your anal invert from a hole in the ground. Raymond makes bad jokes, but they're not illegal. Christ, you've seen us all on the set...clowning around.

176 EXT. POLICE STATION

Cameron stands, peering in through the big front window, feeling once again betrayed. It's like watching TV with the sound shut off. From here, Nina and Raymond are very convincing. Chuck leans against a lamppost, smoking a cigarette, as the charade goes on.

177 INT. POLICE STATION

Eli now going full blast.

ELI

My company's been pouring sixty thousand dollars a week into this place, for which your mayor and governor seem very grateful! We paid enough in taxes and fees alone to buy you parking meters from here to the boardwalk!

SAILOR

(feeling it's all going wrong)

Everything I said in that statement is the flat-ass truth!

Eli pays no attention, knowing that he's got Jake. He gestures toward Nina embracing Raymond.

ELI

Jake, I got a very horny leading lady who's got an early call and would like to spend some time with her boyfriend before she makes "night-night." Now, can I please get 'em outta here before they really do something illegal...and in front of witnesses!

178 INT. HOTEL CORRIDOR - ON ELEVATOR DOORS - NIGHT

It's three o'clock in the morning. The corridors are empty as the elevator door swings open and Nina and Eli step out and move down the hallway, functioning on their last ounce of nervous energy.

ELI

Sorry I had to put you through that. I know it was humiliating.

NINA

...It was awful...I hated it. But you did save that man's life.

ELI

Yeah, that was really nice of me. I'm a nice person. I just wish I had the strength to go to his room and break his spine. On the last day of filming the queen decides to come out of the closet! Wouldn't that have made a lovely headline? You understand, of course, that the film would've been destroyed. Doing that to me...

NINA

Eli, what's wrong?

ELI

Nothing serious. Just a little self-indulgence. Feel-sorry-for-Eli-time.

Eli, on the edge of nervous exhaustion, is actually close to tears.

ELI (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, but you know...it's too goddamn much. Why's everybody on my back? When's somebody gonna say, "There, there Eli?" I'm really surrounded by friends, allies and you..."What else can I do for your film, Eli?"

NINA

(wounded)

That's not fair.

They have reached a turn in the corridor where each would go his separate way. They stop.

ELI

What's not fair...getting my feelings "hurt?" When did I lose you to that soldier boy, Nina? That nice, wholesome, swell-looking kid...wanted by every cop, the FBI and God knows who else, for God knows what crime.

Nina is paralyzed with shock.

ELI (CONT'D)

Come on, Nina, those blue eyes have bedazzled our little girl. For Christ's sake, he reeks of blood.

NINA

You sound as crazy as...
(she stops)

ELI

(wryly)
As who?

NINA

He thinks you're trying to...
(she can't say 'kill')
...harm him.

ELI

Any number of people are trying to harm him...

He walks off down the corridor.

179 INT. HOTEL BASEMENT - LATER THAT NIGHT

Partly crated props and costumes, luggage belonging to the departing film crew is piled against the wall and on shelves. In the cavernous half-lit room, Cameron, once again the coiled, stealthy animal, moves through the shadows among the racks of suitcases, pulling them aside, searching. Discovering one, he sets it on the floor. It's locked. With a metal bar, he breaks the lock and eagerly rifles the contents. Then, sensing a presence, he turns. There stands Nina at the base of the steps watching him. With only a glance to her, he goes on with his search.

CAMERON

How'd you know I was down here?

NINA

The desk clerk...

He finds a WALLET, opens it, getting to his feet triumphantly.

CAMERON

How about that for luck? Burt's from Idaho...no picture on the driver's license.

Cameron stuffs the wallet in his pocket, moving along the row of suitcases. He pulls out a duffel bag, unzips it, shaking the

contents on the floor. Now with the open bag on his arm, he goes along the row of costumes and props like a man in the supermarket, stuffing in things he will need: a pair of hiking boots, a couple of work shirts, a heavy jacket. Passing a shelf of bayonets, he picks one out and throws it in the bag.

NINA
(quietly)
Who are you?

CAMERON
(ignoring the
seriousness)
Name it...

Above the bayonets are army helmets. He tries one on.

CAMERON (CONT'D)
Hey, how's this? A World War One,
uh...what did they call 'em?...
dogfaces... somethin'... doughboys.
(flings a nurses uniform
at her)
Wanna be the nurse?

179A From some hospital props, he grabs a wheelchair and shoves it toward her.

CAMERON (CONT'D)
...You tell me this wouldn't work?
A pretty nurse pushing a vet in a
wheelchair? When we hit that
roadblock, we'd have 'em crying like
babies.

NINA
(quietly)
Who the hell are you?

CAMERON
Somebody trying to stay
alive...anybody--that can get past
the dogs and the quicksand...
(making a shrewd guess)
Who did Eli say I was?

NINA
I'm asking you, God damn...

She has fiercely grabbed his naked shoulder.

CAMERON

Easy with that tatoo...it mighta lost me Eli, but it won me Lt. Emily Schmidt, the greatest boobs in Southeast Asia...and a very patriotic chick. So I got this tattoo, for 28 bucks. And when she saw this shoulder, let me tell ya, holy Jesus! Following which I got the clap from the Lt. And hepatitis from the tattoo needle. You know what bothers me? I think Emily is gonna be very offended by Eli's picture.

Nina cannot endure another moment of this charade.

NINA

Why do they want you? What did you do?

CAMERON

Eli'd tell you...I was a soldier. I did the same as everybody, just one of the boys... emptied my M-16 at any sound... don't know whether I killed gooks or cherries...the new kids from the States, we call 'em cherries, which they were for maybe fifteen minutes. The dry season is when it really breaks loose. You get very tired. It's like falling asleep at the wheel. You close your eyes and it still goes on. You're killin' them, they're killin' you. Couldn't tell ya now what was real except I'm here.

We sense in him the fatigue he is describing, then, pushing aside that memory.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

Hey, once when things were rough and the grass ran out, I shot the hell out of a water buffalo.

(he considers, then passes judgment on himself)

Actually, I wasn't a bad soldier...better than most. Got lotsa pretty ribbons. Funny...sort of like when I did that first stunt and everybody started clapping... nothing like a slap on the back to ruin a man, blow his sense of proportion. So, I got home...and, uh...I guess I expected something. Nothing fancy, but... something, you know...a free car wash, double blue chip stamps, extra time on the parking meter... I don't know... Instead, people... uh, didn't seem too pleased.

(trying to hide a lot of pain)

In fact, they acted like I was gonna start killing babies...

She crosses to him, deeply moved.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

Shit. I was supposed to get married, run an ice cream parlor.

(picks up his suitcases)

I gotta go.

179B Although they're standing only a couple of feet apart, he lifts his hand tentatively, as if to wave goodbye.

NINA

...What about the roadblocks?

CAMERON

I'll go through the woods.

NINA

Don't you suppose there'll be cops in the woods.

CAMERON

I suppose there are cops in the woodwork! But what the hell...it's a nice night.

(he starts to go)

Lovers facing farewells have a gift for suspending time, and Nina speaks out, unable to let him leave.

NINA

I've always liked the woods at night. They're very romantic... You can hunt for truffles. It might be such fun, we'd just keep going.

Cameron can't afford to fall for her softness.

CAMERON

You said "we." What about your two scenes?

NINA

That's true...One of them is three pages of me making a tunafish salad for an American flyer in 1917... And I've got to weigh that against losing the man I love. It's a big decision.

CAMERON

Nina, you're making me crazy.

NINA

I'm sorry. I'm a little crazy myself. I can't let you go and I don't even know who you are.

(suddenly the dam bursts
and all self-control is
gone)

Why are they chasing you?! What
have you done? What happens to me
in the woods? Will I need a bayonet
too?

179C

He stands there, staring at her, his face suddenly savage. After everything, the lady is afraid of him. He picks up the duffel bag and moves for the door, then turns on her, punishing her with his words.

CAMERON

The charge was attempted murder. I bashed this cop's head in. It took the jury about two fucking minutes. It could of been worse. It could of been life. But the judge...he looked real nice at me, and said you were a damn good soldier, son...So he only gave me twenty years. No way! Enough!...You know how long I was in that prison -- nineteen months -- and then I was gone! I was gone!

She stares in shock and horror. His anger is like ice.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

Caught me breaking into a store...oh, not to rob it...I went there to kill the bastard who owned it...

NINA

Why?

CAMERON

...Because...

179D

Suddenly the ice turns to steam. His self-control shatters like glass. There in the basement of a 100-year old hotel, before an audience of one, Cameron ERUPTS, spewing out the memory of his mortification and crucifixion...not without the silent resignation of Jesus, but with the howling rage of a mad dog...Pluto with the rabies...

CAMERON (CONT'D)

...Because...it seemed like a good idea to twist his fucking head off! Said I could be his partner when I got back...lyin' son of a bitch was "real sorry things were slack..." Slack my ass...he just didn't want me hangin' around because he was bangin' my old lady. So I go down and start bangin' on his door!
(he starts pounding on the mirror)

CAMERON (CONT'D)

...He's closed. It's two o'clock in the morning. I want to smash his face in and he's closed! "OPEN UP, YOU BASTARD."

179E Cameron's fist SMASHES his own face in the dressing table mirror. His reflection crazes and falls to pieces.

NINA

(screaming)

Your hand!

Cameron holds up his fist to her, shaking it in glee.

CAMERON

Bang! That bright, shiny front window went bye-bye!

(reveling in his own insanity)

...Maybe he's screwin' her behind the counter...I climb in there screamin' "WHERE ARE YA? Come out here and be a man! Where are ya? Behind that counter, you son-of-a-bitch?"

Cameron kicks over the makeup table as though it were the counter...tubes and glasses shatter all over the floor.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

Ya know what's behind that counter?...

(the ultimate horror)

...41-DIFFERENT-KINDS-OF-ICE CREAM..." and all that fuckin' SYRUP!...

179F There is a rainbow row of makeup jars and hair tints. He starts HURLING them against the wall where they smash, punctuating his speech with bursts of gooey color.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

...And these little Mickey Mouse faces on the walls!...with candy eyeballs!...

He pauses, catching his breath, as another image emerges from the swirl of memory.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

(tense and frightened)
...Then...I see this thing glowing
in the dark...I hit that floor so
fast. Christ, I nearly swallowed my
heart. That second I was sure...it
was Charlie...a cigarette butt, some
guy on a V.C. Patrol!...

(his panic subsides)
Know what it was? It was the
GODDAMN PILOT LIGHT ON THE HOT FUDGE
MACHINE!! That did it! That DID
IT! HOT FUDGE?! Me buried in shit,
being the damn good soldier the
judge said I was, yes sir, people
sitting there on their fat asses
feedin' their fat faces. "Can I
have an extra cherry? Can I have an
extra cherry?"

Cameron rips Denise's electric hair dryer from the wall and hurls it
across the basement.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

I smashed that fucking fudge pot
across the room, smack into that
shelf full of animals...and it
starts raining pussycats and monkeys
and kangaroo cookies like Noah's
Ark!

The hair dryer smashes against a shelf, toppling ammunition boxes
and bottles onto the carcass of a disassembled World War I airplane.
The propeller topples and falls through a German recruiting poster,
and just out at the Kaiser's crotch.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

"How long should a girl wait" she
says? FOR GODDAMN EVER, BITCH,
THAT'S HOW LONG!

Cameron's hands have come to rest on a metal laundry bin. He grips
it and lifts it over his head.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

I picked up this fifty-pound ice
cream vat...FLAVOR-OF-THE-MONTH!...
ROYAL-BAVARIAN-CHOCOLATE-MIST!...and
I started running with that son-of-
a-bitch...

Cameron starts running across the room and just as he's about to hurl it, he COLLIDES with a jutting shelf, which knocks him flat on his back. The shelf falls and thirty or forty one-gallon PAINT CANS cascade on top of him. It looks disastrous. Nina runs to him, terrified, but before the last can has even come to rest, Cameron emerges from the pile of cans, throwing them aside, still thrashing and screaming as he struggles to his feet.

At the sight of him, Nina starts laughing. But Cameron, who has somehow managed to keep his grip on the laundry basket, raises it over his head as if nothing has happened, hurls the clothes bin, screaming:

CAMERON (CONT'D)
SCOOP THAT UP YOUR ROYAL BAVARIAN
STRAWBERRY SNATCH!

With the effort, Cameron's feet fly out from under him as if he had stepped in oil. In fact, he has stepped in paint, and lands flat on his ass in the green goo. Nina "bracks" out an uncontrollable guffaw.

CAMERON
(bellowing)
It's not funny!

Shamed, Nina runs to him.

NINA
Oh, baby...

But, as she reaches him, her feet too are caught in the paint and she slides forward like an ice skater, spraddling him, landing on her ass. His rage vanishes as he points at her, breaking into a fiendish, uncontrollable cackle. These pratfalls are a catharsis that has released the pressure and the madness. They attempt to gain their feet, skidding and sliding in the paint. He succeeds, but Nina fails.

NINA
(through laughter)
Let me go to the bathroom. I'm
gonna have an accident.

CAMERON

You'll miss the main part! Killer Cameron's ghastly crime! I was freaked out of my head! And, suddenly there's this big flashlight shining in my face. I just grabbed that goddamn ice cream bucket and slopped it...right over the guy's head!

Although Cameron's got nothing in his hands, he pantomimes swinging that fifty-pound ice cream bucket around in the air, losing his balance and landing on his back in the paint beside Nina. Her hysteria is renewed, but Cameron stops laughing.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

(quietly)

It's not funny. It wasn't him. It was a cop. I got out of there like a shot. I didn't know he was knocked out. How the hell did I know he was gonna lay there all night with his head in the ice cream?

NINA

(suddenly serious)

Oh, my God. He died?

CAMERON

No, he's in the hospital.

NINA

Oh, no.

CAMERON

Oh, yes. That ice cream's goddamn cold!

(struggling for a proper description)

His nose...it froze and his ear froze, see...and...

Despite the horror of it, Nina starts giggling. She can't help it.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

(indignantly)

No, it's terrible!...He lost the tip of his nose and his ear lobe...

179H

Then, Cameron, realizing the absurdity, starts giggling too. Out of control, Nina scrambles to her feet and dashes for the ladies room. Cameron follows her to the door, still talking as it closes behind her.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

I'll tell ya, it's a bad year to mess with cops. You get the FBI screaming down on your ass...

NINA

(through the door)

Oh, God. Too late...Thanks a lot!

Abruptly, Cameron's energy is gone. The hilarity is over. He leans his forehead against the door in exhaustion and despair.

CAMERON

(softly)

...If we woke up Eli and told him about the ice cream...would he forgive me and call off the stunt?...

180

INT. GARAGE - PRE-DAWN

The DUESENBERG STANDS silhouetted in the darkness, light glinting dimly off it like the gleam from fine wood of a splendid coffin waiting in the slumber room before services begin. Behind it, a side door of the garage opens. But it is not visitors coming to pay their last respects, it is Cameron and Nina. He is wearing Burt's clothes.

Nina moves quickly to a WHITE CONVERTIBLE as Cameron crosses to the big overhead garage doors and hits the electric SWITCH. NOTHING HAPPENS. He flips another switch and harsh overhead lights illuminate the reality of the garage. Nina has started the convertible, as Cameron tries to lift the garage door handles.

CAMERON

How the hell d'ya open this thing?

VOICE (O.S.)

Sorry, folks, it's locked.

Nina gasps. Cameron whirls towards the voice. A COP with a big flashlight stands in the open doorway peering in at them.

CAMERON

We know it's locked. Would you open up for us?

COP

Can't...not 'til seven o'clock. Mr. Cross's orders.

NINA

(the actress)

I'm sure Mr. Cross will understand when you tell him that Miss Franklin had a sudden desire for Swedish pancakes for breakfast and this gentleman had a sudden desire to keep me company...I'm Nina Franklin, the star of the film.

COP

Pancake house don't open 'til eight.

NINA

That's all right, we'll find some place.

COP

Town's closed up pretty tight this time of night.

NINA

Then we'll drive to Cape Long.

COP

Ya'll never get through the roadblocks.

CAMERON

Why not?

COP

Chief's orders. Mr. Cross didn't want any members of the company leavin' town tonight. Guess he wanted everybody good and rested for the last day.

(he grins)

Figure it's no secret about the Chief hopin' this is the last day...

NINA

(fiercely)

Are you telling me that if I decide to take a drive at any time of the day or night or whenever I damn please, I need Mr. Cross's permission? Mr. Cross does not control me or anyone else, including this gentleman and he does not control the public roads!

COP

No, but the police do. I'll wake Mr. Cross up and ask him if you want, but it's an awful hour. Should be somebody in the hotel kitchen by now. I'll get 'em to rustle somethin' up for you. Maybe not pancakes, but eggs, if you want it.

CAMERON

I think the lady had her heart set on pancakes, but thanks.

COP

Okay. You change your mind, call... I'll be around.

He leaves. The officer is gone and so is their plan. They're in limbo...people in a waiting room whose flight has been cancelled.

CAMERON

I can't believe it...He knows. The son-of-a-bitch knows whatever I'm thinking. I'm beginning to feel like something that Sam wrote! I'm not real. I'm some jerk American flyer from World War I who has to go over a bridge and die because the goddamn script says so! It's crazy...I'm trapped in his goddamn story. If somebody lost that page, I'd be fine. If he crossed it out and wrote something else like -- "At the last moment, he veers the big car from the railing--then goes speeding on to live happy ever after..."

(he looks at the Duesenberg appraisingly, then grins as a plan starts to form)

...How about that?! Empty road, me out there all alone, the crew 'way back, breathless as I approach the bridge. And then..."Hey, what happened?!" A fucking rewrite's what happened! I'll have a fifteen-minute jump on them before they figure out they're shooting a new version!

Nina has come to life, her eyes aglow like a shrewd little girl who's already decided how the fairy tale will end!

NINA

...And what about the love story? What happens to the Austrian girl? People will leave the movie feeling terrible...I know! She goes with him!

CAMERON

How?

Nina has walked around to the back of the Duesenberg and opens the TRUNK.

NINA

In here.

CAMERON

(cautiously)
Not bad. But, I think they arrange
to meet later...like in a Greyhound
Bus station a couple of towns away.

NINA
No...look...
(she climbs in)
See how big it is? Comfortable,
too...Honestly, honey, it's a better
ending.

CAMERON
(firmly)
Nina, get out of the trunk.

The pretending has ended.

NINA
And what happens in the morning? Do
I show up on the set in my little
pink pinafore and say, "Hi, Eli.
Where's my hug and kiss...?" How do
I do that now?

CAMERON
(sternly)
...Get out of the trunk.

NINA
...Or should I trot up to my room to
catch a couple of winks and cuddle
up with a dozen sleeping pills?

CAMERON
(angry)
It's my nightmare...Stay out! This
isn't the time to solve your
neurotic problems! I'm trying to
stay alive!

NINA
(shouting back)
So am I. And I never claimed not to
have "neurotic problems!"

CAMERON
(interrupting)
Oh, for Christ's sake...

NINA

...They come with the body! It's
all one. A package deal!

The shouting ends...and in despairing silence, VOICES of approaching WORKMEN are heard, grumbling that the coffee's late.

CAMERON

(urgent whisper)

Nina, please, there's somebody
coming. Get out of the trunk...

As we glimpse the WORKMEN in the doorway, she reaches up, grabs the inside of the trunk lid and pulls it down, disappearing from sight, as the trunk slams shut.

181

EXT. THE OLD ABANDONED ROAD - EARLY MORNING

In the stillness, as the morning sun crests the trees, their shadows move like a parting curtain, leaving sunlight to warm the old stones of the abandoned road. The ancient bridge spans the black river, idling toward the sea. It is a perfect day, tranquil except for the faint distant "rumbling" intruding into our consciousness. As it grows louder and LOUDER, a flock of birds is frightened from the trees, a rusty beer can by the roadside begins to tremble and roll from the vibration.

Rounding the bend of the road into view are a half-dozen kids on bicycles, peddling furiously, laughing and yelling and looking back at what now appears behind them: the first vehicle of an incredible carnival parade -- or is it a funeral procession? Long, short, tall, fat vehicles; the stretch-out car, the cab towing portable toilets, the tractor pulling a generator rig, the Cortez Camper dressing rooms, the stake-bed loaded with reflectors rattling like radar screens, panel trucks with studio emblems, a vintage German army truck filled with soldiers, patrol cars and motorcycles, the huge, bright yellow construction crane on its Caterpillar treads, its pneumatic snout jutting forward thirty yards like a morning hard-on sniffing around for some tunnel to hump -- a few technicians straddle it having their morning Danish and coffee. In the midst of these, on a low-slung flatbed trailer rides the Duesenberg -- the coffin on its caisson.

The caravan grinds, hisses, wheezes to a halt and the A.D., astride the hood of the first vehicle, dismounts and raises his electric bullhorn to begin what will be an incessant squawking of instructions, reprimands, coaxings and complaints.

A.D.

All right, people...the rest period is over. Another fifteen minutes and we start losing sun. Come on, let's get the equipment off those trucks.

The Second A.D.'s run around like sheepdogs herding the laborers, snapping at their flanks, barking their instructions over electric horns.

A.D. (CONT'D)

Chuck...Chuck Barton, where do you want the Duesenberg?

Grips and laborers are carrying the big reflectors through the brush into the hills.

A.D. (CONT'D)

Mr. Cross, please. The camera crew's ready for a setup.

182 ANGLE ON ELI AND THE CAMERA CREW

They are already huddled, squatting on their haunches under a tree.

ELI

The R-35 in the chopper on the maxi-mount, the underwater Imo in the Duesenberg...

GABE

I'll hide an Arri with a zoom up on the hill.

ELI

And what about number four? Maybe hang a platform under the bridge with the speed camera?

GABE

(admiringly)

Heavy...From the top of the screen right into the water...squish.

183 ANGLE ON THE DUESENBERG

Being rolled up to a mark in the center of the road. Crewmen swarm; in and under it, tuning, polishing, testing, installing camera, sound, electrical equipment, as Chuck hovers over them.

A.D.

All drivers, please...I want every
equipment vehicle back behind the
bend...

As motors rev, the two sheepdogs squawk: "Out of sight..." "Behind
the bend..." then are lost in the rising dust of their herd.

184

ANOTHER ANGLE

Cables are being strung out of sight along the side of the road,
snapped into junction boxes that spread their electrified tentacles,
strangling the landscape.

A.D.

(pointing at the mike boom)
What's that supposed to be, Ralph?
...An elm or an oak? Get that mike
off the boom and into the bushes.
Come on, people, let's think! We're
losing the sun!

185

ANOTHER ANGLE FURTHER DOWN THE ROAD

Gabe, Chuck, the A.D. and a Technician move down the road toward us,
shoulder to shoulder, halting on the bridge. Chuck and Gabe move to
the stone railing. Chuck taps on it, producing a hollow sound.
Gabe, examining a corner of this false section...

GABE

(to A.D.)
Have 'em touch up that corner of the
section. It looks phony as hell.

The A.D. has been drawing a chalk line across the road.

A.D.

(to Technician)
Climb down there in the bushes and
stay out of sight.

TECHNICIAN

What about earphones?

A.D.

Just watch your mark.

186 WIDE ANGLE ON THE DUESENBERG

Behind it, the last of the equipment trucks is being jack-knifed out of sight. A row of reflectors stand like sentinels on the hill, bathing the Duesenberg in light. Workmen swarm about it like ants on the queen's birthday.

187 ANGLE ON ELI

ELI

(into walkie-talkie)

Where's the chopper? We'd kinda like to have you join us...if you can find the way.

VOICE

(over walkie-talkie)

Fifteen minutes, Eli. We're just warming her up.

Eli grabs an electric horn from the hand of a passing A.D.

ELI

All right, everybody...may I have your attention, please?

Instantly the frantic A.D.'s begin squawking, "Everybody put down what you're doing, the director wants to talk."

ELI

(thru speaker)

This is the one and only Duesenberg we have in stock. When that car goes into the water, we're not going to see it again. So, once the action starts, no matter what happens, keep it going.

188 ANGLE ON CORTEZ DRESSING ROOM

As Cameron steps out through the open doorway, buttoning his costume.

ELI (CONT'D)

...We must have this shot. Therefore, I now order no camera to jam and no cloud to pass before the sun.

189 LONG SHOT ON THE DUESENBERG

As Cameron moves toward it uncertainly. Eli, some distance away, surrounded by members of his crew, glances up.

ELI

(yelling)

How ya doin', soldier? Where'd ya learn to do without sleep?

Without awaiting an answer, Eli returns to his work, as Cameron approaches the Duesenberg.

190 CLOSE ON DUESENBERG

Cameron walks around it, testing and checking, but moving relentlessly toward the humpback trunk. A horn honks and a police car slides up. Jake leans out the window, waves at Cameron jovially.

JAKE

How do you guys get accident insurance? Must cost you an arm and a leg...

(chuckling)

...that's a good one.

He drives on toward a parked German army truck, in which lounge several soldiers. Chuck approaches Cameron.

CHUCK

You're lookin' real strong, kid. Is that loose change I hear jinglin' or are they beginnin' to grow?

CAMERON

(flatly)

Wanna check?

CHUCK

C'mon, lemme show you this truck...

They walk towards the German truck.

CHUCK (CONT'D)

I'm sending it on ahead. During the gag, it's gonna be comin' down the road towards you when you get to the bridge.

Cameron tenses at this information.

CHUCK (CONT'D)

Relax, what does it change? I'm only tellin' you so you don't buzz off into space when you see 'em. They'll be shooting at you and that's what's supposed to make you go into the river.

190A They've reached the truck where Jake stands proudly. The Property Man is handing out rifles and boxes of bullets to the German soldiers, whom we now recognize as police officers from the town. One cop, tying his shoe, lifts his head and grins at Cameron like an old buddy -- the officer from the garage last night.

COP

Hey, you ever get those pancakes?

JAKE

...My boys...Can't recognize 'em. How could I say no, after all the crap they've taken because of this company the last six weeks?

CHUCK

(good-naturedly)

Yeah, a cop'll do anything for fifty bucks, even be an actor.

SECOND COP

These guns are kinda modern for World War I.

PROPERTY MASTER

(to Chuck)

You want me to drive back and get the old ones.

CHUCK

(deciding)

Shit...forget it. How much'll they see from the helicopter?

If Cameron was upset by the change in the stunt, he is now really unnerved by the sight of those cops with guns. The second cop is loading cartridges.

CAMERON
(starting back to
Duesenberg)
Hope those are really blanks.

SECOND COP
(chuckling)
Don't say so on the box!

191 ANGLE ON DUESENBERG'S TRUNK

As Cameron arrives and casually leans against the trunk and then gently taps. He must get Nina out of there. With determination, he reaches for the trunk handle. Arms wearing the same costume as his own reach in, holding the trunk closed. It is Raymond.

RAYMOND
No need to look... If she loves
you, she's still there. If she
doesn't...then it doesn't really
matter...does it?

How can he know? -- Everything is out of control -- a voice calls.

TECHNICIAN'S VOICE
Hey, Lucky, we need you!

He turns and moves numbly to the car door.

TECHNICIAN (CONT'D)
Get in, will ya?

Dazed, Cameron climbs behind the wheel.

192 INT. DUESENBERG

TECHNICIAN (CONT'D)
(leaning in passenger's
side)
Look straight ahead, can you see
that red light out of the corner of
your eye?

A tiny red light is mounted in the corner over the windshield.

TECHNICIAN (CONT'D)
That'll let you know when the film's
running, so be sure you don't turn
your face to the camera.

The technician tightens a final screw on the red light then, leaning back out of the car, yells O.S.

TECHNICIAN (CONT'D)

All right, bump it once.

(to Cameron)

Does it work?

Cameron, barely hearing, looks straight ahead without response. Jake lounges at the driver's window, kibitzing the operation.

TECHNICIAN (CONT'D)

(yells O.S.)

Bump it again.

(looks back into the car)

CAMERA ON?

CAMERON

(by reflex)

What?

The words "CAMERA ON" sound exactly like "CAMERON." It sounded as though his real name was called and he automatically answered. Has his identity been exposed? His eyes widen. The technician, getting no response, calls to Jake.

TECHNICIAN

Ask him if it's on?

JAKE

Cameron?

He whirls to see Jake staring at him. His hand darts to the ignition key, the engine roars to life.

JAKE (CONT'D)

(startled)

Hey, they wanna know is the CAMERA ON?

Cameron realizes his error, but it's too late, he's in a panic. In his mind, he's given himself away. The road ahead is clear -- GO! He jams the car in gear and slams the accelerator to the floor. The Duesenberg leaps forward, screeching wildly. In its wake -- chaos. Everyone running, yelling...

CHUCK

(yelling)

That crazy bastard! Who cued him?

A.D.

Not me!

ELI

(cold; urgent)

Roll! Roll the film! Move your
asses -- I want that shot!

At their master's voice, they leap.

A.D.

(screams)

End markers!

SOUND MAN

(shouts)

Speed!

193 INT. DUESENBERG

Speed. The needle hits sixty-five -- seventy -- climbing fast. Cameron grips the wheel, looking at that empty road. An involuntary shout swells up and escapes his mouth.

CAMERON

(exultantly)

Yahooo!

(toward Nina in the
trunk)

Hang on to everything, baby, we're
on our way! You okay?

The needle hits eighty -- eighty-five. Ahead, the bridge is rushing toward us. Now the arches of the stone railing are strobing past. Through them, he sees the black river which he has escaped. Triumphant, his hand rises, middle finger extended. Suddenly the red camera light goes on, the underwater camera behind him begins whirring. He moves his finger behind him for a perfect close-up, (recalling that moment in the tower):

CAMERON

(screaming)

Shoot this, Eli!

The center of the bridge is an instant away, an approaching blur.

194 EXT. ROADSIDE - ANGLE ON TECHNICIAN

Crouching -- tensely watching the chalk line on the road as the Duesenberg flashes past. His finger presses a button.

195 INSERT - FRONT WHEEL OF DUESENBERG

Blam! The whole front wheel of the car is blown off by an explosive charge.

196 ANOTHER ANGLE

The Duesenberg drops on one axle. Metal screams against stone, as though it were Cameron himself, screaming. Skidding, spinning, tearing through the papier-mache railing, plunging out of control into space, where it hovers for a brief instant and arcs downward like a dying bird.

197 INT. DUESENBERG - CLOSE ON CAMERON

A cry of such anguish and despair.

CAMERON
(screaming)
Ninaaa-a-a-a-a-!!!

198 INT. DUESENBERG - WIDE ANGLE PAST CAMERON THROUGH WINDSHIELD

The river rushes up and the car smashes into it with a deafening, shattering roar, plunging beneath the surface to a dark and soundless world -- except for a tiny red light, the whir of a camera and Cameron's desperate cries. Tearing his seatbelt off he flings himself toward the rear of the car, clawing at the back seat to reach Nina. Incredibly, there is sunlight again as the car is buoyed to the surface. There, again, is the living world - the road, the trees. In that brief instant, through the rear window, Cameron has a wild, tilted glimpse of a pink pinafore -- Nina, standing by the rail looking down, Eli beside her. The car noses downward, water rising swiftly over the rear window. The last image on Cameron's retina is that wild, eager, little-girl excitement on Nina's face. Then he's alone again, entombed in the darkening water as the car plunges toward the bottom.

Cameron sits, immobilized at the realization that his betrayal is total. Everyone, even Nina, has conspired to bring him to this -- red light glowing, camera whirring, to capture the moment of his death.

Outrage galvanizes him to action. He reaches for the door handles, to rip them open -- they snap off in his hands. Now there is a rumbling and rending of metal as the roof begins to implode, crushing down toward him. Under the immense pressure, the rear window bursts inward, the river rushing in a wild torrent. The memory of Chuck's voice..."the windows." He lowers the front window slowly. The water now pours in faster. The level has risen to his chin. He gasps a final breath and the water rises over his head. Still the red light burns. He reaches beneath the seat for the oxygen cylinder and tries to pull it loose. It won't move. The impact of the car hitting the water has bent the seat frame. His groping hand finds the hose, the oxygen mask. A hope. Though every second is robbing his chance for life, his movements under water are as in slow motion. Pulling the mask to his face, he takes an eager breath and chokes as water fills his mouth. The rubber tube has broken loose from the cylinder and is floating free -- as it must have with Burt. Pressure of the onrushing water has stopped as the water reaches the roof. For a moment there is a strange stillness which Cameron, his lungs bursting, swims through, out the window and toward the surface.

199 ANGLE ON CAMERON

Moving upward through river slime, in a world that grows lighter, in a desperate race to reach air.

Daylight! Gasping, half unconscious, barely able to move his arms to stay afloat. Adrift in the current, he touches land, clawing at the rocks and pulling himself onto the shore. His muscles, still moving by motor reflex, driven by survival instinct, take him crawling from the river bank through the tall grass -- still the fugitive, the "man on the run." Then, he lifts his head and stops at what he sees before him:

200 POV

Fanned out across the field is a row of men, guns held ready. Policemen from the truck in their German uniforms moving forward slowly -- carefully searching the terrain in an arch which, as it closes, must irrevocably reach Cameron.

201 ANOTHER ANGLE

It's over. Without strength or will, he lies waiting for them as though his eyes were made of glass. They see him now, but their pace doesn't change. As they take the last few steps toward him, he sees their shoulders, waists, knees and then only a circle of feet around him.

Their hands roughly grab him, pulling him to his feet, shoving him brutally about. Angry cop faced growling: "Kill the son-of-a-

bitch," "Shoot 'im," "Cut it," "Hang 'im," and then loudly, "Cut it!" He feels a blow on the back, then another. They seem too gentle. Why is that cop smiling? Some of them are walking away. Where are the handcuffs? Why is he shaking my hand instead? Then the jumble of voices is becoming clearer..."No matter what they pay you, make 'em give you a raise!"..."Fantastic, my wife thinks being a cop is dangerous -- you guys are terrific!" It finally sinks in, the insane, absurd, devastating, humiliating realization that it was all just another scene in a movie that came off as planned.

He is alive and free. Is that gurgle we hear in Cameron's throat the water that he swallowed or an unseemly giggle? Then it chokes into laughter.

202
POV

Here comes Chuck, running across the field with his silly stunt bag filled with elastic bandages. How funny. Here's the helicopter hovering with Gabe descending the rope ladder bearing film for Eli, who runs to meet him. How hilarious. There's the pink pinafore...Nina holding the skirt up to her waist as she wades through the tall grass towards him. How sweetly absurd.

A.D.

All right, come on...let's get the stuff in the trucks, we're losing sun!

203
ANGLE ON CAMERON

Chuck has reached Cameron, throwing a blanket over him. He pulls a pint from his back pocket.

CHUCK

Take a belt. Don't be stingy.

As Cameron tilts his head back, the bottle to his mouth, he sees skin divers setting down their rescue equipment and stripping out of their dripping wet-suits.

CAMERON

Those guys down there the whole time?

Chuck, who is rubbing Cameron violently through the blanket to restore his circulation, replies with the highest compliment he can pay?

CHUCK

I can't hear ya...they're clangin' too loud.

204 ANOTHER ANGLE

Nina has reached an impasse twenty yards away in her journey of love toward Cameron -- a muddy section of swamp.

NINA

(shouts across the
distance to Cameron)

I can't come any further. What
should I do? I'll get the dress all
muddy and I need it for the next
scene.

CAMERON

(grinning with good
nature)

Tunafish salad...I know.

NINA

(shouts)

They found me five minutes after you
left. I felt ridiculous.

CAMERON

(waves back)

Just as well!

NINA

(shouts)

When Eli told me you'd changed your
mind and decided to do the stunt, at
first I didn't believe him, but I
guess you really did. I tried to
find you.

Eli is standing nearby listening to this macabre exchange between lovers.

NINA (CONT'D)

(to include Eli)

I'm sure glad you two made up! Boy,
Lucky, were you wonderful...I guess
I have to go now. See you after.

She awkwardly turns, her dress still held high and yells back over her shoulder...

NINA (CONT'D)

I'm sorry I was so nutty last night.
I always get crazy at the end of a
film.

Nina continues picking her way toward the road. And then...

205 CLOSE ON NINA

Suddenly she turns, running headlong, pell-mell across the swamp and through the mud holes, drenching her pink pinafore into a muddy rag, losing a shoe, ripping her hose -- and then wildly into the arms of Cameron, smearing him with love and mud! And then, just as quickly, she is gone, racing back across the field, hopping like a rabbit without her shoe, toward the road.

206 ANOTHER ANGLE

Cameron is brimming with pleasure. Chuck, totally ignored, picks up his stunt bag.

CHUCK

(dryly)

Lover, I think your circulation's back to normal. And please, next time will ya listen for the cue -- the word is "action."

He walks off, leaving Cameron draped in the blanket like an Indian. Eli steps up to him looking very serious, lifts his hand in the Indian sign of greeting and says:

ELI

"How!" I have always had a great compassion for your people. Long before it was popular, I felt a repugnance for General Custer.

Cameron stares at him, incredulous.

ELI (CONT'D)

My God, I think he's breathing. There're days I can't do anything right. I hope this doesn't screw up our relationship, your being alive and all.

CAMERON

(shaking his head)
...You sure took a hell of a chance,
Eli...why didn't you just let me go
last night?

ELI

What, with Nina in the trunk? I've
got scenes to shoot with her...

CAMERON

...All right. This morning then.
Chuck could have done the stunt.

ELI

(thoughtfully)
I knew a guy who made an anti-war
film. When they previewed it in his
hometown, army enlistment went up
six hundred percent. I'm making
this film trying to convince the
whole world that maybe there's a
better way to get home for
Thanksgiving...and I can't even
convince one dumb kid with a
tattoo...I couldn't have you run
around paranoid the rest of your
life thinking I was trying to kill
you.

CAMERON

Paranoid?

Sam has run up, out of breath, followed by crew members.

ELI

Hey Sam, the kid just licked your
screenplay. He named the disease.

SAM

Yeah, what?

ELI

...a social disease, very common.

SAM

...like gonorrhoea...

ELI

You're close. It's spread the same way...by screwing your fellow man.

CAMERON

I hope you find an easier cure. That was the hardest thousand bucks I ever made.

A horn honks. It is Jake who, in his enthusiasm, has driven the police car bumping over the marshes to Eli and Cameron.

JAKE

You guys want a ride back?

ELI

(moving toward the helicopter)

No, we're goin' in the chopper.

CAMERON

(considers it)

Thanks, Eli, but that looks too dangerous. I think I'll ride with Jake. Good luck with the picture.

He moves toward police car.

ELI

(yelling to Cameron)

Don't miss that plane, Burt!

JAKE

(leaning across Cameron to yell at Eli)

He better not! Any member of your company found within city limits after five o'clock tonight, gets shot on sight!

Eli stops, suddenly registering what Cameron had said.

ELI

...What thousand bucks? That stunt paid six-fifty.

CAMERON

(surprised)

Chuck told me a thousand...

ELI

(firmly)
Six-fifty!

CAMERON
(getting upset)
A thousand!

ELI
(relenting)
Okay, seven-fifty. Split the
difference...

CAMERON
Bullshit! You're trying to screw
me!!

ELI
(exasperated)
Christ! You're doing it again!
(striding toward the
chopper, shouting)
Sam! This paranoid little bastard
still doesn't understand your damn
screenplay!

Eli is climbing into the helicopter.

CAMERON
(shrieking)
That's your big problem, Eli! You
use people! I want my money, a
thousand bucks!

ELI
(to Cameron)
Six-fifty!!
(to Sam)
Rewrite the battle scene and let the
tank run him over! The stunt pays
six-fifty!

The helicopter takes off, zooms under the bridge, up into a
hammerhead and soars back, while Cameron continues to scream at it.

CAMERON
Come back here. I'm tired of being
your goddamn clown! Pay me my
thousand bucks!

Eli's voice on the helicopter's P.A. speaker echoes through the
canyon. as the chopper cavorts overhead and skims away.

- 157 -

ELI'S VOICE (ON P.A.)
How tall was King Kong...

- FADE OUT -