

THE SCOUT

by

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Steve Nebraska Version

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FADE IN:

1 EXT. MOTEL - NIGHT

A Best Western. It's late at night. Most of the lights are out. The manager is dozing in his office. TRACK IN toward room 15. The blue light of a television is visible through the window. An old movie is on.

MOVIE TRACK (V.O.)

'He was king of his world. Now  
he comes as a captive...'

DISSOLVE TO:

2 INT. MOTEL ROOM

The movie is KING KONG.

MOVIE TRACK

'... a curiosity for your eyes.'

The actor Robert Armstrong is about to bring out Kong. A brief snore is heard. PAN BACK to where the occupant of the motel room sits fighting sleep, a cigarette burning in the tin ashtray beside him. He is a man of about fifty, wearing boxer shorts, an undershirt, and a New York Yankees cap. The man is AL PERCOLO, scout. He has fallen asleep for an instant, but his own snore startles him awake. He peers at the screen.

AL

'Presenting...'

CUT TO:

3 CLOSE - TV SCREEN

The curtain rises, revealing the manacled giant ape. The audience screams, gasps.

CUT TO:

4 MASTER

AL

Don't be alarmed, ladies and  
gentlemen, those chains are made  
of twelve gauge steel.

MOVIE TRACK (approx.)

'Don't be alarmed, ladies and  
gentlemen, those chains...'

(CONTINUED)

4

CONTINUED:

Al rises and shuffles off to the john.

AL

All right, boys.

On screen, Carl Denham is leading out the gentlemen of the press.

MOVIE TRACK

'All right, boys.'

REPORTER (ON MOVIE TRACK)

Phone it in. Denham's discovered the eighth wonder of the world.

We are discreet, but it is evident that Al is sitting on the toilet. He is leafing through the large book. As we MOVE CLOSER, we can see that it is a scrapbook, full of memorabilia from Al's days as a relief pitcher for the Washington Senators and Detroit Tigers. There are pictures, baseball picture cards, newspaper clippings, headlines such as "AL SAVES ANOTHER," "NO. 10 FOR PERCOLO," "TIGERS SWEEP, AL SAVES TWO." "AL PERCOLO TO SCOUT FOR YANKEES."

AL

(looking up from  
scrapbook)

Phone it in. Percolo's discovered the eighth wonder of the world.

5

EXT. MOTEL - MORNING

Al leaves his motel room, dressed in slacks, windbreaker, Yankee cap. He gets into a mid-70's Plymouth and drives away.

CUT TO:

6

EXT. CAR

Moving along a suburban highway.

CUT TO:

7

INT. CAR

Al turns on the radio.

RADIO

'... lack of progress to an arms  
limitation treaty.'

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

AL  
Who gives a shit.

RADIO  
'Nine-forty-five, time for Bill  
Robers and the sports.'

AL  
Now we're talking.

CUT TO:

8 EXT. CAR

It moves through residential streets, reaches a leafy campus: Eucharist High School. Al pulls into the parking lot of the school's athletic field. We see the young ballplayers warming up in the background. Al gets out of his car, walks toward the field.

END CREDITS.

9 BALL FIELD

Al walks onto the field, watches the young athletes tossing the ball back and forth.

VOICE  
Hey, it's the pride of the Yankees!

Al turns around and smiles.

CUT TO:

10 REVERSE ANGLE

Two other scouts are seated in the bleachers: MIKE CARUSO and FRED McDERMOTT of the Red Sox.

CARUSO  
You fly down in the Yankee jet?

Al climbs up to join them.

AL  
Yankee jet. I just got stuck for a new transmission. Three hundred bucks.

(he reaches the  
scouts, shakes  
their hands)  
Freddie, Mikey... Jesus, I didn't  
know the Red Sox paid for you guys  
to come all the way to Jersey.

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED:

The scouts laugh.

McDERMOTT

How the girls treatin' you, Al?

AL

They ain't treatin' me. I got to pay like everybody else.

More laughter. Al sits down.

McDERMOTT

You here for Lacy?

AL

(playing dumb)

Is that his name?

CARUSO

(chuckles)

Is that his name!

11 FIELD

The object of the scouts' attention, eighteen-year-old BOBBY LACY, is warming up on the sidelines. He obviously has a smoking fastball. Standing next to him is his COACH.

COACH

You're hummin' it.

BOBBY

I can see them.

COACH

Put it out of your mind, son.

BOBBY

Three of them. They're wearing hats.

COACH

Ignore 'em. Just pitch your game.

12 BLEACHERS

The scouts are studying Bobby carefully. Caruso nods.

CARUSO

We hear Wilson's been on your case, Al.

(CONTINUED)

AL

Who said.

CARUSO

Just around.

AL

Just around.

McDERMOTT

Heard he was upset about Larua.

AL

(shakes head)

Look, I told Wilson great glove,  
so-so hitter. All he heard was  
great glove.

CARUSO

So-so hitter?

McDERMOTT

Heard he didn't get a hit at  
Columbus.

AL

0 for 110.

CARUSO

That's poor.

AL

Very poor. Extremely poor. I  
admit I was disappointed.

McDERMOTT

After all you've done.

AL

They don't care what you've done.  
They only care about what you're  
doing.

CARUSO

That's true.

McDERMOTT

Oh, absolutely. I feel the heat.

(CONTINUED)



12 CONTINUED (2)

AL

Tremendous heat. Because we're fall guys. We can all be fired. No one would miss us.

CARUSO

It's such shit.

AL

There are no scouts anymore. To me a real scout is a guy who goes into the jungle and comes back with a Kong. That's what you try for. And I don't care if he misses a few. When you look for potential greatness you always get burned because potential doesn't always pan out.

McDERMOTT

Absolutely. Greatness is very risky.

CARUSO

Kramer was just fired two weeks ago. He was half blind. But so what? They already knew all the information when they sent him out. They got a central bureau of computers.

AL

And that's why when you say Wilson is on my case about Larue, I can only shrug. I didn't find Larue. In the old days when there was no bulletins, no computers, no jets, you got in a car and went into virgin territory.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

AL (CONT'D)

Find a guy in the Virginia Hills,  
Arkansas. Those guys were scouts.  
We're messenger boys. If you can  
read a message and buy a ticket for  
a plane you're a scout. Although I  
think, in Kramer's case, there was  
a problem.

We hear the LOUD THUNK of ball landing in a mitt.

UMPIRE (V.O.)

Strike!

13 FIELD

The game has begun. Bobby is pitching. Winds up, throws  
another scorcher.

UMPIRE

Strike!

14 BLEACHERS

They are very impressed.

McDERMOTT

That's some curve ball. Jesus.

CARUSO

It's the control.

AL

That's the thing. He's eighteen,  
with control like that.

CARUSO

Can you imagine being eighteen  
years old, with that talent?

AL

Luckiest goddamn kid in the world.  
Loose. I like that.

15 MOUND

Bobby turns and takes something out of his pocket. A  
vial of pills.

16 CLOSE ON VIAL

A prescription for Valium is inside the vial.



17 MASTER SHOT

Bobby pops a Valium, turns, winds up and throws.

UMPIRE

Strike!

18 BLEACHERS

McDERMOTT

Whoo, he's fast!

CARUSO

Smooth as butter.

AL

He live around here?

McDERMOTT

Uh-huh. Family is devout Catholic.

AL

No kiddin'. Devout. I have good luck with Catholics.

McDERMOTT

Eighteen. Hard to know what to recommend when they're that young.

CARUSO

Lot of 'if's.'

AL

But what potential.

CUT TO:

19 EXT. LACY HOUSE - NIGHT

A drab, suburban tract house.

20 INT. HOUSE - DINING ROOM

Dinner is in progress. Al is obviously the honored guest, sitting with all the LACYS. The room is dominated by an enormous painting of Christ.

AL

You'll find that the Yankee organization is very geared to religion. In fact the owner of the team has this same portrait in his office.

(points to portrait  
of Christ)

Terrific likeness, isn't it?

(CONTINUED)

MRS. LACY  
More cabbage, Mr. Percolo?

AL  
I just couldn't, thank you. Very  
delicious, though; I've never had  
it quite this way. What's it  
stuffed with?

MRS. LACY  
Spam.

21 CLOSE ON AL

He pales, dabs at his mouth with his napkin.

MR. LACY  
More cabbage, son?

BOBBY  
No thanks, Dad.

MRS. LACY  
He usually eats tons of my  
cabbage.

BOBBY  
Ma...

He smiles sheepishly.

AL  
Well, you're probably too excited  
to eat. I mean, the thought of  
signing up with the New York  
Yankees, pitching in front of  
thousands and thousands and  
thousands of people...

BOBBY  
Thousands and thousands?

Al chuckles. The Lacys nervously join in.

AL  
Heck, everybody gets a few  
butterflies. I pitched in the  
big leagues fourteen years and  
I got 'em right up to the end.

BOBBY  
You did?

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

AL

Last game I pitched for the Senators, they bring me in against the Yankees. Bases loaded, nobody out, Mickey Mantle standing at the plate.

BOBBY

Wow.

AL

A great Yankee and wonderful individual. His sister is a nun, you know.

MRS. LACY

I didn't know.

AL

Oh yes. Sister Mary Theresa Mantle. Looks just like Mickey, too -- big neck, those strong thighs, and also a switch-hitter by the way.

The Lacys smile, a little confused.

AL

Make a long story short, I see Mantle standing there, I get shaky, my palms sweat...

BOBBY

I know the feeling...

Mr. Lacy shoots Bobby an absolutely murderous glance. Al doesn't notice.

AL

Every pitcher does. Anyhow, soon as I warmed up, I just relaxed completely. That's my point.

MR. LACY

An excellent point, Bobby, one to remember.

BOBBY

What happened, you strike him out?

AL

(smiles)

They're still looking for the ball he hit!

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: (2)

Al laughs. Everybody chuckles along with him.

AL

That's a little story I always  
tell on myself.

MRS. LACY

It's a wonderful story. You must  
keep Mrs. Percolo very entertained.

Al dramatically bows his head.

AL

My dear wifa, Blanche Percolo,  
passed away some years ago.

MR. LACY

We're sorry to hear that.

AL

So was I. She was a saint. A  
heavy drinker, but a saint. I  
haven't looked at another woman  
since.

MRS. LACY

Of course.

AL

I like to spend my weekends in  
church, with the other Yankees.

MR. LACY

That's good to hear, isn't it,  
Bobby.

BOBBY

Yes, Dad.

MRS. LACY

You hear stories about ballplayers  
carrying on...

AL

Well, athletes are only human of  
course. They enjoy a lively game  
of hearts or go-fish. I'm sure  
that Bobby here, with his colorful  
personality will make a lot of new  
Yankee friends.

Mr. Lacy clears his throat.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: (3)

MR. LACY

You should know, Mr. Percolo, that the Boston Red Sox have offered Bobby a bonus of four hundred and fifty thousand dollars upon signing.

Al doesn't bat an eyelash.

AL

Mr. Lacy, I spoke to the front office at one o'clock... pulled Jackie Wilson himself off the golf course... and he said...

Al is milking this. The Lacy family leans forward in its respective seats.

AL

He said, 'Al, is this kid Bobby Lacy worth a half million dollars?' I said, 'Mr. Wilson, I stake my reputation on it.' He said...

22. QUICK CUTS

Mr. and Mrs. Lacy, Bobby, hanging on each word.

23 MASTER SHOT

AL

'Give him what he wants.'  
(whips out contract)  
Just sign on the dotted line.

MRS. LACY

Bobby!

MR. LACY

A half million dollars! What do you say, Bob?

BOBBY

Thank you, Mr. Percolo.

AL

You're very welcome. And I have something else for Bobby, something worth more than a half million dollars.

He reaches under his seat, pulls out a paper-wrapped bundle. He rises, starts speechifying:

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED:

AL  
Something which money cannot buy,  
something which I, in my playing  
days, would have given everything  
to possess...

Al dramatically rips open the package. Inside is the pin-  
striped uniform of the New York Yankees.

AL  
... the pride of the Yankees!

MR. LACY  
Bobby, look at that!

MRS. LACY  
It's beautiful!

24 ANGLE ON BOBBY

He looks a little pale.

25 MASTER SHOT

AL  
And look here, on the back...

We begin to hear DISTANT CHEERING.

Al slowly, dramatically turns the uniform around. On the  
back is number 22, and the name "LACY."

AL  
Number twenty-two.

The CHEERING GROWS LOUDER.

DISSOLVE TO:

26 EXT. YANKEE STADIUM - ESTABLISHING SHOT - DAY

P.A. ANNOUNCER (V.O.)  
Number twenty-two.

27 INT. YANKEE STADIUM

A good daytime crowd on hand.

P.A. ANNOUNCER (V.O.)  
Bobby Lacy!

A nice CHEER from the crowd.



## 28 OWNER'S BOX

Al is seated with Yankee owner JACKIE WILSON. Wilson is a fortyish martinet.

WILSON

Great day for you, Al!

AL

I'm more nervous than when I was pitching!

## 29 INT. BROADCAST BOOTH

Yankee announcers PHIL RIZZUTO and FRANK MESSER are on the air:

MESSER

Well, Phil Rizzuto, as an ex-ballplayer yourself, you probably know better than anyone how thrilled and excited eighteen-year-old Bobby Lacy must be, making his first start here at Yankee Stadium.

RIZZUTO

It's unbelievable, Frank. I'm sure the youngster is feeling those butterflies right about now.

## 30 INT. YANKEE LOCKER ROOM

The Yankee CLUBHOUSE MAN and his ASSISTANT are standing outside a locked john.

CLUBHOUSE MAN

Kid, it's two o'clock. The game's starting.

## 31 INT. BROADCAST BOOTH

MESSER

... twelve starts, averaging seventeen strikeouts per nine-inning game.

RIZZUTO

Wow!

MESSER

I was talking with Yankee scout Al Parcolo before the game and Al told me --

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED:

MESSER (CONT'D)

'Frank, in all honesty, Bobby Lacy is the finest prospect I've seen in five years. He's a kid with a lot of cool.'

CUT TO:

32 LOCKER ROOM - BOBBY IN THE JOHN. WE HEAR HIS VOICE.

BOBBY (V.O.)

(weeping)

No!

ASSISTANT

What do you mean, 'no.' There's thirty thousand people waiting for you.

BOBBY (V.O.)

I can't! I can't! Tell them I can't!

The Clubhouse Man just stares at his Assistant.

CLUBHOUSE MAN

Better call them.

CUT TO:

33 BROADCAST BOOTH

MESSER

A record at Eucharist High School of twelve victories in...

CUT TO:

34 EXECUTIVE BOX

A PHONE RINGS in the box. Wilson picks it up.

WILSON

Yeah? What? What the hell are you talking about? Get him out of there! Knock the goddamn door down! Now!

He hangs up, stares at Al, who is munching a hot dog.

WILSON

He doesn't want to pitch.

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED:

AL

Who?

WILSON

Lacy. He locked himself in the crapper.

CUT TO:

35 CLOSE - AL

The color leaves his face.

AL

Oh, that's terrible.

CUT TO:

36 INT. LOCKER ROOM

CLUBHOUSE MAN

Come on, kid. Be a big leaguer.

BOBBY

(like a four-year-old)  
Noo! I don't want to be a big leaguer!

They drag him through the locker room, out a door, toward the field. We hear the CROWD ROAR.

CUT TO:

37 BROADCAST BOOTH

RIZZUTO

Well, the Yankees take the field!

MESSER

A nice crowd on hand today, Phil.  
A lot of people curious about this half-million-dollar bonus baby.

RIZZUTO

That's right, Frank.

He picks up his field glasses, looks through them.

RIZZUTO

No sign of the youngster yet.

CUT TO:

38 YANKEE DUGOUT

The players are milling about. Suddenly, Bobby is dragged out the door from the clubhouse.

BOBBY  
I can't! Please!

The players whirl about, startled. The Yankee MANAGER, a wad of chewing tobacco stuck in his cheek, stares at Bobby and the clubhouse men.

MANAGER  
What the hell's going on?

He spits.

CLUBHOUSE MAN  
Little nervous.

BOBBY  
I can't pitch in front of crowds!

There is a moment of truly stunned silence. The players stare at each other -- one or two of them silently break up. The Manager takes a long look at his new bonus baby, then spits.

MANAGER  
Get the hell out there!

The NATIONAL ANTHEM BEGINS.

CUT TO:

39 FIELD MASTER

Bobby goes running out to the mound.

CUT TO:

40 EXECUTIVE BOX

Al and Wilson are standing for the ANTHEM. Al smiles, much relieved, as Bobby races out to the mound.

AL  
There we go. He moves well out to the mound, doesn't he?

CUT TO:

41 FIELD MASTER

The players are standing at attention.

CUT TO:

42 DUGOUT

The PLAYERS in the dugout also stand for the ANTHEM.

PLAYER

I can see his legs shaking from here.

CUT TO:

43 CLOSE - BOBBY

He is catatonic. He turns around, looks toward the stands.

CUT TO:

44 REVERSE ANGLE

Thirty thousand people on their feet.

CUT TO:

45 CLOSE - BOBBY

Sweat, pallor. He holds his head.

CUT TO:

46 MASTER FIELD

Bobby suddenly darts from the mound, runs toward the dugout.

CUT TO:

47 EXECUTIVE BOX

Al and Wilson are astounded. Al tries to put a good face on it.

WILSON

Jesus Christ. What's he doing?

AL

Maybe he forgot his sunglasses.

WILSON

In the middle of the National Anthem?

CUT TO:

48 DUGOUT

Bobby enters the dugout on the run.

BOBBY

Valium! Valium!

(CONTINUED)



48 CONTINUED:

The Manager grabs him and bodily turns him around.

MANAGER

Get the hell out there! Now!

He pushes Bobby back out to the field.

CUT TO:

49 MASTER - FIELD

Bobby runs back to the mound as the ANTHEM ENDS.

CUT TO:

50 BROADCAST BOOTH

MESSER

All right, Bobby Lacy takes the mound for the first time in his major league career.

RIZZUTO

He left the field during the national anthem, Frank. Very unusual.

MESSER

Probably to make an equipment change. Of course, it is unusual, as you say, for a player to leave the field during the anthem, but I'm sure this youngster has to be so thrilled that he probably didn't even hear it being played.

RIZZUTO

That's right, Frank. Well, he's taking his warm-ups now, so we'll see some of that great speed and accuracy...

CUT TO:

51 MOUND

Bobby takes his first warm-up pitch. Some pitch.

CUT TO:

52 BROADCAST BOOTH

The ball comes flying up to the booth!

(CONTINUED)



52 CONTINUED:

RIZZUTO

Duck, Frank!

The two announcers hit the floor, as Bobby's first pitch goes sailing up to the broadcast booth.

CUT TO:

53 EXECUTIVE BOX

Al is in a sweat.

WILSON

Holy Christ!

AL

It's just a matter of settling down.

CUT TO:

54 MOUND

Bobby takes the ball from the catcher. He is breathing hard. He winds up, throws.

CUT TO:

55 DUGOUT

The ball goes flying into the dugout. The players scatter.

CUT TO:

56 STANDS

Some fans are laughing.

CUT TO:

57 EXECUTIVE BOX

Wilson is ashen-faced. Al lights cigarette.

CUT TO:

58 BROADCAST BOOTH

Rizzuto and Messer climb back into their chairs.

RIZZUTO

Holy-shit...

(CONTINUED)

58 CONTINUED:

MESSER  
(into microphone)

The youngster has tremendous speed,  
we can see that. But it's a question  
of control.

Below them, we can see Bobby winding up. Again, the ball  
speeds toward the two Announcers.

RIZZUTO

Down, Frank!

Again, they hit the floor.

CUT TO:

59 MOUND

The CATCHER runs out to Bobby.

CATCHER

Just relax, kid.

BOBBY

I think I'm gonna be sick.

CATCHER

No, you're not.

The Catcher runs back to the plate, as the first batter  
steps in, wearing two helmets, as a joke. The umpire  
laughs at him.

CUT TO:

60 EXECUTIVE BOX

WILSON

(to Al)

Goddamn you!

AL

This is very disappointing.

61 BROADCAST BOOTH

MESSER

Okay, here's Hector Rodriguez  
leading off against Bobby Lacy.  
And Phil, in all candor, you'd  
have to say that Lacy looked  
somewhat unsettled during his  
warmups.

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED:

RIZZUTO

Almost killed us, Frank. Uh-oh,  
is something wrong with him?

Down the field, we see Bobby holding his stomach and  
bending over.

MESSER

He's bending over, Phil. I believe  
he's searching for the resin bag.

RIZZUTO

He looks sick, Frank.

CUT TO:

62 DUGOUT

MANAGER

What's happening?

PLAYER

He's puking.

MANAGER

What?

PLAYER

Look for yourself. The man is  
puking.

CUT TO:

63 EXECUTIVE BOX

Al and Wilson sit in stunned, awestruck silence.

AL

I might've misjudged this kid...  
in the guts department.

CUT TO:

64 FIELD MASTER

The players are gathered around the mound. Suddenly,  
Bobby bolts from the field and runs toward the stands.  
Then, into the stands. The players, stunned, watch him  
disappear.

CUT TO:

65 STANDS

The fans watch in amazement as the Yankee pitcher comes racing up the aisle and disappears down an exit ramp.

CUT TO:

66 BROADCAST BOOTH

RIZZUTO

Holy cow!

MESSER

A baseball first, I believe, Phil Rizzuto. The young man took himself out of the ball game and then left the field via the exit ramps customarily used by the paying customers.

RIZZUTO

I can't believe it, Frank.

CUT TO:

67 MOUND

A groundskeeper is pouring water over the mound.

CUT TO:

68 EXECUTIVE BOX

Wilson rises. He is absolutely livid.

WILSON

Half a million dollars! Of all the goddamn idiots!

AL

Jackie...

WILSON

Do you have any idea what an asshole this makes me look like? What they're gonna say upstairs?

AL

It was an unfortunate...

WILSON

First Larue, then White. Now this.

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED:

AL

The last two years have been very  
unfortunate for me. But there  
have been good times, too.

WILSON

Get out of my sight.

AL

In what sense?

P.A. ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Now pitching for New York...

WILSON

'Now pitching.' I could cry.

69 INT. WILSON'S OFFICE - WILSON, AL

Wilson is calm now. He smokes a cigar and points to a  
large wall map.

WILSON

... Vapadelapa, Nachos, Escoril, La  
Playa del Morte, Juegas...

AL

I never heard of any of those towns.

WILSON

They're off the beaten track. You'll  
be the first scout we've ever sent  
this far into South Central Mexico.

AL

Is there baseball there?

WILSON

I'm sure there is. Maybe not as  
we know it...

AL

Hey, Jackie. What is this -- a  
grudge trip?

WILSON

And I'll want a daily report. From  
each town.

AL

Jackie, this isn't like you.

(CONTINUED)

69 CONTINUED:

WILSON

I bought a pitcher for half a million and he puked on the mound. Puked on the mound! Do you know why I'm not firing you, Al? Because then I couldn't send you to South Central Mexico.

AL

(after a moment)

Thank you, Jackie.

WILSON

Get out of my sight.

DISSOLVE TO:

70 EXT. ROAD - DAY

A desolate road in South Central Mexico. A cloud of dust appears. It grows larger. In the middle of the cloud is a very old bus, much rusted.

71 INT. BUS

It's packed with peasants, bawling infants, livestock, and Al, seated near the back, his suitcase balanced on his lap. Al is wearing a Yankee jacket and cap, and has a map spread out on the suitcase. His finger is on the map.

CUT TO:

72 CLOSE - OVER AL'S SHOULDER - AL/MAP

His finger is on the map, but the map is a BLUR, so fierce is the bouncing of the bus.

The bus comes to an abrupt stop. A Chihuahua lands on Al's head.

CUT TO:

73 EXT. BUS

The bus has stopped, seemingly in the middle of nowhere.

CUT TO:

74 INT. BUS

The DRIVER turns to announce the stop.

(CONTINUED)



74 CONTINUED:

DRIVER  
Vapadelapa! Este es Vapadelapa.

CUT TO:

75 CLOSE - AL

AL  
Vapadelapa.  
(runs a finger down  
the map, checks a  
slip of paper)  
The Vapadelapa Orioles. Getting  
out!

Al picks up his suitcase and rises, fights his way past the people and animals crowding the aisle.

AL  
Scout getting out. Excuse me.  
New York Yankees coming through.

CUT TO:

76 EXT. BUS

Al gets out of the bus. The bus pulls away, leaving Al in a desolate patch of countryside. In the far distance are a couple of small buildings.

AL  
That must be downtown Vapadelapa.

Al picks up his suitcase and begins crossing a field toward the buildings. He immediately sinks up to his knees in marsh.

CUT TO:

77 EXT. ATHLETIC FIELD - NIGHT

A dimly-lit field in Vapadelapa.

CUT TO:

78 STANDS - AL

He is drinking a beer, waving mosquitoes away from his face.

AL  
Must be a hundred and ten in this  
shithole.

(CONTINUED)

78 CONTINUED:

The crowd roars.

AL

Pop up.

CUT TO:

79 FIELD

Two Vapadelapa INFIELDERS are converging on the ball, both calling for it.

FIRST BASEMAN

Es por mí.

SECOND BASEMAN

Es por mí.

The ball is about to land in the First Baseman's glove, but the Second Baseman jumps on his back and steals the ball away, then waves it proudly at the fans. The First Baseman, taking umbrage, punches the Second Baseman in the mouth. They begin brawling, fall to the ground, where they are surrounded by pigs.

CUT TO:

80 STANDS

The fans cheer the fight. They're having a wonderful time. Al rises, heads for the aisle.

AL

'Scuse me. 'Scuse me.

FAN

Good game, eh?

AL

Excellent. Very fine game.

FAN

Could beat the Yankees, eh?

AL

Easy. No contest.

(reaches the aisle,  
steps over a fan  
sprawled out un-  
conscious)

'Scuse me. Takes care of Vapadelapa.  
Now if I can just find a way to  
send my report.

DISSOLVE TO:

## 81 MONTAGE - CLOSEUP - MAP

PAN DOWN the map as Al begins his tour of the Central Mexican League. SUPER MAP OVER:

## 82 EXT. BUS - DAY

## 83. INT. BUS

Al is dozing. A goat chews on his Yankee cap.

PAN DOWN map to Nachos.

## 84 BASEBALL FIELD - NACHOS - DAY

A swampy muddy field. A dozen people stand around watching. Al sits down on his suitcase to watch. There is a man on first. The batter hits a double play ball. The runner from first dives head first into second, slides in the mud, hits his head on second base which is a stone. The second baseman is laughing and the fans are laughing as the runner sits on the ground holding his head. Al takes out a pencil and paper and begins writing his report.

## 85 ROADSIDE

Al is hitching, with no success.

## 86 TOWN OF JUEGAS - DAY

Al comes riding into town on a burro. It is pouring rain. He stops in front of a hotel, goes inside.

## 87 INT. HOTEL

Al enters the hotel, soaked. He goes to the desk, asks for a room. The clerk shakes his head: no room.

## 88 EXT. HOTEL

Al leaves the hotel, walks his burro down the street, stops in front of another hotel. Al goes inside. HOLD. Al emerges moments later, gets back on the burro.

## 89 EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT

Al sleeps under the stars. Very picturesque. A quarter moon. Al has not tied his burro very well. The burro wanders off, leaving Al alone.

## 90 EXT. ROADSIDE - DAY

Al is hitching again. PAN DOWN map. Al is heading toward Escoril. A white Mercedes, of all things, stops for Al. Al gratefully gets in.

91 INT. CAR

The car is driven by the wealthy land baron, MARTINEZ. He wears a white suit and panama hat. Seems friendly, shakes Al's hand. As he begins driving, he puts his hand on Al's thigh.

92 EXT. MERCEDES

The car comes to an abrupt halt. Al jumps out, clutching his suitcase protectively. The car drives away. Al sticks his thumb out.

93 EXT. BUS

Another old school bus.

94 INT. BUS

Al is sleeping. He has a two-days' growth of beard. The bus stops sharply, awakening Al, throwing him from his seat.

95 EXT. BUS

The bus is surrounded by banditos, brandishing guns. Everybody files off the bus, frightened. The driver starts weeping. Al is the last to get out. A bandito takes his Yankee cap, puts it on.

96 EXT. ESCORIL - DAY

PAN DOWN map (SUPER), to show we are in Escoril. The bus pulls in, stops in front of the Hotel Escoril. Al gets out, attired in slacks and undershirt. His jacket and cap have been stolen. He looks utterly exhausted and disgusted. Al heads toward the hotel.

97 INT. HOTEL ESCORIL (END MONTAGE)

Al drags his suitcase through the small lobby of the Hotel Escoril. A single overhead fan provides scant relief from the mid-day heat. Al goes to the front desk. He is utterly beat. A DESK CLERK greets him brightly.

DESK CLERK

Buenas dias, senor.

AL

Buenas dias. Yo tengo un  
reservacion. Al Percolo.

The Desk Clerk checks his book.

(CONTINUED)



DESK CLERK

Si, si.  
(he smiles)  
Americano?

AL

Pure-bred. By Lucille out of Tony.

DESK CLERK

Si. Americano.  
(carefully).  
You are enjoying your trip?

AL

It's easily the worst trip I've  
ever had in my life, including the  
Korean War.

The Desk Clerk smiles, not quite understanding.

DESK CLERK

Si?

AL

I had a burro, it ran away. I  
hitched a ride, the guy puts his  
hand on my infield. Just now I  
was robbed by banditos.

DESK CLERK

Perhaps you will enjoy Escoril.

AL

Do you have a room without lizards  
in it? That's all I want.

DESK CLERK

I will give you the Presidential  
Suite. It has a flush toilet.

AL

Fabulous.

He hands Al a registration form and pen. Al begins filling  
it out.

DESK CLERK

On business, senor?

AL

I'm a scout. Baseball scout. I'm  
here to see the Toreadors. El  
Toreadors.

(CONTINUED)

97 CONTINUED: (2)

DESK CLERK

Ah. Nebraska.

AL

Nebraska?

DESK CLERK

Senor Steve Nebraska. He is Babe Ruth of Escoril.

AL

Isn't that wonderful.

DESK CLERK

Is in Escoril tres semanas. Is Babe Ruth of Escoril.

AL

You told me. Am I in the old wing or the ancient wing?

DESK CLERK

Is pitch -- is hit -- todo el mundo.

AL

Todo el Mundo. I heard of him.

DESK CLERK

Is Babe Ruth of Escoril.

AL

Could I please have my key? Gimme a break already!

DESK CLERK

You room key.

Hands Al the key.

AL

Thank you. You have room service?

DESK CLERK

No, senor.

(rings bell)

Have a pleasant stay.

CUT TO:

98 EXT. OFFICE OF JACKIE WILSON

The Yankees' GM outer office. His SECRETARY is on the phone.

(CONTINUED)



98 CONTINUED:

SECRETARY

Oh, hi. I'll call Mr. Wilson that you're on.

(she presses her intercom)

Mr. Wilson, Al Percolo, collect from Mexico.

CUT TO:

99 INT. WILSON'S OFFICE

WILSON

Al, how's it going down there?  
This is amazing. I didn't know Escoril had a phone. Find anybody? Banditos? You're kidding!

He laughs.

CUT TO:

100 INT. AL'S HOTEL ROOM - AL ON THE PHONE

A small room with a terrace overlooking the town. His suitcase is open on the bed: it is filled with Yankee jackets and caps.

AL

Hilarious, ain't it? Listen, you got to cable me some dough. Can you hear me? This connection... yeah. Hotel Escoril. Es-co-ri-l. Jackie, you gotta bring me back. No, there's no ballplayers down here. You know goddamn well there's no baseball players down here. Jackie, enough already.

CUT TO:

101 INT. WILSON'S OFFICE - WILSON ON THE PHONE

WILSON

Not enough, Al. Sports Illustrated just had another article on Lacy. Never enough.

Wilson hangs up.

102 AL'S ROOM

Al stares at the phone, hangs up.

(CONTINUED)

102 CONTINUED:

He takes a tape recorder out of his suitcase and switches it on. A TAPE BEGINS PLAYING: a broadcast of an old ball game.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

'Percolo checks the sign. You know that with Ted Williams standing there...'

Al lights a cigarette.

AL

He's gotta be extra careful.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

'He's gotta be extra careful. Percolo checks the runners, looks in... here's the pitch. Strike three! And the ball game's over.'

Timmy cheering rises from the little tape recorder. Al puffs and smiles.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

'Al Percolo comes in with the bases loaded...'

DISSOLVE TO:

103 EXT. ESCORIL BALL PARK - DAY

A ramshackle ball park. A battered taxi pulls up. Al steps out.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

'... and gets Williams on strikes. And the crowd here at Briggs Stadium is going wild. Al's teammates are pounding the little guy on the back...'

The SOUND OF THE BROADCAST FADES OUT. Al pays the cabbie, looks around. A long line of sombrero-hatted Escoril Toreador fans is stretched from the ticket window. A large banner proclaims:

ESCORIL TOREADORS  
CON  
STEVE NEBRASKA

104 EXT. BALL PARK.

Al, sweating, arrives at the ball park.

(CONTINUED)

104 CONTINUED:

Goes to the ticket window.

AL

One in the loge. You got a loge?

The TICKET VENDOR -- pencil-thin mustache -- doesn't know what Al's talking about. But he smiles agreeably.

TICKET VENDOR

Loge, si. Tres pesos.

105 INT. TOREADOR FIELD

A dung heap. The stands sag under the weight of the fans packed in under the broiling sun. A desultory batting practice is in progress, with much interference from barnyard animals who wander freely around the diamond. The Toreador players wear bright red pants, red caps and no shirts. Their names and numbers are painted on their backs. Only one ballplayer wears a shirt. It is blue with stars and reads "Nebraska" over the number 3. He is standing by the field-level seats, signing autographs.

106 CLOSE - NEBRASKA

NEBRASKA

Hey! Hey! Not all at once.

He smiles engagingly at the clamoring youngsters, his voice the pure prairie corn of America. His smile is boyish, his manner shy and engaging.

NEBRASKA

You'll all get a chance. What's your name? Que nombre, que nombre?

Three BOYS cry at once.

BOYS

Jose! Enrique! Jose!

NEBRASKA

That's two Joses and an Enrique to go! That's an expression we use in America when we order food: 'to go.'

107 ANGLE - BOYS

They gaze at him rapturously. So do their mothers.

CUT TO:

## 108 STADIUM/RAMP

Al is carrying a six-pack of beer. At the foot of the ramp, he encounters a thoroughly disreputable man wearing a sombrero that reads "USHER."

AL

Loge?

USHER

Loge?

(laughs)

We don't got no stinking loge!

CROWD (O.S.)

Ne-bra-ska! Ne-bra-ska!

## 109 INT. STADIUM - FIELD

Nebraska approaches the plate for his batting practice swings, tips his hat to the fans who are yelling his name, steps to the plate, starts whipping his bat around in a circle, faster and faster and faster... the pitch comes in... Nebraska checks his swing, but the ball takes off anyway.

## 110 OUTFIELD WALL

The ball goes sailing far over the wall.

## 111 FANS

CROWD

Ne-bra-ska! Ne-bra-ska!

## 112 NEBRASKA

He shakes his head, as embarrassed as if he had just fouled one off. The next pitch comes in. Nebraska swings ferociously... CRACK!

## 113 OUTFIELD WALL

A line drive of remarkable velocity comes hurtling toward the wall. The ball strikes the wall; instead of bouncing off, however, the ball goes through the wall, leaving a small, perfect hole. The outfielder waits, poised in vain for the carom.

## 114 STANDS

Al comes out into the stands, carrying a heaping plate of arroz con pollo and his six-pack. The fans are cheering.

(CONTINUED)

114 CONTINUED:

FANS  
Ne-bra-ska! Ne-bra-ska!

AL  
 Nebraska's an American. El  
 Americano?

FAN  
 Si, senor.

115 FIELD

Nebraska walks out to the mound.

116 STANDS

AL  
 Nice-looking kid. Pitcher?

FAN  
 Senor?

AL  
 Throw the ball?

FAN  
 Throw the ball, hit the ball,  
 catch the ball. Is the greatest.  
 Very humble. Very nice boy.  
 Is come from Mesa del Locos baseball  
 team in Bebebebayo. All the  
 sisters, they love him.

117 FIELD

Nebraska heads toward the mound, addresses the batting  
 practice pitcher, HECTOR.

NEBRASKA  
 Hector, lemme throw a few.

HECTOR  
 Sure, chief. Where you learn to  
 hit like that?

NEBRASKA  
 Beats me. I'm not even sure how  
 I got to Mexico!

Hector laughs.



118 STANDS

AL  
What's he doin' in Mexico.

FAN  
El padre...

AL  
His old man?

FAN  
Si. Was a missionario at Mesa  
del Locos. He teach the inmates  
to wash.

AL  
Missionary. What kind?

FAN  
Seven-day dentist.

A SOUND LIKE A MUFFLED EXPLOSION. Al's eyes widen.

CUT TO:

119 FIELD

The catcher is shaking his glove hand with pain, throws  
the ball to Nebraska.

NEBRASKA  
Well, I'm warm.

P.A. ANNOUNCER (V.O.)  
Por favor, levantan ustedes...

120 P.A. ANNOUNCER

speaking into a large round microphone, of the type last  
used in the 1940's.

P.A. ANNOUNCER  
... como, tocamos, en honor de Senor  
Steve Nebraska, el himno nacional  
de los Estados Unidos.

CUT TO:

121 MARIACHI BAND

A ragtag collection at best, begins a somewhat dissonant  
version of "The Star Spangled Banner." The fans sing  
along but they don't know the words so they end up  
mumbling.

CUT TO:



122 AL

who puts his arroz con pollo and beer on his seat and removes his hat.

CUT TO:

123 FIELD

The players at attention. The coaches are leading the last of the goats and the pigs off the field.

124 QUICK CUTS - CATCHER, FIRST BASEMAN, SECOND BASEMAN

hats over their bare chests, mumbling the anthem.

125 MASTER - STADIUM

The band is obviously in trouble and by "... the rockets' red glare..." the anthem dies a natural death followed by great cheers and applause.

126 STANDS

FAN

Our gesture to Senor Nebraska.

AL

Very nice.

127 FIELD

Nebraska is pitching. The first batter comes to the plate. The infielders and outfielders stand not at their positions, but in clumps of two, watching like spectators.

128 STANDS

AL

What's with the fielders?

FAN

There is nothing for them to do, senor. Some are starting to get fat; they get no exercise.

129 FIELD

The shortstop and third baseman, both obese, are chatting. The centerfielder is seated, reading a newspaper.

The right fielder is talking to a girl in the stands. He persuades her to come out on the field with him.

130 STANDS

AL  
Team seems real loose.

131 FIELD

UMPIRE  
Juegal

The first batter steps in... Nebraska looks in for the sign.

132 CATCHER'S CROTCH

The catcher puts down one finger.

133 MASTER

Nebraska throws. The ball, not visible, sends the catcher sprawling backwards. The Umpire throws up his arm.

UMPIRE  
Strike!

134 INFELDERS

They laugh, slap each other's hands.

135 STANDS

Al is speechless.

136 OUTFIELDER

The rightfielder is now necking with the girl from the stands. They sink to the grass.

137 MASTER

Nebraska checks the sign.

138 CATCHER'S CROTCH

Two fingers this time.

139 MASTER

Nebraska throws another invisible pitch. The catcher goes flying backwards once again. The batter has yet to stir a muscle.

UMPIRE  
Strike!

140 STANDS

AL  
(to Fan)  
Have you actually seen the ball  
yet?

141 MASTER - FIELD

Nebraska looks in.

142 CATCHER'S CROTCH

Five fingers.

143 STANDS

Al leans forward.

144 FIELD

Nebraska throws another invisible fastball. The Umpire's  
arm shoots up.

UMPIRE  
Strike three!

145 INFELDERS

applaud and whistle.

146 CENTERFIELDER

looks up from his newspaper.

147 RIGHT FIELDER

rolling around in the grass with his groupie.

148 FANS

FANS  
Ne-bra-ska! Ne-bra-ska!

149 NEBRASKA

He tips his hat to the fans.

150 STANDS

AL  
They ever time this guy?

FAN  
Time heem for what? •

151 MASTER - BALL PARK

The fans are cheering. The teams change sides.

152 FIELD

Nebraska steps to the plate, waving his hat at the fans. He points to the field seats.

153 STANDS

AL  
He calls his shots?

154 FIELD

Nebraska adjusts his cap, starts whirling his bat around, faster and faster. The pitcher look in, checks the runner at first, goes into his windup.

155 STANDS

Al is hypnotized.

156 FIELD

The pitch comes in -- CRACK!

157 STANDS

The fans, as one, leap to their feet, roaring.

158 OUTFIELD

The outfielder squints up into the sky, looking hopelessly for the ball.

AL (V.O.)  
Where the hell did it go?

159 FIELD

Nebraska watches the ball disappear and then begins to trot slowly around the bases, his cap in his hand. The crowd is roaring.

FANS  
Ne-bra-ska! Ne-bra-ska!

160 STANDS

Al watches the scene on the field. He is paralyzed. We hear the SOUND TRACK from King Kong.

(CONTINUED)

160 CONTINUED:

KING KONG TRACK  
'He was a king and god in the  
world he knew.'

161 FIELD

Nebraska reaches home plate.

KING KONG TRACK  
'Now he comes as a captive, a  
curiosity for your eyes.'

His teammates crush him as he arrives.

KING KONG TRACK  
'This is... Kong!'

162 AL

AL  
(quietly to himself)  
Who would have thought...?

163 FIELD

Nebraska crosses the plate, waving his cap at the jubilant fans.

DISSOLVE TO:

164 EXT. ESCORIL BAR - NIGHT

A tavern located in the barren plains near Escoril.

AL (V.O.)  
So your folks were missionaries.  
Dentists.

165 INT. BAR

A dim, dilapidated room. Al and Nebraska are seated across from each other. Al is having a beer; Nebraska is having a Coke.

NEBRASKA  
(amiably)  
No, my dad was a salesman. Surgical  
supplies: bandages, trusses,  
crutches.

AL  
And he worked in Mexico?

(CONTINUED)

165 CONTINUED:

NEBRASKA

He worked Australia and New Zealand  
for the company until my mom died.  
Then they shipped him to Mexico.

AL

Like me.

NEBRASKA

Your mom died?

AL

No, I meant being shipped to Mexico.

Nebraska waves his arm in an exaggerated "friendly" way.

NEBRASKA

Hey, Pedro, un otro Coca-Cola, por  
favor.

166 CLOSE - AL

He beams. He likes this kid.

AL

You're like a local.

167 MASTER

NEBRASKA

Mexicans are wonderful folks, Al.  
You know my dad was a schoolteacher  
down here and he always said that  
these people were the salt of the  
earth.

168 AL

confused.

AL

Your dad was a schoolteacher, too?

169 NEBRASKA

smiling, amiable.

NEBRASKA

Well, after Dad passed away she  
sold the store. You know how that  
is.

(CONTINUED)



169 CONTINUED:

AL

Sure, those things are always rough.  
It happen down here?

NEBRASKA

What?

AL

Your father passing away?

NEBRASKA

No. The war.

AL

Oh, the war. The war.  
(nods understandingly)  
Which one.

NEBRASKA

What was the last one called.

AL

The last one? Ummm... Vietnam,  
I believe.

NEBRASKA

That was the one.

AL

How old was he?

NEBRASKA

Sixty-eight.

170 AL

He's trying to absorb this.

AL

That's pretty old to be fighting.  
Somebody should have stopped him...

171 SALOON/PIANO

A beaten-up piano in the corner. A local sits down at  
the piano, shuffles through some sheet music.

AL

(after a moment)

What... is Mesa del Locos exactly?

(CONTINUED)

171 CONTINUED:

NEBRASKA

Mesa del Locos? I stayed in Mesa del Locos. My father taught the inmates to wash.

AL

Right.

Two or three goats walk into the bar. Al raises his glass of Lowenbrau:

AL

Here's to good friends. The night is kinda special.

Nebraska smiles, somewhat blankly.

AL

You know that commercial?

NEBRASKA

No, I don't, Mr. Percolo.

AL

Al.

NEBRASKA

Al.

Nebraska smiles at Al. Al smiles back. He's very happy. Not entirely at ease, but happy. He looks around the room.

AL

Some room.

NEBRASKA

It's full of goats.

Al chuckles.

AL

'It's full of goats.' You're quite a kid.

NEBRASKA

Thank you, sir.

AL

So your old man was a missionary at the Mesa del Locos.

(CONTINUED)

171 CONTINUED: (2)

NEBRASKA

(shakes his head)

Fur trapper.

AL

Fur trapper? In Mexico?

NEBRASKA

Mexico, Switzerland, the Dakotas...

AL

Missionary, trapper. He got around, huh?

NEBRASKA

He was a great guy... About six foot ten, long blond hair down to his waist.

AL

(carefully)

No kiddin'. He play ball?

NEBRASKA

Who?

(to waiter)

Pedro, una otra Coca-Cola, por favor.

(to Al)

You met Pedro?

AL

I haven't, no.

NEBRASKA

What a guy. At night, before I go to sleep, you know what he does?

AL

What?

NEBRASKA

Gives me a bag of pretzels. Free.

AL

No kiddin', pretzels?

Pianist starts playing "The Sound of Music."

172 MASTER

NEBRASKA

So you say you're with the New York Yankees?

(CONTINUED)

172 CONTINUED:

AL  
A Yankee-Doodle-Dandy.

NEBRASKA  
So am I. You know, one thing you  
realize, ragtagging around Mexico,  
just how great America is. I mean,  
I'm just a farm-boy so you can  
imagine what that national anthem  
does to me.

Nebraska suddenly begins singing "The Sound of Music."  
His voice is beautiful.

AL  
Hell of a voice.

173 CLOSE - NEBRASKA

His mouth twitches. He stares past Al and begins singing  
"Volare."

174 CLOSE - AL

AL  
Fantastic tenor.

175 PIANIST

still playing "The Sound of Music."

PIANIST  
'The hills are alive with the  
sound of...'

Nebraska leaps from his chair and runs over to the piano.  
Then runs back to the table and sits down again.

AL  
Steve...

BARTENDER  
Is alright.  
(taps temple: "loco")  
He doesn't know.

Al frowns.

NEBRASKA  
What happened? What's all the  
ruckus?

(CONTINUED)

175 CONTINUED:

BARTENDER, PIANO PLAYER

(chuckling)

'Nada.'

'No ruckus.'

The Waiter, with great ceremony, brings over an ice-filled Coke.

WAITER

Una otra Coca-Cola para el gran  
Senor Steve Nebraska.

AL

Beautiful, how they present it.

NEBRASKA

The team pays for my Cokes, my meals,  
my room.

AL

Well, that's only fair. You could  
probably make that deal with any  
team.

NEBRASKA

Really? I didn't know that.

Steve starts on his Coke.

AL

Maybe it's none of my business, but  
the way I see it, there's nothing  
for you down here. I've never tasted  
Mexican pretzels, but how good can  
they be? You're an American. You  
should be playing in Cleveland,  
Milwaukee. I'm telling you, kid,  
you could be the biggest thing to  
hit the game ever. You could be the  
eighth wonder of the world.

NEBRASKA

Will you be with me?

AL

Day and night.

NEBRASKA

(thinks)

Okay.

## 176 WILSON'S OFFICE - WILSON ON PHONE

WILSON

... Are you crazy! What the hell are you talking about! I'm still getting letters about that goddamned puker! And now you want to bring back a pitcher you found on the Escorial Toreadors!...

## 177 AL'S HOTEL ROOM - AL ON PHONE

AL

... I know it's unusual, Jackie. But I'm telling you this kid's a giant. Beyond Ruth and Gehrig. Beyond the Hall of Fame. Beyond... how many games? One. I saw him in one. But...

## 178 WILSON'S OFFICE - WILSON ON PHONE

WILSON

... Al, I'm going to say this slowly. I'm in a very sensitive position because of your fuck-up with Lacy. I do not want you to fly in some kid from the armpit of Mexico after seeing him in one game. I don't even want you here until the season is over...

AL (V.O.)

No! No! No!...

WILSON

Al, it's two days...

AL (V.O.)

... That's the point! You got to sign him before the season is over. You got to sign him now! So he can play in the Series!... That's the point.

WILSON

Al, you're hysterical...

## 179 AL'S HOTEL ROOM - AL ON PHONE

AL

Listen to me, Jackie. I found him. I found Kong!...



180 WILSON'S OFFICE - WILSON ON PHONE

WILSON

Al, if you come back before Friday  
you're fired. Now it's as simple as  
that.

181 AL'S ROOM - AL ON PHONE

AL

(waves Steve over)

Say it again. I'm fired.

He puts the receiver to Steve's ear.

WILSON (V.O.)

If you bring him back...

AL

I'm...

WILSON (V.O.)

You're fired.

Al laughs triumphantly.

AL

You're screwed, Jackie! Because  
I got a witness -- I'm fired!  
King Kong is mine.

He slams down the phone.

182 WILSON'S OFFICE

He slowly hangs up, and turns to the manager.

WILSON

Poor bastard. You got to feel  
compassion for a guy like that.  
And yet...

183 INT. TELEGRAPH OFFICE - MEXICO

Al is dictating a telegram to a female OPERATOR.

OPERATOR

... 'Los Angeles Do'gers, Attenshun  
-- Beel Bower; Taisas Ranyers,  
Attenshun -- Du-sh Hen'erson; Bosson  
Red Sous, Attenshun -- Bernie MaNulty;  
Sheecago Cobs, Attenshun -- Chosef  
Barreyra; New York Jankees, Attenshun  
-- Jackie Weelson.'

(CONTINUED)

183 CONTINUED:

AL  
Perfect. Is that all twenty-six  
teams?

OPERATOR  
Veinta y seis?

AL  
Veinta y seis teams, right?

OPERATOR  
Si.

AL  
Read back the message.

OPERATOR  
'Hen'lemon, feef'y year ago Kin'  
Kon' was brought out o' de chungle.  
Stop. Now I, Yol Percolo, chave  
foun' a beisbol Kin' Kon'. 'E  
ees Steve Nebraska, the Escoril  
Babe Ruth.' An' you are signin'  
it Yol Percolo.

AL  
Right. Send the same message to  
all 26 teams.

NEBRASKA  
Can we go on an airplane, Al?

AL  
Sure, I was planning on it.

184 EXT. HOTEL - NIGHT

Al and Steve, two suitcases. A lamp post. Three strolling  
GUITARISTS are serenading Al with "New York, New York" in  
heavily accented English.

GUITARISTS  
'Those vagabond calzones'...

A battered taxi pulls up.

AL  
We're off. The start of something  
good.

Al tips the Guitarists.

(CONTINUED)

184 CONTINUED:

AL  
Thanks, fellas.

They smile and nod, continue to sing as Al and Nebraska get into the taxi.

GUITARISTS  
'Is up to you, Nueva York, Nueva York.'

The taxi pulls away.

185 EXT. PLANE

hurtles through the night.

186 INT. PLANE - WIDER ANGLE

Al is seated near the window. Next to him, Nebraska has headphones on, turned, as we hear, to the "Easy Listening" channel. "76 Trombones" is playing. It ends. Another song starts. "The Sound of Music."

NEBRASKA  
'The hills are alive...'

AL  
Not on the plane, kid.

187 WIDE ANGLE

A STEWARDESS comes down the aisle, leans past Nebraska and places a drink on his tray. Steve leans his head against her breast, then gently wraps his arms around her waist.

STEWARDESS  
(laughing)  
Aren't you awful?

AL  
Let her up, Steve.

NEBRASKA  
'... with the sound of music...'

STEWARDESS  
Come on now, Mr. Nebraska.

AL  
(pulling at his arms)  
Come on, Steve.  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

187 CONTINUED:

AL (CONT'D)

That's very uncomfortable for her,  
not being able to straighten up.

NEBRASKA

'... Volare, oh-oh...'

Several passengers turn.

AL

Oh boy.

Nebraska abruptly stops. The Stewardess straightens,  
clutching her back.

AL

(to Stewardess)

He's just had a very upsetting  
emotional experience. Thank you  
for comforting him.

(to passengers)

He's okay. Go back to your activities.

(to Nebraska)

Everything's alright, Steve.

NEBRASKA

(taking off his  
headphones)

What?

AL

(to himself)

Better have him checked out. Just  
to be on the safe side.

188 EXT. MADISON AVENUE - DAY

Al and Nebraska are walking down Madison Avenue in the  
upper 50's, still carrying suitcases. Al is holding a  
page torn out of the yellow book.

Nebraska, gawking at the buildings and people, bumps into  
a man.

NEBRASKA

'Scuse me. God, there are so many  
people out in the street.

AL

Used to be even more.

(CONTINUED)

188 CONTINUED:

NEBRASKA

Hey, Al. Look at all the colored guys.

AL

Kid, you gotta be a little more inhibited.

NEBRASKA

What?

AL

Nothing. Never been here, huh?

NEBRASKA

No, You know, my dad was an army man. We traveled so much, but never to New York.

AL

I forgot he was an army man. How's he doing these days?

NEBRASKA

Oh, fine. Retired in Florida.

AL

Good.

(pats Nebraska on  
the back)

Best thing for him. Here we are.

They enter a building.

189 LOBBY

Al checks the directory.

AL

Baker, Baker. Suite 1408.

NEBRASKA

Haven't had a checkup in years.  
I don't think I ever had a checkup.

AL

Everybody needs a physical. This day and age, the stress, bad air, bad water...

(CONTINUED)



189 CONTINUED:

NEBRASKA

Well, I stay in good shape, Al.  
Never eat meat or fish.

AL

Good. That meat and fish'll kill  
you.

They enter the elevator.

190 EXT. ELEVATOR - FOURTEENTH FLOOR

Al and Nebraska exit the elevator, start down the hall,  
Al in the lead.

NEBRASKA

This is a real modern building.

AL

This building? Fabulous.

Florescent lights...

(examining the  
door numbers)

... air conditioning, everything.

Here we go -- Baker.

Al opens the door, keeping his arm over the tile on the door.

AL

After you.

NEBRASKA

Thanks, Al.

Nebraska enters. Al follows, closing the door. Now we can  
read the title on the door:

EMILY BAKER, PH.D.  
Psychologist

191 INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE

AL

Put the suitcase down, kid. Have  
a seat. Shouldn't be too long.

NEBRASKA

Okay.

AL

You feelin' okay?

(CONTINUED)



191 CONTINUED:

NEBRASKA

Great.

The door opens to the inner office. A middle-aged man emerges, blowing his nose. He hurries out the door. Al stares after him.

NEBRASKA

Guy looked like he was crying.

AL

Probably sinus.

VOICE

Mr. Percolo? Mr. Nebraska?

Al turns. Nebraska looks up.

DR. EMILY BAKER steps from her office. She's about thirty and very attractive.

DR. BAKER

Mr. Percolo? I'd like to talk to you first.

AL

(to Steve)

Hang in there, kid.

192 INNER OFFICE - AL, DR. BAKER

AL

I'd like to thank you for giving me such a quick appointment.

DR. BAKER

It sounded like you were calling from the airport.

AL

Really? How long do you think this'll take, Doc?

DR. BAKER

You're Mr. Nebraska's guardian?

AL

Yes. Also, his scout. Al Percolo, formerly of the New York Yankees.

DR. BAKER

And you'd like to be in on this session?

(CONTINUED)

192 CONTINUED:

AL  
If it's possible.

DR. BAKER  
Well, if Mr. Nebraska doesn't  
object...

AL  
Great. One other thing, Doc. He  
thinks he's here for a physical.  
So, I'd appreciate it if maybe you  
could check out his ears, his nose...

DR. BAKER  
I'm not an MD, Mr. Percolo. I'm  
a psychologist.

AL  
So, you can't...

DR. BAKER  
(slowly)  
What exactly is Mr. Nebraska's  
problem, Mr. Percolo?

AL  
No problem, but it can't hurt to  
check.

193 INT. WAITING ROOM - STEVE NEBRASKA  
as Al sticks his head out.

AL  
Okay. Bring the suitcase with you.  
You can't tell who'll wander in here.

194 INNER OFFICE - AL, NEBRASKA, DR. BAKER

DR. BAKER  
How are you today, Mr. Nebraska?

NEBRASKA  
Call me Steve.

DR. BAKER  
Steve.

NEBRASKA  
I'm great.

(CONTINUED)

194 CONTINUED:

DR. BAKER

Good. Your friend, Mr. Percolo,  
tells me you just got back from  
Mexico.

NEBRASKA

Uh-huh.

DR. BAKER

Did you enjoy it there?

NEBRASKA

Sure.

DR. BAKER

Where did you live before you went  
to Mexico, Steve?

NEBRASKA

I don't remember.

DR. BAKER

Is Nebraska your real name?

NEBRASKA

I don't remember.

AL

Kid's very hazy about details.

DR. BAKER

Do you have any family, Steve?

NEBRASKA

Family?

AL

So, what do you think, Doc?

DR. BAKER

(staring at him)

How long has he been like this?

AL

Like what?

DR. BAKER

(after a moment)

I'd like to give him a Beular-Bass  
Test before I make a recommendation.

AL

Sure thing. Does he have to get  
undressed?

(CONTINUED)

194 CONTINUED: (2)

DR. BAKER

It's not that kind of test.

NEBRASKA

That's a beautiful bum.

DR. BAKER

Well, that's a nice thing to say.  
Thank you.

NEBRASKA

Al, isn't that a nice bum? The  
hair in it is so pretty.

AL

He don't see hair like that in  
Mexico.

DR. BAKER

Steve, I'd like to show you some  
pictures.

(she takes out a  
sheaf of pictures)

These are drawings and when you  
see them, I'd like you to tell me  
what you think the story of the  
picture is.

NEBRASKA

Okay.

She holds up the first of the series of drawings, labeled  
(A). It depicts a half-naked woman lying in bed. A fully-  
dressed man is standing by the side of the bed, his arm  
over his eyes.

Al puts on his glasses, peers at the picture.

AL

That's very interesting.

DR. BAKER

Could you sit over there, Mr.  
Percolo?

AL

Sure thing.

Nebraska stares intently at the picture.

(CONTINUED)

194 CONTINUED: (3)

NEBRASKA

Well, there's a lady sleeping and  
I guess that's her husband, he got  
up and he's ready to go to work.  
Still tired, too; see, he's rubbing  
his eyes with his sleeve.

DR. BAKER

Do you see any more?

NEBRASKA

Nope.

AL

Sweet kid, huh? They don't make  
'em like that anymore.

Drawing (B) shows an obviously distraught woman standing  
outside a closed door, her hand over her face. Nebraska  
peers at it.

NEBRASKA

Looks to me like that girl just  
sneezed.

DR. BAKER

I see. Anything else?

NEBRASKA

She was right next to that door  
when she sneezed.

AL

(studying it)

I can go along with that. Yeah,  
that could be.

DR. BAKER

(ignoring Al)

And the third drawing, Steve.

Drawing (C) shows a clearly wretched man, his coat askew,  
two hands restraining him from some act of destruction,  
possibly self-destruction.

NEBRASKA

Well, that guy's leaving a real  
nice restaurant and somebody's  
helping him on with his coat.  
Looks like he ate too much.

(CONTINUED)



194 CONTINUED: (4)

AL

Kid doesn't have one impure thought.  
I've met nuns who weren't that  
straight.

DR. BAKER

Number four.

Drawing (D) is quite strange. A young man stands in the foreground. In the background, two men appear to be performing surgery on a half-naked figure.

NEBRASKA

That guy's got himself a brand new  
suit, looks like. And I guess in  
the back there, they're fitting  
that other guy for a suit.

AL

(mouthing to Steve)

It's an operation.

DR. BAKER

Mr. Percolo, this is not a college  
entrance exam.

(to Steve)

This one.

Figure (E), two men, an older and a younger. Suggestion of  
father, son. It is seemingly the most innocent, the least  
emotionally charged of all the drawings, but it seems to  
throw Nebraska for a complete loss.

NEBRASKA

Two guys.

DR. BAKER

Anything else, Steve?

He shakes his head.

DR. BAKER

Alright. That was very good. Mr.  
Percolo, may I talk to you for a  
moment in the consultation room?

AL

Sure.

(to Steve, as he  
goes)

You did great. A little off on  
the operation story, but like the  
Doc says, this isn't a college exam.

(CONTINUED)

194 CONTINUED: (5)

NEBRASKA  
(as they leave;  
to Al)  
Don't forget me.

AL  
No way.

Dr. Baker and Al go out.

195 INT. CONSULTATION ROOM - AL, DR. BAKER

THROUGH THE GLASS TRANSOM, we see Steve wandering about,  
reading the diplomas on the wall.

AL  
(sitting)  
So, give me the word, Doc. How'd  
he do? He don't have to be a  
genius, you understand. The guy  
pitches a ball 130 miles an hour  
and I'm auctioning him off  
tomorrow. So, I just want to know  
that he won't... do anything crazy,  
like throw up on the mound... I...  
uh... don't have to tell you that  
this is all confidential, because  
I know that a doctor with his  
patient is sacred, like a reporter  
with his source.

DR. BAKER  
Mr. Percolo, how long have you  
known Steve Nebraska?

AL  
Three days.

DR. BAKER  
Are you aware that he's suffering  
from total amnesia?

AL  
Steve? Naw. He remembers things.  
Remembers me. Remembers the guys  
on the team in Mexico.

DR. BAKER  
But he remembers nothing about his  
past.

(CONTINUED)

195 CONTINUED:

AL

He doesn't have to remember his past to pitch.

DR. BAKER

Mr. Percolo, didn't anything strike you about his interpretation of the pictures in the Bualar-Bass?

AL

Yeah. He could work for Disney. I wish I had a kid like that. My wife is dead.

DR. BAKER

You aren't struck by the fact that he sees nothing in any picture that suggests anger, sadness, sexuality, conflict... any emotion?

AL

Oh, yeah. That was good. And, you know that was my one worry, that the kid would get emotional on the mound. But he don't have a nerve in his body, does he?

DR. BAKER

Mr. Percolo, Steve Nebraska has an amnesia so severe that he has not only blanked out the facts of his past, but the emotions that go with them. He has the consciousness of an unhatched egg.

AL

Hey! Doc! He pitches 130 miles an hour. In a week, he'll be a multi-millionaire. I know emotional guys with great memories who don't earn a third of that. One of them is my doorman.

DR. BAKER

For your information, Mr. Percolo, one of the reasons he can probably pitch 130 miles an hour is because he responds like an animal. He doesn't worry about failing. He doesn't worry about succeeding.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

195 CONTINUED: (2)

DR. BAKER (CONT'D)

He has no thought that comes between the impulse and the act, no doubts, no memories to slow his reflexes. He lives in the immediate present. Like... an ape.

AL

Exactly! That's exactly how I see him. But a special ape. A king in his own world -- baseball. A moron everywhere else. You know, I don't know too much outside of baseball, either.

DR. BAKER

Mr. Percolo, don't you understand what I'm saying? This man should be in a hospital. He's lost his identity. He's forgotten who he is.

AL

I know, but he doesn't mind, so why should we?

DR. BAKER

Well, he wouldn't mind if he were in a coma, either, but you wouldn't let him stay that way.

AL

Of course not. He couldn't pitch in a coma.

DR. BAKER

(after a moment)

Mr. Percolo, I am a doctor. And I believe Steve Nebraska is deeply disturbed. And I am not going to sit idly by while you take him out and use him as a... a pitching machine until he explodes...

AL

Explodes?

DR. BAKER

Yes! Explodes. Steve Nebraska's brain isn't impaired. It's his mind.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

195 CONTINUED: (3)

DR. BAKER (CONT'D)

The usual cause for this kind of forgetting comes from an experience so horrible, so black, so dangerous, so unthinkable, that it's impossible for the patient to face it. He escapes from it by pulling down a shade. But the experience isn't gone, Mr. Percolo. It's still there, and the shade won't stay down forever. Amnesia isn't permanent.

AL

It isn't?

(after a moment)

How long have I got? A season?

DR. BAKER

(rising)

I don't want to talk to you.

AL

Why?

DR. BAKER

Because you're inhuman.

AL

I'm sorry you feel that way.

DR. BAKER

(sitting)

Mr. Percolo, if you don't allow me to treat Steve Nebraska, I'm going to take steps to apply for a court order to commit him. I'm going to call...

AL

Wait a minute. Wait a minute. Who said you couldn't treat him? Of course, treat him. If the kid needs to be treated -- that's all I need to know.

DR. BAKER

Oh. I... I'm sorry. I thought...

AL

(shrugging)

You were pitching wild. It happens.

(CONTINUED)



195 CONTINUED: (4)

DR. BAKER

You understand that...

(frowning uneasily)

... it will be dangerous to treat him outside of a hospital situation.

AL

Oh?

DR. BAKER

He's a keg of dynamite, Mr. Percolo. Anything could light the fuse.

AL

A keg... of dynamite?

DR. BAKER

God knows what memories he's running away from. I'd feel much better if we could put him under 24-hour surveillance. The violence and rage he's repressing could erupt in murder. Suicide is a very real possibility.

AL

Really? He seems so cheerful.

DR. BAKER

That's one of the danger signals.

AL

One of the danger signals.

(slowly)

So... we're talking about a guy who could kill someone... or kill himself... at any time...

DR. BAKER

Exactly.

AL

Well, we see a lot of that in baseball. If you want 24-hour surveillance -- I'm your man. I won't leave his side, believe me, Dr. Baker. This kid means a lot to me.

DR. BAKER

It's a big job, Mr. Percolo.

(CONTINUED)

195 CONTINUED: (5)

AL

Do you know what Denham went  
through to bring back Kong? 'Big  
job.'

(he chuckles, rises)

You think he might pitch slower  
when he gets his memory back?

DR. BAKER

I don't know if he'll pitch at all.  
Wednesday at eleven?

AL

Right. And you'll be treating him  
in order to...

DR. BAKER

... get his memory back.

AL

Check. See you at eleven.

CUT TO:

196 CLOSE ON KNIVES, SPOONS, FORKS, SCISSORS, NAIL FILES

all sharp objects. They are being dumped into an incinera-  
tor.

197 INT. AL'S BUILDING - INCINERATOR

Al steps from the incinerator, cleaning off his hands.

198 INT. AL'S APARTMENT

He enters the apartment, stops, looks around, screams.

AL

Kid?

Al goes into the hallway, sees that the bathroom door is  
closed. He tries the knob. Locked. He pounds on the door.

AL

Kid? Kid! Answer me!

NEBRASKA (O.S.)

(opening the door)

I'm shaving, Al.

(CONTINUED)

198 CONTINUED:

AL

(taking the razor)  
That's good enough. I'll get you  
an electric shaver tomorrow.

Al wraps the razor in a washcloth, puts it in his pocket.

AL

Got any more of these?

NEBRASKA

No. I only use one razor.

AL

Sit down. Dinner in a minute.

Al goes into the kitchen, picks up the phone, dials, picks up a slip of paper. He speaks in a low voice.

AL

Hello. This is Mr. Percolo. I  
live at 41-20 46th Street, in  
Sunnyside, apartment 3C, account  
number 210056-871. I'd like my  
gas to be shut off as soon as  
possible... Not electric, just gas.  
Until further notice. Right.  
Thank you very much.

He hangs up. There is a large box on the kitchen table.  
He unwraps it: an electric broiler. There are styrofoam  
dishes of take-out food.

AL

Here we go. A couple of nice  
steaks, french fries. Want some  
ketchup?

He holds up a little plastic packet.

NEBRASKA

Sure.

Al tears the steak apart with his hands.

AL

Oh, this is perfect. Medium well.  
Yours okay?

NEBRASKA

I didn't look yet.

(CONTINUED)

198 CONTINUED: (2)

AL  
Good fries. Want another packet  
of ketchup?

NEBRASKA  
We don't have to eat like animals,  
Al. I won't hurt myself.

AL  
Less to wash this way. Drink  
your ice cream. It's almost time  
for bed.

NEBRASKA  
It's 8:30.

AL  
That late? Where the hell did  
the time go?

The PHONE RINGS. He snatches it up.

AL  
Percolo here...you mean the auction?...  
I'm absolutely serious...Bernie, it's  
entirely up to you. You feel that  
way -- don't come. It's your choice.  
(to Steve)  
Where you going, kid?

NEBRASKA  
Brush my teeth.

AL  
Hold on a second. We'll brush 'em  
together.

199 INT. BATHROOM - AL, STEVE

They are standing in front of the mirror brushing their  
teeth together. In the other room, the PHONE RINGS on.

AL  
You brush side to side?

Steve nods.

AL  
Try up and down. You wanna spit?

NEBRASKA  
I'll wait.

(CONTINUED)

199 CONTINUED:

AL  
No, go ahead. You spit first.

Steve spits, Al spits.

AL  
See how much fun it is doing  
things together?

CUT TO:

200 INT. BEDROOM - AL, STEVE

on twin beds. Steve is asleep. Al sits on the bed, nodding off. There is a length of cord looped around Steve's ankle leading to Al's ankle, where it is tied in a knot. Steve turns. Al's foot shoots out over the bed. His eyes fly open.

AL  
Kid?

NEBRASKA  
(mumbling in his  
sleep)  
... school... school...

Al leaps out of bed and sits by Steve's side; then sings softly into his ear.

AL  
'Keep your sunny side up, up,  
Hide the side that gets blue,  
If you have nine sons in a row  
Baseball teams make money you know  
So keep your sunny...'

Steve's breathing becomes regular again. Al starts back to his bed.

AL  
'... side up, up'  
(his eyes close;  
he slaps himself)  
'... stand up on your legs  
be like two fried eggs...'

CUT TO:



201 EXT. BASEBALL STADIUM

The huge ball park is empty, except for clusters of baseball EXECUTIVES, scouts, and a few REPORTERS milling around in the stands. Some are standing, some are sitting. Most of them are smoking cigars.

202 THREE EXECs

seated with their feet propped up on the back of the chair in front of them.

FIRST EXEC

(smoking a cigar)

I wouldn't miss this for the world.

SECOND EXEC

This son of a bitch is auctioning off a pitcher from the Escoril Toreadors.

FIRST EXEC

If he brings out a gorilla, I'll know he has a sense of humor.

THIRD EXEC

Al Percolo? He don't have a sense of humor. The last time he laughed was when Billy Martin kicked dust on the umpire. And once he laughed when his wife missed a chair.

203 WILSON

coming down the steps with Red Moore.

WILSON

... I'm only here because you guys are here. Why didn't you say no?

FOURTH EXEC

Because you didn't.

WILSON

I sent him to Mexico and I didn't tell him to stay out of the sun. It's my fault. I should have sent him to Alaska.

204 FOUR EXECUTIVES, FOUR REPORTERS

The Executives are all holding their telegrams.

(CONTINUED)



204 CONTINUED:

One of them is reading his aloud to the Reporters, who take notes.

FOURTH EXEC

'Gentlemen. Fifty years ago King Kong was brought out of the jungle. Stop. Now I, Al Percolo, have found the baseball King Kong. He's Steve Nebraska, the Escoril Babe Ruth.

REPORTER

(writing)

'... Escoril Babe Ruth...'

(looks up)

Is this a gag?

FIFTH EXEC

We'll know soon enough.

SIXTH EXEC

Wilson thinks Al's gone around the bend.

FIFTH EXEC

We'll know soon enough.

SIXTH EXEC

It better be soon. I gotta be out of here...

He breaks off.

There is a sudden silence as Al and Nebraska appear, walking toward the dugout. The men in the stands study Nebraska.

FOURTH EXEC

That must be the kid.

FIFTH EXEC

Christ, from the telegram, I expected fur.

205 AL, NEBRASKA

walking.

AL

How you feeling, kid?

NEBRASKA

Fine.

(CONTINUED)

205 CONTINUED:

AL

Atta boy.

They enter the dugout where a lone, middle-aged man in uniform sits twirling his cap. He leaps up as he sees Al and Nebraska.

AL

Ray, good to see you. Steve, this is Ray Pecker. He'll be catching.

RAY

Steve! Just go out there and throw it. Fuck 'em all.

AL

He's okay, Ray.

RAY

(to Steve)

Just stay loose. An auction's no different than a pick-up game...

AL

He's good, Ray...

RAY

No different than Old Timer's Day...

AL

You're tansing him up, Ray.

NEBRASKA

(frowning)

School...

RAY

What school did you go to?

AL

(leaping for Ray's throat)

Shut up!

There is a stunned silence.

AL

(to Steve)

We kid around like that, me and Ray. Nothing to worry about.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

205 CONTINUED: (2)

AL (CONT'D)

(to Ray)

Got you going there for a minute,  
didn't I?

RAY

Yeah. Oh, what a sense of humor  
this guy's got.

206 CARUSO, McDERMOTT, KRAMER

move toward the dugout. Kramer walks slowly, carefully.

AL

Good to see you, fellas.

CARUSO

I wish you the best, Al.

McDERMOTT

(to Steve)

Shove it up their asses, kid.  
Just stay loose...

AL

He's loose! He's loose! How  
are you, Kramer?

KRAMER

(feeling Al's face  
with his hands)

You're looking good, Al.

AL

Thanks, Kramer. You, too.

KRAMER

(groping for Steve)

I'm Chuck Kramer, kid. And I  
just want to tell you Al Percolo's  
the best. If he says you got an  
arm, I don't care who says he's  
crazy, you got an arm.

CARUSO

That's my arm, Chuck.

KRAMER

Jesus, what a relief.

They laugh.

## 207 STANDS - REPORTERS

FIRST REPORTER

What do we make this -- human interest?

SECOND REPORTER

I don't know. I never heard of auctioning off a player so... openly.

THIRD REPORTER

You think there's a chance he's got something?

FOURTH PLAYER

Naw. I saw the telegrams. Percolo's ready for a banana stand.

They laugh... then look down. Al is trotting out on the field, sweating copiously.

AL

Jack, Ted. Hi, Marty. Nice of you all to come here and special thanks to my former employer Jackie Wilson for letting me use the big ball park.

WILSON

(calling)

You've got fifteen minutes, Al.

AL

That's all I need. Folks, I went to Mexico and I found something. Jackie didn't believe me so he canned me, which of course was his prerogative. Now I'm about to prove he's the biggest horse's ass in the history of the game, which is my prerogative.

They laugh dutifully. Wilson shakes his hand sadly. Bernie spits.

WILSON

Fourteen minutes, Al.

AL

I'll say no more. Folks, he was a king and a god in the world he knew...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

207 CONTINUED:

AL (CONT'D)

... but I brought him back for  
your entertainment and edification.  
Steve Nebraska! Steve?

Nebraska comes trotting out on the field.

208 EXECS

They glance at each other, shrug, but lean forward with  
interest.

209 FIELD

AL

Okay, assisting me today will be  
my old pal, the former bullpen  
catcher for the Philadelphia A's,  
Ray Pecker. Ray?

Ray Pecker comes trotting out.

WILSON

(calling)

Twelve and a half minutes, Al.

AL

I think we're all set. Kid, you  
ready?

NEBRASKA

Sure am, Al!

AL

Just like Mexico, kid. Easy and  
relaxed. Sunny-side up, comprende?

NEBRASKA

Uh-huh.

Nebraska trots out to the mound.

AL

Ray'll do the catching and I'll  
be the batter, so to speak, 'cause  
against this kid there's no such  
thing as a batter.

210 EXECS

WILSON

Al, come on already, stop the  
bullshit.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

210 CONTINUED:

WILSON (CONT'D)  
(to the others)  
He's stalling.

SECOND EXEC

I see.

211 FIELD

Al steps to the plate.

AL  
Okay, kid?

NEBRASKA  
(calls from the mound)  
Sure.

AL  
Ray?

PECKER  
Let 'er rip.

Nebraska winds up, kicks his leg in the air, stops, looks around bewildered. Al runs up to him.

AL  
(casually through his terror)  
Something wrong?

NEBRASKA  
What if it hits you? You could get hurt.

AL  
Naw. You throw a strike, I won't be anywhere near it.  
(suddenly inspired)  
But you throw a ball... I could get clipped. You know what I mean?

NEBRASKA  
(thinking)  
Okay. Then I'll throw a strike.

AL  
(shrugging)  
Okay.

His knees buckle slightly, he straightens and trots back to home plate.



212    EXECS

SECOND EXEC

You see that?

FIRST EXEC

(rising)

I'm not sitting around for this  
crap.

213    FIELD

Nebraska delivers. Pecker goes tumbling over from the force  
of the pitch. The First Exec sits slowly down.

AL

Guess that was a strike.  
Anybody see it?

214    EXECS

They are in shock.

FIRST EXEC

Holy Christ!

WILSON

Who's got a speed gun? Ray,  
you got a speed gun?

215    REPORTERS

FIRST REPORTER

What happened?

SECOND REPORTER

(whispering)

He pitched. I think.

216    FIELD

AL

Okay, kid. Gimme a good one!  
You know how.

Nebraska winds up and delivers.

217    EXECS

Moore holds up the speed gun.

218    MASTER

Nebraska throws another blur. Again, Pecker falls over.  
Kramer, McDermott, Caruso.

(CONTINUED)

218 CONTINUED:

KRAMER

Sounded like a slider.

CARUSO

I don't believe this.

219 EXECS

FIRST EXEC

Red, what does it say?

Moore looks at the speed gun.

MOORE

Twenty-five miles an hour.

WILSON

What the hell are you talking about?

MOORE

'Scuse me. 125 miles an hour.  
What!

The Execs are in shock.

220 NEBRASKA

intent. He winds up, kicks.

221 EXECS

Now they're standing.

222 MASTER

The pitch comes in like lightning. Pecker holds it, then falls over to the side.

223 EXECS

They are all looking over Red Moore's shoulder.

224 CLOSE - SPEED GUN

The digital readout: 30. A second later, the "1" lights up.

225 EXECS

MOORE

Hunnert thirty.

(CONTINUED)

225 CONTINUED:

WILSON  
(in a coma)  
Hunnert chirty.

MOORE  
Coulda been a bad move, firing Al.

226 MASTER

AL  
All right, do we have time for  
Steve to demonstrate his batting  
skills, Jack?

WILSON  
Take all the time you want!

AL  
Thanks.  
(to Pecker)  
Flip me the ball, Ray.

Pecker flips Al the ball.

AL  
Remember the old curve, Ray?

PECKER  
Jesus, I can't believe that pitch.  
I never even saw it.

AL  
Yeah. Well, I wasn't comparing  
my curve to it. I just wondered  
if you remembered.

Al reaches the mound, starts warming up.

227 NEBRASKA

swings three bats over his head, a frown on his face.

NEBRASKA  
Lookit these big bats.

AL  
Don't swing 'em so close to your  
head, kid.  
(to the Exacs)  
The Mexican bats are much lighter.  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

227 CONTINUED:

AL (CONT'D)  
 (to Steve, nervously)  
 Let's go, kid. Enough bat swinging.

Nebraska steps to the plate, pounds his bat.

228 ANGLE ON EXECS

A few of them whip out binoculars.

229 MASTER SHOT

Al looks in, shakes his head as if shaking off a sign, then nods... winds up... Nebraska swings his bat in his circular round-and-round fashion. The ball comes in... Nebraska plants his foot down a la Mel Ott...

230 ANGLE ON EXECS

lean forward as one man...

231 MASTER SHOT

The pitch comes in -- CRACK. It soars away.

232 CLOSE ON NEBRASKA

He watches the vanishing ball.

233 CLOSE ON PECKER

He throws off his mask.

234 MOUND

Al shields his eyes, looks up in the sky.

235 ANGLE ON EXECS

WILSON  
 Holy Christ.

EXEC #1  
 It's going out.

236 EXT. YANKEE STADIUM

The ball comes flying out of the stadium.

## 237 ANGLE AT BILLBOARD ACROSS STREET

Across the street from Yankee Stadium, atop a building, a billboard:

## ABC SPORTS WITH HOWARD COSELL

A portrait of Cosell behind an ABC microphone, his mouth open as if speaking. Nebraska's mighty shot comes speeding toward the billboard where it crashes through Cosell's mouth, leaving a hole where the teeth were. A pigeon comes to roost on the opening.

## 238 ANGLE ON EXECS

They have leaped to their feet and are screaming bids at Al, holding up their fingers.

## FIRST EXEC

A million a year for three...

## SECOND EXEC

Two million a year for six...

## WILSON

Four million a year for eight...

## AL

Hold it. What is this kid? An object. Let's do this right. Put your bids in writing. We'll be waiting for you in the locker room.

## 239 THE STANDS

The five Reporters are running for the phones.

The Executives are racing toward the locker room.

## 240 DUGOUT

Caruso, McDermott and Kramer hug Al.

## CARUSO

You went into the jungle, Al.

## McDERMOTT

You found one, Al.

## KRAMER

That was the fastest pitch I ever heard, Al. And I heard some fast ones.

CUT TO:



241 EXT. STADIUM - BANDS OF PHONES - REPORTERS ALL ON PHONES

FIRST REPORTER

The pitch knocked the catcher on his ass. He caught it and went on his ass -- unbelievable.

SECOND REPORTER

They timed him -- fastest in history -- like 130 miles an hour -- unbelievable.

THIRD REPORTER

Then he knocked one out of the park -- They were throwing money at Percolo -- millions -- he said 'put it in writing.'

FOURTH REPORTER

Baseball owners in frenzied bidding for greatest player ever. Results at one p.m.

FIFTH REPORTER

Unprecedented auction. Calls him the King Kong of baseball.

CUT TO:

242 EXT. STADIUM - TV VANS, PRESS CARS PULLING UP

243 INT. LOCKER ROOM - AL, STEVE, EXECS

watching silently as Al reads the bids. The tension in the room is palpable as Al unfolds each slip of paper, looks at it and puts it in one of three piles.

FIRST EXEC

(suddenly cracking)

Wait! Wait! I made a mistake!  
I wanna resubmit my bid!

SECOND EXEC

Fuck you!

THIRD EXEC

I wanna resubmit my bid, too.

SECOND EXEC

Fuck both of you.

244 EXT. LOCKER ROOM - REPORTERS

listening to the NOISE of the voices screaming inside.

(CONTINUED)

244 CONTINUED:

Suddenly there is silence. Then -- the door opens and Al walks out with Steve. The Reporters begin screaming questions. Nebraska takes a step back. Al holds up his hand.

AL

I have a brief announcement to make.

Al takes out his reading glasses. The Executives shove their way into the doorway of the locker room, listening tensely.

AL

The result of this bidding is as yet unknown -- even to the bidders themselves.

REPORTER

You mean no one knows who got Nebraska yet.

You mean...

What do you mean?

AL

I mean, gentlemen -- and you, Miss -- that in an unprecedented move, I am going to reveal to the press and to the highest bidder who he is --

The Reporters, TV Sportscasters, Execs all wait tensely.

AL

Here are a few hints. First, there is an historic five-year contract for Steve Nebraska with a bonus of six million dollars for signing.

THREE EXECS (UNISON)

That's me!

REPORTERS

Al, which one is it?

EXECS

Who is it?

AL

... and an annual salary of four million dollars and a deferment of twelve million dollars to be paid ... over six years. Total package of thirty-eight million.

(CONTINUED)

244 CONTINUED: (2)

WILSON

(suddenly, jumping  
up and down)It's me! It's me!

REPORTER

38 million! You said 38 million?  
Jack, 38 million! How can you  
justify that amount of money.

WILSON

He's a great, great ballplayer  
with unlimited potential. Plus  
his mental attitude is tremendous.  
He's really together.

REPORTER

Would you agree with that, Steve?

NEBRASKA

With what?

Big laugh from the Reporters. Al laughs as if it were a  
great joke.

AL

Very good answer.

REPORTER

Steve, how many years did you  
play in Mexico?

NEBRASKA

I don't remember.

REPORTER

You don't remember?

AL

Fellas...

REPORTER

What do your folks say about all  
this, Steve?

NEBRASKA

Well, my dad's a postman down in  
Baton Rouge.

REPORTER

How did he react?

(CONTINUED)

244 CONTINUED: (3)

NEBRASKA

Who?

AL

Guys...

REPORTER

Your dad.

NEBRASKA

Passed away about ten years ago.

REPORTER

But you said he's a postman.  
Then you said he's dead.

AL

Guess that's why the mail's so  
slow. Okay, thanks, fellas...  
that's all.

A flashbulb explodes several times.

NEBRASKA

Al said that's all.

The flashbulbs explode again.

Nebraska smashes the camera to the ground.

PHOTOGRAPHER

Hey!

More flashbulbs explode, CAMERAS WHIR AND CLICK as the extraordinary event is recorded. Nebraska grabs the photographer.

AL

Relax, kid.

WILSON

(to photographer)

You son-of-a-bitch! Are you  
alright, Steve?

(to Steve; softly)

You just bought yourself a lot  
of column space, kid.

Nebraska goes running into the locker room.

(CONTINUED)

244 CONTINUED: (4)

AL

(to Reporters)

Guys, you have to understand the kid's been in darkest Mexico. He went there when he was eight. This is all new to him.

WILSON

(softly to Al)

Lotta TV coverage, Al.

AL

(to the press)

Phone it in, boys. Percolo's discovered the eighth wonder of the world.

Al turns and runs toward the locker room.

WILSON

Any questions I can answer, gentlemen?

CUT TO:

245 INT. LOCKER ROOM - NEBRASKA

sitting with his head in his hands. He looks up as Al runs in.

AL

Kid.

NEBRASKA

Hi, Al.

AL

You okay?

NEBRASKA

Yeah. I didn't like it when that guy wouldn't listen to you. And I didn't like the lights.

AL

Yeah. They stink. But you gotta take those things in stride.

NEBRASKA

Did everything go the way you wanted, Al?

(CONTINUED)



245 CONTINUED:

AL  
 Everything. In one week, you're gonna be out there pitching the first game of the World Series for the Yankees. So all you gotta do is just stay the way you are for a week. And then six more days for the series. That's 13 days. Christ, how hard can that be.

246 INT. AL'S BEDROOM --AL, NEBRASKA - NIGHT

Al sits watching anxiously as Steve thrashes about, tangling the cord around his leg.

AL  
 (crooningly)  
 'Keep your sunny side up...'

NEBRASKA  
 ... my dog... dog.

AL  
 'Hide the side that gets blue...'

NEBRASKA  
 ... where'd you put...

AL  
 ... 'If you have nine sons in a row...'

NEBRASKA  
 ... where'd you put my dog...

AL  
 'Baseball teams make money, you know. So keep your sunny side up, up...'

247 EXT. AL'S HOUSE

as a horde of media pull up.

BERMAN  
 (into mike)  
 Warner, it's absolute mayhem outside Al Percolo's home in Sunnyside, Queens, as reporters and newscasters wait for the second day to interview Al and phenomenal new pitcher, Steve Nebraska...

248 INT. AL'S APARTMENT - AL, STEVE  
seated at a table playing cards for cookies.

AL  
Do you have any sevens?

NEBRASKA  
Go fish.

Al picks a ten.

AL  
Hey! How do you like that! I  
picked a seven.

NEBRASKA  
You take the pot.

Al sweeps in the cookies.

NEBRASKA  
I bet three cookies on the five.

AL  
I see your three cookies and I  
raise three cookies.

NEBRASKA  
Got any fives.

AL  
Go fish.  
(he chuckles)  
I win again.

249 EXT. AL'S APARTMENT HOUSE  
More reporters and TV vans pull up.

250 TV STUDIO NEWSROOM  
Sportscaster Warner Wolf is winding his segment.

WOLF  
... for an unprecedented 38  
million...

251 ANOTHER TV STUDIO NEWSROOM - SECOND SPORTSCASTER

SECOND SPORTSCASTER  
... an unbelievable 38 million.

252 ANOTHER TV STUDIO NEWSROOM

THIRD SPORTSCASTER  
... a phenomenal 38 million paid  
by Jackie Wilson of the New York  
Yankees.

253 ANOTHER TV NEWSROOM - WILSON AND INTERVIEWER

WILSON  
I made a mistake with Percolo,  
but I didn't run from it. I bit  
the bullet. That's the Yankee  
tradition.

CUT TO:

254 INT. DR. BAKER'S OFFICE

She is reading about Steve Nebraska.

255 EXT. AL'S APARTMENT HOUSE - THE REAR

Al and Steve going down the fire escape.

256 INT. DR. BAKER'S WAITING ROOM - AL

on his hands and knees, trying to see under the door. A  
patient enters. Al pretends to find his keys, then sits  
with the patient in silence.

257 INT. DR. BAKER'S OFFICE - STEVE, DR. BAKER

DR. BAKER  
Anything come to mind?

Steve shakes his head.

DR. BAKER  
Any dreams? Fragments? Nothing?

Steve shakes his head.

(CONTINUED)

257 CONTINUED:

DR. BAKER

Alright, Steve. That's all for today.

Steve rises and starts out.

258 EXT. STREET - AL, STEVE - WALKING

AL

How did the session go?

NEBRASKA

Fine.

AL

Yeah, she's a nice lady but you gotta take her with a grain of salt.

NEBRASKA

I understand, Al.

259 EXT.. AL'S APARTMENT HOUSE

More Reporters and TV vans have pulled up outside.

FIRST REPORTER

38 million...

SECOND REPORTER

I'd give my ass to know what those two are planning next.

CUT TO:

260 INT. AL'S BUILDING/LAUNDRY ROOM

Al is teaching laundry to Nebraska. He has two baskets: white and dark.

AL

Now you gotta separate the light and the dark. You don't do that, you wind up with pink underwear and all the other guys make fun of you.

Holds up argyle socks.

NEBRASKA

Dark.

(CONTINUED)

260 CONTINUED:

AL

Very good.

Holds up jockstrap.

NEBRASKA

Light.

AL

This is enjoyable, isn't it? And when we're done with the laundry we'll go upstairs and work on our scrapbooks. It's gonna be a nice evening.

261 INT. AL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Al is cutting out articles and pasting them in two scrapbooks. Steve stands looking out of the window.

262 INT. DR. BAKER'S WAITING ROOM - AL, THE PATIENT

Al sits, looking nervously at his watch. The Patient suddenly gives a choked sob. Al looks up.

PATIENT

Oh, God, I'm sorry. I'm just... working through some very painful material... and I'm... I'm very vulnerable right now. The past is so painful.

AL

Yeah. Well you got to take these sessions with a grain of salt.

263 INT. DR. BAKER'S OFFICE - STEVE, DR. BAKER

There is a pause. Dr. Baker sighs quietly.

NEBRASKA

(suddenly)

I dreamed that I knew you from someplace. We were somewhere, not New York, and I knew you.

264 CLOSE - DR. BAKER

Very interested, a little stunned. She leans forward.

DR. BAKER

What kind of place?



265 MASTER

NEBRASKA

A street. Trees.

DR. BAKER

Did you ever have a dream like  
this before?

Nebraska shrugs sheepishly.

DR. BAKER

You don't remember... Have you  
felt differently since the dream?

NEBRASKA

Weird. A little... I don't know  
... I can't remember things. And  
the thing is, the last few days I  
realize that I don't remember  
things. Used to be I didn't know  
that, I just didn't remember. Do  
you understand what I'm saying?

DR. BAKER

You weren't conscious of the fact  
that you didn't remember things.

NEBRASKA

Yeah. I knew you'd understand.

(pause)

You like me this way?

DR. BAKER

Very much. I would like you to  
remember though.

NEBRASKA

Al likes me this way.

(pause)

I like you, too.

(pause)

I can't explain to Al. Sometimes  
it just gets lonely without a  
past.

(CONTINUED)

CUT TO:

266 EXT. ZOO - NEBRASKA, AL

They are looking at the gorilla.

AL  
(casually)  
How'd the session go today?

NEBRASKA  
Fine.

AL  
Guy who goes in after you is a mess. I had a very rough time with him for a while. It isn't always healthy to dwell on the past.

NEBRASKA  
But it's... it's nice to have a past.

AL  
Not necessarily. Look at him.  
(he points to  
the gorilla)  
He don't have no past. Nothing on his mind but his next banana. Look how carefree he is. Lot of people would trade places with these apes.

NEBRASKA  
Yeah. I guess so.

(CONTINUED)

266 CONTINUED:

AL  
Still down in the mouth? Come  
on, I'll buy you a balloon.

CUT TO:

267 EXT. YANKEE STADIUM - CROWDS

They are lined up to buy tickets for the series. The lines  
go around the corner. Scalpers carry signs that say "Only  
4 more days."

268 INT. CLUBHOUSE - AL, WILSON, PHOTOGRAPHERS

Al and Wilson are posing with their arms around each other,  
shaking hands, toasting with champagne. Al is hollow-eyed  
with fatigue.

PHOTOGRAPHER  
Hold it. Could you and Mr.  
Wilson smile.

WILSON  
You look tired, Al. Lot of late  
nights, huh?

He grins.

AL  
Yeah. Lot of parties.

REPORTER  
Is Steve happy with his deal, Al?

AL  
Happiest kid in the world. Of  
course, he's low about his teeth.  
There's no pain like that I can  
tell you. We take good oral  
hygiene for granted in this  
country, but in Mexico and bear  
in mind this kid hit Mexico when  
he was eight -- he never saw a  
dentist --

PHOTOGRAPHER  
Look this way, Mr. Wilson, Mr.  
Percolo.

Flash bulbs pop.

AL  
Excuse me, will you? I need a  
five minute break.

(CONTINUED)

268 CONTINUED:

He grabs a bottle of club soda and runs out.

REPORTER

Is Mr. Percolo married?

WILSON

He's married to his work. That's the highest tribute I can pay a scout.

269 EXT. STREET - AL RUNNING

around the corner still clutching the club soda. He skids to a stop in front of an old Chevy with a padlock on it, looks over his shoulder and quickly unlocks the car. Steve sits up in the back seat.

AL

Hurry up. I gotta get back. Got your bowl?

Steve holds out a plastic bowl. Al fills it with club soda.

AL

Don't drink too fast.

Al shuts the door padlocks it again and runs back towards the clubhouse.

270 INT. AL'S BEDROOM

Steve is in bed. Al sits in a chair listening to his transistor radio and slapping himself awake, the cord tied around his ankle. A VOICE leaks out of his headset.

VOICE

And so with three days left to the first game of the series...

NEBRASKA

Al...

Al jumps awake.

AL

Yeah? You wanna go to the john?

He reaches down to his ankle.

NEBRASKA

No, you don't have to untie me. I just wanted to ask you something.

AL

Yeah.

(CONTINUED)

270 CONTINUED:

NEBRASKA

Have you enjoyed your life?

AL

Huh?

NEBRASKA

Have you enjoyed your life?

AL

Who wears a cloak and rides a pig?

NEBRASKA

Who?

AL

Lawrence of Poland.

Steve is silent.

AL

(chuckles)

I don't know why that joke kills me. I think it's the cloak.

There is a pause. Steve stares straight ahead. Al stares at the ceiling.

AL

(suddenly)

In the forties, after the war.  
I enjoyed my life.

NEBRASKA

In the 40's? You remember that far back?

AL

Oh, yeah. And, you know, I don't remember the 70's. For me it went from 1969 to 1980 just like that. But in the 40's -- you didn't know what to dream about next -- there were so many things.

NEBRASKA

You must have been young in the 40's.

AL

Yeah, but it wasn't just that. It was the time. What a great time that was. What a town this was in the 40's. I was just a kid pitching for Jersey City.

(CONTINUED)



270 CONTINUED: (2)

NEBRASKA

Jersey City.

AL

Just across the river.

NEBRASKA

Is it pretty there?

AL

It was then. On my off-days I'd take the ferry, come into town, just walk around. That's how I met Blanche. She was at a bus stop. I said, 'waiting for a bus.' She said, 'no just resting my feet. I'm walking around.' It doesn't sound like much now, but in the 40's with her hair rolled up and dressed so sporty -- she was wearing black and white spectators and bright red lipstick -- it sounded... just right... just like what you'd want to hear a girl say.

Another pause Al looks thoughtful, almost sad.

NEBRASKA

(singing tentatively)

'Keep your sunny side up, up...'

AL

Hey, where did you hear that song?

NEBRASKA

I don't... know.

AL

Son-of-a-bitch.

(he claps his shoulder)

I'll tell you something, kid. I wouldn't trade my best memories for what's ahead. Most guys -- they got a year, two years' worth of good memories out of their whole lives. But me -- I got a future. At my age. I got my best times ahead of me. Because of you.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

270 CONTINUED: (3)

AL (CONT'D)

(taps Steve's arm)

That right arm -- that's my ticket  
to the movies.

NEBRASKA

What'll you do with 38 million,  
Al?

AL

Nothing. That's your money, kid.  
I don't get that money. Maybe  
enough to cover expenses, but  
it's not the money people will  
remember me for. It's finding  
the guy who earned it. You did  
it for me, kid.

Steve sits quietly -- staring straight ahead.

CUT TO:

271 EXT. YANKEE STADIUM

The crowd has grown and is growing.

272 42ND STREET

Shops with King Kong T-shirt. Below the ape is the name  
"Steve Nebraska."

273 CENTRAL PARK

Crowded with kids in King Kong T-shirts playing baseball.

274 INT. TV STUDIO

Al is being interviewed by Howard Cosell.

COSELL

Al, three months ago you were  
an outcast, really, condemned to  
Mexico after the extraordinary  
episode of your half-million  
dollar catastrophe, Bobby Lacy.

AL

Well, Howard...

COSELL

The young man you touted so highly  
who proceeded to vomit on the  
mount here at Yankee Stadium.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

COSELL (CONT'D)

You, excoriated, really, by owner Jack Wilson, ordered to the depths of Mexico, the lowly Southern Mexican League...

AL

Best experience I ever had.

COSELL

You can say that now, but what a humiliation. Then fired! Fired from the team you had labored for as a scout, and then in triumph, making an unbelievable 38 million dollar deal, then re-hired as pitching coach. What an extraordinary saga it has been.

AL

Been a helluva year, Howard.

COSELL

Al, let's call a spade a spade. Four days ago, the press reported that Steve Nebraska displayed a combination of pitching and batting skills not seen in this game since the heyday of George Herman Ruth. Since then he has virtually disappeared, refusing all interviews with members of the press and actually destroying the camera of an A.P. Press photographer. Al -- what's the problem? Drugs, the money? Personal problems?

AL

Howard, we're talking about a boy who's been in darkest Mexico since he was eight. A boy whose teeth were in such jeopardy, that for awhile there was a fear on my part that he would lose them. Now, I have explained this in many interviews. He has been in the dentist's chair almost constantly since the Yankees signed him and the pain has been such that his temper which, believe me, is usually like a saint's, has become a little ragged.

275 INT. DR. BAKER'S OFFICE - DR. BAKER, NEBRASKA

They sit in silence.

DR. BAKER  
Is something troubling you, Steve?

NEBRASKA  
Would you kiss me?

DR. BAKER  
Kiss you?

NEBRASKA  
I won't be your patient any more -  
after today... so is it okay to  
kiss me?

DR. BAKER  
Is this a goodbye kiss?

NEBRASKA  
Yes.

He leans over and kisses her.

DR. BAKER  
Steve, if you would just...

NEBRASKA  
I don't want to talk any more now.  
I just want to sit here till Al  
comes for me.

DR. BAKER  
All right. Would you like to  
tell me why you won't come back?

NEBRASKA  
No. I'd like to look at my test  
pictures again though.

DR. BAKER  
Alright.

She hands him the Beuhlar Bass pictures. He smiles at  
them.

NEBRASKA  
I remember these. These are my  
1940's.

(CONTINUED)

275 CONTINUED:

He looks at the first picture.

NEBRASKA

That's a woman crying because her husband left her and now she's going to have to raise her little boy all by herself.

Dr. Baker stiffens.

NEBRASKA

It's very hard to her. Very. Her health goes bad. She drinks a lot... Next, please.

Dr. Baker whips a card into his hand.

A) DRAWING C: THE DISTRAUGHT YOUNG MAN

NEBRASKA

The mother dies; her son considers doing away with himself...

Dr. Baker leans forward.

NEBRASKA

But he doesn't. He lives, but he's totally lost. He has no idea where his father is, he has no family. No one cares if he lives or dies. He just floats around and winds up in Mexico. He starts messing around with peyote and loses touch with reality. Next, please.

She slaps another card in his hand.

B) DRAWING D: THE DREAMING YOUNG MAN

NEBRASKA

He's in a strange place in Mexico; his true self is stretched out flat in the background. He adopts the manner of a young boy, is easily suggestible. When he forgets his own last name, he takes a new name from a truck full of hogs. The name Nebraska. Next, please.

She snaps him a card.

C) DRAWING E: THE TWO MEN



276 CLOSE - NEBRASKA

He stares intently at the card. Dr. Baker swallows.  
Steve speaks with difficulty.

NEBRASKA

The young man finally meets a  
father. Not his real father,  
but someone like a father.  
Someone who seems to care for  
him, who listens to him...

(his voice becomes  
strained)

... who protects him, who doesn't  
seem to mind if he gets angry.  
Someone who just likes him.

(he breaks into  
a sweat)

Someone who is just there for him  
... someone like Al.

He stops.

DR. BAKER

Yes?

NEBRASKA

What?

DR. BAKER

'Someone like Al...'

NEBRASKA

Yes?

DR. BAKER

Did you want your father to be  
like Al?

NEBRASKA

I don't remember my father.

DR. BAKER

Your father left you. You and  
your mother...

NEBRASKA

He did?

DR. BAKER

Your mother's dead.

STEVE

How do you know?

(CONTINUED)

276 CONTINUED:

DR. BAKER

You just told me.

STEVE

Told you what?

DR. BAKER

The story you told me about the cards.

STEVE

What was it?

DR. BAKER

Don't you remember?

(Steve shakes his head)

You just said it.

(Steve shakes his head)

Steve! You just told me about your past.

(she hands him the cards)

Look at them again. Try and remember.

STEVE

(shaking his head)

It isn't healthy to dwell on the past.

277 INT. WAITING ROOM - AL

He sits in the waiting room still in his TV makeup waiting for Steve's session to be over. His eyes keep closing. Dr. Baker's voice is heard dimly through the door.

DR. BAKER (O.S.)

... He's a parasite. Al Percolo is a human parasite.

Al's eyes snap open.

The door opens and the Patient enters.

PATIENT

(excitedly)

Al! Wait till you hear what happened!

(CONTINUED)

277 CONTINUED:

DR. BAKER (O.S.)  
... can't you see he's using you.

PATIENT  
(wisely)  
Sounds like your boy is having  
a breakthrough.

Al grabs his heart, leaps to his feet and rushes into  
Dr. Baker's office.

278 INT. DR. BAKER'S OFFICE

Al enters. Dr. Baker is in her chair. The other chair  
is empty.

DR. BAKER  
(ice-cold, livid)  
You son of a bitch.

AL  
Where's the kid, toilet?

DR. BAKER  
How could you?

AL  
(totally confused)  
What...

DR. BAKER  
Not only do you fight this  
treatment tooth and nail by  
telling him not to 'dwell on  
the past...'

AL  
Doc...

DR. BAKER  
But you encourage him to remain  
an infant.

Al goes to the door he thinks to be the bathroom door.

AL  
Kid?

He opens the door. It's a rear exit. Stairs.

DR. BAKER (O.S.)  
He left.

(CONTINUED)

278 CONTINUED:

Al turns in horror.

AL

Left?

DR. BAKER

He wants to become an adult, but he thinks that would make you angry.

AL

Where did he go?

DR. BAKER

I have no idea.

AL

(desperate)

You just cut him loose?

DR. BAKER

He's no threat to anyone. He'll be back here tomorrow.

AL

Tomorrow? What about tonight?  
He's pitching, for crissakes!

Al, exhausted, in total shock, starts wandering out of the office.

DR. BAKER

Mr. Percolo.

Al stops. Dr. Baker comes to the door.

DR. BAKER

You're the most important person in his life...

AL

Doc, I'm just a scout.

DR. BAKER

That's up to you.

She closes the door.

AL

It was never like this in the old days.

CUT TO:

279 EXT. YANKEE STADIUM - EVENING

The fans are streaming toward the ball park. Scalpers are all over the place.

SCALPERS

Who needs seats? Only two hundred dollars.

280 INT. YANKEE STADIUM

The place is filling up. Banners hang from the upper deck: "WELCOME STEVE." "WE LOVE NEBRASKA." PAN DOWN to the field where Cosell is speaking to Red Moore.

COSELL

The anticipation is almost palpable. Red, a word about your starting pitcher.

MOORE

Well, Howard, not much I can say, 'cause as you know, I ain't seen him since the auction.

281 EXT. YANKEE STADIUM

Al steps from a cab. Gaunt, haggard, but now he resembles the Flying Dutchman. He heads toward the players entrance. The GUARD greets him.

GUARD

Evening, Mr. Percolo. Big night for you.

AL

Sure is.

GUARD

This kid ain't another Lacy, is he?

The Guard laughs. Weakly, Al joins in.

AL

Where's Wilson?

GUARD

In his box. He's waitin' for you.

AL

He is?

GUARD

Told me to tell you.

The weight of the world on his shoulders, Al enters the stadium.



282 INT. STADIUM ELEVATORS

Al enters the elevator. The OPERATOR smiles.

OPERATOR  
Evening, Mr. Percolo.  
Congratulations.

AL  
Thanks very much.

OPERATOR  
I can't wait to see that kid  
pitch.

AL  
Yeah, ma, too.

The elevator stops. The doors open at the level of the executive boxes. Like a condemned man, Al gets out.

283 INT. WILSON'S BOX

With Wilson are various guests: an executive couple, a black couple, a foreign couple.

WILSON  
Here he is.

Wilson starts to applaud Al and is joined by the other guests. Al just nods.

WILSON  
Al, this is Ted Vanderbilt of General Motors, Mrs. Vanderbilt, Mr. and Mrs. Dongen van Loon of the Dutch Bank, and of course, Sugar Jackson and Mrs. Sugar Jackson.

AL  
Great honor to meet you all.  
(sotto voce)  
Jackie...

WILSON  
He looks great in uniform I'll call you that, Al.

AL  
Who?

Wilson laughs, joined by the others.

(CONTINUED)

283 CONTINUED:

WILSON

'Who.'

AL

The kid.

WILSON

Of course the kid.

AL

He's here?

WILSON

You know what he said to me --  
and you'll love this, Al, cause  
of the Lacy thing and all -- he  
said, 'Mr. Wilson, I'm not sure  
I'm gonna pitch tonight.'

Wilson cracks up.

WILSON

I mean, the balls, to kid me like  
that.

AL

(whiter than snow)  
Yeah. Well, he... He said that?  
About what time?

WILSON

Dongen, when did we meet Nebraska.

VAN LOON

(heavy accent)  
'Bout six.

WILSON

About six.

AL

He was in his uniform.

WILSON

Look at this crowd. It's  
unbelievable. You know what I  
told the kid?

AL

What?

(CONTINUED)

283 CONTINUED: (2)

WILSON

Stay out of sight. The first  
time he steps out on the field...  
I mean, that'll have to be one of  
the great moments.

AL

Oh, yeah. Absolutely. You think,  
what, he's in the clubhouse, Jackie?

WILSON

I thought he came here with you.

AL

He did, but I've been running  
around... clubhouse?

WILSON

Yeah. Go keep him loose.

(winks)

Like only you can; go.

AL

Yeah.

284 EXT. ELEVATORS

Al comes running out Wilson's box, starts running down  
the ramp.

285 FIELD

Cossell interviews the RED SOX MANAGER, an obese man  
with a crew cut.

RED SOX MANAGER

I don't believe anybody can throw  
the ball 130 miles an hour.

286 YANKEE DUGOUT

Al comes out into the dugout. He is stopped by the  
BAT BOY.

BAT BOY

Mr. Percolo?

AL

What?

The Bat Boy hands Al a note. Al opens it.

287 CLOSE - NOTE

AL, GO TO RIGHT FIELD AND LOOK UP.

STEVE

288 CLOSE - AL

AL

Up?

289 FIELD

Al goes out to the field and starts walking out toward right field, attempting to look casual. On the way out, various player and coaches greet him: "Hey, Al." "Big night, Al." "Can't wait to see him, Al."

P.A. ANNOUNCER

Good evening, everybody, and welcome to Yankee Stadium, the home of champions...

A ROAR from the CROWD.

P.A. ANNOUNCER

And welcome to the opening game of the American League championships.

Al makes it out to right field. He stops, casually looks up.

290 AL'S POV

The glare of the lights. The night sky behind the lights.

291 CLOSE - AL

Squinting up.

292 AL'S POV

A figure steps from behind the lights, waves his cap twice, goes back behind the lights.

293 CLOSE - AL

AL

Holy Jesus.

P.A. ANNOUNCER

Tonight's lineups...

294 MASTER - FIELD

Al goes running toward the right field seats, jumps the wall.

295 RIGHT FIELD SEATS

Al goes tearing up the aisle.

296 INT. STADIUM/RAMPS

Al goes chugging up ramp after ramp.

297 TOP DECK

Al reaches the top deck, near cardiac arrest. He walks past milling fans, past hot dog and beer vendors, spots a ladder. He starts climbing the ladder. A GUARD shouts at him.

GUARD

Hey.

AL

I'm Percolo.

GUARD

Oh, sorry, Al. Go on ahead.

298 CLOSE - AL

Rung by rung.

299 ROOF OF YANKEE STADIUM

An eerie silence. The green field below. A hatch opens. Al steps out.

AL

Kid? Kid?

He gets out, dusts himself off, starts walking around the roof. Al doesn't like heights.

AL

Kid?

NEBRASKA (O.S.)

Over here, Al.

PAN RIGHT: Nebraska is standing by the light stanchion.

300 MASTER

With gingerly steps, Al walks toward Nebraska.

P.A. ANNOUNCER

Introducing the western division  
champion California Angels...

(CONTINUED)



300 CONTINUED:

(The introduction of the team begins. During Al and Nebraska's dialogue, we see and hear, one by one, the players of each team being introduced and taking their positions along the foul lines.)

AL

Beautiful up here. Some view.

NEBRASKA

It's a good place to think.

AL

Yeah. Must be. Get the whole...  
the big picture.

Nebraska stares down at the field.

AL

Used to be a show on TV, 'The  
Big Picture.' About the army.  
Just the army -- never the navy  
or the marines or coast guard.  
I figure the army musta made  
that show.

Nebraska keeps looking down. Al nervously talks on.

AL

I mean, if the navy makes that  
show and they're just talking  
about the army every week, that  
don't make any sense to me.

NEBRASKA

Al, I ain't gonna pitch tonight.

Al just nods. He's way past being surprised.

AL

That's extremely disappointing.

301 ANGLE - SKY

The Goodyear blimp nears the stadium.

302 INT. ABC TRUCK

A DIRECTOR stares at the multiple screen before him,  
reflecting every shot available.

(CONTINUED)

302 CONTINUED:

He stares at the screen marked blimp. We see that it's nearing the stadium.

DIRECTOR

Stay with two; and be prepared for a blimp shot.

303 ROOF OF STADIUM

NEBRASKA

It's just impossible. I've had a day...

AL

You and the doc had a breakthrough, huh?

NEBRASKA

Yeah. Sure did.

AL

Picked a helluva day for it. Couldn't of waited till the off-season, I guess.

NEBRASKA

It was inevitable, Al. It had to happen today.

Al lights a cigarette.

AL

Yeah. Why don't you tell me about it. We got plenty of time. If you don't pitch, I ain't gettin' off this roof till the winter.

Al is exhausted and Al, for the first time, appears to be getting ticked off.

304 ANGLE - SKY

The blimp is now directly over the ball park.

305 INT. DIRECTOR'S TRUCK

The Director checks out the blimp shot.

(CONTINUED)

305 CONTINUED:

DIRECTOR

Okay...

(he leans closer  
to the monitor)

What the hell is that?

306 ROOF

NEBRASKA

I'm twelve years old, the  
greatest pitcher in the history  
of Moline Junior High School.  
One day, I pitch a bad game.  
A week later, my old man runs  
off. I never see him again.

AL

So what?

NEBRASKA

What do you mean, so what?  
I'm scared.

AL

You weren't scared in Mexico.

NEBRASKA

I was nuts in Mexico! I had  
nothing to lose in Mexico! There  
was nothing at stake!

AL

What are you going to lose here?  
The contract is guaranteed.

NEBRASKA

You! I don't want to lose you!

307 CLOSE - AL

AL

Me?

308 NEBRASKA

NEBRASKA

Yeah. It's been just us, Al.  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

308 CONTINUED:

NEBRASKA (CONT'D)

I go out there, it's over; I'm  
part of that...

P.A. ANNOUNCER

And now... The New York Yankees...

A huge ROAR...

309 MASTER

The Yankees begin to be introduced.

NEBRASKA

No more eating in the apartment,  
no more laundry together...

AL

We can do laundry...

NEBRASKA

But I won't be protected anymore,  
Al. I'll be with all of them.

(he's panicking  
a little)

Why don't we just go back to your  
house?

310 TV MONITOR

Al and Nebraska on top of the stadium.

COSSELL (O.S.)

What an extraordinary moment! Al  
Percolo, who for the past week has  
dedicated himself with fanatical  
zeal to the shielding of Steve  
Nebraska, now, at the penultimate  
moment, is giving his young  
discovery the ultimate pep talk on  
the very roof of Yankee Stadium.

311 WILSON'S BOX

Wilson stares at his TV with delight.

WILSON

Unbelievable! What an ideal! Al  
must've ordered a chopper to bring  
'em down.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

311 CONTINUED:

WILSON (CONT'D)

(to aide)

Find out if he ordered a chopper.  
If not, get one up there! Jesus,  
what an entrance!

312 INT. DR. BAKER'S OFFICE

She is watching on a small portable TV. We see Al and Nebraska, oblivious to the zoom lens, in fevered discussion.

DR. BAKER

My God. Al, don't baby him.  
Don't baby him.

313 EXT. ROOF

NEBRASKA

Just two more weeks, Al.

AL

(confused)

Kid, the doc told me I was babying  
you. She said it was no good.

P.A. ANNOUNCER

Number 31, Dave Winfield.

Another ROAR. Nebraska pales.

NEBRASKA

Al, just baby me a little more.

(suddenly)

I'll pitch. Just tell me that we  
can go back to doing the laundry.

Al just stares at Nebraska.

NEBRASKA

Al?

314 CLOSE - AL

A long beat. Al finally shakes his head.

AL

Time to leave the nest, kid.

315 MASTER

NEBRASKA

Al!

(CONTINUED)



315 CONTINUED:

AL

I gotta. Believe me, you'll  
pitch; you'll pitch great...

The SOUND OF A HELICOPTER intrudes. Al and Nebraska look  
up.

NEBRASKA

You think that's for us?

AL

(nods)

We're probably the only people up  
here.

NEBRASKA

I can't do it.

AL

Kid, I ain't your old man. I'm  
only a scout. I like you a whole  
lot, but I'm only a scout. If you  
screw up out there, all it means  
is you screwed up out there. You  
understand what I'm saying? You  
Nothing's gonna happen to you.

NEBRASKA

'Cause you ain't my old man.

AL

'Cause I ain't your old man. I  
pitched fourteen years --  
sometimes I pitched good, sometimes  
lousy. When I was lousy, they  
pulled me out. Next day I pitched  
again. That's all it is.

NEBRASKA

That's all it is.

The HELICOPTER GETS LOUDER.

316 SKY

The helicopter, lights shining, is descending.

317 CLOSE - AL

He imagines: Kong on top of the Empire State Building.

318 CLOSE - NEBRASKA

He imagines: Kong on the top of the Empire State Building.

319 TV MONITOR

The helicopter begins to lower itself onto the roof of the stadium.

COSELL

We are about to meet Steve Nebraska!

320 WILSON

staring at the monitor.

WILSON

Al's a goddamn genius. I always knew it.

321 DR. BAKER

She starts biting her nails, watching the tube.

322 ROOF

The helicopter lands.

AL

So?

The PILOT yells.

PILOT

Ready?

AL

Kid?

NEBRASKA

Guess I'll take a shot at it. What the hell, huh?

AL

What the hell. What the hell.

Al smiles, embraces Nebraska.

AL

That ain't a fatherly hug. That's a scout hug.

323 MASTER - STADIUM

Both teams are lined up along the foul lines.

P.A. ANNOUNCER

And pitching for the Yankees tonight.

(CONTINUED)

323 CONTINUED:

A massive ROAR goes up. The helicopter begins to descend toward the pitching mound.

P.A. ANNOUNCER

The newest member of the team,  
number 24, a man who was a king  
and a god in the world he knew,  
but is now brought back...

Bedlam. The chopper lands next to the mound. The doors open.

P.A. ANNOUNCER

... By scout Al Percolo.

Al steps from the helicopter to a tremendous OVATION.

324 BROADCAST BOOTH

COSSELL (V.O.)

Al Percolo is a very, very great  
man, ladies and gentlemen.

325 MASTER

P.A. ANNOUNCER

This is... Steve Nebraska.

Nebraska steps from the chopper.

326 FANS

on their feet. Going crazy.

327 CLOSE - NEBRASKA

He tips his cap like a practiced pro. Al, beaming,  
stands beside him.

NEBRASKA

Only a game, right, Al?

AL

That's right.

328 WILSON

on his feet, applauding. The others in the box are  
applauding.

DONGEN VAN LOON

Quite a stunt for the public  
relations.

(CONTINUED)

328 CONTINUED:

WILSON

Al and I worked this out days ago.

329 DR. BAKER

She smiles, wet-eyed. She looks down at a yellow legal pad.

330 CLOSE - PAD

"THE CASE OF 'N':  
A STUDY OF HYSTERICAL AMNESIA

BY

EMILY BAKER, PH.D.

331 MASTER - STADIUM

Al whacks Nebraska on the ass.

AL

Go get 'em!

The crowd start a familiar chant.

FANS

Ne-bra-ska! Ne-bra-ska!

332 LOWER STANDS

The fans cheering.

333 FIELD

Al runs off the field, waving his hat at the fans.

334 BATTER'S BOX

The first batter sidles up to the plate, to watch Nebraska take his warmups.

335 BROADCAST BOOTH

COSSELL

Perhaps the most eagerly awaited warmup pitch in the history of the national pastime.

336 MOUND

Nebraska brings the ball high over his head, kicks his leg in the air.

337 DUGOUT

Al leans forward breathless.

338 WILSON

on his feet.

339 DR. BAKER

stares anxiously at the screen.

340 MOUND

Nebraska lets fly.

341 BATTER'S BOX

The catcher falls backwards.

342 FANS

ROAR with delight.

343 AL

smiles broadly. Red Moore slaps Al's knee.

MOORE

Holy shit.

344 BROADCAST BOOTH

COSELL

One hundred and forty-six miles  
per hour, or, in laymen's terms,  
faster than a speeding bullet.

345 DUGOUT

The PHONE RINGS. PLAYER picks up.

PLAYER

Percolo.

346 MOUND

Nebraska winds up, throws another heater.

347 BATTER'S BOX

The catcher again slumps to the mound. The Umpire smiles  
at the waiting batter.

UMPIRE

They sound like strikes.



348 MOUND

NEBRASKA

I'm ready!

349 DUGOUT

AL

Yeah, I thought it'd be kind of fun to arrive that way, Jackie. Glad you liked it. No... no. No front office for me, Mr. Wilson. That's very kind, but...

350 MASTER

Nebraska winds up and throws.

UMPIRE

Strike!

The crowd SCREAMS its approval.

351 DUGOUT

The players are on the front steps, watching in astonishment.

AL

(on phone)

No, I feel my work here is done. The kid? He ain't gonna need me. No. His teeth? Oh, they're fine.

352 MASTER

Nebraska winds up and throws.

UMPIRE

Strike!

353 MOUND

Nebraska is grinning from ear to ear. He waves toward the dugout, gives a thumbs-up.

354 DUGOUT

Al, getting teary, gives a thumbs-up in return.

AL

(into phone)

No, I'm ready to roll again. Yeah. Guess I'm just a born scout, Mr. Wilson.

355 MASTER

Nebraska rears back and throws.

(CONTINUED)

355 CONTINUED:

UMPIRE

Strike.

The first batter, a still life until now, just turns and heads back to the dugout.

356 DUGOUT

AL

Yeah, he's looking good. I'll  
leave next week sometime. Yeah.  
Maybe go north.

SOUND TRACK: WIND WHISTLING.

AL

Yeah... north.

DISSOLVE TO:

357 CLOSE - AL - DAY

Al is wearing a huge fur hat and looks to be extremely cold. PULL BACK to reveal that he is seated amongst several dozen similarly dressed men. They are seated in makeshift stands. The men are Eskimos and Al is in the North Pole.

AL

(to Eskimo)

Good hitter.

ESKIMO

Name Mokaluk. Rusty Mokaluk.

AL

Rusty Mokaluk.

CUT TO:

358 FIELD

A frozen waste. The players are all in fur. Penguins stand solemnly in the coaching boxes. A batter lays down a bunt. The catcher lunges for it, picks up the ball, throws down to third. The runner slides into third... and slides... and slides, sailing two hundred feet past the bag.

CUT TO:

359 STANDS

AL

Tough footing.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

359 CONTINUED:

AL (CONT'D)  
 (takes out his  
 notebook)  
 I'll make a note of that.

ESKIMO  
 Mokaluk. Rusty Mokaluk.

We BEGIN TO PULL AWAY, encompassing the vast frozen  
 beauty of the Pole.

AL  
 How much of a bonus does he want?

ESKIMO  
 Tell me he want twenty dollar.

FARTHER AWAY.

AL (V.O.)  
 Twenty. We can work that out.

CONCESSIONAIRE (V.O.)  
 Cold beer! Cold beer!

AL (V.O.)  
 Beer? No soup?

CONCESSIONAIRE (V.O.)  
 Cold beer! Soda!

AL (V.O.)  
 What kind of soda?

CONCESSIONAIRE (V.O.)  
 Yukon Club.

AL (V.O.)  
 What flavor?

CONCESSIONAIRE (V.O.)  
 Dog.

AL (V.O.)  
 Dog soda?

ESKIMO (V.O.)  
 Very good.

AL (V.O.)  
 No. Gimme a beer.

(CONTINUED)

359 CONTINUED: (2)

The stands are just a speck in the whiteness now.

AL (V.O.)  
Hey, this beer is warm.

FADE OUT.

THE END



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