

Midnight's Redemption

WGA-W 1973117

FADE IN:

OVER SCREEN 1974

A five way intersection in a turn of the century village. In the center of the intersection is a statue of two Standardbred horses racing stride for stride. The drivers in racing sulkies wheel to wheel.

The engraved bronze plate at statue base reads.

Goshen New York, Cradle of the Trotter.

EXT. PICKUP TRUCK -DAY

A late model beater pulls an equally beat-up two horse trailer through the intersection. From the back of the trailer hangs a pristine two wheeled racing sulky.

INT. PICKUP TRUCK-DAY

Grand Funk Railroad's Loco-motion blares from the radio.

JARETT RANDALL(16) aka Jett, tousled mop top, stares pensively out the passenger's window. He wears a worn-out smiley face T-shirt. He looks like he'd rather be anywhere but where he is right now.

JUNIOR RANDALL (18) wears aviator shades and shakes to the music as he drives. The raised middle finger on his tee shirt announces his attitude for the day as he sings along.

JUNIOR

*So come on, come on and do the Loco-
motion with me.*

Junior turns down the radio.

JUNIOR (CONT'D)

Somebody shit in your Cherrios this morning or what?

JARETT

I accidently lit Dad's fuse.

JUNIOR

How?

Jarett turns.

JARETT

I went to help Tommy break his colt last night. We were kicking back a beer when Dad pulled up to the barn.

JUNIOR

Shit.

Junior pulls the truck into the backstretch of Goshen Historic track.

JARETT

Shit's the word. You can bet your eating money it's gonna hit the fan today.

Junior stops the truck and shuts it off. The engine coughs and gags as it dies.

JUNIOR

Well don't let him get in your head. You're driving the colt today. You're making the moves out there, not him.

EXT. PICK-UP TRUCK-CONTINUOUS

Junior and Jarett unhook the sulky from the trailer and place it on the ground. Jarett steps into the trailer. Junior let's the trailer ramp down.

A black horse stands in the trailer stall. Jarett slowly backs the horse down the ramp.

INT. GRANDSTAND-AFTERNOON

Overlooking the racetrack. Open air bleachers are filled to capacity. On the racetrack horses pull drivers in race sulkies for warm ups

A high school band plays The Star Spangled Banner in the infield of the racetrack.

The TRACK ANNOUNCER voice reports from the P.A.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED)

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen and welcome to Goshen Historic track. We have a spectacular Grand Circuit card lined up for your Independence day weekend.

JACK RANDALL (49) right wrist in a cast, looks like a gunslinger in cowboy boots and shirt. His shirt cuffs rolled to the forearms.

He stands behind the box seats and sizes up the horses warming up.

INT. GRANDSTAND BOX SEATS-CONT.

CATHERINE "CAT" MANCINI (40) a good-looking woman with a weather-beaten face, sits with MYRON WANERIGHT (50) dressed like money head to toe.

REBECCA WANERIGHT (15) Myron's golden-haired daughter, studies every horse that trots by on the race track.

Cat sees Jack and waves him over.

Jack enters the

BOX

JACK

Long ways from home ain't ya Cat?

CAT

Jack, say hello to Myron and Rebecca Waneright. They've got a filly in the Landmark this afternoon.

Rebecca glances then turns back to the horses.

JACK

Afternoon.

Cat points to the cast.

CAT

What happened, Jarett have to break your arm to get the drive today?

REBECCA

I like that one Dad!

She points to a dark horse trotting by the stands.

JACK

You've got a good eye for horse flesh. That's Jett's Express.

MYRON
Is he for sale?

Cagey.

JACK
Everything I've got is for sale.
The question on this particular
piece is, can you afford it?

MYRON
I can afford whatever I want. The
only thing I need to know, is he
worth the investment?

Jack glances at Cat. She nods.

JACK
You're looking at a Hambletonian
hopeful right there. He's eligible
to over a million in purse money
this season. I'd settle for a
quarter of that.

MYRON
That's pretty serious money.

JACK
Well. That's a pretty serious colt.

MYRON
What do you think Rebecca?

She turns to Jack.

REBECCA
Why did you name him Jett?

JACK
I named him after my son. Everyone
call's him Jett.

REBECCA
I like the name.

MYRON
If he wins a heat today in two five
or better you got yourself a deal.

JACK
Fair enough.
(to Cat)
I'll see you in the paddock?

CAT

Bet on it.

EXT. RACE PADDOCK GATE-DAY

BOB DELANEY(20) a husky-red haired groom with a Boston accent stands at the outside rail. Junior walks over and leans his stringy body over the racetrack fence.

JUNIOR

Hey Bob, how's your colt?

Bob spits tobacco juice over the fence.

BOB

Done for the season Junior. Busted a coffin bone out here three days ago.

He turns to Junior.

BOB (CONT'D)

They resurfaced the track last month. The inside still ain't right.

ON THE RACETRACK

Jarett glides Jett's Express to the off gate. Junior waits. Junior unclasps the over check-rein.

JUNIOR

How is he?

Jarett strips off his helmet and goggles.

JARETT

He feels super. The track ain't for shit at the rail.

JUNIOR

That's what I heard. Try to stay wide.

EXT. RACE PADDOCK SHED ROW-AFTERNOON

Horses stand in chain cross ties of open air box stalls. Grooms hitch race sulkies and check equipment. Jack walks past STANLEY DARRINGER(32) leading dash driver on the circuit.

DARRINGER
Tell the kid to stay out of my way
Jack.

JACK
Worried about your dash title
Stanley?

DARRINGER
Just tell him.

JACK
(under his breath)
Asshole.

EXT. JETT'S EXPRESS STALL-CONTINUOUS

Junior and Jarett rub down Jett's legs. Jarett is dressed in orange and black racing colors. Jack walks over to his boys. Their demeanor tenses up as soon as they see their father.

JACK
How's the colt?

JARETT
He warmed up great.

JACK
Good now listen up. Darringer's
comin' hard at you in the first
turn. Don't let him have the top.

Jack points at Jarett

JACK (CONT'D)
I want you on the engine
understand?

JARETT
The rail's a mess Dad.

JACK
The first heat ain't over yet and
you're already coppin' excuses?

JARETT
I'm just telling you how it is out
there.

JACK
Well don't. Just shut the hell up
and do what I tell ya.

He sizes up his sons.

JACK (CONT'D)
I'll see you in the winner's
circle.

He walks away.

JUNIOR
Don't worry about him, just go out
there and drive your colt.

A bell sounds.

TRACK MAN
Line'em up for the first race!
Line'em up!

Junior leads Jett's Express out of the stall. Jarett swings into the sulky.

EXT. RACETRACK-DAY

The horses post parade in a line one thru eight down in front of the grandstand. Jett's Express the number one horse leads the post parade.

TRACK ANNOUNCER (FILTERED)
Here are the two year old trotters
for the first race. Number one
Jett's Express owned by Jack and
Estelle Randall. Driven by Jarett
Randall

Jarett turns Jett's Express back up in front of the grandstand, the field of horses follow.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED) (CONT'D)
Number two, Mar Con Bon Jon owned
by the Jet star stables and driven
by Stanley Darringer.

BACKSTRETCH-CONTINUOUS.

The field of trotters fan out and line up behind the wings of the starting gate. Stanley Darringer glares over at Jarett as the gate begins to roll.

INT. GRANDSTAND-DAY

Jack stands behind the box seats and scrutinizes every move of the field as the gate picks up speed.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED)
Heeeeere they come!

The starting gate speeds away from the field.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED) (CONT'D)
There they goooo! Mar Con Bon Jon
and Jett's Express are first to
leave. Noble Smoke on the outside
joins them with Speed Demon sliding
down fourth at the rail.

A BALD MAN with a round belly slaps Jack on the back as he
passes by.

BALD MAN
Hey Jack, how's the colt today?

Jack turns.

RACETRACK -CONTINUOUS.

Jarett and Darringer are wheel to wheel as they reach the
turn. Darringer crowds Jarett down closer to the rail.
Jarett's sulky wheel rumbles over the rough surface.

INTERCUT WITH GRANDSTAND.

Jack watches.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED)
As they move around the first turn,
Mar Con Bon Jon grabs the early
lead, followed by Noble Smoke and
Speed Demon. Jett's Express gets
away fourth followed by Speedster's
Pride fifth.

JACK
Damn it Jett!

RACETRACK TOP OF THE STRETCH -CONTINUOUS.

Jarett is locked in fourth. The driver of the horse outside
swings a left handed whip. The tired horse lugs off the rail.
A gap opens.

INTERCUT WITH GRANDSTAND

Jack stands behind the box seats.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED)

As they turn for hooooome! Mar Con
Bon Jon and Noble Smoke on top by
two lengths and have been there all
the way! Speed Demon back in third.
Jett's Express shakes loose at the
rail in fourth.

JACK

(to himself)

Come on Jett.

EXT. RACETRACK- CONTINUOUS.

Jarett sees the lane open and fires for it.

JARETT

Come on Jett!

Jarett raises the whip. Jett's Express flies at the leaders
as they close on the finish wire.

INTERCUT WITH GRANDSTAND

The noise of the crowd rises as three horses rush toward the
finish wire.

JACK

Come on.

TRACK ANNOUNCER (FILTERED)

Deep streeeeetch! It's still Mar
Con Bon Jon and Noble Smoke but
heeeeere comes Jett's Express with
a rush!

The three horses trot under the wire at the same time.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED) (CONT'D)

And here they are!

INT. GRANDSTAND-MINUTES LATER

The din of the crowd is a low hum. Jack watches from behind
the box seats as three horses circle in front of the stands.
At the infield judges booth a RACE OFFICIAL holds up the
result card.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED)

The judges results are in, the
first race is official.

(MORE)

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED) (CONT'D)

The winner by a nose, Mar Con Bon Jon, second, Jett's Express and third, Noble smoke. Time for the mile two oh four and three.

The crowd applauds as Darringer pilots Mar Con Bon Jon into the winner's circle. Myron passes by Jack.

MYRON

The colt raced good Jack. My offer still stands for the second heat.

11

EXT. RACE PADDOCK SHED ROW-DAY

11

Junior bathes Jett's Express while Jarett holds him. The colt points his right foot.

JARETT

I don't like the way he's pointing Junior.

Junior sees Jack on the march.

JUNIOR

Here it comes.

Jarett turns. Jack is in his face.

JACK

What the hell is wrong with you?

Everyone in proximity watches.

JACK (CONT'D)

Are you stupid? I told you, on the engine!

JUNIOR

He got crowded.

JACK

Am I talkin' to you Junior?

JARETT

Darringer squeezed us. We got roughed up in the turn.

Jack's voice explodes.

JACK

Bullshit! That colt was perfect!

JARETT
The rail was in bad shape.

EXT. OPPOSITE SIDE OF SHED ROW-SIMULTANEOUSLY

Myron and Rebecca walk together.

MYRON
That Jett's Express closed like an
elevator door.

REBECCA
I told you I like him.

Jack's voice BOOMS through the shed row.

JACK(V.O.)
I saw the god damn race!

Myron and Rebecca watch through the open shed row stall as
Jack stands menacingly over Jarett.

JACK (V.O.)
You drove that colt like a god damn
idiot!

REBECCA
Isn't that the man we met in the
grandstand?

MYRON
Yes I think it is.

JARETT (V.O.)
I'm telling you he took a bad step.
If I don't steady him up we tip
over in the first turn.

JACK (V.O.)
Tip over my ass! The colt was
solid.

REBECCA
Why is he treating him like that?

MYRON
I don't know. Let's just go find
our filly.

Myron and Rebecca hurry away.

EXT. RACE PADDOCK SHED ROW-CONTINUOUS

Jack is face to face with Jarett.

JACK

Maybe it was all that piss water
you drank last night.

JARETT

I had one beer.

JACK

You shouldn't a had any! Just shut
your mouth and listen up. I want
you on the front end the second
heat. Darringer's gonna have the
rail this time, you fire this colt
out hard.

Jack pokes Jarett in the chest.

JACK (CONT'D)

You hear me? I don't give a shit
what Darringer does, you look
straight ahead and drive on, he'll
get the message.

JARETT

What about Jett?

JACK

What about him?

JARETT

He's pointing his right front.

Jack looks at the big black colt.

JACK

Walk him off for me Junior.

Junior leads the colt up the shed row.

JACK (CONT'D)

He looks fine to me.

Jack turns to his son.

JACK(CONT'D)

You do it the way I tell you. It's
my barn and those are my colors
you're wearin.

Jack walks away. Jarett's jaw tightens, his fists clench as he watches his father go.

JARETT

I'm drawing him from this heat.

JUNIOR

Are you crazy? He'll crucify the both of us!

JARETT

Well what the hell? You saw him pointing.

Calmly.

JUNIOR

If he doesn't feel right when you score him down look my way and take him off the track. I'll meet you at the ramp. We'll have the judges scratch him for soundness. Remember you're driving this colt today not the old man.

JARETT

Okay.

TRACK MAN

Ten minutes for the second heat!
Ten minutes!

EXT. RACE PADDOCK GATE-DAY

Junior leans over the outside rail. Bob Delaney steps up beside him.

BOB

Jarett drove a good first heat.

JUNIOR

Yeah he did.

Junior watches his brother and Jett's Express as they trot by. Jarett does not look over.

INT. GRANDSTAND-DAY

Jack stands behind the box seats.

TRACK ANNOUNCER (FILTERED)
The starter calls the trotters for
the second heat.

EXT. RACETRACK-DAY

The STARTING JUDGE sits on top of the mobile gate. He looks down at the field of horses behind the wings.

The gate rolls through the turn. Every horse has it's nose on the gate except Jett's Express. The starting Judge's voice reports through the microphone speaker.

STARTING JUDGE (FILTERED)
Bring up the four.

Jarett moves Jett in a step closer. The five horse darts left and almost clips Jett's legs.

STARTING JUDGE (FILTERED)	JARETT
(CONT'D)	Wait for it.
Get that five horse straightened up! Bring up the four!	

INTERCUT WITH GRANDSTAND

Jack from behind the box seats.

TRACK ANNOUNCER (FILTERED)	JACK
Heeeerrre they come!	Wait for it.

EXT. RACETRACK-CONTINUOUS

The starting gate straightens out in the stretch and picks up speed.

STARTING JUDGE (FILTERED)	JARETT
Bring up that four now!	Waaait for it.

The starting car engine roars as it accelerates away. Jarett turns the whip over Jett's back.

JARETT (CONT'D)
Now!

Jett's Express drops into overdrive. He catches the starting gate just as the wings fold in and the car speeds away from the field.

INTERCUT WITH GRANDSTAND

JACK

Now!

TRACK ANNOUNCER (FILTERED)

There they goooooo! In the middle of the track Jett's Express flies out for the early lead, Mar Con Bon Jon at the rail goes right with him. As they move into the first turn it's Jett's Express by half a length..

EXT. RACETRACK

Darringer glances out at Jarett. He waves his whip over Jett's back.

DARRINGER

Where you goin' kid?

Jarett looks straight ahead and taps Jett with the whip. The two horses wheel side by side off the turn.

INTERCUT WITH GRANDSTAND

Jack behind the box seats.

TRACK ANNOUNCER (FILTERED)

As they move off the turn and head up the backstretch it's Jeeeett's Express and Mar Con Bon Jon on top by five..

JACK

Just drive on boy.

EXT. RACE PADDOCK FENCE-CONTINUOUS

Junior elbows Bob Delaney as they watch Darringer ease back Bon Jon. Jett's Express takes the top.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED)

Noble Smoke is third followed by Speed Demon fourth Speedsters Pride is fifth. They go by the quarter in twwwenty eight seconds flat.

BOB

Darringer's letting him go.

JUNIOR
This colt got wings!

INTERCUT WITH GRANDSTAND

Jack watches as the spread out field of horses begin to fill the gaps on the leaders like box cars hitching to an engine.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED)
It's Jett's Express on top with Mar Con Bon Jon in the pocket second. Noble Smoke swings to the outside in third and moving up. As they go by the stands the first time it's Jeeett's Express on top.

EXT. RACETRACK-CONTINUOUS

Noble Smoke lugs up on the outside of Jarett's wheel. Jarett eases Jett back and to trap Darringer in the pocket.

Bon Jon's nose shoves against the back of Jarett's helmet.

DARRINGER
Keep it movin' kid!

JARETT
Get him off me!

INTERCUT WITH GRANDSTAND

JACK
That's where you want him.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED)
They move off the turn and head into the backstretch the final time. It's Jett's Express in command, Mar Con Bon Jon right there in the pocket second. Noble Smoke fades on the outside third.

EXT. RACETRACK-CONTINUOUS

Bon Jon breathes fire down Jarett's back as the two horses head into the last turn. Suddenly, Jett's head goes up sharply.

When the colt's head comes down the over check-rein snaps and Jett's Express nose dives to the racetrack.

Bon Jon crashes over Jarett's wheel and nose dives as well. As Bon Jon goes down the racing sulky becomes a catapult and sends Darringer flying across the track.

Darringer tucks and rolls as he lands, his momentum carries him to the outside fence just as the field thunders past.

INTERCUT WITH GRANDSTAND

As the horses on the track tumble, the crowd rises to their feet. Jack is frozen behind the box seats.

TRACK ANNOUNCER (FILTERED)
 Drivers go wide! Drivers go wide!
 Horses are down on the track!
 Drivers go wide!

EXT. RACETRACK—CONTINUOUS

Jarett is face down on the track. Junior rushes to his side.

JUNIOR
 Jarett!

He touches Jarett's shoulder.

JUNIOR (CONT'D)
 Jarett?

Junior looks around.

JUNIOR (CONT'D)
 We need help!

Horsemen come from the paddock. Junior looks down to the rail. Jett's Express lays on his side. Bob Delaney kneels on the horses neck to keep him still. The colt is twisted up in the wreckage of the race sulky.

JUNIOR (CONT'D)
 We need an ambulance!

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM—DAY

ESTELLE RANDALL (45) soft brown eyes of a kind heart, sits bed side. Jarett's leg is in a cast from knee to waist. Jarett's eyes open. Estelle touches her sons hand. He looks at his mother.

In a dry voice.

JARETT

Mom?

ESTELLE

It's all right Jarett, I'm here.

She hands him a cup of water. He takes a sip. Junior enters. He looks at his brother.

JARETT

Is my colt all right?

He looks at the floor.

ESTELLE

Wait outside.

He places a length of black hair on the table and leaves.

JARETT

Where's Dad?

ESTELLE

He's just as upset as you.

JARETT

Then why isn't he here to tell me about my colt?

ESTELLE

I know you're upset but try to understand.

JARETT

Don't stick up for him! You weren't there!

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR-LATER DAY

Estelle stands with a DOCTOR. He writes on a prescription pad, tears off the sheaf and hands it to her.

DOCTOR

These will help make the pain manageable. If he needs more just let me know.

INT. JARETT'S BEDROOM-DAY

The worn out wood plank floors and sloped ceiling make the room depressively small. Jarett sleeps on a single bed. A picture in his lap.

ON PICTURE

Jarett sits in a stall full of straw. A foal lays with his head in Jarett's lap. Jarett holds a bottle as the foal nurses.

BACK TO SCENE

Estelle enters with a tray. She places it on the bedside table.

She picks up the picture and looks at it. Jarett's eyes open.

JARETT

He was barely an hour old. He
couldn't even get up to nurse.

ESTELLE

I remember.

She places the picture on the bedside table. She rubs her sons shoulders. She hands Jarett a pain pill and water.

ESTELLE (CONT'D)

You'll feel better, just give it
some time.

EXT. RANDALL HOUSE FRONT PORCH-ANOTHER DAY

Jarett sits on the front porch. Estelle places a tray of food on the table next to Jarett. She hands him a pill and a glass of water.

INT. JARETT'S BEDROOM-ANOTHER DAY

Jarett struggles with his crutches. Estelle comes in with the prescription bottle and water.

JARETT

I left my book downstairs mom,
sorry.

She sets the bottle and water on the desk and exits.

Jarett spills out two pills and pops them in his mouth. He places the pill bottle back on the table. Estelle returns.

She helps Jarett onto the bed. She gives Jarett a pill and water.

INT. RANDALL HOUSE KITCHEN-EARLY MORNING

Jarett limps into the room on crutches. The cast on his leg is off. He hobbles to the sink. He finds the prescription bottle on the window sill.

Jarett's hands shake as he pops three pills. He runs the faucet, cups his hands and slurps water.

JACK

Find what you were lookin' for?

He wipes his mouth with his wrist.

JACK (CONT'D)

How many did you take?

He turns to Jack.

JARETT

Enough to kill the pain.

JACK

You shouldn't need that stuff anymore.

JARETT

I think I know how much pain I'm in, or do you want to tell me?

JACK

You can get addicted to that stuff.

JARETT

Since when do you care!

JACK

I care.

JARETT

Bullshit! I tried to tell you Jett wasn't right! You didn't give a shit! You didn't even try to save him did you?

JACK

That colt was as good as dead when he went down.

JARETT

You're a liar! Junior told me he was alive and kicking, tangled up in the wreck.

Estelle rushes into the kitchen.

JARETT (CONT'D)

You made me push too hard!

JACK

Now who's the liar?

Jarett's fists are clenched.

JACK (CONT'D)

I didn't drive that colt into the ground boy, you did.

ESTELLE

Jack! For god sake!

Jarett's eyes fall.

JARETT

The hell with you and all your bullshit. I've had about all I can take.

ESTELLE

Where are you going?

As he hobbles out.

JARETT

Anywhere but here.

ESTELLE

Jack?

JACK

Don't let the door hit you in the ass on your way out!

He looks at Estelle.

JACK (CONT'D)

He'll be back.

EXT. COUNTY HIGHWAY-DAY

A horse van rumbles along a road lined by rich autumn colors of fall. The van slows and pulls through the open gate. The sign over the gate reads SARATOGA HARNESS TRACK.

INT. BACK OF VAN-DAY

The van stops. Jarett winces as he gets to his feet. He fumbles in his pocket and fishes out the prescription bottle. He swallows two pills. The van doors open. Jarett limps down the ramp.

Jarett
Thanks for the ride.

VAN DRIVER
Good luck finding work, son.

EXT. STABLE AREA-DAY

A long dirt road weaves through the rows of long barns. Jarett walks the road suitcase in hand. He stops at the first barn he comes to.

INT. BARN-DAY

The shed row is lined with color coordinated tack trunks and harness bags that read HARRISON STABLES. GROOMS scramble in and out of stalls. FRANK HARRISON (50) leads a horse from a stall.

JARETT
Mr. Harrison?

HARRISON
That's me, what can I do for you?

JARETT
I'm looking for work.

HARRISON
I don't have anything right now.

JARETT
Do you know anybody who might?

HARRISON
Not this late in the season. You'd have better luck coming into spring when the meet starts.

MONTAGE

-Jarett walks to a barn and talks to a TRAINER. The Trainer apologetically shakes his head in rejection.

-Jarett at another barn with another trainer.

-Jarett at another barn the trainer shakes his head in rejection.

BACK TO SCENE

EXT. TRACK KITCHEN-DUSK

Jarett stands in front of a green and white building. Large block letters read. TRACK KITCHEN. Jarett digs into his pocket and pulls out a few singles.

INT. TRACK KITCHEN-DAY

Jarett slides a tray along a cafeteria railing. He pays the CASHIER at the register. Bob Delaney sits at a table near the back. He sees Jarett.

BOB
 (To himself)
 Jarett Randall?
 (To Jarett)
 Hey Jarett, back here!

Jarett limps over and pulls up a chair.

BOB (CONT'D)
 What are you doing up here?

JARETT
 Looking for a job.

BOB
 Finally quit the old man huh?

JARETT
 Yep.

Jarett downs a cup of soup in a few quick gulps.

BOB
 It looked pretty bad at Goshen.

JARETT
 It was.

Jarett pours two pills into his hand.

BOB
What's that?

JARETT
Racing results.

He pops the pills.

JARETT (CONT'D)
I need work Bobby, you know
anybody?

BOB
Yeah maybe.

EXT. SARATOGA RACETRACK-EARLY MORNING

The sun is peeking over the trees along the backstretch.
Several horses jog evenly around the half mile oval pulling
Jog (exercise) carts. Snow falls softly from the sky.

INT. BATHROOM -DAY

Jarett pours out the last pills from the prescription bottle
into his mouth. He throws cold water on his face with
trembling hands.

EXT. BARN-DAY

Bob Delaney stands patiently by the barn door. A husky built
man drives a horse up to the barn. PERSY DAVIS (35) swings
out of the exercise cart and hands the reins to Bob.

PERSY
Where's my next piece?

BOB
Jarett's gettin' him ready.

Persy lights a cigarette.

INT. BARN STALL-DAY

Jarett's hands tremble as he places the bit in the horse's
mouth. Jarett stops to steady himself then finishes setting
the bridle.

Persy marches into the shed row. He takes a deep pull on the cigarette.

PERSY
What's the hold up Randall?

Jarett stumbles as he leads the horse out of the stall.

JARETT
I'm sorry Mr. Davis it won't happen again.

PERSY
Keep up Randall, or I'll find someone who can.

INT. BOB DELANEY'S CAR-DAY

Bob pulls into a grocery shopping plaza and parks.

BOB
I gotta grab a few things, you coming?

JARETT
I'm going to refill my prescription. I'll meet you back here in a few.

INT. DRUGSTORE-SAME

Jarett hands his prescription bottle to the gray haired PHARMACIST. He looks at the bottle through thick wire rim glasses then looks at Jarett.

JARETT
Can you refill this for me please?

The Pharmacist hands the bottle back.

PHARMACIST
I can't son, you're out of refills.

INT. GROOMS QUARTERS JARETT'S ROOM-NIGHT

A dormitory style room is lit by a small bedside lamp. Jarett sits on an army cot. A picture of Jett's Express in one hand, The lock of Jett's mane in the other.

A knock on the door. Jarett opens it. Bob Delaney stands in the hall with a six pack in each hand.

BOB
Come on, there's a poker game
tonight.

JARETT
Not tonight.

Bob sees the pictures on the bed.

BOB
Come on Jarett. It'll do ya good.
You can't stay bottled up here in
the past. Besides I can't drink all
this by myself.

JARETT
I don't know.

Bob turns and sticks out his ass.

BOB
I got us the good stuff.

A pint of bourbon sticks out of his back pocket. Jarett slips
the bottle out and looks at the label.

BOB (CONT'D)
Easy Kimo-sabe that stuff will kick
your ass.

JARETT
Oh yeah? Maybe I could use a little
ass kicking.

BOB
That's the spirit.

INT. GROOMS QUARTER COMMON AREA- CONTINUOUS

Four GROOMS sit around a card table. Other Grooms watch the
game from a distance. Jarett and Bob enter and approach the
table.

BOB
Mind if we join in?

GROOM 1 looks up with a rotten toothed smile. He has a
southern twang.

GROOM 1
Sure. Bets are one and two. Five
dollar max.

Bob glances at Jarett. Jarett nods.

BOB
Deal us in.

Bob and Jarett grab chairs and slide into the table. Bob hands Jarett a beer. Money hits the table and cards begin to flow.

MONTAGE

-Bob cracks the Bourbon and takes a swig then hands the bottle to Jarett. Jarett takes a swig and chases it with a beer.

-Jarett holds cards and shoves money into the pot.

-Groom 1 sweeps the pot towards his side of the table.

-Cards are dealt. Jarett slugs beer.

-Groom 1 pulls another pot to his side.

-Jarett swigs bourbon as he looks at his cards.

-Jarett throws his cards on the table then slugs another beer.

BACK TO SCENE

Jarett sways in his seat. He focuses on the cards in his hand. A pile of cash sits in the center of the table.

JARETT
Gimme that stuff.

BOB
(Under his breath)
You've had enough.

GROOM 1
It's to you Boss Man!

JARETT
Loan me five bucks.

BOB
You're already down fifty.

JARETT
I got this guy! Just loan me the damn money!

Bob digs and hands him a five.

BOB
It's your funeral.

Jarett tosses the five on the pile and pushes the last few singles he has into the pile.

JARETT
All in. It's to you now Big Shot.

Groom 1 pushes his money in.

GROOM 1
Show'em.

Jarett flips his cards.

JARETT
Full boat. Aces over cowboys.

Groom 1 flips over his cards and laughs.

GROOM 1
Good but not good enough Boss man.
Four sevens.

He reaches for the pot. Jarett grabs his wrist and pulls him across the table. He punches him in the face. A fight breaks out.

INT. GROOMS QUARTERS JARETT'S ROOM-EARLY MORNING

Jarett is face down on the cot.

BOOM BOOM BOOM from the door.

He raises his head. His face is a mass of bruises. Bob's voice outside.

BOB (O.S.)
You better get your ass moving
Jarett! Persy don't give second
chances!

INT. BARN-DAY

Persy stands with Bob in the shed row examining the front legs of the horse Bob holds. Jarett walks in the door. Persy looks up, a cigarette dangles from his lips.

PERSY

Day starts at six Randall. You should have just stayed in bed.

JARETT

I'm sorry Mr. Davis.

PERSY

Sorry don't cut it, pack your gear.

Bob gives Jarett a regretful look. Jarett turns away.

INT. HORSE VAN-DAY

Jarett's sits on a crate between the horse stalls. A suit case is at his side, his face a bruised mess.

He sways with the motion of the van. He takes a swig from a bottle. A big bay horse snorts accusingly. Jarett looks up.

JARETT

Yeah? You shoulda seen the number my face did on the guy's fist.

Jarett gives the horse a salute with the bottle and takes another swig. The horse paws impatiently and snorts again.

Jarett tucks the bottle back into his coat. He stands up and strokes the horse's neck.

JARETT (CONT'D)

You okay big fella?

The horse tosses his head.

JARETT (CONT'D)

Eeeeaasy boy, we're almost there.

Jarett peeks out the side window of the van. The van slows to a stop. The sign at the stable gate reads. VERNON DOWNS

MONTAGE VERNON DOWNS STABLE AREA

-Jarett walks with his suitcase at his side to a barn.

-Jarett talks to a Trainer.

-Jarett at another barn talking to another Trainer.

-Jarett talks to another Trainer, dusk has fallen. We see him shake hands with this one.

INT. HORSE STALL-EARLY MORNING

Jarett picks straw bedding with a pitchfork. He dumps horse shit into a muck bucket. Jarett looks tired, tattered and worn.

He stops and takes a swig from a pint then continues his work.

VOICE (O.S.)

Jesus H Christ! How long does it take you to muck a stall?

JARETT

I'm finishing up now Chub!

KENNY JENKINS (18) aka Chubby, appears at the stall door. He is a squat young man with a baby face. The chip in his front tooth matches the one on his shoulder.

KENNY

It's Kenny, get it right. And you need to pick up the pace.

JARETT

Sorry.

KENNY

My Father wants you to work the tenth tonight.

JARETT

I've been working the late race every week for two months. I need a break.

KENNY

What you need is a break from the booze. You smell like a bar mat.

Kenny walks away. Jarett flips him the bird.

JARETT

(Whisper)

Asshole.

Jarett takes another swig of the bottle.

INT. RACE PADDOCK-NIGHT

The race paddock is a warehouse sized barn. Eighty horses are stalled for a ten race card. Basically it is a huge locker room for equine athletes.

Jarett stands next to a bay horse hitched and ready. Kenny storms over.

KENNY

I said have her ready to warm up
after the fifth race!

JARETT

She is ready, I just have to bridle
her up.

KENNY

The fifth is on the track!

JARETT

It's ten minutes to post. Calm
down. I'll have her ready when it's
time.

KENNY

Just put the god damn bridle on
her. I'll be right back.

Kenny rushes off.

JARETT

I swear, Chubby, just one more
word.

He a check the rigging once more then takes a nip of bourbon.
Kenny returns.

KENNY

What the hell is wrong with you! I
said put the fu..

Jarett punches Kenny in the mouth. Kenny hits the floor ass
first. Jarett tosses the bridle on top of him.

JARETT

Do it yourself asshole.

Jarett walks away.

SERIES OF SHOTS

Jarett in back of a horse van with his suitcase.

Jarett walks a stable area suit case in hand.

Jarett, older, cleans a stall drinks bourbon, his eyes
bloodshot and tired.

Jarett asleep in a stall, a bottle in hand. His face is as thin and washed out as his T-shirt and jeans.

Jarett sits in the back of a horse van. His head hangs between his knees.

DISSOLVE TO:

OVER SCREEN 1979

INT. JACK RANDALL'S OFFICE-DAY

Win photos cover the walls, trophies line the flat surfaces of the file cabinet and desk. Jack digs in the closet for something. Junior is behind him.

JUNIOR

I'm telling you he's not!

JACK

I spent a fortune vetting this colt and still came up empty. The son of a bitch ain't tryin' and that's cheatin'.

JUNIOR

He's got to be quitting for a reason.

JACK

Here it is.

Jack turns to Junior. He holds a cattle prod.

JACK (CONT'D)

Well then give me one good reason.

JUNIOR

Maybe he don't like you.

JACK

Boy, he don't have to like me or you or his mother, but he does have to try when I tell him to. Now come with me.

Jack walks past Junior out of the office.

INT. RANDALL BARN-DAY

Jack marches down the aisle with the cattle prod in one hand and a racing hood in the other. Junior follows.

JUNIOR
This ain't the way to handle him
Dad.

Jack stops at a box stall. A bold black colt with a white blaze stands in the stall. Jack holds out the hood.

JACK
Put the hood on him.

JUNIOR
You'll ruin him.

He shoves the hood at Junior.

JACK
Put it on him Junior!

JUNIOR
I will not.

JACK
Do what I tell ya or I swear...!

JUNIOR
Or what? You going to use the
cattle prod on me?

Junior snatches the hood from his father.

JUNIOR (CONT'D)
You know I've had about enough! I'm
twenty god damn three and I'm tired
of being kicked around like a dog.

JACK
Oh yeah? You're free to leave
anytime you want.

Junior stares at his father in disbelief. He tosses the hood at Jack's feet.

JUNIOR
I should have left with Jarett.

Junior turns and walks away.

JACK
Go on then. I don't need your
goddamn help anyway.

EXT. RANDALL BARN-CONTINUOUS

Junior marches off. He stops when he hears the whip crack and a horse wail in pain. He closes his eyes and keeps walking.

DISSOLVE TO:

OVER SCREEN BUFFALO RACEWAY

INT. BUFFALO RACEWAY CLUBHOUSE-NIGHT

A WAITER carries a tray across the elegant clubhouse restaurant to Myron and Rebecca's table. Rebecca has matured into a beautiful twenty one year old woman. The Waiter places dishes and leaves.

TRACK ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

The trotters for the fourth race
are on the track.

Myron picks up his knife and fork and slices into a thick steak.

REBECCA

Well?

MYRON

Well what?

TRACK ANNOUNCER (V.O)

Number one Nervy Flak owned
by the Jet-star Stables
trained by Eddie O'Dwyer.

REBECCA

Don't act as if you don't
know. I know you bought
something at the Old Glory
sale.

MYRON

Why do you automatically assume I
bought a horse?

REBECCA

Because I know you. What broken
down sob story is it this time?

Myron chuckles.

TRACK ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

Number three Chantitown
Rascal owned by the
Chantitown Stables, trained
by Ralph Sherman.

MYRON

His name is Midnight Express.
The poor thing looks like
he's had a rough time of it
too.

REBECCA
How bad is he?

MYRON
I don't know yet but he's New York
Sire Staked and eligible to the
Hambletonian.

REBECCA
Really? When can I see him?

MYRON	TRACK ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
He should be in Cat's barn in a day or two.	Number four, Star Dreamer, owned by Myron Waneright driven by Cat Mancini.

Myron turns to the post parade.

MYRON
Here's our filly.

EXT. MANCINI STABLE-EARLY MORNING

A Blue and white stable banners hang outside the barn.

MANCINI RACING STABLES

INT. MANCINI STABLE-CONTINUOUS

Jarett sleeps on top of the hay bales piled at the end of the
shed row. Sunlight falls across his face. His eyes open. He
lifts his head.

Horses nicker and snort. Jarett sits up his face is thinner,
he has dark circle under his eyes. The horses call louder and
bang on their doors when they see him move.

JARETT
Okay. Okay!

All the horses in the shed row call to him.

JARETT (CONT'D)
I'm comin' for Christ's sake!
Hold your damn...

He looks down the shed row. The horses all stare impatiently.

JARETT (CONT'D)
...horses.

INT. MANCINI STABLE-DAY

Jarett mucks a stall. VIC ROSS (27) short and stocky, leads a horse to the cement wash stall. A van pulls up outside the barn.

VIC
Jarett, finish bathing this piece.

EXT. MANCINI STABLE-SAME

Vic walks out to the VAN DRIVER as he climbs out of the cab.

VAN DRIVER
Cat Mancini?

VIC
I'm Cat's stable manager wha'd ya got?

INT. MANCINI STABLE-SAME

Jarett listens from the wash stall.

VAN DRIVER
Midnight Express for owner Myron Waneright.

VIC
You're in the right place.

VAN DRIVER
Sign on the bottom.

EXT. MANCINI STABLE-SAME

The van shakes from side to side as the Van Driver lets down the ramp. He leads a black colt with a white blaze out and hands the horse to Vic.

VAN DRIVER
Be careful with this thing. He damn near tore my rig apart.

Vic leads Midnight into the

STABLE

Jarett stares at the colt as Vic leads him past the wash stall. Midnight's coat has scrapes of missing hair and cuts. Vic notices Jarett's haunted stare.

VIC

What's your problem? You seen a ghost or something?

Jarett

Winning Expression.

VIC (CONT'D)

What?

JARETT

The Dam of this horse, is it Winning Expression?

Vic looks at the paper in his hand.

VIC

Yeah, how'd you know?

JARETT

He's not a ghost.

INT. MANCINI STABLE-NIGHT

Jarett stands outside Midnight's stall. The colt stands with his head in the corner.

JARETT

I know what he did to you.

Jarett slices some apples and tosses them in the feed bucket.

JARETT (CONT'D)

He did it to me too.

The colt doesn't even turn his head.

INT. MANCINI STABLE-MORNING

Jarett's eyes open. He lifts his head from the hay bales. The horses call. Jarett sits up and rubs his eyes.

INT. MIDNIGHT EXPRESS' STALL-SAME DAY

Midnight has his head in the corner. Vic opens the stall door and walks in. The colt lets both back feet fly. Vic rushes out of the stall.

VIC
Holy shit!

INT. MANCINI STABLE-SAME DAY

Cat walks up the shed row. Vic scurries behind. He carries a long pole with him.

CAT
Oh come on Vic, you're over reacting.

VIC
I'm tellin ya Cat be careful?

Cat opens the stall door.

CAT
Easy son, no one's going to hurt you.

Midnight lets both back feet fly. Cat darts out.

Vic hands Cat pole with a hook at the end.

EXT. MANCINI STABLE-DAY

Vic holds Midnight Express as Cat steps into the exercise cart. Jarett watches from inside the barn.

CAT
Turn him loose.

Cat gently taps Midnight on the flank. The colt rears. Cat is thrown backwards out of the cart. The shafts splinter.

CAT (CONT'D)
That's it, we're done. Put him away Vic.

EXT. MANCINI STABLE-NEXT DAY

A red corvette pulls up to the barn. Rebecca gets out and bee lines for the barn. DARREL (23) preppy college quarterback gets out and follows.

DARREL

I can't believe you'd rather be
here all summer Becky!

REBECCA

I'm not spending another minute
with those idiots you call friends.
And my name is Rebecca not Becky!

Darrel grabs her wrist and turns her around.

DARREL

My friends are not idiots!

INT. MANCINI STABLE STALL-CONTINUOUS

Jarett picks through the straw with a pitch fork. He hears
Rebecca's voice.

REBECCA

Get your hands off of me!

Jarett looks out the door. Darrel has Rebecca by the wrist.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

You're hurting me!

DARREL (O.S.)

I'm about done being nice.

Jarett steps out of the stall and goes

OUTSIDE THE STABLE

Darrel raises his hand. Rebecca pulls back.

JARETT

Turn her loose!

Darrel turns. Jarett holds a pitchfork.

DARREL

Who's gonna make me?

Jarett marches toward Darrel. He lets Rebecca go. Jarett
lances Darrel in the gut with the pitchfork handle.

Darrel doubles over.

DARREL (CONT'D)

You're a dead man.

Darrel lunges at Jarett. Jarett side steps and wallops himl across the back with the fork. Darrel goes face down in the dirt.

Cat comes out of the barn.

CAT
What's all this?

REBECCA
Nothing, Darrel was just leaving.

CAT
Jarett, get back to work.

INT. MANCINI STABLE-DAY

Rebecca wanders down the shed row. She finds Jarett brushing a horse in a stall. She stands at the door.

REBECCA
Hi.

Jarett turns.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
I'm Rebecca. I just wanted to say... well. Darrel's not really like that.

Jarett turns back to the horse.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
Anyway I just... I wanted to say thanks.

She turns.

JARETT
What is he like?

REBECCA
What?

JARETT
If he's not like that, then what is he like?

REBECCA
He didn't really mean it.

Jarett stops brushing the horse and turns to her.

JARETT

I use to rub a colt that would
threaten to bite from time to time.
The owner told me the same thing.
He doesn't really mean it.

Jarett pulls up his tee shirt. There is a six inch scar on his side.

JARETT (CONT'D)

Don't kid yourself.

Jarett turns and brushes the horse.

INT. MIDNIGHT EXPRESS STALL-NIGHT

Midnight's head is in the corner. Jarett stands outside the door and slices apples. He tosses them into the colts feed tub. The colt turns to look.

JARETT

I know you like' em.

The colt moves slowly to the tub.

JARETT (CONT'D)

Your brother did too.

Jarett places his cot in the aisle in front of Midnight's stall. The colt watches Jarett. Jarett lies on his back and looks at the stars.

JARETT (CONT'D)

Your brother was meant to be a
great racehorse. He should have
been a champion.

Midnight inches his nose over the stall door. Jarett looks at the horse hair bracelet on his wrist. He twists it around and holds his wrist up for Midnight to smell.

JARETT (CONT'D)

This is all I have left of him.
You know what his name was?

Midnight nickers.

JARETT (CONT'D)

Jett's Express. He was named after
me.

Jarett looks back at the stars. A tear wells in the corner of his eye.

JARETT (CONT'D)
I really miss him.

INT. MANCINI STABLE-DAY

Myron and Rebecca stand with Cat in the shed row.

CAT
He can't stay here. Someone's going to get hurt.

OPPOSITE SIDE OF SHED ROW

Jarett carries a harness into an open stall. He places the harness over a horse's back. He listens to Cat, Myron and Rebecca on the other side.

MYRON (V.O.)
What am I supposed to do with him?

CAT(V.O.)
That's up to you. There's always the Amish.

MYRON(O.S.)
The Amish won't have a horse that doesn't pull a cart.

CAT(V.O.)
Butcher him then.

REBECCA(V.O.)
There must be something else we can do!

CAT(V.O.)
If someone gets hurt, that's exactly where he'll wind up anyway.

EXT. MANCINI STABLE-DAY

Jarett follows Cat to her pickup truck.

JARETT
At least let me try.

CAT
I can't Jarett, he's dangerous.

JARETT

Then I'll buy him from the butcher myself.

CAT

If you do that you'll be out of my barn.

Cat opens the door and turns to Jarett.

CAT (CONT'D)

The only reason you've got a job is because I know your father and I know what he was like. Truth be told, nobody else would have you.

Cat gets in the truck.

CAT (CONT'D)

I can't risk that colt being here. I'm sorry.

Cat starts the truck and drives off.

INT. MIDNIGHT EXPRESS STALL-NIGHT

Midnight's head is in the corner. Jarett opens the door and goes in. He extends the apple in his hand. Midnight sniffs the apple then turns. Jarett rubs the colts head.

JARETT

I'm not going to let anybody send you to the butcher. I promise you that.

Jarett steps out of the stall. Rebecca turns the corner of the shed row and sees him.

REBECCA

What are you doing?

Jarett turns.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

That horse is dangerous.

JARETT

He's not dangerous.

REBECCA

Now who's kidding himself?

JARETT
Come see take a look.

She stands at the stall door. Jarett steps into the stall. He pats the colts neck.

JARETT (CONT'D)
He wasn't born that way.
Somebody made him.

REBECCA
How do you know that?

JARETT
Because I know this colt.

REBECCA
How?

JARETT
I drove his brother at Goshen.

REBECCA
Goshen! When?

JARETT
Five years ago.

Rebecca searches her memory.

REBECCA
Oh my God. That was your horse that
went down?

JARETT
His name was Jett's Express.
Midnight's his brother.

INT. WANERIGHT DINNING ROOM-NIGHT

Myron's glasses hang on the end of his nose. He reads the racing form. Rebecca sits across the table.

REBECCA
Then you know who he is?

MYRON
It doesn't matter he can't come
here.

REBECCA

You bought Midnight because you
thought he needed a second chance.
Doesn't Jarrett deserve one too?

Myron peers over his glasses.

MYRON

The boy's been fired everywhere
between here and New York City.

REBECCA

So that makes him a bad person?

MYRON

He can't come here and neither can
that horse and that's final.

REBECCA

Give me one good reason why!

MYRON

I'll give you three. He drinks
heavily. He assaulted a fellow
horseman and that colt is downright
dangerous.

She stares in silence.

MYRON (CONT'D)

For God's sake Rebecca, the colt
nearly killed Cat.

Stone faced.

MYRON (CONT'D)

I haven't even made a dent have I?
(a beat)
Fine, I'll call Cat.

Myron snaps the racing.

MYRON (CONT'D)

(To himself)

At least if something happens it'll
be here and not the track for
everyone to see.

Myron takes his glasses off and uses them as a pointer.

MYRON (CONT'D)

Just be warned, young lady, if
either one of them makes a mistake
they'll both be out of here,
understood?

REBECCA

Understood.

EXT. MANCINI STABLE-DAY

A horse van pulls up. Jarett watches from the shed row. Vic
hands Midnight to the Van Driver. Midnight rears and strikes.

VAN DRIVER

Whoa! Easy boy! I can see why you
want him out of your barn.

VIC

Not soon enough for me.

Jarett watches the van drive away.

INT. MANCINI STABLE-NIGHT

Jarett rummages through a tack trunk in the shed row. He
finds a large white bottle and reads the label.

CLOSE UP ON BOTTLE

Acepromizine for equine use only

INT. JARETT'S TACK ROOM-NIGHT

The room has less appeal than a prison cell. Jarett sits on
his cot in the corner. He takes a long pull from a bottle of
bourbon.

JACK (V.O.)

I didn't drive that colt into the
ground boy, you did.

He picks up the pill bottle and pours a handful of white pill
into his palm then throws them into his mouth. He washes them
back with more bourbon.

EXT. MANCINI STABLE-NIGHT

A car pulls up. Rebecca gets out. She goes into the stable. She walks slowly down the shed row.

REBECCA
Jarett?

She sees a faint light from the tack room door.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
Jarett?

She pushes the door open. Jarett is slumped in the corner. The pill bottle is on the bed, the bourbon spilled on the floor.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
(a whisper)
Oh my God.

She rushes into the room.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
Jarett!

She shakes his body.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
Jarett wake up!

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY-NIGHT

A DOCTOR in white lab coat stands with Myron. Myron looks into Jarett's room. Rebecca she sits next to Jarett's bed.

DOCTOR
He ingested about a dozen
acetylpromazine tablets.

Myron looks at the Doctor.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
It's Animal Tranquilizer. He's
stable right now. If your daughter
hadn't found him when she did he,
may not have made it.

MYRON
Thank you Doctor.

The Doctor leaves. Myron turns back to his daughter.

MYRON (CONT'D)

Seems I'm not the only one who's a
sucker for a broken-down sob story.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM-MORNING

Jarett is asleep. Rebecca is asleep in the chair by the bed.
Jarett begins to stir.

Rebecca's eyes open. Jarett's head thrashes side to side his
voice raspy and dry.

JARETT

You didn't even try.

Jarett thrashes harder his respiration increases.

JARETT (CONT'D)

Jett.

Jarett eyes open. Rebecca stands bedside.

REBECCA

It was just a dream. You're all
right.

Jarett focuses on Rebecca.

JARETT

I couldn't save him.

REBECCA

It was an accident. It wasn't your
fault.

JARETT

No, Midnight, I promised I wouldn't
let the butcher take him.

REBECCA

He didn't. Midnight's at my
father's farm.

EXT. REBECCA'S CAR-DAY

The car turns onto a long cobblestone driveway. The wrought
iron gate spans the driveway connecting two granite pedestal
horse heads. The lettering on the gate.

WANERIGHT FARM.

INT. REBECCA'S CAR-CONTINUOUS

Rebecca drives past a Tudor style house. Jarrett looks at Rebecca. Rebecca smiles as she pulls up to a Dutch gabled barn. They get out and go into the

BARN

WILLIE(62) slight mid-western accent and husky voice, hobbles over to Rebecca and Jarrett.

WILLIE

I can't get near that black colt,
Miss.

REBECCA

Willie, say hello to Jarrett
Randall. He'll be handling that
from now on.

They shake hands.

WILLIE

That's good news, I'm getting too
old to be messing with wild horses.

Rebecca guides Jarrett away.

REBECCA

He's over here.

JARETT

Nice to meet you, Willie.

She leads Jarrett to Midnight's stall. Midnight stands with his head in the corner. Jarrett looks in.

REBECCA

He went back to the corner as soon
as he got here.

Jarrett takes a step closer.

JARETT

Hey big guy.

Midnight turns his head.

JARETT (CONT'D)

Come over and say hello.

Midnight nickers and turns toward the door. Midnight puts his head over the stall gate. Jarrett rubs the big colt's neck.

REBECCA

I knew he would come to you. Let me show you where you'll be staying.

Rebecca leads Jarett a stairway at the end of the barn. They climb the stairs and enter the

LOFT APARTMENT

Jarett goes over to the bay window. He looks out over the training track and fields of the estate. Rebecca joins him.

REBECCA

You need to sign this.

She holds official paper in her hand.

JARETT

What's this?

REBECCA

Midnight's registration papers. We'll be partners, fifty-fifty, no one can ever take him away from you.

She hands Jarett the papers.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

Before you sign that you have to promise me one thing.

JARETT

What's that?

REBECCA

You have to stay sober. No more drinking. Can you do that?

JARETT

Yes, but why are you doing this?

She extends her hand.

REBECCA

Because it's the right thing.

He shakes her hand.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

For both of you.

He looks into her eyes. She smiles.

EXT. BROOD MARE PADDOCK-DAY

Jarett breaks ice from the water tub. He is healthier now and has put on a few pounds. His face has color his clothes fit better.

He throws hay into feeders. A dozen mares trot over pull hay. Willie hobbles over to the fence. He rubs his hands together.

WILLIE

This damp cold sure don't agree
with my old bones.

JARETT

Let's get warmed up then.

WILLIE

Sounds good to me.

Across the field Midnight trots at high speed through the snowy paddock.

WILLIE (CONT'D)

I never seen a colt that could go
like that one.

Jarett turns. Midnight flying up the fence line.

JARETT

I have.

INT. JARETT'S APARTMENT-DAY

Willie sits at the kitchen table. Jarett places a mug of coffee in front of Willie and sits down. Willie pulls a small flask from inside his coat. He glances at Jarett.

WILLIE

I know you've given it up but I
hope you don't mind if I indulge.
It helps me with the cold.

JARETT

Of course.

Willie pours a shot into his own cup and raises it.

WILLIE

Here's to the holidays.

They tap mugs together.

JARETT
To the holidays.

They both sip.

WILLIE
I guess Miss Rebecca will be home soon enough.

JARETT
Have you been with the family a long time, Willie?

WILLIE
Since Mrs. Francine hired me.

JARETT
Who?

WILLIE
Mrs. Waneright

JARETT
I thought Mr. Waneright...

WILLIE
Everyone thinks that, but it was Mrs. Francine who got Mr. Myron started with the horses. He bought this farm for her. She used to train the horses herself right on this here farm.

JARETT
What happened to her?

WILLIE
She got cancer, died when Rebecca was seven.

EXT. WANERIGHT MANSION-DAY

Christmas lights adorn the mansion. Myron helps Rebecca remove Christmas presents from the trunk of her car.

MYRON
Looks like you have a few extra presents this year.

REBECCA
Don't be jealous Daddy.

She kisses her father on the cheek.

Rebecca (CONT'D)
You're still the number one man in
my life.

They carry the presents to the mansion.

EXT. MIDNIGHT'S PADDOCK-DUSK

The sun sets over the snow covered pasture. Jarett watches
Midnight pull hay from a feeder. Rebecca joins Jarett at the
fence.

REBECCA
How is he?

JARETT
He's happy here.

REBECCA
And you?

Jarett turns to Rebecca.

JARETT
I am too, for the first time in a
long time, I really am.

Jarett and Rebecca begin to walk along the track around the
property.

JARETT (CONT'D)
I'll start back with him pretty
soon.

REBECCA
Are you going to be ready to drive
him?

JARETT
Me?

REBECCA
Yes you.

JARETT
You want me to drive him?

REBECCA
Of course. Who did you think would
drive him?

JARETT

I don't know. I never really... I just... I didn't think you'd want me to.

REBECCA

Why wouldn't I?

Their eyes meet.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

He's your colt Jarett.

INT. JARETT'S APARTMENT-NIGHT

Jarett sits reading a Hoof Beats magazine. There's a knock on the door. Jarett opens it. Willie smiles uneasily. He holds a small Christmas tree.

Rebecca stands anxiously behind Willie. She holds two wrapped boxes.

WILLIE

Merry Christmas, Jarett.

Willie steps inside and sets the tree down.

WILLIE (CONT'D)

I'm just going to get on my way if ya don't mind?

Willie smiles.

WILLIE (CONT'D)

You two have a nice time now.

Rebecca smiles and holds up the larger box.

REBECCA

Merry Christmas.

Jarett takes the box from her.

JARETT

Thanks, come on in.

REBECCA

That one is for Midnight but you can open it for him.

Jarett sets the box on the table. He removes a heavy horse blanket.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
It gets pretty cold this time of
year.

JARETT
It's perfect.

Rebecca hands Jarett another box.

REBECCA
This one's for you.

JARETT
Rebecca you shouldn't...

REBECCA
I had to, just open it.

Jarett opens the box to reveal a painting.

ON PAINTING

A black horse with a white blaze lays under a tree. A young
boy lay with his head on the horses neck.

REBECCA
(softly)
It made me think of you.

JARETT
It's beautiful Rebecca. Thank you.
(Uncomfortable)
My family never really celebrated
Christmas. I guess they, well what
I mean is. I've been living in tack
rooms for so long and well I...

Jarett looks around the room.

REBECCA
Jarett, I'm sorry I didn't mean to
make you uncomfortable.

JARETT
No it's okay. I Just... just close
your eyes and hold out your arm.

Rebecca closes her eyes and extends her arm. Jarett slips the
horse hair bracelet off and puts on Rebecca.

JARETT (CONT'D)
You can open your eyes now.

She looks at it. She looks at Jarett.

REBECCA
This is more than just a bracelet.

JARETT
I want you to have it.

Rebecca hugs Jarett.

REBECCA
Merry Christmas Jarett.

His arms hang at first. He hugs her back.

JARETT
Merry Christmas Rebecca.

INT. MIDNIGHT'S STALL-DAY

Jarett rubs Midnight's coat with a towel. Rebecca pokes her head over the stall door.

REBECCA
Oh, there you are.

Jarett turns.

JARETT
Hi.

REBECCA
Daddy's having some people over for New Year's, would you mind being my plus one?

JARETT
I can't.

Jarett turns back to Midnight.

REBECCA
Why can't you?

He rubs his coat with the towel.

JARETT
I just can't.

REBECCA
Why. Do you have plans?

JARETT

No... I mean yes... What difference does it make? I can't go with you.

REBECCA

Of course you can.

JARETT

I have foal watch!

REBECCA

Willie can check in on the mares.

Jarett exits the stall and walks up the barn isle. Rebecca follows.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

Why are you being like this?

JARETT

I'm not being like anything.

REBECCA

I'm not asking for a lifetime commitment here. It's just dinner with my father and some people.

He stops and turns.

JARETT

Some people? Do they live in a tack room? Do they eat meals out of a can? Do they shovel shit for a living? Those are the only kind of people I know how to be around Rebecca.

She looks into his eyes.

REBECCA

That's not true. You know how to be around me.

She takes his hands.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

I know life has been hard on you but it doesn't have to be that way.

JARETT

I have a bad track record when it comes to people. I don't want to embarrass you.

REBECCA

You won't, Jarett. You just have to trust me. Do you trust me?

He calms.

JARETT

All right, I'll come to dinner.

She smiles.

JARETT (CONT'D)

But then you have to do something for me.

REBECCA

Of course, anything.

INT. JARETT'S APARTMENT-NIGHT

Jarett is dressed in black slacks and white shirt. He stands in front of a mirror struggling with the knot of his tie. His hands tremble.

He yanks off the tie and hurls it to the floor. He grabs a pint bottle of Bourbon from the cabinet, his hands tremble as he twists off the cap.

Jarett see himself in the mirror and stops for an instant then raises the bottle to his lips.

INT. JARETT'S APARTMENT-MINUTES LATER

Jarett sits on the couch his head in his hands. There is a knock at the door. Jarett does not move.

JARETT

It's open!

Rebecca enters. She wears a black cocktail dress. She sees the open bottle on the counter. She goes to him and sits calmly by his side.

REBECCA

Are you all right?

JARETT

How am I going to get through dinner? I can't even tie a tie?

She sees the tie on the floor and picks it up.

REBECCA

Here. Let me help you.

Rebecca places the tie around his neck and calmly ties it.

JARETT

You're not upset?

REBECCA

Would being upset with Midnight
have been useful the first time you
stepped into his stall?

Jarett studies Rebecca's calm expression. She finishes the knot and snugs it to his collar. Her eyes meet his and she smiles.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

Perfect. You ready?

She stands and extends her hand. He takes it.

INT. WANERIGHT DINING ROOM -NIGHT

Jarett sits next to Rebecca at the table. Four other couples all dressed in high money fashion sit around the table in the midsts of conversation.

DINNER MONTAGE

Jarett looks uncomfortably around as the guests converse around the table.

Jarett nods and smiles politely when engaged then turns inward.

Rebecca recognizes Jarett's doubt. She holds his hand under the table while she talks to guests.

Jarett sits idle and listens to what self-important people sound like.

BACK TO SCENE

Myron sits at the head of the table trying his best to be polite to RICHARD (DICKIE) WHALEN(50). Dickie is two drinks over the line. SALLY WHALEN(45) sits by her husband.

DICKIE

Well I just don't understand why
for Christ sake!

(MORE)

DICKIE (CONT'D)

I give these damn people paid vacation, retirement, sick leave, health insurance and even profit sharing and they won't stay long enough to make partner. I mean what the hell more do they want from me?

MYRON

I really don't know, Dickie.

Myron taps his glass with a spoon. The room quiets. Myron stands and holds up a champagne glass.

MYRON (CONT'D)

I would like to propose a toast. To all of you, may the New Year bring you health, prosperity and happiness.

Myron looks at Rebecca and Jarett.

MYRON (CONT'D)

And to Jarett and Rebecca, may your joint venture bring great success and many healthy victories.

The table raises champagne glasses. Jarett raises his water goblet.

SALLY

So tell us Jarett, how did you know Midnight wouldn't turn on you when you went into his stall?

JARETT

I didn't. I just knew he needed to be treated with respect.

DICKIE

Respect? He's supposed to respect you. I mean for Christ's sake you feed him and take care of him without you he couldn't survive.

JARETT

Actually, horses do just fine on their own. It's only when we use them to serve our needs that they become dependent. If we don't treat them with the respect they deserve they can become resentful.

DICKIE

Resentful? Well then why the hell don't you just get rid of the son of a bitch and get one that does respect you?

JARETT

Horses don't give you respect for free Mr. Whalen, you have to earn it. Perhaps if you tried that approach with your employees you wouldn't lose so many.

Dickie's mouth hangs open. The room is quiet, all eyes are on Jarett. The grandfather clock chimes.

MYRON

My goodness look at the time. I suggest we all retire to the library and prepare for the festivities.

JARETT

I'm sorry Mr. Waneright. I have to check on the mares.

Jarett stands.

REBECCA

I'll go with you.

INT. BARN-AFTER DINNER PARTY

Jarett and Rebecca wear winter coats over dinner clothes as they walk the barn aisle together. Jarett stops to look into a mare's stall.

REBECCA

Did you see the look on Dickie's face?

JARETT

No. I was too worried about your father's reaction to notice.

Jarett returns to Rebecca, she wraps her arm around his.

REBECCA

Are you kidding? Daddy's waited years to put Dickie in his place, you did it in less than a minute.

They continue down the aisle and stop in front of Midnight's stall. Jarett opens the door and goes in. He turns to her.

JARETT

You remember the deal we made? You promised to do something for me.

REBECCA

I remember.

JARETT

Come into the stall.

REBECCA

Jarett no, I couldn't do that.

JARETT

Of course you can. You just have to trust me. You trust me don't you?

Rebecca slowly enters the stall. Midnight pulls at the hay feeder.

JARETT (CONT'D)

Now place your hand on his shoulder.

Rebecca hesitantly reaches. Midnight snorts. Rebecca recoils.

JARETT (CONT'D)

Give me your hand.

Jarett looks calmly at Rebecca.

REBECCA

I'm scared.

JARETT

Midnight is a part of us now. You need to be a part of him. Take a deep breath and let the fear go, trust me.

Jarett guides Rebecca's hand to Midnight's shoulder. He moves behind her. He places both her hands on Midnight's coat.

JARETT (CONT'D)

How does he feel?

REBECCA

He feels... peaceful.

Rebecca's shoulders begin to relax. Jarett slides his hands along her arms to her shoulders and down to her waist. He leans in behind her.

JARETT
 (softly)
 And how does that make you feel?

She smiles.

REBECCA
 (softly)
 I feel that way too.

JARETT
 It's called transference.

He turns her around. They are face to face. Their lips move closer. Their first kiss is tender and sweet.

INT. JARETT'S APARTMENT BEDROOM-NIGHT

Jarett and Rebecca stand face to face. He cradles her cheek as they kiss. He guides her onto the bed. Jarett's hands move over her body as they kiss.

They make love.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. PRESS BOX YONKERS RACEWAY-NIGHT

STAN GOLDSTEIN (50) and GABE PRESSBY (45) have a birdseye view of racetrack from booth on top of grandstands. Each have a microphone before them as they give live commentary.

PRESSBY
 Welcome to a beautiful Mid May evening at Yonkers raceway I'm Gabe Pressby, with me is Stan Goldstein.

GOLDSTEIN
 Yes a beautiful and balmy night for harness racing. Tonight's open trot features Hambletonian hopeful, Hard Drive, with George Brendan in the sulky for the Victoria Racing stable.

INT. YONKERS RACEWAY PADDOCK-NIGHT

A line of horses numbered one through eight stand on the ramp to the racetrack. Junior holds the head of number five.

Jack buckles his helmet.

JUNIOR
We're racing for second money
tonight.

Jack unties the reins from shaft of race sulky.

JACK
You never know about that Junior,
anything can happen out there.

He picks up the reigns. He looks up at the line of horses.

JACK (CONT'D)
Hey, Georgie boy!

GEORGE BRENDAN (29) red and black colors, stands next to the number three horse. George turns.

JACK (CONT'D)
No mistakes tonight, everyone's
watchin'.

Jack winks. George frowns and turns back to his horse.

PADDOCK ATTENDANT(O.S.)
Drivers up!

Jack swings into the race sulky.

PADDOCK ATTENDANT(O.S.) (CONT'D)
Take' em out!

Junior follows the horse in front of him as he leads Jack's horse to the track.

JUNIOR
Good luck, Pop.

JACK
Keep your fingers crossed.

INT. BUFFALO RACEWAY CLUBHOUSE-NIGHT

Jarett and Rebecca sit at a table. A TV monitor hangs from the ceiling.

REBECCA

I was so young it's hard to remember. People tell me I look just like her.

Jarett smiles.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

Daddy said she would bring me to the barn with her everyday. He said She wanted her filly with her at all times. Isn't that silly?

JARETT

I don't think so. It like she loved you as much as her horses.

Jarett glances at the TV Monitor.

JARETT (CONT'D)

I think the race is about to go off.

REBECCA

This should be a walk in the park for a horse like Hard Drive.

JARETT

Just because he's a Hambletonian hopeful doesn't mean he can't get beat.

REBECCA

I don't see how that's possible Hard drive's five seconds the best in this field.

Jarett grins.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

What?

JARETT

My father has a horse in this race.

REBECCA

So?

JARETT

So anything can happen out there.

INT. PRESS BOX YONKERS RACEWAY-NIGHT

Goldstein and Pressby look down at the field of horse behind the mobile starting.

GOLDSTEIN

Number eight, Fly on Bye is the early speed and loves the front end, that should make for a fast opening quarter.

PRESSBY

It'll be interesting to see what move George Brendan makes with Hard Drive when the gate folds.

The gate sweeps off the turn at the top of stretch. The gate picks up speed as it brings the field to the starting wire.

TRACK ANNOUNCER (FILTERED)

Heeeeere they come!

GOLDSTEIN

Let's find out as we turn to this feature field of trotters.

TRACK ANNOUNCER (FILTERED)

There they gooooooo!

The gate folds. The car races away from the field. The Number three and eight horse fire to the front.

TRACK ANNOUNCER (FILTERED) (CONT'D)

Hard Drive heads out for the early lead. On the far outside Fly on Bye goes right with him. As they move into the first turn Fly on Bye has a head in front.

INTER CUT WITH CLUBHOUSE-SAME

Rebecca and Jarett watch the simulcast monitor. The Eight horse has just cleared the three horse and moved to the rail. The five horse swings to the outside and moves up on the leaders.

TRACK ANNOUNCER (V.O. FILTERED)

Fly on Bye has made the top as they go past the quarter in tweeenty eight seconds flat! Hard Drive is second at the rail. The Intruder swings to the outside fourth and moving up.

REBECCA

Your father moved too early.

JARETT

Maybe, maybe not.

INTERCUT WITH. PRESS BOX-SAME

Goldstein and Pressby overlooking the race.

TRACK ANNOUNCER (FILTERED)

Fly on Bye is still on top. Hard drive is locked in the pocket second. On the outside it's The Intruder third as they swing past the paddock turn the first time.

PRESSBY

Hard Drive is under lock key right now.

GOLDSTEIN

Very strategic move here by Jack Randall.

TRACK ANNOUNCER (FILTERED)

They reach the three eighths and head to the half mile pole. It's Fly on Bye on top by a half a length. Hard Drive at the rail second, The Intruder on the outside third.

INTERCUT WITH CLUBHOUSE-SAME

Rebecca and Jarett watch the monitor

TRACK ANNOUNCER (FILTERED)

They move into the paddock turn the final tiime! It's Fly on Bye still on top, Hard Drive at the rail second. The Intruder hanging on the outside third. Harlan blaze swings to outside fourth and they turn for hooooommmme.

REBECCA

The Intruder looks to be finished.

JARETT

Maybe, maybe not.

On the screen. We see Jack go the whip. He raises his hands.

TRACK ANNOUNCER (FILTERED)
 Top of the streeetch! The Intruder
 has battled back on the outside.
 Fly on bye fades at the rail. Hard
 Drive is desperate to shake loose
 in third.

Rebecca looks at Jarett.

REBECCA
 That's impossible.

TRACK ANNOUNCER (FILTERED)
 As they come to the wire it's Jack
 Randall with The Intruuuder in
 front.

Jarett smiles.

JARETT
 In a horse race, anything is
 possible.

EXT. REBECCA'S CAR-NIGHT

Jarett and Rebecca hold hands as they walk from the car
 toward the barn.

REBECCA
 Do you think Midnight can handle a
 horse like Hard Drive?

JARETT
 I'm giving him a workout tomorrow
 morning. Why don't you come down
 and watch?

Playfully

REBECCA
 A workout?

Jarett smiles.

JARETT
 Yeah, a work out.

Jarett pulls Rebecca to him. They kiss with playful passion
 as they head into the apartment.

EXT. WANERIGHT TRAINING TRACK-DAY

The fields are green with grass. Rebecca, Willie and Myron stand by the fence and watch as Midnight speed down the stretch. Myron and Rebecca click their stop watches simultaneously as Midnight completes his mile.

Myron checks the watch.

MYRON

Good lord!

WILLIE

What's it say?

MYRON

He just worked a two minute mile.

REBECCA

To an exercise cart.

EXT. WANERIGHT BARN-CONTINUOUS

Midnight jogs up to the barn. Myron, Rebecca and Willie wait. Jarett dismounts the jog cart. Willie and Jarett unhitch Midnight.

REBECCA

Well?

MYRON

Well?

Jarett smiles.

JARETT

He's ready.

INT. BUFFALO RACEWAY DRIVER LOUNGE-NIGHT

Jarett stands behind a long row of lockers and puts on his racing colors. He sits down on the bench and takes a deep breath.

He hears two DRIVERS on the opposite side of the lockers as they come in.

DRIVER 1 (V.O.)

You got days for that?

DRIVER 2 (V.O.)

It wasn't my fault, McKnight stuck a wheel under me. We damn near took down the field.

INTERCUT WITH OPPOSITE SIDE LOCKERS

The tow Drivers stand in front of the lockers. George Brendan storms into the lounge.

DRIVER 1
Hey Georgie! How was Yonkers?

GEORGE
A freaking nightmare!

George takes off his helmet and throws it into his locker.

DRIVER 1
What happened?

GEORGE
Jack Randall is what happened!

DRIVER 2
I caught the simulcast.

INTERCUT WITH JARETT'S SIDE OF LOCKERS

Jarett listens.

GEORGE(V.O.)
You want to know what he says to me
after the race?

JARETT
(whispers)
You drove that piece like a
freakin' moron.

GEORGE(V.O.)
You drove that piece like a
freakin' moron.

INTERCUT WITH OPPOSITE SIDE OF LOCKERS

GEORGE
Guy's an asshole.

DRIVER 2
Yeah but you have to admit, he's a
surgeon in a race bike.

GEORGE
Bullshit!

George kicks the locker door.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
He's got my Hambo mount!

DRIVER 2
Shit George, sorry to hear that.

DRIVER 1
You know his kid's driving one
tonight in the seventh.

GEORGE
Who?

DRIVER 1
Mancini's stall mucker. Jarett
Randall. He's on Midnight Express.

George looks at Driver 1.

GEORGE
He's Jack Randall's kid? He's a
drunk ain't he?

DRIVER 2
Hell he'd have to be to sit behind
the piece he's driving. Cat said
the horse is crazy.

All three Drivers head out of the locker room.

INT. DRIVERS LOUNGE-SAME

Jarett sits on the bench and stares into his locker. He reaches in and removes a bottle of Bourbon. He twists off the cap.

He sees his reflection in the mirror. He stops.

He gets up and goes to the sink. He pours the bourbon down the drain and chucks the bottle in the trash.

He throws water on his face. He looks at his reflection in the mirror.

INT. BUFFALO RACEWAY CLUBHOUSE-NIGHT

Myron and Rebecca sit at a table. Rebecca sits on the edge of her seat. She twists her program and looks out at the track.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED)
The Marshall calls the trotters!

REBECCA
I've never been this nervous
before. I feel like I need to be
doing something.

Myron smiles.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
What?

MYRON
Your mother would twist her program
just like that before her horse
went to the gate.

EXT. RACETRACK BACKSTRETCH

The field of horses move in behind the starting gate. The
gate begins to roll.

STARTING JUDGE
Bring up the six horse.

Jarett holds Midnight off. The gate swings through the turn.

STARTING JUDGE (CONT'D)
Get that six horse up here!

CLUBHOUSE

Rebecca and Myron watch as the gate swings through the turn.

REBECCA
Something's wrong. He's not
catching the gate.

TRACK ANNOUNCER (FILTERED)
Heeeeeeere they come!

MYRON
Let's not panic just yet.

RACETRACK

The gate straightens out of the turn into the stretch. The
car engine roars as it accelerates away.

JARETT
Now!

Jarett raises his hands and Midnight shifts gears and flies out of the gate just as the wings fold and release the field.

CLUBHOUSE

Myron and Rebecca watch as the starting gate wings fold and release the field. Midnight fires to the front and separates from the field.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED)

There they gooooo! On the far outside it's Midnight Express firing out for the early lead. At the rail Lindy Lobell tries to stay with him. They move into the first turn Midnight Express is on top three back to Lindy Lobell second.

REBECCA

Wow!

MYRON

Holy cow! I've never seen speed like that!

RACETRACK

Jarett takes a quick look back. Jarett and Midnight are all by themselves as they trot past the quarter pole.

JARETT

Easy big guy.

CLUBHOUSE

Rebecca eyes are glued to on Midnight.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED)

They go past the quarter pole in tweeeenty six and three. Midnight Express is on top and on a mission. Five back in second is Lindy Lobell followed by Green Streak and Speed Away.

REBECCA

Twenty six and three?

MYRON

That's got to be a track record for the quarter.

RACETRACK

Jarett and Midnight are still on top as they come off the last turn. The field has closed in. A horse swings out to challenge. Jarett looks out. It's George Brendan.

George sets for the drive to the wire.

CLUBHOUSE

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED)

They've got an eighth of a mile to trot and they turn for hoooooome. It's still Midnight Express on top but heeeere comes Speed Away!

Rebecca nervously twist the program in her hands

REBECCA

Come on Jarett.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED)

Speed Away has collard Midnight Express. As they drive for the wire it's Speed Away on the outside.

RACETRACK

Jarett raises his hands and urges Midnight. Midnight shifts into another gear.

CLUBHOUSE

Rebecca and Myron are on their feet. Rebecca has almost torn the program in two.

REBECCA

Come on Jarett!

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED)

It's Speed Away and Midnight Express but Midnight Express comes battling back at the rail and it's Midnight Express on top and drawing away.

EXT. WINNER CIRCLE-SAME

Rebecca hugs Jarett, Myron stands next to his daughter. Willie holds Midnight by the bridle. The PHOTOGRAPHER snaps a photo.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. RANDALL KITCHEN-DAY

Jack reads the racing form. Junior sips coffee and flips through a Hoof Beats magazine. Estelle washes dishes at the sink.

JUNIOR

Holy shit!

Junior pulls the magazine closer.

JUNIOR (CONT'D)

I don't believe it.

JACK

What?

JUNIOR

Midnight Express won a division of the New York sire stakes.

JACK

Where?

JUNIOR

At Buffalo Raceway, in one fifty-eight and two.
(Excited)
No shit!

JACK

Christ, Junior what?

JUNIOR

Guess who owns, trains and drives him.

JACK

Who?

JUNIOR

Jarett.

Estelle turns.

ESTELLE
Jarett's in Buffalo?

JUNIOR
Yeah. He's doing okay.

Jack half grins and half frowns.

JACK
Read the article, Junior.

SERIES OF WIN SHOTS ARE SEEN AS JUNIOR READS

Jarett and Midnight as they clear the field and draw off to win.

JUNIOR (O.S.)	TRACK ANNOUNCER(V.O.)
Midnight Express and Jarett Randall have been nothing less than flawless in their last four outings at Buffalo raceway.	It looks like Midnight Express has this one all wrapped up.

A flash of light pops over the screen and we see the black and white print as they cross the wire.

NEXT SHOT

Jarett and Midnight on top. The field is back five lengths.

JUNIOR (O.S.)	TRACK ANNOUNCER(V.O.)
Midnight Express has won his first three outings and last Saturday night took his division of the New York Sire stakes in easy fashion, winning in one fifty eight and two the fastest division of the night.	Jarett Randall and Midnight Express are going to win this one easily, as they draw off by five.

A flash of light pops over the screen and we see the black and white print as they cross the wire.

NEXT SHOT

Jarett and Midnight from the far outside as they catch the leaders.

JUNIOR (O.S.)
 Owner Rebecca Waneright said
 Midnight Express has been
 nominated and payments have
 been kept up for this summers
 richest trotting stake, The
 Hambletonian, which moves
 from the Du Quoin State fair
 in Illinois to The
 Meadowlands in East
 Rutherford New Jersey.

TRACK ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
 And heeeere cooomes Midnight
 Express flying on the far
 outside to win it all!

A flash of light pops over the screen and we see the black
 and white print. Midnight looks as if he's flying. All four
 feet are off the ground, his legs fully extended in the air
 as he crosses the wire.

BACK TO SCENE

Junior sneers at his father.

JUNIOR
 I'll bet he didn't have to use a
 cattle prod on him.

JACK
 Don't start with me Junior. I put
 winners on the racetrack. I can't
 feed my family with a horse that
 quits.

Junior pushes away from the table.

JUNIOR
 It don't look like either one of
 them quit at Buffalo.

Junior walks out.

ESTELLE
 I want to see my son.

JACK
 We'll see him soon enough.

ESTELLE
 When?

JACK
 The Sire Stake horses will be at
 Goshen next week.

EXT. GOSHEN HISTORIC TRACK BARN-NIGHT

Jarett and Rebecca sit on a tack trunk. Jarett flips through the racing program. He finds the page he wants and folds it back. He scans the program.

He stops and stares at the program for a few seconds then drops it on the trunk and walks away.

REBECCA
What's the matter?

Jarett paces up and down the barn isle as he runs his hand over his head in disbelief.

JARETT
Take a look at the program.

Jarett continues to pace as Rebecca studies the program.

REBECCA
You're racing Hard Drive tomorrow.

JARETT
Yeah, look who's driving him.

Rebecca takes another look at the program. She looks at Jarett.

REBECCA
Your father's driving him?

JARETT
Yeah.

REBECCA
If it's going to be a problem we can scratch him.

JARETT
We didn't just drive six hours to scratch our horse.

REBECCA
Let's sleep on it. We can decide in the morning.

JARETT
There's no way, I'm not going to let him stop us from racing our horse.

EXT. RACE PADDOCK SHED ROW-DAY

Rebecca sits on the stall railing. She looks at the race program. She looks down the row of horses. Estelle pushes a race sulky with equipment piled on it.

Junior leads a bay colt into the number two stall. Rebecca walks down to the number two stall.

REBECCA

Hi, seems were in the same race today.

Junior hangs Hard Drive on cross ties. Estelle unloads the equipment.

JUNIOR

Who have you got?

REBECCA

Midnight Express.

ESTELLE

Oh, Hi! You must be Rebecca? I'm Estelle Randall.

JUNIOR

Hi, I'm Junior.

ESTELLE

Lord, I didn't think you'd be so young. How's Jarett?

Rebecca looks over Estelle's shoulder. Estelle turns. She looks at her son with a mother's adoration. Jarett hugs her.

JARETT

I missed you mom.

Estelle's eyes tear. She separates from her son and takes a good long look at him.

ESTELLE

My god, you look so good. How have you been?

Jarett reaches for Rebecca's hand.

JARETT

I've been just fine, thanks to Rebecca

JUNIOR
 Hey Jett, Fifty eight and two huh?
 I bet that turned some heads up in
 Buffalo.

Jarett turns to Junior they hug like brothers home from war.

JARETT
 I guess so Junior.

JUNIOR
 So you're going to the big show
 then?

Rebecca gives Junior a curious look.

JUNIOR (CONT'D)
 The Hambletonian. The purse is a
 million dollars this year.

Jack's voice bellows.

JACK (O.S.)
 What are we havin' a family
 reunion? Junior, get that colt
 ready for warm ups. Estelle, get my
 colors for me.

Estelle turns to Jack.

JACK (CONT'D)
 Please Estelle. They're in the
 truck.

ESTELLE
 (to Rebecca)
 Walk with me?

As soon as Rebecca and Estelle leave.

JACK
 You been gone for years without a
 word then you come over here like
 it was yesterday? You think you're
 some kind of hot shot now that you
 won a few races?

JARETT
 I came over to see my mother and my
 brother.

Jack moves a step closer.

JACK
You owe a lot more than that.

JARETT
Well then I guess I'll take that up
with them.

Jarett turns and walks.

JACK
You ain't nothin' but a lucky
drunk.

He stops and turns.

JACK (CONT'D)
That's right, I got eyes out there.
I know you drank yourself stupid
from here to Buffalo.
I heard all the stories. How's that
bottle gonna look when you ain't
winning? What then, big shot?

JARETT
You seem to know an awful lot about
it.

JACK
More than you'll ever know.

JARETT
I got a horse to race.

Jarett walks away.

EXT. MIDNIGHT'S STALL RACE PADDOCK-CONTINUOUS

Willie rubs down Midnight. Jarett walks right past the stall.

WILLIE
Jarett? Where you going?

JARETT
I'll be right back.

INT. HORSE TRAILER-CONTINUOUS

Jarett lifts a horse blanket off a bucket. A bottle of
bourbon is inside. Jarett's hands tremble as he twists off
the cap. He takes a long pull.

He takes several more before his hands stop trembling.

EXT. HORSE TRAILER-CONTINUOUS

Jarett steps out of the trailer. Jack stands by the door.

JACK
All better now?

Jarett moves. Jack steps in his path. Jarett shoves past his father.

JACK (CONT'D)
It'll ruin you!

JARETT
The hell do you give a shit?

INT. GRANDSTAND-SAME

Rebecca and Estelle sit together in Myron's box.

ESTELLE
So how did you and Jarett meet?

REBECCA
It's a long story but Jarett actually saved me.

Estelle gives Rebecca a curious look.

ESTELLE
I would love to hear it sometime.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(V.O.)
Heeere they come!

They both watch the starting gate move down the stretch.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(V.O.)
There they goooooo! In the middle of the track The Klaxon and Stanley Darringer hustle out for the early lead. On the inside Hard Drive goes right with him. On the far outside goes Midnight Express.

EXT. RACETRACK-SAME DAY

The Klaxon is a neck in front of Hard Drive as they hit the turn. Jack looks out and sees Jarett sliding down toward them. Jack slaps Hard Drive with the whip.

The three horses move away from the field. A gap opens behind Jack. Jarett drops into it.

GRANDSTAND

Estelle and Rebecca on the edge of their seats lean over the box railing as the field rounds the turn.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(V.O.)

They reach the three eighths and head for the half mile pole. Hard Drive on top by a half a length. On the outside The Klaxon is moving up. Midnight Express sits the pocket in third. They go by the half in a minute and three fifths.

ESTELLE

Jarett's getting a good trip.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(V.O.)

Two back to fourth it's Egyptian Dancer followed by Crown Victory and Worthy Boy.

RACETRACK TOP OF THE STRETCH

Jarett is locked in behind Jack. The Klaxon is along side Midnight. Jack drifts off the rail.

Jarett sees the rail begin to open. Jack goes to a left hand whip. Hard Drive drifts out more.

GRANDSTAND

Rebecca and Estelle watch the field come off the last turn.

ESTELLE

Hard Drive's drifting, he's getting tired.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(V.O.)

They've got an eighth of a mile to trot and they turn for hooooome! Hard Drive has been there all the way. The Klaxon on the outside. Midnight Express looks for racing room at the rail third.

REBECCA

Come on Jarett!

RACETRACK

Hard Drive and The Klaxon stretch duel head to head both drivers push and urge and flail whips at their charges. Neither horse gains nor loses an inch.

Jarett finally has room and shoots the gap between Jack and the rail.

JARETT

Now Midnight!

Jack draws Hard Drive back toward the rail and nearly clips Midnight's front leg. Jarett's outside wheel locks with Jack's inside wheel.

GRANDSTAND

Both Estelle and Rebecca are on their feet leaning over the box railing

REBECCA

Come on Jarett!

ESTELLE

Get him up Jarett!

TRACK ANNOUNCER(OS)

As they drive for the wire! It's still Hard Drive holding on! The Klaxon on the outside and Midnight Express at the rail and here they are!

Three horses rush under the wire in front of the grandstand. Estelle's face goes ashen. She holds onto the box railing and almost falls into her seat.

REBECCA

Are you all right.

Estelle puts up her hand as she holds her stomach.

ESTELLE

I'm fine, it's just a stomach flu.

RACE PADDOCK SHED ROW-AFTER RACE

Rebecca holds Midnight, Willie washes the colt down. Jarett squats down next to Midnight's front legs. He runs his hands down the legs to check for injuries.

JARETT

He looks okay.

Jarett looks down the shed row. He sees his father with Junior and Estelle.

REBECCA

Jarett don't.

Jarett rushes toward Jack. Rebecca follows.

JARETT

The rail was open! You stuck a wheel under me!

JACK

I hadn't settled into a lane, you shot the rail.

JARETT

Bullshit! You damn near took the legs out from under me!

JACK

How the hell would you know with all the booze you downed before post. You probably couldn't see straight enough to drive that colt.

JUNIOR

Leave ' em alone!

ESTELLE

Jack! Don't do this!

Rebecca looks at Jarett.

JACK

(to Rebecca)

Oh you didn't know Missy? Your big shot driver here had to have a little pre-race fixer.

Jarett shoves Jack. Jack and Jarett wrestle each other to the ground.

ESTELLE

Stop it!

Estelle doubles over and holds her stomach. Rebecca holds onto Estelle as Junior tries to break up the fight.

Two RACE OFFICIALS rush in to break up the fight.

As Jack dusts himself off.

JACK

I want to lodge a formal complaint against Jarett Randall for un-sportsman like conduct and racing under the influence.

ESTELLE

Jack no!

JACK

Yes Stell! He's gonna learn his lesson the same way I did.

INT. WANERIGHT FARM BARN-DAY

Jarett brushes a foal in a stall next to it's dam. Rebecca walks over to the stall. She has mail in her hand.

REBECCA

There's a letter here from the Racing commission.

Rebecca hands him the letter. Jarett tears it open. Jarett slowly exits the stall.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

Jarett?

He hands Rebecca the letter and walks away.

INT. JARETT'S APARTMENT-DAY

Jarett stares out the bay window. Rebecca enters the room letter in hand.

REBECCA

A thirty day suspension.

JARETT

The Hambletonian is in twenty eight days. We have to get somebody else to drive Midnight.

REBECCA

You're Midnight's driver.

JARETT

We have no choice.

INT. BUFFALO RACEWAY PADDOCK-NIGHT

Willie and Jarett stand with Midnight. Cat has on racing color, she walks over.

CAT
Any suggestions?

JARETT
Try to get his head on the gate early.

CAT
If he refuses?

JARETT
Then it's game over.

CAT
Let's hope that doesn't happen.

INT. BUFFALO RACEWAY CLUBHOUSE-NIGHT

Myron and Rebecca sit at their regular table. They watch as the starting gate wings open up.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(V.O.)
The Marshall calls the trotters.

EXT. RACETRACK-NIGHT

The field of horses circle in the backstretch. The wings of the starting gate open.

STARTING JUDGE (FILTERED)
All right bring em in.

Cat turns Midnight to the gate. Midnight rears up. The MARSHALL on the lead pony races down to Midnight.

The Marshall reaches for Midnight's bridle. Midnight rears again and strikes at the Marshall's pony.

STARTING JUDGE(FILTERED) (CONT'D)
Take him off Cat. He's out. Number seven is out.

BUFFALO RACEWAY CLUBHOUSE-NIGHT

Myron and Rebecca watch in horror as Midnight throws a temper tantrum.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED)
Number seven, Midnight Express is
scratched for refusing to come to
the gate.

EXT. JARETT'S APARTMENT -NEXT DAY

Jarett paces the room like a caged animal. Rebecca sits at
the kitchen table and studies his demeanor.

REBECCA
I don't see another option. We'll
have to scratch the Hambletonian.

Jarett turns.

JARETT
We're so goddamn close! This is
insane!

The telephone rings. Jarett snatches it up.

JARETT (CONT'D)
Hello?

Jarett expression goes blank as he cradles the receiver.

REBECCA
What is it?

JARETT
My Mom's in the hospital. She has
cancer.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM-DAY

Estelle eyes are closed. Jarett stands on one side of the
bed, Rebecca the other. Jarett gently takes his mother's
hand.

Estelle's eyes slowly open. She smiles when she sees her son.

In a weak low voice.

ESTELLE
Jarett, you shouldn't have to come
all this way.

Jarett's eyes instantly tear up. Rebecca takes Estelle's
other hand. She puts on a hopeful smile, a tear rolls down
her cheek.

JARETT

What did the doctor say?

Estelle looks affectionately at her son.

ESTELLE

That doesn't matter.

Estelle puts Jarett's hand into Rebecca's and holds them both.

ESTELLE (CONT'D)

This is all that matters.

INT. HOSPITAL LOBBY-SAME

Jack presses the elevator button and waits. The doors open. Jarett and Rebecca step out. Jarett skirts past his father.

JACK

We need to talk.

Jarett turns.

JARETT

I got nothing to say to you.

JACK

Your mother is dying.

JARETT

You think I don't know that! You did this to her!

JACK

You can't give somebody cancer.

Jarett voice drips venom.

JARETT

The hell you can't! Thirty years of serving the great Jack Randall! It makes me sick to think about it! You destroy every goddamn thing you touch! You killed Jett, you damn near destroyed Midnight and now Mom! You're a goddamn cancer! I wish to hell it was you up there!

REBECCA

Stop it Jarett!

Jarett turns like a gunslinger. His eyes smoke with anger. She doesn't recognize this Jarett. He turns and walks away.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM-SAME DAY

Jack sits by Estelle's bedside. He holds her hand. Her voice is weak.

ESTELLE

You have to make things right with him, Jack.

JACK

He's pretty mad at me, Stell.

ESTELLE

You have to. Promise me.

JACK

I will. I promise.

EXT. WANERIGHT BARN-DAY

A hay wagon is parked in front of the doors. A hay elevator rumbles as Willie loads bales onto it. The bales slowly move up to the loft.

INT. WANERIGHT BARN HAY LOFT-SAME

The air is thick with hay dust, the heat in the loft is like a sauna. Jarett's body is sweat soaked. He stacks the bales as they roll off the elevator.

INT. WANERIGHT BARN-SAME

Rebecca climbs the stairs to the loft. She reaches the landing and stands at the top of the stairs. She watches Jarett as he stabs a bale with the hay hooks.

REBECCA

Jarett.

He stacks it.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

Jarett!

He turns.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
We need to talk.

He stabs another bale and stacks it.

JARETT
Kinda busy right now.

REBECCA
We haven't talked since the
funeral.

Jarett stabs bales furiously trying to keep up with Willie's
pace.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
You're father didn't give her
cancer.

Jarett throws a hay bale high on the stack.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
Being angry at him isn't going to
bring her back.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
He may be a lot of things but he's
still your father.

JARETT
I know god damn good and well who
he is! You didn't have to live with
the son of bitch for fifteen years,
I did! So please just stay out of
it!

Willie's speed is too fast. Jarett is over run with bales.

JARETT (CONT'D)
God damn it, Willie! Slow the hell
down!

REBECCA
Don't you dare take your anger out
on Willie!

Jarett spins. His face full of pent up rage. Rebecca shifts
back on the landing. She falls backward down the stairs onto
the concrete floor.

JARETT
Oh my god!

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR-DAY

Myron talks to a Doctor outside Rebecca's room.

DOCTOR

She has a grade three concussion.
We've given her anti inflammatory
for the swelling around the brain,
now all we can do is wait and see.

Myron looks into the room. Rebecca is unconscious. Jarett sits at Rebecca's bedside. He holds her hand.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM-NIGHT

Jarett sits by Rebecca's bedside. He stares at Jett's braided hair bracelet on her wrist.

JARETT FLASHES BACK

Jarett slips the braided bracelet off his wrist and places it on Rebecca's wrist. Rebecca hugs him.

Jarett stands behind Rebecca in Midnight's stall and guides her hand over Midnight's coat.

Jarett and Rebecca's first kiss.

Rebecca and Jarett making love the first time.

Estelle dying in the hospital bed. Placing Jarett's hand in Rebecca's

ESTELLE

This is all that matters.

BACK TO SCENE

Jarett lays his cheek on Rebecca's hand and closes his eyes.

JARETT

Please come back to me, Rebecca. I
can't be without you.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM-MORNING

Jarett is asleep, his head rests on the bed. Rebecca's hand is on top of his head. He feels fingertips tickle his cheek. His eyes open. He raises his head. Rebecca smiles at him.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM-SAME LATER

Jarett and Myron stand by the window as Rebecca's Doctor examines her. He shines a pen light in her eye.

DOCTOR
Follow the light please.

He moves the light left then right. He switches eyes and does the same.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
Do you feel any discomfort?

REBECCA
No. None at all.

The Doctor turns to Myron.

DOCTOR
Reflexes are good, vitals are normal. I'd say you're daughter is ready to go home.

MYRON
Thank you.

INT. WANERIGHT FARM BARN-SEVERAL DAYS LATER

Jarett stands in front of Midnight's stall. Midnight has his head out. Jarett pats the big colt's neck. Rebecca walks toward them. She holds up white envelope.

REBECCA
We have an invitation.

JARETT
To what?

REBECCA
To the Hambletonian press conference. We need to go.

JARETT
You want to drive six hours, to a press conference, for a race we can't even put our horse in?

REBECCA
No. I want to drive six hours to look your father in the eye so he knows he hasn't beaten us.

JARETT

Okay, if you think it will do us any good.

REBECCA

Well it certainly can't do us any harm.

Jarett smiles.

INT. MEADOWLANDS SPORTS COMPLEX PRESS ROOM-DAY

CEO ROBERT B CARTER of the Hambletonian Society stands at the microphone podium of the head table. A handful of Sports writers sit on either side of the podium.

At twenty round top tables sit the owners, trainers and drivers of each of the Hambletonian entries. The tables are identified by the name of the horse entered.

Jarett and Rebecca sit at the Midnight Express table.

CARTER

Ladies and Gentlemen, members of the press and Harness Writers Association, I'd like to welcome you all to this breakfast conference. As President of the Hambletonian Society I'd like to thank the Meadowlands sports complex and the New Jersey sports authority for helping us to sustain this great tradition in harness racing.

Flash bulbs pop around the room.

CARTER (CONT'D)

We have a fantastic field of trotters in line for this year's Hambletonian. We also have the largest purse in the history of harness racing at over one million dollars. I will give the floor now to the members of the harness writers association and the Associated press. Thank you and good luck to all this years entries.

More flash bulbs pop as Carter steps away from the podium. At the head table GENE DORFMAN stands up.

DORFMAN

Gene Dorfman, Hoof Beats magazine.
For The Klaxon's table. Klaxon has
tremendous early speed but as of
late has had trouble finishing his
miles. What strategy do you have
going into this race.

Klaxon's TRAINER stands up.

TRAINER

We made a driver change that I
think suits The Klaxon's style of
racing. He's been very sharp in his
last two starts.

The Trainer looks at Stanley Darringer sitting next to him.

TRAINER (CONT'D)

As you all know The Klaxon loves
the front end almost as much as
Stanley here.

A chuckle from the room.

KEN DUBLIN stands up at the head table.

DUBLIN

Ken Dublin, Harness Racing
communication. For Hard Drive's
table. An amazing story behind how
this horse came into the hands of
Mr. Randall. Would you comment on
that?

The Owners of Hard Drive whisper with Jack. Junior looks on.
Jack stands up.

JACK

Yes. Victoria Racing Stable
approached me for the drivin'
assignment after I beat Hard Drive
in the open at Yonkers. I explained
to them that I am not a catch
driver.

DUBLIN

So you turned them down?

JACK

I told the owners that I only drive
horses that I train and they agreed
to put me down as trainer and
driver.

DUBLIN

Did that have anything to do with the higher commission for training and driving?

JACK

It doesn't hurt.

The room chuckles. Jack smiles and sits down.

PAUL WEINTRAUB stands at the head table.

WEINTRAUB

Paul Weintraub, P.A. Sports ticker. For Midnight Express. With less than four days until the race have you decided who will drive Midnight Express?

Jarett looks at Rebecca. Rebecca slowly stands up.

REBECCA

Midnight Express will only be driven by Jarett Randall.

WEINTRAUB

Jarett Randall is suspended.

REBECCA

No, you don't understand Mr. Weintraub. The horse refuses to race without him.

The room chuckles softly, a low hum builds.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

We put another driver on Midnight Express at Buffalo. He refused the gate and almost unseated the driver.

The room quiets down.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

This untimely suspension isn't just costing us entry fees.

Rebecca glares at Jack.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

It's costing a talented young trainer-driver the opportunity of a lifetime.

WEINTRAUB

Care to comment on that Jack?

Jack stands up. All eyes are on Jack.

JACK

You all know what I was like in my drinking days. I guarantee no one would want to see me show up for a race half in the bag.

DARRINGER

Hell Jack, no one wants to see you show up for a race period.

Laughter fills the room.

JACK

Fair enough Stanley but let me just say this. Everyone in this room has a huge investment in this race as well as this sport. No one in this race should be subjected to a driver who isn't in total control on that racetrack. We're all aware of how fast things happen out there.

Jack looks at Rebecca.

JACK (CONT'D)

There's just no excuse for it. Not from my son or anyone else's.

Jack sits down.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE PRESS ROOM

Rebecca and Jarett exit the press room. ROBERT CARTER sees them come out. CARTER makes his way over.

CARTER

Miss Waneright, Mr. Randall!

They both turn.

CARTER (CONT'D)

No one on the Society wants to see you draw your entry because of these unfortunate circumstances.

Carter hands Rebecca an envelope.

CARTER (CONT'D)

Take this to the racing commission.

REBECCA
Thank you.

JARETT
Thank you.

CARTER
Good luck.

INT. RACING COMMISSION JUDGES CHAMBERS-DAY

Rebecca and Jarett stand in front of a JUDGE as he reads the letter. He looks at Jarett and Rebecca.

JUDGE

Apparently the Hambletonian Society feels strongly about the circumstances surrounding this incident.

(To Jarett)

The Racing commission takes this offense very seriously. If there is a reoccurrence in the future it will not sit well with this bench. Do you understand?

JARETT

Yes your Honor.

JUDGE

With consideration to the society's concerns and the achievement it takes to be included in this event, I am going to repeal your last week of suspension and ask that you be reinstated on the day of the Hambletonian.

The JUDGE slams his gavel Rebecca smiles.

JARETT

Thank you your Honor.

JUDGE

Good luck to you both.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE RACING COMMISSION

The door to the courtroom closes behind Rebecca and Jarett as they exit. Rebecca squeals and rushes into Jarett's arms.

EXT. MEADOWLANDS RACETRACK HAMBLETONIAN DAY-DAY

The grandstand is filled to capacity. On the blacktop apron in the front of the grandstand a rag time band plays. Cotton-candy, popcorn and sausage sandwich vendors have stands set up all along the apron.

INT. PRESS BOX-DAY

Stan Goldstein and Gabe Pressby overlook the track from high up in the grandstand.

GOLDSTEIN

We have an exciting card lined up for this afternoon's 1 million dollar Hambletonian with two divisions of trotters each going for one hundred thousand dollars.

PRESSBY

That's right Stan and the first five finishers from each heat come back for a final heat worth eight hundred thousand dollars.

GOLDSTEIN

That's right and should the final heat produce a third winner then a race off between the three individual winners is declared.

INT. MEADOWLANDS RACE PADDOCK-DAY

Jarett, Willie and Rebecca stand in front of Midnight's stall. Jarett has his racing color slung over his arm.

JARETT

I'm going to get ready.

He turns.

REBECCA

Hold on.

She nods to Willie. Willie removes a large box from under a folded blanket. He holds the box up for Jarett. Rebecca grins.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

Take a look.

Jarett lifts the top of the box. Brand new Blue and Gold racing colors are neatly folded inside. Jarett's name is stitched across the chest pocket.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

They were my mother's stable colors. I thought you might like a new look. There's a new helmet to go with it.

Jarett smiles and tucks the box under his arm. He kisses her on the cheek then walks off toward the Driver's lounge.

INT. MEADOWLANDS DRIVERS LOCKER ROOM-DAY

Jarett sits on a bench between two long rows of lockers. He removes the new colors from the box. He sees an envelope in the bottom with his name on it.

He opens it. The bracelet of Jett's hair is inside with a note.

CLOSE UP ON NOTE.

I thought this might bring you some extra luck. R

Jarett puts the bracelet on his wrist.

INT. MEADOWLANDS DRIVERS LOCKER ROOM-MINUTES LATER

Jarett has on the new colors. He studies the racing program.

Jack turns the corner. He walks over. Jarett gets up. He looks at the wall at the end of the row of lockers.

JACK

Where you gonna go?

Jarett tries to skirt Jack. Jack steps in his way.

JACK (CONT'D)

Not this time.

Jarett steps back.

JACK (CONT'D)

I want you to know something.
 What I did, I did for you.
 It was the only way to get you to
 face your problem.

JARETT

My problem? Is that what this is?
 This is you helping me? Jamming me
 in a corner and playing mind games,
 the same way you did to Midnight
 with the cattle prod!

Jarett picks up his helmet and whip.

JARETT (CONT'D)

The only person you're trying to
 help is yourself!

Jarett slams the locker shut and pushes past his father.

INT. MEADOWLANDS RACE PADDOCK-DAY

Willie, Myron and Rebecca stand in front of Midnight's stall.
 Jarett comes over. He takes his driving gloves out of his
 helmet.

PADDOCK ATTENDANT(O.S.)

Bring out the horses for the 5th
 race.

Rebecca takes Jarett's hands in hers. She glances at
 Midnight.

REBECCA

He trusts you Jarett.

She looks into Jarett's eyes.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

I believe in you. Believe in
 yourself.

She kisses his cheek.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

You only need to be fifth or better
 this heat. You'll be fine.

INT. PRESS BOX-DAY

Stan and Gabe look down as the field post parades in front of the stands.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED)

Number three The Klaxon, owned by the Three Diamonds racing stable and driven by Stanley Darringer.

GOLDSTEIN

The Klaxon was on fire early in the season winning the Dexter cup. Stanley Darringer gets the driving assignment and these two look to be the ones to beat.

INT. CLUBHOUSE-DAY

Rebecca and Myron sit in the private section for the Hambletonian owners. They watch Jarett and Midnight post parade down in front of the stands.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(V.O.)

Number eight, Midnight Express, owned by Rebecca Waneright and Jarett Randall, driven by Jarett Randall.

Myron watches Rebecca twist the program in her hands.

INTERCUT WITH PRESS BOX

GOLDSTEIN

Midnight Express doesn't really look like he belongs in this company. An unknown on the circuit with most of his wins in the open at Buffalo Raceway. He did win a sire stake at Buffalo earlier in the season and finished second to Hard Drive in an early July sire stake at Goshen but he hasn't raced since.

PRESSBY

All his starts have been on a half mile track. Will that have any effect on his performance?

GOLDSTEIN

Absolutely, the big mile track is a whole different style of racing. Jarett Randall and Midnight Express will have to adapt quickly.

EXT. RACETRACK STARTING GATE-DAY

The field of ten horses move down the long stretch. Jarett looks in at Darringer. Darringer has his whip up. Jarett turns up his whip.

The starting car motor roars as the gate accelerates away.

STARTING JUDGE (FILTERED)

Gooo!

Darringer fires out Klaxon. Jarett fires out Midnight. The two horses move ahead of the field.

INTERCUT WITH CLUBHOUSE

Rebecca and Myron watch on the edge of their seats.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED)

They're awaaaaay it's The Klaxon and Midnight Express first to leave. Crown Control gets away in third. As they move toward the first tuuuurn. The Klaxon at the rail has a head in front. Midnight Express on the outside to challenge. Now Midnight Express goes off stride. The Klaxon in command with Crown Control in second Nuclear Giant third Swift Officer on the outside fourth.

REBECCA

He made a break.

MYRON

He better get him back on stride fast or it could end right here.

EXT. RACETRACK

Jarett leans into Midnight hard. Midnight gallops wildly. Jarett drags Midnight back until he is at the back of the field.

Jarett finally lands Midnight back on stride.

INT. RACE PADDOCK UNDER THE MONITOR

Jack and Junior stand in front of the video monitor and watch the race.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED)
Three back to Dexter's Pride
eighth, Snazzy Jazz ninth and now
back on stride Midnight Express
trails the field.

JACK
He fired too hard. He should have
floated him out.

RACETRACK TOP OF THE STRETCH

Klaxon has a big lead. Four horses have fanned out across the track and battle for the wire. Jarett is back in seventh. He swings out to an open lane and starts to drive.

INTERCUT WITH CLUBHOUSE

Myron and Rebecca stand at the table and try to see down the long stretch.

REBECCA
I don't see him.

MYRON
He's way back.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED)
They've got a quarter of a mile to
trot and they turn for hooooome. The
Klaaaaaxon is in command by three.
Second by a length is Nuclear Giant
on the outside it's Swift Officer
trying to get by. Crown Control and
Shiaway Yankee battle for fourth.

RACE PADDOCK UNDER THE MONITOR

Jack and Junior look up at the monitor. Junior points to the screen.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED)
Two back to Snazzy Jazz.

JUNIOR

There he is. He's got a lane.

JACK

He's got a lot of ground to cover.

INTERCUT WITH CLUBHOUSE

Myron & Rebecca standing.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED)

Eighth of mile to trot it's still
The Klaxon on top Nuclear Giant
tries to hold on as Swift Officer
bears down. Shiaway Yankee and
Crown Control and on the far
outside comes Midnight Express.

REBECCA

Come on Jarett!

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED)

It's still The Klaxon with Swift
Officer up for second Shiaway
Yankee closing in third with Crown
Control and Nuclear Giant. Midnight
Express with a late rush. But
it's all The Klaxaaxon in front.

REBECCA

Did he make it?

MYRON

It was close. I don't know.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED)

Your winner number three The
Klaxon, finishing second number
six, Swift Officer, third was
number seven, Shiaway Yankee.
Fourth number four, Crown Control.

Myron and Rebecca look out at the infield tote board for the
run down. The numbers of finishers flash in order. 3-6-7-4.

a few silent beats.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED) (CONT'D)

Number eight, Midnight Express was
fifth.

REBECCA

He made it!

RACE PADDOCK UNDER THE MONITOR

Jack and Junior look up at the monitor. The number eight flashes in the fifth position. Junior pumps his fist.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED)
Number eight, Midnight Express was fifth.

JUNIOR
Yeesss.

JACK
Come on, we've got a race to win.

INT. RACE PADDOCK HARD DRIVE'S STALL

Junior stands with Hard Drive. Jack stands in front of the stall with the owners.

PADDOCK ATTENDANT(O.S.)
Bring' em out for the sixth race!

Junior leads Hard Drive out behind the five horse.

EXT. RACE PADDOCK GATE-DAY

Junior clips the over check reign as Jack swings into the sulky. The field heads out to post. Junior walks back to the gate. Jarett leans against the fence and watches. Junior goes to his brother.

They both gaze out at the field of horses and watch their father go to post like they had done all their lives.

JUNIOR
You pushed too hard leaving.

JARETT
I know it.

Jarett looks at his brother. Junior looks out at the horses.

JUNIOR
This isn't like the half mile racetracks you're used to Jarett. You can't control the pace here. There's too much movement.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED)
The field issssssss at the gate!

EXT. RACETRACK-DAY

The starting gate speeds down the stretch. Jack looks inside.

STARTING JUDGE(FILTERED)
Looks good gentlemen!

The starting gate roars away from the field. Jack slides Hard drive down toward the rail behind the five horse.

INT. PADDOCK UNDER THE MONITOR

Junior and Jarett stare up and watch Jack follow the five horse around the turn.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED)
There awaaay! It's Dance Gypsy
Dance first to leave! Titan Hanover
goes right with him followed by
Cheer for Me.

JUNIOR
You see how he drifted in behind
the five without taking back?

Jarett nods as Junior points to the screen.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(V.O.)
Trot on By gets away seventh two
back to Hard Drive eighth. They go
past quarter in twenty eight and
three. Homeward Bound has taken
command a length back to Dance
Gypsy Dance.

JUNIOR
You want to stay in the flow moving
forward.

Junior and Jarett watch the field trot by the paddock.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED)
They've got an eighth of mile trot,
Master and Commander has put away
Homeward bound. Trot On By on the
outside battling for second. Hard
Drive is right on his back in
third. Two back to Lock and Load
fourth.

ON THE MONITOR

Jack angles Hard Drive off Trot on By and goes to the whip.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(V.O.)

Trot on By has collared Master and
Commander but heeere coomes Hard
Drive fresh for the hunt! They
drive to the wire and it's Hard
Drive getting up in the final
strides to win it all!

JUNIOR

Never go backward to go forward.

Junior turns to his brother.

JUNIOR (CONT'D)

You can beat him Jarett.

EXT. RACETRACK-DAY

The starting gate stands at the top of the stretch, wings
open. Jack and Darringer are farthest from the gate.

STARTING JUDGE(FILTERED)

Okay let's bring' em in gentlemen.

Jarett turns Midnight to the gate. Midnight starts to rush to
it.

JARETT

Easy buddy we're not doing that
again.

Hard drive and The Klaxon approach the gate together.

JACK

Hey Stanley.

Darringer looks over.

JACK (CONT'D)

Remember what I did to you at
Goshen?

DARRINGER

Give it your best shot, Jack.

Jack looks away and smiles.

INT. PRESS BOX-DAY

GOLDSTEIN

This could be the deciding race. If The Klaxon or Hard Drive come back to win this heat the million dollar purse is decided.

PRESSBY

These two horses really look to be the best. Both winning their heats easily.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED)

Theeere at the gate.

GOLDSTEIN

Definitely two outstanding athletes both have really shown their class all season.

PRESSBY

Who's your pick to win this Stan?

GOLDSTEIN

I have to go with the power here and that would be, The Klaxon.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED)

Heeere they come!

GOLDSTEIN

Let's take a look as the field rolls to a start for the 56th running of the Hambletonian Cup.

INT. CLUBHOUSE-DAY

Rebecca and Myron's eyes are glued to the field.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED)

They're awaaaaay. The Klaxon fires right out to the early lead. At the rail Lock and Load, on the outside Master and Commander. Three of them go into the first turn.

EXT. RACETRACK

The gate speeds away. Jarrett looks in. He sees Jack slide down toward the rail. The Klaxon blasts away from the field.

Jarett slides down easily and drops into the rail one horse behind Jack.

JARETT

Nice and easy Big Guy. We'll get our chance.

INT. UNDER THE MONITOR-DAY

Junior watches every move.

JUNIOR

That's it Jarett. Nice and easy.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED)

The Klaxon is in command, two back to Lock and load followed by Master and Commander. As they approach the quarter pole in TWENTY SIX AND THREE!

INT. PRESS BOX

PRESSBY

A lightning fast opening quarter.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED)

Shiaway Yankee is first to move on the outside fourth, at the rail Swift Officer fifth, Hard Drive picks up cover sixth with Trot on By at the rail seventh, Crown Control eighth, then comes Midnight Express and Homeward Bound.

INT. CLUBHOUSE

Myron and Rebecca stand beside their table and strain their eyes to see the race on the far side of the track.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED)

The Klaxon has opened up three as they move past the three eighths and head for the half mile pole.

MYRON

The Klaxon's running away with it.

EXT. RACETRACK

Jack has Hard Drive to the outside behind Shiaway Yankee. Jarett follows right behind Jack.

Shiaway Yankee is outside. Lock and Load on the rail. Shiaway Yankee clears and drops in second. Lock and Load's driver urges his horse as Jack moves alongside.

As Jack clears. Lock and load makes a break. Lock and load gallops wildly and darts across Jarett's lane. Jarett grabs into Midnight hard.

INT. CLUBHOUSE

Rebecca and Myron watch as Lock and Load nearly takes out Midnight. The crowd gasps.

INT. PRESS BOX

TRACK ANNOUNCER (FILTERED)

Lock and Load swings to the outside off stride. Then comes Master & Commander at the rail fourth. Midnight Express on the outside fifth.

PRESSBY

Lock and Load almost ended it for Midnight Express right there.

GOLDSTEIN

Fast reflexes by Jarett Randall.

Paddock UNDER THE MONITOR

Junior watches Jarett and Midnight. Jarett urges Midnight. Midnight closes up the gap and gets right behind Hard Drive.

TRACK ANNOUNCER (FILTERED)

They've got a quarter of a mile to trot and they tuuurn for Hooome! The Klaxon has been there all the way, at the rail Shiaway Yankee is second, On the outside Hard Drive is third with Midnight Express in fourth.

JUNIOR

That's it Jarett, that's right where you want to be.

INT. CLUBHOUSE

Everyone in the clubhouse is on their feet. The thunder of the crowd almost drowns out the Announcer's voice. Rebecca and Myron hold hands.

TRACK ANNOUNCER (FILTERED)
 Hard Drive sets down for the drive!
 The Klaxon is still holding on at
 the rail. Shiaway Yankee back to
 third.

REBECCA
 Come on Jarett!

MYRON
 Come on Midnight!

EXT. RACETRACK

Darringer slashes and rocks in the sulky pushing Klaxon to hang on. Jack strikes the shaft with the whip and urges Hard Drive. Jarett moves off his cover.

JARETT
 Wait for it.

Jack feels a horse move outside and turns to look.

JARETT (CONT'D)
 Now!

Jarett raises his hands and flags the whip. Midnight digs hard.

PADDOCK UNDER THE MONITOR

Junior watches Jarett slide out from behind Hard Drive.

JUNIOR
 Now!

TRACK ANNOUNCER (FILTERED)
 They're inside the eighth and it's
 The Klaxon and Hard Drive battling
 to the wire but heeere coomes
 Midnight Express!

INT. CLUBHOUSE

The crowd is at a fevered pitch. Rebecca jumps up and down.

REBECCA
Come on Jarett!

MYRON
Come on Midnight!

TRACK ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
A sixteenth to goooooo and it's
Hard Drive and Midnight Express.
The Klaxon trying to hang on at the
rail. Three horse battle for the
wire but it looks like Midnight
Express in front.

Rebecca and Myron hug and jump up and down.

EXT. RACE PADDOCK GATE-DAY

Junior waits as Jack pulls up with Hard Drive. Junior unhooks
Hard Drive's check reign as Jack swings out of the sulky.

JACK
I had the damn thing won. Where the
hell did he come from?

JUNIOR
Right off your back.

INT. RACE PADDOCK MIDNIGHT'S STALL-DAY

Jarett, Rebecca and Myron stand in front of Midnight's stall.
Willie unharnesses Midnight. Midnight points the right front
foot.

Jarett runs his hand down the leg.

REBECCA
What is it?

JARETT
I'm not sure.

INT. RACE PADDOCK MIDNIGHT'S STALL-MINUTES LATER

The STATE VETERINARY assesses Midnight. Jarett, Rebecca,
Myron and Willie look on with concern.

STATE VETERINARY
Walk him for me.

Willie leads Midnight off. Midnight has a slight nod to his step.

STATE VETERINARY (CONT'D)

I can't pin point anything. It could be as simple as a muscular contraction.

He turns to Jarett.

STATE VETERINARY (CONT'D)

It's fifteen minutes to post. If you want to scratch him from the race off let me know.

INT. RACE PADDOCK HARD DRIVES STALL

Jack and Junior watch the State Vet with Jarett and Rebecca. The State Vet walks away.

JUNIOR

You need to go talk him.

JACK

I'm the last person he wants to hear from me.

Junior assess his father.

JUNIOR

I've seen you sweet talk sour mares into winners. Hell you've turn around horses that shouldn't even be on the track and made them winners, but when it come to people, you suck.

JACK

I tried to talk to him. He ain't listening.

JUNIOR

Then try a different way.

INT. MEADOWLANDS DRIVERS LOUNGE-DAY

Jarett sits in front of the locker. Jack walks in. Jarett gets up. He grabs his gear. He turns.

JACK

I saw the replay. That four horse jammed you up when he made the break. You kept your horse together damn good out there.

He stops.

JACK (CONT'D)

This isn't like Goshen, Jarett. What happened that day could have happened to me or anyone else for that matter.

Jack scratches the back of his head.

JACK (CONT'D)

I done a lot of things wrong, I know that. Drinking was my disease. When I heard how you were doing out there I thought the worst. I thought if I could show you what it would get you, that would straighten you out but like I said, I was wrong.

JARETT

I'm not you.

JACK

I know that, Jarett. You're better than me.

A beat.

JACK (CONT'D)

So, what're ya gonna do?

JARETT

I don't know.

JACK

Life is just like horse racing. Every race is different and you can't predict the outcome. Just because something happened in the past don't mean it'll happen in the future.

Jack turns.

JARETT

Why are you telling me this?

Jack considers the question for a second.

JACK

Because I'm an arrogant son of bitch, and if I'm gonna win this thing, I want to be damn sure I beat the best.

He walks out.

RACE PADDOCK MIDNIGHT'S STALL-DAY

Rebecca and Jarett face to face next to Midnight.

JARETT

There's just no way to know Rebecca.

Jarett pats Midnight's neck.

JARETT (CONT'D)

What do you want to do?

REBECCA

If it hadn't been for you.

Rebecca glances at Midnight.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

He wouldn't be standing here right now.

JARETT

If it hadn't been for you, neither of us would be standing here right now.

REBECCA

We came to race our horse today.

Jarett nods. He looks into her eyes.

JARETT

Klaxon's a bully. The way to beat a bully is look him right in the eye and hit him hard.

INT. PRESS BOX-DAY

Pressby and Goldstein look down from on high at the three horses circling at the top of the stretch.

PRESSBY

Well this is a first in Hambletonian history. We have a three horse race off with two of the contenders driven by a father and son.

GOLDSTEIN

We had an exciting drive in the last heat with Midnight Express getting up in the final strides to beat Hard Drive and The Klaxon.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED)

They're at the gate.

Pressby and Goldstein's POV. The starting gate with one wing open begins to move down the stretch.

Hard Drive sets in behind the number one position. The Klaxon behind the number two. Jarrett moves Midnight to the three post.

PRESSBY

That blazing opening quarter took it's toll in deep stretch on The Klaxon giving Midnight Express the advantage.

GOLDSTEIN

It would seem so. I doubt Stanley Darringer will have to fire out that hard this time with just a three horse field.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED)

Heere they come!

PRESSBY

Let's turn now and find out as the field for the final heat of the 56th running of the one million dollar Hambletonian cup gets under way.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED)

They're awaaaay! The Klaxon charges right out for the lead. Hard Drive takes a few quick step with him. Midnight Express drops quickly to the rail.

EXT. RACETRACK-DAY

Klaxon clears Hard Drive and drops to the rail. Jack has Hard Drive right on Darringer's back. Jarett is back two lengths off of Jack.

INT. CLUBHOUSE

Rebecca and Myron look out at the race.

MYRON

He's gapping out. Something's wrong.

REBECCA

He's not gapping out. He's waiting.

MYRON

What for?

REBECCA

The Klaxon to settle down.

INT. PRESS BOX

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED)

The Klaxon is easily in command by a length. Hard Drive has the garden spot at the rail in second. Two back to Midnight Express.

PRESSBY

It looks like The Klaxon is going to have it his way.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED)

They go past the quarter pole in twenty eight seconds flat. Stanley Darringer and The Klaxon lead the way. Hard Drive right on his back in second. Midnight Express has closed the gap now third. Now Midnight Express swings to the outside and is on the move.

GOLDSTEIN

A bold move by Jarett Randall with Midnight Express.

INT. CLUBHOUSE

TRACK ANNOUNCER (FILTERED)
Midnight Express on the outside
applies pressure to The Klaxon as
they reach the three eighth and
head for the half mile pole.

MYRON
He moved too early.

REBECCA
No he didn't. He's right where he
wants to be.

Paddock UNDER THE MONITOR

Junior and Willie stare up at the race on the screen.

TRACK ANNOUNCER (FILTERED)
The Klaxon still in front with
Midnight Express on the outside
second. Hard Drive is loving his
spot on the rail in third.

WILLIE
What's he doin' out there?

JUNIOR
He's controlling the pace. He's
gonna grind down The Klaxon.

EXT. RACETRACK

Darringer flags the whip, Klaxon digs harder. Jarett eases
Midnight back a step and is wheel to wheel with Jack. Jack
looks out at his son.

JACK
You think you can last out there?

Jarett nods.

JACK (CONT'D)
Save some for the stretch!

Jarett nods.

JACK (CONT'D)
I'll be comin' with a fresh horse!

INT. CLUBHOUSE

TRACK ANNOUNCER (FILTERED)

They reach the five eighth and head for the three quarter pole. The Klaxon is still in front, on the outside Midnight Express bides his time in second a length back to Hard Drive in third.

REBECCA

That's it, Jarett!

EXT. RACETRACK

Jarett stays a half a length on Klaxon. Jack looks out at Jarett's sulky wheel holding him in. Jarett looks in at Hard Drive pumping strong in the pocket.

JARETT

Wait for it.

The three horses trot past the three quarter pole. Darringer urges The Klaxon for more. Jarett peeks in again. Hard Drive is right on Darringer's back.

JARETT (CONT'D)

Waaaait for it.

Paddock UNDER THE MONITOR

Junior and Willie stare at the monitor.

JUNIOR

Wait for it Jett.

Hard Drive begins to back off The Klaxon.

JUNIOR (CONT'D)

Now Jett!

EXT. RACETRACK

Jarett sees Hard Drive begin to back off Darringer's helmet.

JARETT

Now Midnight!

Jarett raises his hands and flags the whip over Midnight's back. Midnight digs in and moves up nose to nose with The Klaxon. The two horses begin to draw away from Hard Drive.

JACK

Shit!

INT. PRESS BOX

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED)

They go past the three quarter pole
in one twenty six and ooone.
Midnight Express draws alongside
The Klaxon. Dooooown the stretch
they trot. A length and a half back
Hard Drive in third.

PRESSBY

This is unbelievable! Midnight
Express is going toe to toe after a
giant mile on the outside!

INT. CLUBHOUSE

The place is pandemonium. Myron and Rebecca hold hands and
jump up and down like children.

REBECCA

Go! Go! Go!

MYRON

Go! Go! Go!

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED)

It's Midnight Express on the
outside with a head in front The
Klaxon is desperate to hang on at
the rail but now Hard Drive get
under way!

PADDOCK UNDER THE MONITOR

JUNIOR

Hang on! Hang on!

TRACK ANNOUNCER(V.O.)

Inside the sixteenth! It's Midnight
Express! Hard Drive is under a
drive trying to close! Three horses
across the track as they come to
the wire!

EXT. RACETRACK

Jack looks in. He swings the whip to the inside. Jack shoves
Hard Drive with his hands willing him across the wire with
every bit of energy.

Jarett leans way back in the sulky seat. Whip raised high as they take the final strides to the wire.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED)
It's Midnight Express, Hard Drive,
The Klaxon and here they aaaare!

The Photo finish bulb flashes as the three horses rush under the wire.

INT. CLUBHOUSE

Myron and Rebecca hold onto each other as they look out the tote board.

TRACK ANNOUNCER(FILTERED)
Ladies and gentlemen we have a
photo finish. The time for the
mile, one fifty five flat.

EXT. RACETRACK

Midnight, Hard Drive and The Klaxon circle in front of the grandstand. The drivers all watch the tote board for the official run down.

The Tote board lights up. The number Three is on top. The grandstand crowd applauds and cheers.

JARETT
Yeeesss!

Hard Drive and Klaxon trot back to the paddock. Jarett turns Midnight into the winner circle. Willie takes a hold of Midnight's bridle.

Jarett steps out of the sulky. Rebecca and Myron rush to his side. Robert Carter places the blanket of roses over Midnight's back. Flash bulbs pop.

SERIES OF BLACK AND WHITE PICTURES-AS THE CREDIT'S ROLL.

Jarett and Rebecca stand in front of a Minister under a wedding gazebo, they hold hands. Jack and Junior look on with Myron, Willie and the wedding party.

NEXT PICTURE

Jarett feeds Rebecca wedding cake. Rebecca with cake on her face laughing.

NEXT PICTURE

Jarett and Rebecca stand at Midnight's paddock. Midnight has his head over the fence. Jarett feeds Midnight wedding cake.

FADE OUT.