

"COOL HAND LUKE"

Screenplay by

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Based on the novel by

Donn Pearce

SHOOTING DRAFT

FADE IN:

EXT. SOUTHERN CITY STREET EXTREME CLOSEUP PARKING METER
(NIGHT)

flag

Its irritating head opens a glaring red eye: the red
pops across the entire screen:

VIOLATION

INSERT: PARKING METER SUPPORT (NIGHT)

metal

CLOSEUP of a pipe cutter attached to the meter neck,
slivers curling out. From o.s. we HEAR -- LUCAS JACKSON
cheerfully humming and mumbling Auld Lang Syne and

then:

LUKE

Okay, Mister General, you son of a
bitch. Sir. Think you can put things
right with a piece of tin with a
ribbon hangin' on it? Gonna put you
right.

CLOSEUP PARKING METER (NIGHT)

as the meter head falls out of FRAME.

NEW ANGLE ON METER (NIGHT)

stands

as it falls to the ground amidst a forest of meter
and Luke's hand comes into the FRAME to pick it up and
we SEE him in CLOSEUP for the first time. He is cheerful,
drunk, wearing a faded GI Field jacket. A bottle opener hangs
on a silver chain around his neck. He addresses the next
meter.

we

drunk,

on a

meter.

LUKE

All right. Helen, honey. I lost my
head over you. Now its your turn.

Suddenly the beam of headlights crashes in, FLARING the SCREEN.

ANGLE ON PROWL CAR (NIGHT)

revolving
start
sliding up to us, headlights glaring, red toplight menacingly. TWO OFFICERS, black shapes, get out and warily toward Luke.

ON LUKE (NIGHT)

SUPER-IMPOSE
MAIN TITLE and as it FADES
illuminated by the headlights. He grins as the Officers approach, lifts a bottle of beer, opens it and drinks, smiling. On his smile, FREEZE FRAME. ON THE FRAME

DISSOLVE TO:

OMITTED

EXT. CLOSEUP A YOYO BLADE IN THE SUN

topping
backstroke,
CAMERA.
the
feet
on:
It swings with a pendulum motion, its shining blade a clump of grass and weeds; it swings on the lopping more grass, then moves a little away from FROM CAMERA RIGHT, a pair of feet move INTO the FRAME, feet of the man swinging the yoyo. They are booted and connected by chains, riveted around the ankles. The move further INTO the FRAME and the SHOT WIDENS. We are

EXT. A COUNTRY ROAD (DAY)

away
guarded by
men
light
and we see the work gang in uniforms (14 men) flailing with yoyos, short-handled scythes in the hot sun, three men. Three of the workers wear chains (Gambler, Dynamite, Sailor). The scene is bleached and hot; the sweating and dirty in prison shirts and pants. The shifts during the following:

A MONTAGE OF A FULL DAY - SUPERIMPOSE TITLES AS

APPROPRIATE

OVER FOLLOWING

ANGLE ON RABBIT

sign:
He is a trustee. He walks up INTO CAMERA and sets up

SLOW DOWN -- MEN AT WORK

ANGLE ON DRAGLINE (9:00 A.M.)

to He is a giant, covered with sweat and dust. He starts pull off his shirt.

DRAGLINE

Takin' it off here, Boss!

BOSS KEAN

Yeah, take it off, Dragline!

ANGLE BOSS KEAN (11:00 A.M.)

pulling out watch, looking at the sun.

ANGLE THE BULL GANG

flailing away, most of them naked to the waist.

ANGLE KOKO

He is sweating streams.

KOKO

Wipin' it off here, Boss!

BOSS SHORTY

Okay, wipe it off there, Koko.

Koko takes out a limp handkerchief and mops his face.

ANGLE ON GAMBLER (A CHAINMAN) (NOON)

his yoyo flashing like a sword. He pauses, panting.

GAMBLER

Drinkin' it up here, Boss!

ANGLE BOSS KEAN

BOSS KEAN

Awright, drink it up, Gambler. Water 'em, Rabbit.

NEW ANGLE GAMBLER AND GANG

Rabbit. as Gambler takes a drink from a tin cup, passed by

FULL SHOT THE GANG (2:00 P.M.)

working away like a machine.

ANGLE PAST BOSS GODFREY TO BOSS SHORTY

of Godfrey is the Walking Boss, silent, implacable symbol

mirrored
emotionless.

ultimate judgement. He wears a black hat, globular
sunglasses -- the Man With No Eyes, impassive,
He nods to Boss Shorty.

BOSS SHORTY
Awright, smoke it up!

FULL SHOT THE GANG

In unison they chant:

THE GANG
Yeah, Boss.

ANGLE SOCIETY RED AND BLIND DICK 4:00 P.M.

ducks.

Society is checking his yoyo edge with a file, covertly
watching a passing car. Blind Dick sneaks a look, then

ANGLE BOSS KEAN

BOSS KEAN
You eyeballin' there, Society?

SOCIETY RED

SOCIETY RED
Checkin' my yoyo, Boss!

KOKO (5:00 P.M.)

outside,
stage

He sees something o.s. He speaks, as they all do
like a ventriloquist, not moving the lips, and in a
whisper, to Dragline.

KOKO
Drag... Drag... Newmeat Bus! We got
us Newmeat tonight!

ANGLE ON GAMBLER AND DRAGLINE

They look up covertly.

P.O.V. ANGLE ON ROAD

meshed
approaching
covertly

The Newmeat Bus, a prison vehicle, a panel truck with
windows; and men in it, appears down the road
the gang. It slows as it passes them and the men
look at it.

KOKO AND GAMBLER

KOKO

(whispering)
A bunch. Must be halfa dozen Newmeat.

GAMBLER
No more than five. For a cold drink.

KOKO
(whispering)
Bet! Babalugats, bet here!

ANGLE BABALUGATS

the He is the idiot of the gang. He grins foolishly, making
bet official.

NEWMEAT BUS

as it passes, picking up speed, PAN INTO:

CLOSE SHOT GODFREY

looking at the Newmeat Bus.

EXT. CLOSEUP THE EYES OF GODFREY

the His sunglasses FILL THE SCREEN, distorting the image of
bus as it moves away from us and the last TITLE ROLLS.

CUT TO:

INT. NEWMEAT BUS

meshed The SCREEN is mostly black, but we see out through the
grubby rear windows a desolate panorama of gnarled trees and
landscape, bleak and hopeless.

bloodhounds, Now we HEAR outside the barking and baying of
truck not like they're tracking, but just playing as the
back turns and stops. The BUS GUARD and DRIVER get out. The
rectangle of the truck is opened by the guard and through that
descend, of bright sunlight, the silhouettes of the Newmeat
Luke last.

EXT. PRISON CAMP LUKE'S P.O.V. (DAY)

washed, The Scene: in a hollow is a long barracks, white-
compound. faded gray, one story high. At right is a mess hall and
laundry. A chain-link fence surrounds the whole

floodlights
hall,
which
simple
the
barracks.
at one
lawn.

The corners of the fence are telephone poles with
on the tops. These burn all night. Back of the mess
again outside the fence, are several kennel runs in
bloodhounds are now ROARING. A wooden tower with a
board roof stands at two corners of the compound where
guards sit when the prisoners are not locked in the
A picnic table sits in a grassy area just outside and
side of the gate is a picket fence enclosing a scrubby

BOSS PAUL

Four. Right.

kindly
club.

He hands the papers to the CAPTAIN, a small man with a
face but a firm, set mouth who always carries a golf
In b.g. the bloodhounds are YOWLING:

BOSS PAUL

Dogboy, get them dogs shut up!

sticking
the

DOGBOY, a trustee whose leather gloves are always
out of one back pocket, puts his hand to be licked by
dogs who quiet, friendly, like any pets.

DOGBOY

They just smell newmeat is all, Boss.

prisoners,

The Captain has been ignoring this, watching the
looking at their records.

EXT. NEWMEAT BUS (DAY)

them,
TATTOO)
eagerness

as the Bosses (BOSS PAUL and BOSS HIGGINS) motion for
the other Newmeat (to be known as TRAMP, ALIBI, and
stumble into each other and jostle Luke in their
to obey orders.

BOSS PAUL

You men git lined up here.

Issue
Luke
goods.

The Newmeat jostle into line. They are wearing State
gray pants and their own Free World shirts. All except
carry a paper bag or cigar box containing their wordly

with
fearful.
records

All except Luke look apprehensive, worried. Luke stands languid grace, neither insolent nor hostile, nor The Bus Guard hands Boss Paul a folder that contains as the Captain approaches from his porch.

CAPTAIN

What did they bring us today? Gibson. A 507, Manslaughter. Good for a two spot.

ALIBI

It was an accident. I've never been in any trouble.

BOSS PAUL

You'all call the Captain, Captain.

CAPTAIN

(to next man)

Edgar Potter. A 302 and resisting arrest. One year.

TRAMP

I was tryin' to keep outa the rain.

BOSS PAUL

Git the wax out'n yore ears. You call the Captain, Captain.

TRAMP

Yes, sir.

BOSS PAUL

And you call the rest of us Boss, you hear?

TRAMP

Yes, Boss.

CAPTAIN

This man is gonna make us proud of him, Mr. Hunnicutt.

(moving on)

Raymond Pratt.

TATTOO

Yes, Captain.

CAPTAIN

Breakin', enterin' and assault. Five spot. Hmmm. Able-bodied seaman.

TATTOO

That oughta come in handy here, Captain.

CAPTAIN

Maybe.

(turning to Luke)
Lucas Jackson.

LUKE
Here, Captain.

CAPTAIN
Maliciously destroyin' municipal
property while under the influence.
What was that?

LUKE
Cuttin' the heads off parkin' meters,
Captain.

CAPTAIN
Well, we ain't never had one of them.
Where'd you think that was gonna get
you?

LUKE
I guess you could say I wasn't
thinkin', Captain.

CAPTAIN
(looking at record)
Says here you done real good in the
war: Silver Star, Bronze Star, couple
Purple Hearts. Sergeant! Little time
in stockades. Come out the same way
you went in: Buck Private.

LUKE
That's right, Captain. Just passin'
the time.

CAPTAIN
(staring at him)
Well, you got yourself some time
now. Two years. Hell, that ain't
much, we got coupla men here doin'
twenty spots. We got one who's got
all of it. We got all kinds and you
gonna fit in real good. Course in
case you git rabbit in your blood
and decide to take off fer home, you
git a bonus a some time and couple
leg chains to keep you slowed down a
little -- fer your own good. You'll
learn the rules. It's all up to you.
I can be a good guy or I can be one
mean son-of-a-bitch, it's up to you.

He turns and walks away.

CLOSE SHOT LUKE

His eyes have been wandering during this speech. He
sees a
at
doleful, lovable bloodhound, nose at the mesh and winks

him.

CLOSE SHOT BLOODHOUND

He simply stares dolefully.

INT. BARRACKS (DAY)

covered
compound
cage. In
as a
is
hammering

Bare, unpainted wood. The windows are barred and with chain link. The door from the barracks up to the passes a small area enclosed by a woven metal strap this usually sits the WICKER MAN, whom we generally see as a heavy, short shape moving about his own business which is making an endless series of rings or jewelry by hammering coins with the back of a heavy spoon.

iron
the
them,
with
the

The door to the barracks locks by the tongue of a strap bar that is thrust through a hole in the wicker where Wicker Man locks it by padlock. Thus he can always see but they can't reach him. The single big room is filled with two and even three-tiered bunks. Bare bulbs hang from the ceiling.

indoctrinating
twill
been
restless
the
for
addressing

CARR, the floorwalker, a 240 pound behemoth, is the Newmeat while they change into camp clothing: gray trousers, shirt and jacket, all numbered, which has been piled on the table. Carr squeegees up and down, a restless man, and CAMERA in following him SHOWS us the room. At the same time, the Wicker Man is moving about the barracks, tapping the floors and bunk posts with a broom handle for signs of tampering. Carr pays no attention to him, addressing the Newmeat.

CARR

Them clothes has got laundry numbers on 'em. You remember your number and always wear the ones that has your number. Any man forgets his number spends a night in the box.

(passing out spoons)

This yere spoon you keep with you and any man loses his spoon spends a night in the box. There is no playing

grabass or fighting in the building.
You got a grudge against another man
you can fight him Saturday afternoon.
Any man playing grabass or fighting
in the building spends a night in
the box. First bell is at five minutes
of eight when you will get in your
bunk and last bell is at eight...

the
O.S. now are heard the SOUNDS of trucks arriving and
Wicker Man goes back to the wicker.

CARR

(continuing)

Any man not in his bunk at eight
will spend a night in the box. There
is no smoking in prone position in
bed. To smoke you must have both
legs over the side of your bunk.
Anyone caught smoking in prone
position will spend a night in the
box. You get two sheets. Every
Saturday you put the clean sheet on
the top, the top sheet on the bottom
and the bottom sheet you turn in to
the Laundry Boy. Any man who turns
in the wrong sheet spends a night in
the box. No one will sit on the bunks
with dirty pants on. Any man sitting
on a bunk with dirty pants will spend
a night in the box. Any man who don't
bring back his empty pop bottles
spends a night in the box.

the air
O.S. now are the SOUNDS of men counting off, filling
with the apprehension of impending arrival.

CARR

(continuing)

Any man loudtalking spends a night
in the box. You got questions you
come to me.

(attentive now)

I'm Carr, the floorwalker. I'm
responsible for order in here and
any man that don't keep order...

we
the
Luke mouths the next line with him. At the same time,
HEAR the clanking of the Wicker Man's doors opening and
thudding of many steps.

CARR

...spends a night in the box.

(to Luke, sincerely)

I hope you ain't gonna be a hardcase.

NEW ANGLE

rushes
out
seated
spies

As Luke shrugs the chute bursts open and the Bull Gang in, men trying to get hands clean, urinate and get back into the chowline. Sudden LOUD CHAOS. The Newmeat are on the bench, bewildered, except Luke who grins. Koko the Newmeat and is unhappy that there are only four.

GAMBLER

(to Koko)

Four. You owe me a drink.

DRAGLINE

(pushing both aside)

Get outa mah way you don't want a wet pocket!

SOCIETY RED

(passing the Newmeat)

Gentlemen, welcome to the Family.

LOUDMOUTH STEVE

Any of you guys from Connecticut?

CARR

Awright, let's move it along!

NEW ANGLE

the
shoves

as the flow of bodies reverses and the men stampede for chute, going out, adjusting clothing, etc. Dragline Loudmouth Steve along.

DRAGLINE

Fill your loudmouth with some beans!

.in
across the

And they are in the chute. The Newmeat still sit there. the empty barracks, the SOUND of men disappearing yard.

CARR

Well, what are you doin' here? You supposed to be eatin' them beans!

The Newmeat stampede out the chute.

INT. MESS HALL (DUSK)

sitting
They are
for

Most of the other men already have their food and are down with no jockeying for places: everybody knows. shoveling it down as fast as they can, getting back up

seconds. Luke and the other Newmeat get their plates
and while the others stand there, confused, Luke sits at
the first vacant spot and begins to eat industriously.

KOKO
(sotto voce to Dragline)
Newmeat's a hog-gut.

off- Dragline looks up, goes back to his food. There is an
stage CRASH.

NEW ANGLE TRAMP

stew He is sitting on the floor, between his knees a mess of
on the floor and his plate upside down. He has made the
champion mistake of taking Dynamite's seat. DYNAMITE, the
Dogboy eater, has casually displaced him and is busy chowing.
is serving; he is the only one to break the rule of
silence in chowlines.

DOGBOY
These pigs is rollin' in thar slops
now, Boss!

Tramp makes terrified and ineffectual efforts to scoop
the stew back onto his plate with his hand, wiping his hand
on his uniform, etc., then trying to obliterate the stain
on the floor with a foot.

EXT. BARRACKS PORCH (NIGHT)

barracks The men are being shaken down before entering the
empty for the night. They sit and take off their shoes. They
throws their pockets into their caps. Carr inspects shoes,
turned, them inside door, frisks men who stand with backs
arms raised. Then Carr mutters a number.

INT. BARRACKS (NIGHT)

stoop Through the Wicker Cage toward door. As the men enter,
Man, as to pick up shoes, repeat their number to the Wicker
they go through the chute.

INT. BARRACKS NEW ANGLE (NIGHT)

Gambler
shuffling
arranging
the
talking
Dynamite,

The men are preparing for their hour of free time.
has layed out the blanket for the poker game and is
cards. Koko and BLIND DICK have their seats, are
their piles of change. Luke sits at the other end of
table, past the blanket line. Dragline who has been
to the Wicker Man now enters casually as we HEAR
change in hand, moving to the game berating Tramp.

DYNAMITE

Next time you stay outa my place! I
earned it. You try that agin an'
I'll bounce you all over the floor.

TRAMP

I didn't know. I was hungry.

KOKO

You don't take another man's place,
boy.

ALIBI

It wasn't his fault. Nobody said
anything about seats. We --

DRAGLINE

(to Tramp)

You gotta mind your manners, you
actin' like a hillbilly tramp.

KOKO

(delighted)

Tramp! Beautiful!

Dragline nods.

GAMBLER

(to Tramp)

You got your bullgang name, boy.

TRAMP

(good-naturedly)

Ain't no worse than some I been
called.

TATTOO

In the Navy, we used to call guys --

DRAGLINE

Fasten your flap! All you Newmeats
gonna have to shape up fast and hard
on this gang. We got rules here an'
in order to learn them, you gotta
keep your ears open and your mouths
shut.

Luke snorts.

OMITTED

ANGLE ON DRAGLINE

looking up as if he has just heard a strange sound.

DRAGLINE

Somebody say somethin'?

LUKE

I didn't say nothin', Boss.

DRAGLINE

Well, whatta we got here?

LUKE

A Lucas Jackson.

SOCIETY RED

(at mirror, back turned)

Dragline gives out the names here.
You'll get yours when he figures you
out.

DRAGLINE

(to Luke)

Maybe we oughta call you No-Ears.
You don't listen much, do you, boy?

LUKE

(smiling)

Ain't heard much worth listening to
yet. Just everybody handing out rules.

remained
A feeling of discomfort. Koko assesses Luke, who has
at the poker table.

KOKO

Newmeat looks like a poker player,
Drag.

DRAGLINE

Wouldn't surprise me none.

(to Luke)

Wicker Man says you got a hundred-
twenny and some change in the
Captain's safe and you got your five
dollars pocket money... That'll buy
you a whole fistfull of cards. You
in or out?

it --
Luke stares at him for a beat, then shrugs -- who needs
and walks over to his bunk.

SOCIETY RED

Looks like you've got yourself a
redhot, Dragline.

Dragline just stares after Luke.

GAMBLER

(dealing)

Awright, let's play some poker. First Jack is the Man... a trey, a duck, a neighter...

bunks
a
SAILOR

He continues to call cards as we PAN AWAY and DOWN the showing Alibi writing a letter, Loudmouth Steve reading a sex book, STUPID BLONDIE working a rattleskin wallet, removing his pants through his chains, CHIEF rolling cigarettes, etc.

CLOSE THE WICKER

to

The shadow of the Wicker Man behind it rises and moves the tire rim which he beats with a tire iron.

CLOSE CARR

CARR

First bell!

POKER TABLE

The men break it up, some head for the urinal.

ANGLE ON LUKE

bulb
face.
men

He lies in his bunk staring directly into a flyspecked hanging from the ceiling about eighteen inches from his face. It will be on all night. The tire iron SOUNDS again and hurry for their bunks.

CARR (O.S.)

Last bell. Last bell.

INT. BARRACKS MED. SHOT

barracks
Wicker.

Carr moves down the aisle, counting lips moving. The is silent. Finishing the count, Carr goes to the

CARR

Fifty, Boss.

WICKER MAN (O.S.)

Fifty. Okay, Carr.

ANGLE ON LUKE

staring up at bulb.

LOUDMOUTH STEVE'S VOICE
Gittin' up here, Carr.

MOVING CLOSE SHOT CARR

Pacing along, his feet squeegeeing on the floor.

CARR
Yeeahp.

ANGLE SHOWING LOUDMOUTH STEVE

the
In the sleeping barracks he gets up and moves toward
toilets...

ANGLE ON BABALUGATS

space
He is crouched in a tortured position to pray, in the
between his bunk and the one above.

CLOSE LUKE

squeegeeing
WATER
outside.
He rolls over and goes to sleep. SOUND OVER: Carr
along, the CREAK of the bunks as men toss and turn, the
RUNNING in the toilets, the DOGS BARKING a little

OMITTED

OMITTED

ANGLE ON CARR

in the
game
something
stone.
He sits at the poker table. The sound has dropped now
depth of the night, the chink, chink of the Wicker man
stopped. Carr simply sits staring at his half-finished
of solitaire, a card in his hand, his eyes seeing
far distant. He's breathing but he could be carved of

OMITTED

INT. BARRACKS LONG SHOT BEFORE DAWN (NIGHT)

clamor
All others sleeping. Carr at poker table. Suddenly the
of the iron bar is HEARD.

CARR
First bell! First bell! Let's go!

ANGLE ON ALIBI

floor
all
as, still asleep, he is unceremoniously dumped onto the
by Carr who goes right by. Pandemonium of rushing men
around.

EXT. CHUTE MED. SHOT BEFORE DAWN (NIGHT)

outside is
gate,
out.
Carr is barring the gate with his body. The door
unlocked and opened. The gong SOUNDS. Carr opens the
steps outside to the porch and the men begin counting

EXT. BARRACKS PORCH BEFORE DAWN (NIGHT)

lockers
them go
The voices continue to count off as the men run to
and quickly line up outside the mess hall. Watching
is Boss Godfrey.

GODFREY'S FACE

impassive behind the sunglasses.

EXT. MESS HALL INSIDE YARD BEFORE DAWN (NIGHT)

and
out of
to
The men pour out. There is a little dawnlight, but the
floodlights are still on. The Yard Man opens the gate
the men begin counting off again. Gambler is the last
the mess hall and gets a kick in the ass from Boss Paul
get him up with the others.

ANGLE ON CAPTAIN'S PORCH BEFORE DAWN (NIGHT)

the men
counting, clanging of chains.
He sits in his rocket watching. We hear the SOUND of

TRUCK BEING LOADED (DAWN)

leaves.
The men clamber inside. The Little Bull Gang truck

EXT. ROAD NEAR CAMP

moving
off down the road into the dawn light.
Caravan of the Little Bull Gang and Patch Squad trucks

INT. TRUCK (DAWN)

looking
in, then all is dim and the truck begins to lurch away,
just as the gate is swung shut. We SEE Godfrey's face

customary

gunning fast, throwing the men, searching for their seats. Chaos.

DRAGLINE'S VOICE

Git outa my eyeballin' seat, you Newmeat dummy!

with
Koko,
but
game
floor but
the
Dick.

Luke stands, holding a strut in the roof and watching amusement as Tattoo is shoved away by Dragline, then and then pushed from man to man as he tries to sit down always finds a lap in the way. Bawdy laughter; it's a but earnest. As they settle Tattoo winds up on the grins, understands, finds a place beside Tramp. Across way Alibi begins a serious conversation with Blind

ALIBI

(nervously)

Where are we going now?

LOUDMOUTH STEVE

It's the Captain's birthday. They're takin' us on a picnic.

ALIBI

(uncertainly smiling)

I'm a salesman. I used to drive these roads all the time. I never thought -- it was an accident, car skidded, maybe I'd had a drink or two --

ANGLE ON KOKO, TRAMP, TATTOO

KOKO

Man! It's gonna be one hot muther today.

GAMBLER

Bears gonna be walkin' the road today.

MECHANIC

(to Tattoo)

You ever seen a man bearcaught?

Tattoo and Tramp look uncertain, frightened.

NEW ANGLE

GAMBLER

All the salt goes outa his body and the water follers the salt and the brain shrivels up like a dried pea.

TATTOO

(trying to ingratiate)
When I was in the Navy --

SOCIETY RED
(to Alibi)
Convulsions, shivering. Very
unpleasant to watch.

BLIND DICK
(to Alibi)
Man's never the same. Makes him lose
his sex drive.

ON KOKO, OTHERS

KOKO
(to Tramp)
I'm lucky I got a broom. Work up
top. Real easy job. Man, it's gonna
be hot down in that ditch.

ALIBI
We work down in the ditch?

GAMBLER
Ain't you never seen a chain gang,
in all your driving around?

TRAMP
(to Koko)
I ain't used to hard labor neither.
Done my best to avoid it.

TATTOO
I ain't crazy about it myself.

KOKO
(shaking his head)
Gonna be a hot one to learn on.

SOCIETY RED
Koko, why don't you let one of these
Newmeats take your broom for today?

KOKO
Hell, no. I ain't goin' down in the
ditch.

TRAMP
I shore would appreciate it. I ain't
in much shape just now.

TATTOO
What about me?

SOCIETY RED
(to Tramp and Tattoo)
Perhaps if you offered Brother Koko
a small...
(makes money gesture)

TRAMP

I ain't got much. A quarter?

DRAGLINE

(to Koko)

You was to sell your job, maybe this Lucas War Hero would give you a price.

TATTOO

I'll give you fifty cents.

KOKO

Fifty cents? Sweet job like that worth at least a buck.

ALIBI

I'll make it a dollar.

KOKO

Buck is a deal.

ALIBI

(apologetically to
Tramp, Tattoo)

I've got this weak heart. Too much drinking, I guess. As soon as they find out about it, they'll probably send me someplace else.

TRAMP

If you even need dough in here, I'm in big trouble.

LUKE

(to Dragline)

Where'd you get that about war hero?

DRAGLINE

Oh we got our sources... Tearing the heads off... what was it... gumball machines? What kind of thing is that for a grown man?

LUKE

(amused by the put-on)

Well, you know. Small town, not much to do in the evenings. Mostly it was settling up old scores.

SOCIETY RED

You'll have to do better than that if you want to impress these men. Some pretty hard numbers here. Dragline's an ex-safe cracker, Koko's a jewel thief. Blind Dick is a rapist.

BLIND DICK

(to Luke)

Show you the clippings some time. News-Dispatch called me "The Shiek of Simmonsville." Five broads in

three days...

GAMBLER

'Course two of them were sisters.

SOCIETY RED

Of course some of them, like Stupid Blondie, were just unlucky... he fell off the fire escape... and one or two don't really belong here at all...

(indicates Babalugats)

...or myself, who just made the small error of misspelling a friend's name... on a check.

DRAGLINE

Hey, Koko. You hear that? All this time I been thinkin' Society just come here for the sun and exercise.

Everyone laughs.

DRAGLINE

(to Luke who is smiling)

Whatta you so happy about?

LUKE

I just always did like truck rides.

EXT. CLAYPIT ROAD (JUST AFTER SUNRISE)

picking

as the trucks pull up and stop and the men pour out, up tools for the day's work.

EXT. TOOL TRUCK

Godfrey.

The guards for the day are: Paul, Kean, Higgins and

approaches

As the men move through the line for tools, Alibi

Boss Paul:

ALIBI

Boss, I made an arrangement with that man to take his broom.

BOSS PAUL

(shoving him along)

Git your shovel and git to work.

ALIBI

I don't think you understand. We made a deal ---

BOSS PAUL

(canes him on the leg)

Git movin', I said.

ALIBI

(in pain)
But I made this arrangement --

BOSS PAUL
(shoving him)
Cut that backsass!

Alibi sees the light, accepts a shovel and walks off
resentfully to where the others are working, casting
hurt,
angry looks at Koko and Society who ignore him.

THE SUN COMES UP

in Godfrey's glasses, and we SEE the gang begin their
work.
In VARIOUS CUTS, in each of which the sun leaps
forward,
time passing inexorably...

FULL SHOT: THE GANG

rhythmically working away.

CLOSE: ALIBI

Trying to pretend to work, not doing it well and
getting a
at
passing cut from Boss Paul's cane. Resentfully, he goes
it, sweating heavily.

CLOSE: LUKE

He is working hard but badly, unused to the awkward
tool,
trying to master it. Society Red works up behind him.

LUKE AND SOCIETY

SOCIETY RED
You're working too hard. You won't
last two hours. Watch the way the
Human Dragline does it.

ANGLE ON DRAGLINE

He is whipping away with apparently effortless ease but
accomplishing more than the others.

THE ROAD

An open red Continental with kit zips past, the driver
grinning at the Gang.

CLOSE: TATTOO

He is suffering along, sweat pouring off him. The sun
is
beginning to really beat down now. Dragline works a
little

behind him.

DRAGLINE

Takin' it off here, Boss!

BOSS PAUL

Yeah, take it off there.

the
imitate,
He takes off his jacket and tosses it to the edge of
road where Dogboy collects it. Tattoo decides to
tentatively.

TATTOO

Takin' it off here, Boss?

BOSS PAUL

Yeah, take it off there.

thornlike
on
He strips, revealing a tattoo of "Mother" lodged
in his flesh and a great garland of flowers and a girl
his chest.

DRAGLINE

(sotto voce)

Hey, turn around! Let Koko see the
broad.

CLOSE TATTOO

turning so Koko can see, grinning, stopping work.

KOKO

Beautiful! A real work of art!

BLIND DICK

(low voice)

Nice broad. Good set.

TATTOO

(proudly, flexing it)

Had it done in Singapore. Bunch of
us drunk as coots --

DRAGLINE

(hissing)

Hey, Tattoo!

TATTOO

(not hearing)

-- went down to see this old hag and
she had needles the size of that
cane.

MECHANIC

(quietly)

Hey. Swing that yoyo or you gonna
get a taste of that cane.

Tattoo realizes where he is and goes back to work.

MOVING SHOT TRAMP (LATER)

his
as he seems to spin, his eyes closed, his arms limp,
head lolling back, he stumbles, twists, careens.

CLOSE DRAGLINE

seeing this.

DRAGLINE

Man bearcaught, boss!

CLOSE BOSS KEAN

BOSS KEAN

Blondie... Sleepy! Git him afore he
falls.

STUPID BLONDIE AND SLEEPY

Without
truck,
They drop their tools and rush over as Tramp falls.
ceremony, they drag him over the rough ground to the
where Boss Paul locks him in.

DRAGLINE

fate.
that
He is watching Luke, who is very close to the same
Although he has achieved some grace, it is apparent
Luke is working too strenuously, too determined.

MED. SHOT BOSS KEAN

watch,
He reaches into his pocket and takes out a turnip
looks to Godfrey, who nods.

BOSS KEAN

Awright, let's eat them beans!

The men break and head for the chow line.

OMITTED

ANGLE ON LUKE

his
resentful,
He has dropped to the ground, examining a blister on
hand. At Boss Kean's call, he looks up, ruefully
and gets to his feet and slowly walks to the chow line.

BOSS KEAN'S VOICE

Hey, you. Bean time!

DRAGLINE
(eyeing Luke, to
Gambler)
Cold drink he don't make it.

GAMBLER
Bet. Babalugats, bet!

Babalugats grins. Dragline has his chow, passes Luke.

DRAGLINE
(whispering)
You got to snag it, man. You got to
stop foolin' around and tear up them
weeds.

Luke stumbles past, not paying attention.

FULL SHOT GANG WORKING

It is later in the afternoon.

ON STUPID BLONDIE

He stops.

STUPID BLONDIE
Caught short here, boss!

ANGLE BOSS KEAN

BOSS KEAN
Awright, Blondie. Take it behind
that tree.

ON STUPID BLONDIE

direction
He drops his tool and gratefully trots off in the
of the tree.

ANGLE ON LUKE

HEARS
It is later. He is working hard, stops a minute as he
a crow cawing overhead. He looks up at it.

CLOSE SHOT GODFREY

He snaps his fingers.

ANGLE ON LUKE, TATTOO, KOKO, OTHERS

single
bolt
looking up as Rabbitt goes to the truck and gets out a
action rifle which he brings to Godfrey, who puts in a
and bullets from his pocket.

TATTOO

Who's that?

KOKO
Boss Godfrey.

MECHANIC
The walking boss.

TATTOO
Don't he ever talk?

Godfrey has raised the gun and now FIRES.

INSERT CROW ON THE WING

It is hit, explodes in a burst of feathers.

ANGLE ON LUKE AND TATTOO

LUKE
I believe he just said something.

OMITTED

FULL SHOT THE MEN

working, Luke flailing away like an automaton.

INT. THE TRUCK (AFTERNOON)

the
others
like
up and
But
gives
It
over
He's the

as it is opened from the outside. Tramp sits up against
bench, still in rocky shape from his collapse. The
step over him as though he weren't there. Luke appears,
a sleepwalker. He grabs the side rails, gets one foot
tries to pull himself over the edge of the truck body.
the muscles are just used up. Boss Paul sees this and
Luke a kick, timed so that it coincides with his jump.
gives him just the added momentum needed to send him
the edge of the body and sprawling along the floor.
last one and as the guards lock them up, he grins up at
Dragline and Gambler from his prone position.

LUKE
(to Dragline)
You owe that fella a cold drink.

it's

The men are not tired, they smoke and talk and laugh:
been an easy day.

KOKO
Hot damn, Drag. Tomorrow's Saturday.

Another week almost made.

ALIBI

(hopelessly)

I got two years.

DRAGLINE

Only two? Man, I already done eight. Nothin' to it. Just make the days and let the weeks and the years make themselves.

TATTOO

I did three hitches in the Navy. It ain't bad. After a while, you get used to it and the time --

Koko is looking out the back of the truck.

KOKO

Oh, man, oh man. Look at that. On the bicycle. Lookit them shorts. I'm dyin'.

the
The men rush to look out at the vision of freedom on
bike.

DRAGLINE

(knowledgeably)

She looks just like a lil girl I useta know named Louise Merryweather. Fine lil ol' girl, always partial to home-made whiskey. Remember one time down in the cellar, both of us knee-walkin' drunk and ah had this lil pint and Louise wanted a poke of it. So ah said: you wanna poke and I wanna poke, so...

He starts his story. On the floor, Luke sleeps.

EXT. PRISON YARD LATE (AFTERNOON)

with
inspected,
but
testing
them on
seems
line at
the
as they are counting in through the gate, their hats
their personal possessions in them held out to be
their pockets turned out. A guard frisks them quickly
efficiently. The Captain stands nearby ignoring them,
a golf swing. The men move to the mess hall, most of
the run. Luke moves painfully with exhaustion. Alibi
quiet and cowed, lost in the crowd. They fall into a
the mess hall door. Dynamite, his spoon out, moves to

rear. front of the line and Luke winds up somewhere near the

BOSS HIGGINS

(yardman)

Awright, you, Gibson, step out. Boss Paul says you wasn't happy with your job. Done a lot of complainin'. Gone give you a chance to think it over.

down Alibi looks around, fearfully steps out, peering up and the line, wondering.

BOSS HIGGINS

Get them clothes off.

shining Alibi is led to the box. A light stands about it down into it and it always burns when the box is ready to be used or when there's someone inside. Now a nightshirt is laid out on top of it. Alibi strips and puts on the pajamas. Boss Kean opens the heavy lid of the box and we see it is grilled with heavy chain link fencing and with strap iron bars. A chamber pot is put inside. Alibi stands in the box, looking back at them, then lies down out of sight. The lid is slammed shut.

FULL SHOT

they The men watching this. The mess hall door opens and begin to file in.

INT. BARRACKS (NIGHT)

the as the Wicker Man whales away at his tire rim outside barracks.

CARR

Awright, first bell! Let's hit them bunks!

the The men are piling into bunks and the CAMERA FINDS Luke heaving himself with a kind of rueful amusement up to third tier bunk he sleeps in; he's exhausted.

DRAGLINE

Plumb busted out. Looks like the hard road finally got to Mister Lucas War Hero.

LUKE

(agreeably)

Back at it in the mornin'. Just need
a little nap...

are the
the
the

He lies back. Across him and in various perspectives
other participants in this conversation, speaking in
ventriloquist's whisper while the stragglers get into
sack.

KOKO

Man, I never thought they'd put him
in the box on his first day.

LOUDMOUTH STEVE

It was just supposed to be a joke.
There ain't no brooms. Whoever heard
of a chain gang using brooms?

TRAMP

I gotta tell you that I believed it.

TATTOO

He should have known; it was a gag.

KOKO

You can't switch 'round jobs, anyway.
I figured he knew that.

SOCIETY RED

You can't expect him to learn
everything the first day. Hopefully
it's taught him a very valuable
lesson.

LUKE

Well, you fixed it up so he's got
all night to think about it.

LOUDMOUTH STEVE

It's not our fault he's a square.

DRAGLINE

Course not. He ain't in the box 'cause
a the joke played on him. He's there
'cause he back sassed a Free Man.
They got their rules and we ain't
got nothing to do with that. Woulda
probably happened to him sooner or
later, to a complainer like him.
He's gotta learn the rules same as
anybody else.

LUKE

Yeah, those poor old guards need all
the help they can get.

DRAGLINE

You tryin' to say somethin'?

Luke rolls over and goes to sleep.

DRAGLINE

(to his back)

You jus' keep flapping your mouth
and one of these times, you and me
gonna raise a little dust.

The Wicker Man begins hitting the tire rim again.

CARR

Awright, last bell!

Silence.

CARR

(continuing)

Forty-nine and one in the box, Boss!

WICKER MAN'S VOICE

Forty-nine and one in the box. Right,
Carr.

EXT. ROAD CLOSEUP YOYO TRANSITIONAL DEVICE (DAY)

TICKING
SHOT
time.
by
always,

It slashes away like a pendulum, golden in the sun,
away time, over roads that stretch to infinity -- a
that will always tell us that the men are building
SHOT WIDENS. The gang is laboring, filling in washouts
the roadside. The bosses are Paul, Kean, Higgins, and,
Godfrey, the Walking Boss.

CLOSE LUKE

work
his
In the
and,
the
while
and
him

He is tanned and hardened now, and has mastered the
rhythm. SHOT WIDENS to show Dragline near him, checking
shovel for nicks but really eyeballing a passing car.
ditch, Luke expertly scoops up a shovel full of sand
levering the handle on his knee, flips the sand through
air so it hits spang in the pan of Dragline's shovel
Dragline is still eyeballing. It knocks him off balance
by the time he has caught up, Luke is already catching
with another shovel full.

DRAGLINE

Slow down, man. They ain't passing

out medals for slinging dirt.

LUKE

I thought you knew, boy... they
sentenced me by the mile.

the
salvaged
Dragline grins at this insouciance, sneaks a look down
road. He digs into his pocket and hauls out a pair of
sunglasses, which he holds up.

DRAGLINE

Puttin' 'em on here, Boss!

BOSS KEAN'S VOICE

Yeah, put 'em on, Drag!

NEW ANGLE DRAGLINE, LUKE

Tramp are
as Dragline hooks on the glasses. Luke, Tattoo and
working around here.

LUKE

(to Tramp)

Lookit that. Some Hollywood movie
star jus' joined up with us.

Tramp smiles.

DRAGLINE

(to Koko)

Man, this here Newmeat parking meter
bandit thing what calls itself Luke
don't know nuthin' 'bout nuthin'.

LUKE

(to Tramp)

But damn if he don't look like a fat
old Dragline.

TRAMP

Coulda fooled me.

DRAGLINE

(to Tattoo)

These is my eyeballin' glasses. Now
I'm gonna play peek-a-boo and ol'
Godfrey ain't gonna know if I'm
eyeballin' or tootin' the piccolo.

TATTOO

That ain't nuthing compared to what
we used to do in San Pedro. There
was this ensign...

DRAGLINE

(has been sniffing
the air)

Ah believe I smell me a blonde-haired

lady.

ANGLE ON BULL GANG

second
sun
over
top

They all look up covertly and, sure enough, in the car slowed down by Rabbit's sign, is a lush BLONDE in a dress that is hiked up high on the thighs and cut low the bosom. She cringes under their gaze and starts the going up on the car as though to hide from them.

KOKO

Man, see her legs. She's tanned all over.

BLIND DICK

Nice broad. Nice set.

DRAGLINE

She looks just like Mrs. Patricia Handy, a married woman... I useta fool with. Man, I kin sniff blondes from a hunnert yards and redheads from a mile and a half.

KOKO

(to Tattoo)

Drag's been chain-ganging so long he's got a nose like a bloodhound.

LUKE

Maybe he's been chain-ganging too long.

DRAGLINE

Long enough to see redhots come and redhots go.

again.

OMITTED

NEW ANGLE ON GANG

small
and
mid-

Time has passed; they are further down the road. A blue coupe kicks up dust as it jitters down the road stops across the highway before a small home. A blonde, twenties, gets out, and heads covertly look up.

THE BULL GANG

too

The woman is too much for them, too close, too blonde,

the lush. They stop as one and watch as she disappears into house.

CLOSE GODFREY

happening Seeing their odd behavior, he turns to see what's heads but the woman is gone; when he turns back, the men's are back down.

DRAGLINE, KOKO, LUKE, OTHERS

KOKO

Oh, man, did you see her? Did you see her?

DRAGLINE

I got eyes, don't I? How my not gonna see something like that?

BLIND DICK

Nice broad. Good set.

LOUDMOUTH STEVE

How could you tell? You could hardly see her.

GAMBLER

She's back!

house, now Heads pop up again as the blonde comes out of the pail and dressed in a short house dress, carrying a radio, a toward a sponge. She is clearly buxom. She goes to the outside faucet, fills the bucket and drags the attached hose the car.

LOUDMOUTH STEVE

Look at that!

DRAGLINE

Shut up, you loudmouth jerk!

THE BLONDE

making She begins to hose the dusty car, splashing herself, every the cotton dress cling to her body, tossing her hair, movement and gesture erotic and provocative.

THE MEN

to Their work is completely disorganized as they attempt shovel while watching. Their voices overlap.

KOKO

Man Oh Man.

LUKE

That is one mean lady. Bet her husband spends one day a week shooting milkmen.

BLIND DICK

Lookit her bounce.

GAMBLER

Oh lean over here, lady. Lean this way.

TRAMP

I wouldn't mind being that hose.

GAMBLER

More... a little more.

TATTOO

I don't know if I believe it.

BLONDIE

She's so big!

GAMBLER

Now lean down... a little more.

DRAGLINE

Lookit that little honeypot. Lookit those legs.

MECHANIC

Oh man, I ain't never been so thirsty in my life.

THE BLONDE

She begins to rub the windshield erotically.

BLIND DICK

Oh rub.

SLEEPY

Rub.

DRAGLINE

Rub!

BABALUGATS

Rub-a-dub-dub. Rub-a-dub-dub.

KOKO

I'm dyin'. I'm dyin'!

DRAGLINE

Look, she's got paint on her toenails! Oh Lord, whatever I done, don't strike me blind for 'nother couple minutes.

Oh you Lucille!

DRAGLINE AND LUKE

LUKE

Lucille? Where do you get that?

DRAGLINE

(whirling)

That'sa Lucille, you mullet head!
Any girl so innocent and built like
that gotta be named Lucille.

LUKE

Innocent?

BLIND DICK

She don't even know what she's doin!.

LUKE

She knows exactly what she's doin.
She's drivin' you crazy and lovin'
it.

DRAGLINE

Shut your mouth 'bout my Lucille.

LUKE

Your Lucille? Man, you better put
them glasses back on and take a look
at yourself.

DRAGLINE

(glaring)

Boy. You jus' asking to be handled!

P.O.V. MEN TO GIRL

as Godfrey moves across the scene, blocking their view,
staring at them, FILLING THE SCREEN.

OMITTED

INT. SHOWERS (NIGHT)

Trashing bodies and heads in the steam. Feeling of
tension,
irritation, except for Babalugats, who is SINGING.

SLEEPY

Babalugats, shut up.

MECHANIC

Leave him alone. He's happy.

SLEEPY

That's because he's a damn moron.

LOUDMOUTH STEVE

Now why don't you just shut up?

INT. BARRACKS (NIGHT)

iron

The men are in their bunks, sullen, quiet as the tire
SOUNDS.

CARR

Awright, last bell.

restlessly,
barracks, a
do so
SQUEEGEEING

Carr paces, counting. Beds SQUEAK as men turn
unable to get comfortable. At the far end of the
slow-turning fan CREAKS gratingly. It will continue to
throughout the scene, adding irritation to Carr's
steps and the regular SQUEAKING of bedsprings.

OMITTED

ANGLE ON MEN

restless, irritated.

CARR'S VOICE (O.S.)

Fifty, Boss.

NEW ANGLE ON MEN

WICKERMAN'S VOICE

Fifty, right, Carr.

ANGLE ON KOKO

KOKO

Man, it's so hot.

NEW ANGLE ON MEN

GAMBLER

Gettin' up, Carr.

FULL SHOT BARRACKS

SQUEAK.

as Carr paces, SQUEEGEEING. The fan CREAKS. Springs

CARR

Yeahhpp.

Gambler gets up, chains JANGLING.

NEW ANGLE ON MEN

uncomfortable, tense, shifting.

LOUDMOUTH STEVE

Giddyap, Carr.

NEW ANGLE ON MEN

CARR'S VOICE (O.S.)

Yeahhpp.

NEW ANGLE ON MEN

Tramp turns, irritated, as Carr SQUEEGEES by.

TRAMP

How can you sleep with that damn
squeaking!

FULL SHOT BARRACKS

Carr pacing. SQUEEGEEING, the fan CREAKING, springs
SQUEAKING.

DYNAMITE'S VOICE

Gettin' up, Carr.

CARR

Yeahhp.

Dynamite gets up, chains JANGLING.

ON FAN

It is turning slowly, CREAKING, CREAKING, CREAKING. And
now
building,
on the SOUNDTRACK we HEAR low at first, but steadily
the tinny SOUND of the Blonde Girl's radio.

ANGLE ON MEN

tense, annoyed, frustrated as the SOUND of the RADIO
GROWS,
joining the CREAKING, SQUEAKING and SQUEEGEEING.

ANGLE ON DRAGLINE

as Carr passes by. He speaks in a low whisper.

DRAGLINE

Man, that lil Lucille was a lot of
lil girl.

OMITTED

ANGLE ON MEN

some turning away, not wanting to be reminded, some
staring
ahead unhappily, thinking the same thing.

DRAGLINE'S VOICE (O.S.)

You see how she was jus' poppin'
outa the top of that dress.

ANGLE ON KOKO

irritated, anxious.

KOKO

Aw, come on, Drag.

ANGLE ON DRAGLINE

not paying attention.

DRAGLINE

And down below, that thing didn't reach no higher than...

(chuckles)

She liable to catch cold... runnin' around like that.

ANGLE ON MEN

the
grating,
irritated by Dragline's voice and the SQUEEGEEING and SQUEAKING and CREAKING and the RADIO SOUND, tinny and growing in volume.

DRAGLINE'S VOICE

...And that thing was so tight 'cross her bottom... made me wanna just reach out my hands and...

ANGLE ON LUKE

LUKE

Forget it, man.

ANGLE ON DRAGLINE

suddenly angry.

DRAGLINE

Whatta you mean, forget it?

ANGLE ON LUKE

LUKE

Stop beatin', man. You ain't doin' nobody no good.

ANGLE ON DRAGLINE

unbearable
peak.
his face corroding in fury as the RADIO SOUND and the CREAKING, SQUEAKING and SQUEEGEEING are at an

DRAGLINE

(with slow menace)

Boy, you better get some sleep and save your strength. 'Cause you're gonna need it.

OMITTED

ANGLE ON FAN CLOSE

high-
of the
As the SOUNDS threaten to burst our ears with their
pitched tension, the CAMERA MOVES SLOWLY into the hub
fan and our nerves scream for relief.

OMITTED

FACE
EXT. BARRACKS CLOSE ON LUKE AS GLOVE SMASHES INTO HIS
(DAY)

but
up. He
gloves.
and Luke falls back into the dirt. He's hurt, startled,
grins. We HEAR a CHEER from the men O.S., as he gets
is stripped to the waist, wears huge 16 oz. boxing

FULLER ANGLE

off in
is a
before.
Captain
obvious.
showing Dragline similarly dressed. They are squared
the yard, surrounded by YELLING men who want blood. It
release from the sexual tension built up by the night
The guards stand in the guard boxes, watching. The
sits up on his porch, so he can see without being too

Dragline's
counters
into
for the
round.
Luke gets up and manages a lunging right across to
Adam's apple. Dragline is momentarily staggered but
with a terrible clubbing blow that mashes Luke's gloves
his face, knocking him to the ground. Time is called

LUKE AND OTHERS BEHIND HIM

as he gets to his feet.

TRAMP

Why don't you just stay there? He's
only gonna knock you down agin.

ALIBI

It's not your fault. He's just too
big.

SOCIETY RED

Let him hit you in the nose, get
some blood flowing. Maybe they'll
stop it before he kills you.

LUKE
(shaking his head,
grinning)
I don't want to frighten him.

Dragline. The second round is called and Luke advances toward

gets
moves
Dragline
SCREAM AND
again. He

TWO SHOT LUKE, DRAGLINE
circling. Luke has to get in his shot before Dragline
too close and clubs him again. He feints a punch that
Dragline off-balance and winds up for a big one, but
smashes him backhand. Luke hits the dirt, the men
YELL. Wiping some blood from his mouth, Luke rises
is dizzy. Dragline smacks him down again.

releasing

THE MEN
SHOUTING, SHRIEKING, they have blood in their eyes,
their tensions.

and
waiting
Dragline

INTERCUT THE VARIOUS REACTIONS
as the fight continues. The Captain on his porch rocks
spits dry little spouts of wind, Godfrey, impassive,
in his guard house. The YELLING gradually subsides as
continues to smash Luke, who keeps getting up.

no

ANGLE ON DRAGLINE
Without relish, he pokes Luke down again. Now there is
cheering, no yelling, just silence.

see

ANGLE ON CAPTAIN
as he gets up and walks down to the wire where he can
what is happening. The silence disturbs him.

But
enough

ON LUKE
He rises, grinning and winds up to throw another punch.
the act of lifting his giant glove is a Herculean task.
Seconds go by in which he tries to raise the glove high
to launch a punch.

ON DRAGLINE

waiting, gloves at waist level, poised.

DRAGLINE

(low)

Ommana pop you one easy. Stay down.

slowly
He pops Luke who reels, goes down on a knee and then rises, rises. Dragline is honestly agonized.

DRAGLINE

I'm gonna kill you, you go on...

LUKE

That's what you're gonna have to do.

ANGLE ON CAPTAIN

concerned.

ANGLE ON BOSS GODFREY

impassive.

ANGLE ON DRAGLINE

realizes
moment,
toward
He raises his fists. But Luke is up again. Dragline he'll have to kill him to beat him. After a long Dragline drops his hands to his sides, looks back Godfrey and the captain and then starts walking to the barracks, fast.

ANGLE ON LUKE

away,
He looks after him and reaches up to wipe the blood still grinning.

INT. BARRACKS (NIGHT)

Koko,
the
assessing
looking
Dragline
book.
The poker game. Five card stud. Playing are Gambler, Dynamite, Blind Dick and Luke, bandaged. The mood of barracks is quieter than usual. The men are still the fight, uncertain as to who now is their leader, toward Dragline for an indication. Not playing, lies on his bunk behind Koko, sullenly reading a sex Gambler deals the third cards.

GAMBLER

Ana paira ninas. Koko's the brains.

KOKO

Cuter.

Dynamite is already out. Blind Dick now folds.

GAMBLER

Ace calls.

LUKE

Kick a buck.

KOKO

(considers, then chips)

I'm in.

GAMBLER

Ace calls. Here we go.

(deals Luke)

King-five gets a tray for no help.

(deals Koko)

Paira ninas gets a Jack.

(deals himself)

Ana man with the ace gets... slop in
the face... Ninas up.

KOKO

(regarding Luke)

Cuter again.

GAMBLER

Call.

LUKE

(expressionless)

Kick a buck.

long
Koko is worried. He looks at his hole card, considers,
silence. Dragline looks over from his bunk.

DRAGLINE

(to Koko)

Whatcha got?

KOKO

Pair'a nines.

DRAGLINE

I kin see that, brick head. I mean
your hole card.

sits up
Koko hands it over his shoulder to Dragline, who now
to consider the whole situation.

DRAGLINE

(continuing)

Uh-huh. And he ain't got nothing
showing. Raise his head off.

KOKO

He's been betting his head from the gun. Gotta have kings.

DRAGLINE
So then you just call him.

KOKO
(chipping)
I call.

GAMBLER
(studies Luke's cards)
I gotta believe. Out!
(folds)
Now they're rollin'.
(deals Luke)
King-five-four gets an eight.
(deals Koko)
Pair'a nines with a Jack gets a four.
Ninas still up.

KOKO
(tentatively)
Cuter.

LUKE
(automatically)
Kick a buck.

KOKO
Damn.

He looks up to Dragline for help.

DRAGLINE
Kick him back a buck!

Koko looks uncertain, but listens.

KOKO
Back a buck.

LUKE
(automatically)
Kick a buck.

Koko looks up to Dragline: What do we do now?

DRAGLINE
Don't look at me, mullet-head.

Koko looks to the others.

GAMBLER
Man, you play like a kokonut. You got to call him at least.

KOKO
I know he's got a paira kings. He don't have to stick 'em in my ear.

BLIND DICK
Gotta have kings.

GAMBLER
Sure he's got kings but you still
gotta call him.

Koko looks back to Dragline.

DRAGLINE
Man's got a paira kings, get your
tail out.

that
Koko folds. Luke reaches for the pot at the same time
Dragline reaches for Luke's cards.

DRAGLINE
Nuthin'! A handfull of nuthin'!
(cuffs Koko)
You stupid mullet-head. He beat you
with nuthin'! Just like today when
he kept coming back at me.

LUKE
(smiling)
Nuthin' can be a pretty cool hand.

DRAGLINE
Cool Hand Luke.

leadership
So saying, Dragline saves face and the baton of
is passed.

(DAY)
EXT. YOYO SHIMMERING IN THE SUN TRANSITIONAL DEVICE

swinging away the time...

INSERT: ROAD MOVING SHOT DAY

the
etc.,
SHOOTING THROUGH cage truck, as it moves swiftly along,
landscape a blur of shadows and racing phone poles,
the men shadows slouched on their benches inside.

DISSOLVE TO:

BEARCAUGHT AVENUE

open
The
Stretching
pyramid
This is a country road running over rolling moors, land
to the sky and sun, the roads reaching out to infinity.
cage truck rolls to the end of the road and stops.
out on either side of the road, every five feet is a

of freshly dumped sand.

ANGLE ON REAR OF TRUCK

given as the bull gang gets down, looks at the sand, are shovels.

KOKO

Oh no, man! Not on this hot muther.

GAMBLER

All the bears gonna be walking today.

ALIBI

(nervously)

What's the deal?

DRAGLINE

Tar truck.

array At these bleak words, over the last rise comes a filthy blackened tank truck with a fire in its belly and an of pipes and valves at its rear, like a hellish beetle.

KOKO

(to Tattoo, Tramp,
Alibi)

You think you've been working hard.
This muther'll break your back.

SOCIETY RED

This is a big day for the guards.
They get to remind us who's boss.

TRAMP

I ain't forgot.

ON THE MEN

flame, as the truck driver makes adjustments in the heater, etc.

BOSS PAUL

Awright, every second man, git to
the other side of the road.

Alibi,
Luke,
Mechanic
the Dragline, Dynamite, Gambler, Tattoo, Loudmouth Steve, Sleepy, Stupid Blondie and Chief cross over, leaving Koko, Society Red, Tramp, Babalugats, Blind Dick, and Sailor. The tar truck begins to move slowly down road, spreading a black, hot, acrid wake behind it.

BOSS PAUL

(continuing; with

undisguised malice)
Captain heard this gang been doin'
so good, gave us this special job.
We got three miles of tarrin' to
cover today. Let's roll it!

NEW ANGLE ON THE MEN

fanning
Luke
The
them
They begin to work, digging a shovel-full of sand,
it out over the hot tar, moving up to the next pile.
and Dragline in the lead of their respective groups.
guards move up along the ridges behind the men, urging
to move faster, caning the slow workers.

BOSS PAUL
Let's git with it!

BOSS SHORTY
Roll it, heah?

ANGLE GODFREY

center of
tar
of
He is at the rear of the columns, walking down the
the road. With his stick he points to spots where the
has not been covered and the nearest man flicks a spray
sand over it.

ON LUKE WITH KOKO AND SOCIETY RED LATER

breaking
They are working steadily but it is hot, hard, back-
labor. Koko stops for a moment to rub his arm.

KOKO
Oh man. I'm gonna twist my arm off
if this heat don't kill me first.

Boss Paul canes him across the legs.

BOSS PAUL
Roll it!

ON DRAGLINE

with
sweating and suffering across the road, just keeping up
Luke.

DRAGLINE
Hey, buddy. Take it easy. You're
making me look bad.

LUKE
The man wants speed, let's give it

to him. Ram it in and break it off.
Go hard. Shag it.

keeping Dragline begins to work harder, digging and fanning,
pace with Luke.

ON DRAGLINE AND DYNAMITE

DYNAMITE
(panting)
Whatta we racin' for?

DRAGLINE
Man wants speed, let's give it to
him. Use that shovel like you use
your spoon. Shag it, man!

Dynamite understands and throws himself into it.

FULL SHOT THE MEN

tar, up to their waists in smoke and dust, splattered with
working like devils as the word passes down the line.

BLIND DICK
(to Society Red)
Go hard!

GAMBLER
(to Tattoo)
Ram it in and break it off!

ALIBI
(to Sleepy)
Roll it!

LOUDMOUTH STEVE
Shag it!

They are all working like hell.

ANGLE ON BOSS PAUL

activity. He looks confused, concerned by this sudden manic

ANGLE ON BOSS GODFREY

spots forced to walk faster to keep up, finding no unsanded
for his sorcerer's wand.

ON LUKE, DRAGLINE, OTHERS

enjoying the guard's confusion.

DRAGLINE
(to Luke)
They don't know iff'n to smile, spit

or swallow.

LUKE

They ain't never seen a bull gang
before.

SOCIETY RED

Work those shovels instead of your
mouths.

WORKING ON BEARCAUGHT AVENUE

led
the
other

Essentially a MONTAGE, a wild insane ballet of labor as
by Luke and Dragline, the bull gang throws itself into
madness, muttering Luke's words of inspiration to each
and loving the guards' confusion. (SONG ON SOUND TRACK)

TRAMP

Go hard!

TATTOO

Ram it in...

MECHANIC

Break it off...

SOCIETY RED

Roll it!

DYNAMITE

Shag it!

STUPID BLONDIE

Move it!

and
on
but
faces

Luke grins and works. The guards are tense and uneasy
walk the road backward, not daring to turn their backs
these madmen. Rabbit runs around with his water bucket
the men don't drink, just upturn the water over their
and keep going.

ON BOSS PAUL

hour.

confused, angry, has not been able to cane anyone in an
As Rabbit rushes by:

BOSS PAUL

Rabbit! What the hell's goin' on?

RABBIT

(knows but isn't saying)
I don't know, Boss. They must be
bearcaught. All of them.

others.

He rushes off, as caught up in the esprit as the

WORKING AGAIN

wilder.

More of the madness but now even faster, sweatier,

confound the
working

The men are bearcaught by their sudden power to
guards. ALL SHOTS FAVORING Luke, splattered with tar,
right behind the truck.

ON GODFREY

uncertain as
eyes.

Replacing his stick with a rifle, as tense and
the other bosses, staring at Luke with blank, hating

ON LUKE

which
finished.
the

as he looks up just as the tar truck turns off the road
has ended, crossed by a small highway. They have
Luke stands straight, looking out across the highway to
rolling green beyond. Dragline works up to him.

DRAGLINE

Where'd the road go?

LUKE

That's it. That's the end.

KOKO

But there's still daylight left.

DRAGLINE

(checking the sun)

'Bout two hours left.

LOUDMOUTH STEVE

What do we do now?

look

Luke has been looking at the guards who have grouped in
conference around Boss Paul who has his watch out. They

concerned, gesticulating toward Luke and the others.

LUKE

(smiling)

Nothin'.

rolling

The others understand. They have beaten the Free Men by
working harder. They all collapse on the ground,

about, dazed, tired but happy as hell, laughing.

DRAGLINE

Oh, Luke, you wild beautiful thing!
You crazy handful of nuthin'!

DISSOLVE TO:

OMITTED

INT. BARRACKS (DAY)

jingling.
preacher
romantic
the
for
depants
SHOWING
on
board
barefoot.

Sunday afternoon scene. The chain men are dancing,
Three RADIOS BLARE in different corners; a hell-fire
where Deacon and Society Red sit working a letter;
ballads (Near You, Heart Aches by Ted Weeks, etc.) for
men reading fuck books; rhythm and blues, country music
a couple of wrestlers, banging into bunks until one
the other and runs off. CAMERA FOLLOWS THIS ACTION
the scene. Other men rolling cigarettes, Dynamite still
his rattlesnake wallet, Koko cutting hair, using a
over an ash can for a barber's chair. Everyone is

WICKERMAN

Visitor for Luke!

unmoving,
amazed.

Luke sits up from his bunk, staring at the Wicker,

GAMBLER (O.S.)

Steve. Your mother's here!

ANGLE ON LUKE

tossing
down his sex book resentfully:

as he gets up. Behind him Loudmouth Steve gets up,

LOUDMOUTH STEVE

Jeez! She never lets me alone.

TRAMP

You oughta be glad you got somebody.

Steve tosses him a finger as he leaves.

ALIBI

My wife hasn't been here for a month.
She must be sick again. She's had
this condition of the liver for...

TATTOO

Alibi, can't you never say nothin'
without explainin' it? Carr says you
even explain when you get up at night.

EXT. CAMP GATE (DAY)

we SEE
toward
exit,
the
mirror
- a
prisoners
table
is
everything
Luke's
enormously

By the picnic table set up for visitors. In far b.g.,
Luke come out of the door and start across the yard
the gate, where he is shaken down and permitted to
moving down to the table. A few feet from the end of
table, Boss Godfrey sits in a kitchen chair, his hands
discreetly crossed over the pistol in his lap. His
eyes play over the scene. Loudmouth Steve, his MOTHER -
desperately fortyish blonde -- and a couple of other
and visitors occupy the background. Parked next to the
is a truck. In the bed lies Luke's mother, ARLETTA. She
propped up on pillows and wedged in for traveling.
The whole back is set up as for a chronic invalid,
within reach, etc. She smokes incessantly. Nearby,
BROTHER and his nephew, JOHN-BOY, a kid of twelve,
impressed with the sights and the guns and dogs, etc.

LUKE

Comin' out here, Boss?

BOSS PAUL

(by the gate)

Yeah. Come on out, Luke.

boy,
the
craning

A few feet outside the gate, Jackson reaches for the
pats him on the head. Shakes hands in passing with his
brother, who is unmistakably a farmer, and stands in
doorway looking at his mother. She lies on her side
to see him.

LUKE

How'd you find me?

ARLETTA

Helen, she sent along your things
with a note, and John here, he wrote
to the police.

LUKE

Yeah. Well.
(to Godfrey)
Gettin' up here, Boss.

Godfrey just looks at him, says nothing.

LUKE
Well, Arletta, I got to stand down
here.

ARLETTA
I allus hoped to see you well fixed
and have me a crop of grandkids to
kiss and fuss around with.

LUKE
Like to oblige you, Arletta, but
right off I don't know where to put
my hands on 'em.

ARLETTA
Sometimes I wisht people was like
dogs, Luke. Comes a time, a day like,
when the bitch just don't recognize
her pups no more, so she don't have
no hopes nor love to bring her pain.
She just don't give a damn. They let
you smoke?

LUKE
Smokin' it up here, Boss.

Boss Godfrey nods. He lights cigarettes for her and for
himself.

LUKE
Yeah, well, Arletta, you done your
best. What I done with myself is my
problem.

ARLETTA
No it hain't, Luke. You ain't alone.
Ever whar you go, I'm with you, and
so's John.

LUKE
You never thought that's a heavy
load?

ARLETTA
We allus thought you was strong enough
to carry it. Was we wrong?

Luke gives her the cigarette, and smiles at her.

LUKE
No. But things ain't always like
they seem, Arletta. You know that. A
man's gotta go his own way.

ARLETTA

Well, I don't know, I just wash my hands of it, I guess I just got to love you and let go.

her
She catches his hand as he puts the cigarette between lips.

LUKE

Yeah.

ARLETTA

What are you doin' here?

LUKE

We call it abuildin' time, Arletta.

ARLETTA

I ain't askin' what you'll do after you get out, because I'm gonna be dead and it don't matter.

real
His mother's disappointment in him brings Jackson a twinge of pain here. He tries to change the subject.

LUKE

You never wanted to live forever anyways, did you? It wasn't such a hell of a life.

ARLETTA

Oh, I had me some high old times. Yore old man, Luke, wasn't much for stickin' around, but damn it he made me laugh.

LUKE

Yeah, would of been nice to of knowed him, the way you talk about him.

control and
they
She's looking at him and begins to laugh, losing coughing to the point it alarms John and Jackson and have to help her. She pays no attention to the cough.

ARLETTA

He'd... He'd of... broke you up.

She quiets after the fit and lies back, tired.

ARLETTA

You think life is some kind of ocean voyage and you start out with buntin' and hollerin' and high hopes, but the damn ship goes down before you ever reach the other side. Luke?

LUKE

Here, Mom.

ARLETTA

What went wrong?

LUKE

Nothin'. Ever'thing's cool's can be.

ARLETTA

No.

LUKE

Tried to live always just as free
and aboveboard as you been, and well,
they ain't that much elbow room.

Arletta is looking hard into his eyes as he speaks. She reaches out to him again...

ARLETTA

You allus had good jobs, and that
girl in Kentucky I taken a shine to
her.

LUKE

She took off with that convertible
feller...

ARLETTA

Well, why not? Idee of marryin' got
you all choked up, trying to pretend
you was respectable you was borin'
the hell out of all of us.

LUKE

(grinning at her)

Yeah.

ARLETTA

I'm leavin' the place to John.

LUKE

That's good: he earned it.

ARLETTA

Nothin' to do with it. I ain't never
give John the kind of feelin' I give
you, so I'm payin' him off now. Don't
feel you got to say anything. Way it
is, sometimes, you just have a feelin'
for a child or you don't, and with
John I just didn't.

OFFSTAGE WHISTLE

LUKE

Gotta go, Arletta.

ARLETTA

(recovering)

Laugh it up, kid. You'll make out.

turns
is on
goodbye to
them is
a
clinking

She kneads his hand and subsides onto her bed. Luke
away from her to face John, who has stood by. Godfrey
his feet. The other men are getting up and saying
visitors, picking up their packages, etc., and among
a chain man, his chains dragging, holding them up with
string. The kid stands by John looking at the chains
past...

JOHN-BOY

Why can't you have chains?

Luke looks up at John, Sr. with amusement.

JOHN-BOY

Uncle Luke?

TWO SHOT LUKE AND JOHN, SR.

JOHN

John-Boy looks to you. You're a hero.
He's braggin' on you all over the
county.

LUKE

(thoughtful)

Yeah.

JOHN

You must've really flung a binge
this time. You really hit that cop?

LUKE

(not liking the smug
pride in John)

Much as I'd like to oblige you, John,
I didn't hit the cop.

(beat)

She's in pretty bad pain, ain't she?

JOHN

(nods)

Fulla dope, Luke.

LUKE

Keep it with her all the time. Let
her have all she wants.

the
They understand each other. Luke chucks John-Boy under
chin, then stops, looks at John, kneels beside him.

TWO SHOT LUKE AND JOHN-BOY

LUKE

You don't want to admire them chains,

John-Boy. They ain't medals. You get them put on for makin' mistakes.

(beat)

And if you make a really bad mistake, then you got to deal with the Man... and he is one tough old boy.

THEIR P.O.V.

Godfrey stares at them, his glasses mirroring.

BACK TO THEM

LUKE

So long, Arletta. Take care.

ARLETTA'S VOICE

You know it, kid.

and John holds Luke for a beat and reaches into the truck pulls out a battered banjo which he gives Luke.

JOHN

Now there's nothin' for you to come back for.

ARLETTA'S TRUCK

b.g. LEAVING down the road, kicking up dust. Barracks in

EXT. HIGHWAY WITH YOYO SUPPORT (DAY)

cutting away at the time...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BARRACKS (NIGHT)

The Luke sits on his bunk plunking aimlessly at the BANJO. an barracks are quiet, an air of [...]. Suddenly there is barracks unidentifiable SOUND, low, but all the heads in the big look up, waiting, silently. It has begun to rain, the There drops DRUMMING on the roof. It begins to fall heavily. guards are moving slams around the building as outside the SLAM the storm shutters. It is hot, oppressive.

ALIBI

I guess they have to close those things, or we'd drown. But it's really suffocating.

TATTOO

Talk about drownin', I did some
trainin' on a submarine once. Boy,
when you're under there you really
feel it.

LOUDMOUTH STEVE

Shut up, man. It's too hot to talk.

Dragline

The air is stifling, desultory. Out of boredom,
turns to Dynamite.

DRAGLINE

You see mah skinny lid boy at chow
tonight. He was matching you plate
for plate.

DYNAMITE

I wasn't feelin' good. Think I got a
ulcer or somethin'.

DRAGLINE

He had a spoon like yours, he'd make
you look like a possum [...] on a
tree bark.

of

Society Red is lying on his bunk looking at the bottom
the bunk above.

SOCIETY RED

Oh, come on, Clarence.

Dragline sits up and looks at him aggressively.

DRAGLINE

What do you mean, Clarence? You
callin' me a liar?

He waits.

SOCIETY RED

Not a liar. You just have a common --
and likable -- tendency toward
exaggeration.

DRAGLINE

(proudly)

He's the champeen hog-gut of this
camp. Hell, I seen him eat ten
choc'lat bars and seven cold drinks
in fifteen minutes. He kin eat busted
bottles and rusty nails, any damn
thing. If you'd so kindly oblige as
to let me cut off your yankee head,
he'd even eat that.

LUKE

I can eat fifty eggs.

him

They turn to look at him as though surprised to find there. Before Dragline can think he says...

DRAGLINE

Nobody kin eat fifty eggs.

SOCIETY RED

(to Dragline)

You just said he could eat anything.

DRAGLINE

(doubtfully, to Luke)

You ever eat fifty eggs?

LUKE

Nobody ever ate fifty eggs.

GAMBLER

Bet! Bet! Babalugats!

DRAGLINE

Mah boy say he kin eat fifty eggs, he'll eat fifty eggs.

LOUDMOUTH STEVE

Yeah but in how long?

LUKE

One hour.

SOCIETY RED

Well I believe I'll have to take part of that wager.

DRAGLINE

Two bucks.

GAMBLER

Let's talk money.

DRAGLINE

Awright, twenty bucks. Anything! The Syndicate'll cover any money you got. Koko, get paper.

KOKO

Dragline... fifty eggs got to weigh a good six pounds.

DYNAMITE

(expertly)

Man's gut can't hold that. They'll swell up and bust him open.

BLIND DICK

You're gonna kill him.

DRAGLINE

Getcha money, up. Gambler! Dynamite! Everybody. Kokonut Head here is taking

the money. Loudmouth -- get it up!

purpose
building

The initial boredom of the scene is dispelled -- a
has been created to lead them through the endless
of time.

GAMBLER

How's he gonna eat 'em?

LUKE

(cutting in)

Boiled for fifteen minutes. Then
peeled. I eat all fifty in one hour.

Men are all around Dragline and Koko now with money and
wagers. Koko is frantically scribbling.

DRAGLINE

Koko, write down their names, don't
just make marks.

SOCIETY RED

One rule! No throwing up. He throws
up, you forfeit everything.

DRAGLINE

You ever see mah boy throw up? Shut
your mouth and put up your money!

assorting
Luke.

Koko is on the floor now with Babalugats beside him,
papers, handing out betting receipts. Dragline turns to

DRAGLINE

Why'd you have to say fifty? Why not
thirty-five or thirty-nine?

LUKE

Fifty's a nice round number.

DRAGLINE

Damn, Luke. What's the matter with
you? what's the matter with me?

LUKE

(winking)

Nothin' to worry about. We got a
deadlock on that mullet.

EXT. PRISON YARD MOVING TWO SHOT (DAY)

a

Luke and Dragline jog around the yard like roadwork for
boxer and trainer.

DRAGLINE

What did I do? Stole and stole lies.
I loved mah neighbor and his wife,

but what did I do to deserve this lunatic to come in mah happy home and beat me outa hard earned bread.

LUKE

(grins)

We got it locked in the sock.

DRAGLINE

Yeah, I know. But what we gotta do first is stretch that l'il ol' belly of yours -- git it all strained out, in fightin' shape, like a barrage balloon.

LUKE

You ol' sack of guts. I had a belly like yours, we wouldn't have nothin' to worry about.

DRAGLINE

(considers paunch)

'Atsa sign I got me an affectionate nature.

LUKE

Like an elephant.

DRAGLINE

(grinning)

Us elephants may be a lil slow, like in makin' love, but you give us a coupla three days to really get with it an' man -- stand back!

Luke grins.

LUKE IN THE CHOWLINE

taking enormous helpings.

DOGBOY

Lookit this hot gut, Boss. Here's a man gone bust the State feedin' his face.

BOSS HIGGINS

Wisht I could eat like that.

LUKE

Thing about bad food, you got to eat a lot of it.

OMITTED

LUKE

muscles
He sits in a yoga position, rippling his stomach
miraculously. Koko and Gambler pop INTO THE SHOT to
watch

with amazement.

INT. MESS HALL (NIGHT)

his Luke refuses food. He moves to his place, sits before empty plate.

INT. BARRACKS (NIGHT)

as Dragline stops in front of the Wicker Man.

DRAGLINE

Boss! Man needs a brown bomber and a dose of salts.

Instant UPROAR of protest.

SOCIETY RED

Rules Committee! Rules Committee!

ALIBI

Nobody said nothin' about that!

LOUDMOUTH STEVE

Same as dopin' a race horse!

SLEEPY

It don't sound right.

TATTOO

You can't do that!

DRAGLINE

You jes' watch us!

BLIND DICK

Fair's fair.

KOKO

Got a right to start with a clear gut!

DYNAMITE

Man can't eat that much no matter --

LOUDMOUTH STEVE

You can't just change the rules any way you want!

Wicker, All of this is overlapping: Dragline walks through them carrying the pile and cup of salts passed out from the ignoring it all.

INT. KITCHEN

pots Outside JABO, the cook, is lowering the sacks of eggs into huge of boiling water. Carr stands by with a watch, timing.

the open door are Dragline, Dynamite and Gambler
watching tensely.

DRAGLINE

Take it easy now, Jabo. Them is eggs,
not them cathead biscuits.

JABO

I know what eggs look like. I ain't
seen any around here for three years,
but I remember.

ANGLE ON BARRACKS DOOR (DAY)

as a file of men carry the still-steaming eggs in their
hats from the yard into the building.

RABBIT

(adding on a scrap of
paper)

I've got it figured. If he eats an
egg a minute, he's got 10 minutes
left to swaller them.

CHIEF

I just got sent five bucks from the
rodeo company.

RABBIT

What for?

CHIEF

A bull I fell off.

INT. BARRACKS

as the line of men reach the poker table and begin
stacking up the eggs. The Rules Committee sits around the table
leaving one side for Luke. It's all set up with towels, etc.
They are counting eggs carefully, piling them in pyramids.
Dragline picks up an egg and cracks it smartly on the table.
Again uproar...

DRAGLINE

Awright! Stand back, you pedestrians,
this ain't no automobile accident!

ALIBI

You're peeling his eggs!

DRAGLINE

That's right, Mister Alibi.

SOCIETY RED

He peels the eggs himself. That's understood.

DRAGLINE

You jus' may be great at hangin' paper around the big cities, but us country boys is not entirely brainless. When it comes to the law, nothin' is understood.

LOUDMOUTH STEVE

Who made what law about peeling his eggs?

DRAGLINE

I'm his trainer, I'm the syndicate what's coverin' all bets, and I'm his official egg peeler.

SOCIETY RED

Just wait till the hour starts, that's all.

the
bends.
from a
combs
ready,
The champion enters and the talk dies. He's naked from waist. He does some side-straddle hops and deep-knee bends. His stomach is markedly concave. He, drying himself from a shower, walks to the fragment of mirror on the wall and combs his hair, studies his image a second and, at last ready, moves to the table and sits down.

LUKE

(ingeniously)

What's goin' on?

Luke's
and
his
peeled and
watch,
hand.
and
Luke
Dragline jumps up and gives a second's rubdown to shoulders. There is a flurry of last minute betting, and then silence. Everybody gathered around. Luke shuffles his feet, twitches his toes. One egg from the pile is peeled and watch, his eyes on his wrist hand. Carr waits, his eyes on his wrist hand. All eyes rest on that hand. All eyes drop as the hand drops. Dragline grabs eggs and peels them, his fingers flickering, the shells flying. Luke picks up the peeled egg and eats it in a gulp.

CUTS OF LUKE, DRAGLINE, REACTIONS

LUKE

He's eating very fast.

SOCIETY RED
(keeping a written
tab)
One, two, three...
(continues counting,
throughout)

KOKO
He's gonna lose a finger eating eggs
like that.

mouth, his
of
Dragline reaches over and pops an egg into Luke's
pinkie extended, like tossing a tidbit into the mouth
of
some animal.

FULL SHOT LUKE IN THE CENTER
The others stand around, motionless. Dragline cracks
and
peels and Luke eats in a regular musical rhythm
inexorable
and horrible as it is sustained. Red is checking and
counting
off eggs...

SOCIETY RED
...twenty-four. Twenty-five, twenty-
six...

LUKE
His face bears an expression of ineffable absent
pleasure as
though eggs reminded him of something a long way away.

DRAGLINE
looking at him, neutral...

DRAGLINE
Slow down a little.

THE GROUP
Some chew fingernails, some stare, some mouth open,
some
stand with unlighted cigarettes in their mouths,
staring.
Some have eyes shut, their lips silently counting with
Red.

SOCIETY RED
...thirty, thirty-one, thirty-two.

LUKE

as
barracks
him,
out,
down,
walks
distaste.
moves
and
eyes,
out his

He stops and stands up, stretching. His stomach bulges though he were pregnant. Slowly he walks across the toward the water faucet. Dragline stands looking after alarmed. Luke slowly bends over and washes his mouth not taking a drink. He stands, turns, walks up and does some exercises. Silence, no one else moves. He back, looks at the eggs, making an expression of He turns away and does some more exercises. Gambler over very close to him. Luke is going up and down, up down doing knee bends. Gambler tries to look into his examine his stomach, listen to his wind. Luke sticks tongue obligingly for a check. Gambler stands up.

SOCIETY RED

Eighteen to go!

Onionhead's
tellers.

There is a flurry of last-minute betting led by examination. Koko, Babalugats beside him, are the

GAMBLER

He's had it. I'm throwin' in my last tenner.

Sleepy appears, as does Tramp, to make beta.

BLIND DICK

He don't look good.

DYNAMITE

(expertly)

Man's gut can't hold more'n that.

GAMBLER

Oh you gonna come crawlin' around beggin' for a cold drink, Drag. Your boy is done for!

Mechanic has been studying Luke as if he were an ailing carburetor.

MECHANIC

(quietly to Dragline)

If I give you a dollar and he don't eat all fifty eggs, I get two dollars?

DRAGLINE

Mechanic!

Dragline puts his arm around Mechanic's shoulders affectionately.

DRAGLINE

You're a sweet old boy and I don't like to see you pick up no bad habits. Better use that dollar to buy yourself a new spark plug or something. But as long as you done took a stand, why don't you put some money where your mouth is? Not no measly buck!

MECHANIC

All I got is three-seventy-five.

DRAGLINE

It's a bet! Koko! I gone this far, I'm backin' mah boy all the way! Come on, who's next? Where are the big money men, I want to hear from some high rollers.

Silence.

SOCIETY RED

I believe you've got it all, Dragline. Every nickel in camp is riding.

appears to
be
Dragline
eating.

Dragline turns to Luke and grins. Luke instantly recover and walks casually back to the table. It should clear this last was a little put-on between him and to milk the last money into bets. Luke sits and begins

LUKE

the
His
swivel
lest

cool, confident, but as the egg is crushed in his mouth first real gagging feeling of total surfeit hits him. His jaw closes and freezes. His eyes grow desperate and toward Dragline, though he doesn't dare move his head he give way to nausea.

DRAGLINE

reacts.

LUKE

with a herculean effort, he swallows.

SOCIETY RED'S VOICE

Thirty-three.

about, Dragline swallows with relief. Gambler moves and looks
a man feeling victory within his grasp.

ALIBI

Carr? What's the time?

CARR

Twenty-four minutes to go.

forehead. Luke swallows another egg; sweat bursts out on his
and Dragline signals to a second, Koko, to sit in for him
peel eggs. He moves to Luke.

SOCIETY RED

Thirty-four.

TWO SHOT LUKE AND DRAGLINE

and as Dragline stands behind him, massaging his shoulders
Red neck, tenderly... Luke doggedly eats eggs, one by one.
counts off under...

SOCIETY RED

Thirty-nine... forty... forty-one...
forty-two...

MEANWHILE:

DRAGLINE

Come on, boy, come on, darlin'. You
kin do her. Just let that ol' belly
sag and enjoy itself. Stay loose,
buddy. Eight more, between you and
everlasting glory. Little ol' eggs,
pigeon eggs, that's all, fish eggs
practically.

hold Luke almost throws up, and Dragline signals Koko to
up and up... he gets Luke off his feet and begins walking him
down the barracks...

LOUDMOUTH STEVE

Carr? Time?

CARR

Six minutes to go, Dragline.

DRAGLINE

(into Luke's ear)

Just shakin' it down, that's all,
settlin' them eggs down...

Luke's He sits him down, takes an egg from Koko and puts it to

lips, pursing his lips in a kiss...

DRAGLINE

Come on, Baby... don't be that way.
Open your little ol' gator mouth.

Luke opens his mouth, in goes the egg, he chews, chews,
swallows. Another egg...

SOCIETY RED

Forty-four...

CARR

Two minutes to time...

DRAGLINE

All right now: get mad at them eggs.
Eat it there boy! Bite it! Gnaw on
it!

SOCIETY RED

Forty-five.

CARR

One minute, thirty seconds.

Another egg goes. Luke closes his eyes and motions to
Dragline; just stuff 'em in any old how!

DRAGLINE

That's it, that's how to do it, chew,
chew, chew!

couple
to
themselves

All eggs peeled, Koko is up and dancing wildly, and a
of men, even though they've got nothing but everything
lose, are intoxicated beyond power to restrain
and are yelling and jumping up and down.

CARR

One minute, fifty-five... fifty...
forty-five... etc.

SOCIETY RED

Forty-five, forty-six, forty-seven...

Dragline
and

So that it all comes out in a near dead-heat, with
yelling and popping in eggs. At the last second before
deadline, two whole eggs are shoved into Luke's mouth,
Dragline rams Luke's mouth shut for him...

DRAGLINE

All in: that's it: chew, chew, chew!

CARR

Fifteen, ten, nine, eight, seven...
six...

Luke looks around, then takes a mighty swallow, as:

CARR

One... zero!

flung

Luke collapses with his head on the table, his arms out.

SOCIETY RED

He didn't swallow the last...

Dragline

He grabs him by the hair and pulls his head back. prries his mouth open with his fingers. Luke is out...

DRAGLINE

You think so, huh?

NEW ANGLE PAST LUKE'S EAR

looks

as they all peer down into his throat. Dragline grins, around at Society.

DRAGLINE

Where's the egg?

mouth
thump,

A

the

new

next

He slaps Luke on the cheek affectionately, closes his and lets his head fall back on the table with a loud his arms again sprawled out in the piles of egg shells. dance of victory for Dragline... he collects all over place. Dynamite, shaking his head, quietly knights the champion hog-gut by laying his big spoon on the table to Luke's head.

EXT. ROAD (DAY)

the

rhythmically.

A car ROARS by, leaving a hint of laughter and music in air and a cloud of dust. The men are working Godfrey watching.

ANGLE ON LOUDMOUTH STEVE GAMBLER

They have been observing Godfrey.

LOUDMOUTH STEVE

Man looks like a goddamn bus driver.

GAMBLER

(yoyoing)

He gets too close to me and I'll cut

his belly open.

OMITTED

ANGLE ON KOKO

He sees snake.

KOKO'S VOICE

Snake in the grass! Boss!

yoyos
we
it,
He runs. Men flail at the snake in the grass with their
and CAMERA MOVES WITH Snake though we can't see it and
follow its progress only by the men jumping, hitting at
yelling.

GODFREY

into
the
He rams his cane into the soft sand and Rabbit reaches
the truck cab and hands him his rifle. Godfrey slams
bolt in.

BACK TO MEN

Luke,
holding
They jump and yell and chase the snake until they reach
who stoops, grabs cooly and comes up with the snake,
it by the tail.

LUKE

Pickin' it up here, Boss!

GODFREY

DUPLICATE,
wriggling
long
see
the
CAMERA
so we
His EYES HUGE IN THE SCREEN: Luke seen there IN
standing tall in the sun, grinning, the rattler
and thrashing in his grasp. Godfrey's face holds for a
beat then the rifle is brought up so that we can now
Luke CLEAR IN ONE LENS and the other he is lined up in
rifle sight pointing directly INTO THE LENS -- or just
LEFT. There is a SHOT and the rifle is lowered enough
can see Luke IN DUPLICATE again.

LUKE

The
looking at Godfrey, grinning, but a little tougher now.

the
brings
sand.
cane

snake has no head. He walks down a little and throws
body of the snake on the road at Godfrey's feet. It
him close to where Godfrey's cane still stands in the
Godfrey kicks at the snake. He turns... Luke pulls the
out of the sand and holds it out to Godfrey.

LUKE

Don't forget your walking stick,
Boss.

holds
of
puts
before
turns

Godfrey turns to face him and stares at him. Luke just
the stick out to him. Godfrey slowly takes the bolt out
the rifle, looks down the barrel, blows the smoke out,
the bolt in his pocket and hands the gun back to Rabbit
finally reaching out and taking the stick from Luke. He
and walks away.

LUKE

You shore can shoot, man.

he

Godfrey's shoulders almost jerk as though at every word
were being hit with invisible bullets.

SKY CLOUD THUNDER LIGHTNING

EXT. ROAD DRAGLINE LUKE

working.

DRAGLINE

Luke, why you actin' so strange?
What you wanna do somethin' like
that for? You gone too far when you
mess with the Man With No Eyes. You
gonna be outa here in a little bit --
whyn't you jus' take it a little
easy?

growing

Luke has been staring up at the darkening sky which is
more ominous with clashing clouds and rolling thunder.

LUKE

Man, it looks like the Big Boss is
getting ready to let us have it!

turning

It begins to rain, large spattering drops, quickly
into a downpour.

BOSS PAUL (O.S.)

Awright, you kin git in that truck.

and The gang rushes back into the shelter, all except Luke
Dragline.

LUKE

Look at Him go. Bam! Bam!

DRAGLINE

Knock it off, Luke! You cain't talk
about Him that way.

Dragline begins to move off toward the truck.

LUKE

You still believe in the Big Bearded
Boss, Drag? You think he's up there
watching us?

bush He grins at Dragline and then, after a beat, raises his
axe straight up to the sky, grinning at Dragline.

ANGLE ON DRAGLINE

He is frightened as he backs off toward the truck.

DRAGLINE

Get in here! Ain't you scared --
ain't you scared of dyin'?

ANGLE ON LUKE

The rain is torrential. He has to shout to be heard.

LUKE

Dyin'? He can take back this nice
pretty life any time He wants.
(looks up)
You welcome to it, Old Timer. Come
on! Make me know you're up there!
Kill me or love me, one or the other.

He holds his bush axe again, laughing, soaking wet.

REVERSE BACK OF TRUCK

shocked The men jammed into the frame of the body, a frieze of
blinding faces staring out at him through the rain. There is a
but flash of lightning and a THUNDEROUS ROAR. They wince
don't turn away.

LUKE

truck. He smiles and lowers the bush axe, walking toward the

LUKE

Standin' out here in the rain! All
alone! Talkin' to myself.

climbs
He smiles a little shamefaced, rueful, sad smile and
into the truck and the men draw back from him.

ANGLE THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD OF THE TRUCK PARKED BEHIND
Godfrey seen dimly through the rain-misted windshield.

(DAY)
EXT. YOYO SHIMMERING IN THE SUN TRANSITIONAL DEVICE

INT. BARRACKS (NIGHT)

Dragline,
of
changing
Dick
It is the free hour. But instead of the poker game,
Luke and Koko sit at the table dealing with their line
debtors from the egg-eating. Koko acts as secretary,
the amounts as the men pay off or borrow more. As Blind
receives his money and leaves:

DRAGLINE

(to Koko)

Blind Dick is payin' us off three
and borrowin' back five. Next!

It is Tattoo.

DRAGLINE

Borrowin' or payin' back?

TATTOO

Borrowin'.

DRAGLINE

Mister Cool Hand here is the soft
heart in our Loan Department. Next!

ON CARR AT THE WICKER (NIGHT)

He
business
He has just been handed a telegram by the Wicker Man.
reads it impassive as always, while in b.g., the
continues and we HEAR:

SOCIETY RED'S VOICE

I believe I still owe you thirty. I
don't suppose you'd take a check.

TATTOO'S VOICE

(to Luke)

My Navy disability didn't come yet.
You know how it is.

the Carr finishes reading and we FOLLOW HIM as he walks to table.

LUKE

Sure do... that's why we didn't bet with the Navy.

DRAGLINE

Oh, that's mah darlin' Luke. Grins like a baby and bites like a 'gator.

Carr sets the telegram on the table next to Luke.

CARR

Sorry, Luke.

down, Luke picks up the telegram and reads. Then he sets it takes stands and goes to his bunk. Dragline looks after him, up the telegram and hands it up to Society Red.

SOCIETY RED

(after reading)

His mother's dead.

ANGLE ON LOUDMOUTH STEVE

book and As he sees Luke go to his bunk, he picks up his sex the moves down to the other end of the barracks. Alibi does same with the cigarette papers and tobacco he has been rolling.

ANGLE ON LUKE

drawn- sitting on his bunk, bare feet tucked up beneath his banjo. up legs, softly picking out a slow hymn melody on his Tears slowly stream down his cheeks.

ANGLE ON CARR

other as Luke continues playing softly. He walks down to the end of the barracks, too.

FULL SHOT BARRACKS

giving All of the other men are congregated at the other end, only Luke what privacy they can. There is no conversation, the slow, plaintive plucking of the banjo.

ANGLE ON LUKE CLOSE

playing, the tears coursing.

NEW ANGLE ON LUKE

in his bunk now, staring wet-eyed up at the ceiling.

CARR'S VOICE

Fifty, boss.

WICKERMAN'S VOICE

Fifty, awright, Carr.

EXT. MESS HALL (PRE-DAWN)

is
hurry-
As the men pour out they see that the light on the box
burning, a nightshirt is hung on the fence. Their usual
up pace is slowed to a nervous, apprehensive gait.

BOSS PAUL

Awright, git lined up here.

ANGLE ON CAPTAIN'S PORCH

gets
He has been watching, rocking. As the men line up, he
up and goes down the steps toward the yard.

CAPTAIN'S P.O.V.

facing
pushing the gate open, moving in front of Boss Paul,
the men.

CAPTAIN

Luke, fall out.

steps
the
Luke steps forward, pulls off his shirt and jacket. He
behind the latticework screen to take off his pants as
Captain speaks.

CAPTAIN'S VOICE

(emotionless)

When a man's mother dies and he gits
to thinkin' about her funeral and
payin' respects, before he knows it
his mind ain't right and he's got
rabbit in his blood and runs. We're
keepin' you off the road fer awhile.

He has said all he has to say. He walks off.

FULL SHOT LUKE AND THE MEN

opens
They are watching him slip on the nightshirt. Boss Kean
the box.

BOSS KEAN

(to Luke)
Ah'm jus' doin' mah job, Luke. You
gotta appreciate that.

ANGLE ON LUKE IN BOX

LUKE
Boss, when you do somethin' to me
you better do it because you got to
or want to... but not because it's
your damn job.

ANGLE ON KEAN

His eyes narrow. The box door slams. Greyness.

BOSS PAUL'S VOICE (O.S.)
Awright, let's move it out!

gate and
And o.s. the SOUNDS of the men counting through the
the truck engines coughing.

EXT. ROAD DAWN (NIGHT)

and
The bull gang truck pulling out. In b.g. the barracks
the light over the box.

EXT. CAMP

the men
gate.
The bull gang truck stopping. The back is opened and
jump out, line up and begin counting off through the
In b.g. as they count is Luke's voice singing.

CLOSE ON DRAGLINE

He smiles... oh that Luke!

CLOSE ON BOSS GODFREY

listening to the mocking voice.

EXT. BARRACKS

It is the next morning. The tire iron SOUNDS.

CARR'S VOICE
First bell! First bell! Let's go!

Seven
The figures of Boss Paul and Boss Seven go to the box.
carries Luke's food.

INT. BOX PAUL'S P.O.V.

illuminates
as it is opened. The dimness of the overhead bulb
Luke.

LUKE

Shut the door, Boss. You're lettin'
in a draft.

ANGLE ON PAUL

His face corrodes in fury.

BOSS PAUL

Git on your feet! Ah'm gonna teach
you some respect right now!

But
wildly
corner,

Furiously he tries to cane Luke with his walking stick.
the cramped quarters restrict him. The cane clangs
against the sides of the box as Luke crouches in a
covering his head.

ANGLE ON LUKE

protecting, as Boss Paul retreats. The box door slams!
Greyness.

EXT. BARRACKS (AFTERNOON)

light

as the bull gang counts in after the day's work. The
on the box still burns. No sound from Luke.

CLOSE ON DRAGLINE

He looks worried.

EXT. BARRACKS (NIGHT)

The tire rim SOUNDS and the men scurry for their bunks.

CARR'S VOICE

Last bell! Last bell!
(the pacing of his
steps)
Forty-nine, Boss. And one in the
box.

WICKERMAN'S VOICE

Forty-nine and one in the box. Right,
Carr.

EXT. BARRACKS (PRE-DAWN)

opening

Boss Paul, carrying a shotgun, and Boss Seven are
the box. In b.g. the tire rim SOUNDS.

CARR'S VOICE

First bell! First bell! Let's go!

hurrying And the uproar of the men getting out of their bunks,
to dress and line up by the chute.

shot- INT. BOX CLOSE SHOT LUKE'S P.O.V.
as the door opens and the double muzzle of Boss Paul's
gun stares.

crossed BOSS PAUL'S P.O.V.
Luke is standing at the rear of the box, his arms
and over his chest, his eyes slightly wild, his face dirty
bloodhound stubbled. In b.g. the SOUND of Rudolph, the pet
puppy, yipping.

biscuit, LUKE'S P.O.V.
Paul's gun draws back. Boss Seven hands Paul a heavy
trousers, grinning. Rudolph is sniffing, nipping at Paul's
smelling the biscuit.

nips BOSS PAUL
You look hongry, Luke.
(tosses biscuit in
his hand)
Reckon this would taste mighty good,
but Rudolph looks pretty hongry,
too. Why don't we split it with the
pooch, okay?

He breaks the biscuit and dangles half over Rudolph who
and barks for it.

BOSS PAUL
(feeding Rudolph)
Tha's a good boy.
(to Luke)
Well, here's your piece, Luke.

ON LUKE
He speaks in a low, uneven voice.

LUKE
Might as well give it all to him,
Boss. I just ain't much hongry.

ON BOSS PAUL
Livid with rage, he slams the door! Greyness.

EXT. LAUNDRY FENCE CLOSE ON LAUNDRY FLYING OVER FENCE
(AFTERNOON)

and as LAUNDRY BOY tries to catch the flying sheets, pants shirts being tossed by the men. Behind him we SEE the steaming, pumping cleaning machines.

EXT. YARD (AFTERNOON)

Seven Laundry boy and machines in b.g. as Boss Kean and Boss go to the box. Boss Seven carries Luke's shoes and a freshly cleaned set of state issues. The men turn.

INT. BOX (AFTERNOON)

down, as the door opens. Luke looks up. Kean's face stares not unkind. Luke moves forward.

OMITTED

EXT. BOX (AFTERNOON)

as Luke emerges, Kean behind him.

BOSS KEAN

(gently)

She's in the ground now, Luke. Best forget about it. You got a day ana half lay-in... and tomorrow's a holiday.

OMITTED

INT. BARRACKS (EVENING)

radios The Fourth of July. All hell is breaking loose. Four going, chain men jitterbugging, one of the men has a mouth harmonica, another plucks Luke's banjo. A lemonade barrel is in a corner and men dip into it with coke bottles; others are banging together bottles as instruments, playing combs, etc.

ANGLE ON ALIBI AND DYNAMITE

just filling their bottles with lemonade.

ALIBI

(toasting)

Happy Fourth of July.

SLEEPY

Same to you.

ALIBI

Boy, if anyone had told me where I
was going to be spending Independence
Day...

(shakes his head)

ON MUSIC MAKERS, OTHERS

singing
possible.
some
confused.

Most of them are concentrated in front of Luke's bunk,
and screaming, trying to make as much noise as
Tattoo is reading a new sex book aloud while Dynamite,
Loudmouth Steve, others listen intently, some avid,
confused.

TATTOO

(reading)

Wanda trembled, faced by this awesome
decision. It was the moment of choice.
Could she take the plunge and wantonly
hurl herself into pagan abandon? Or
would she remain ever fettered by
the bonds of her puritanical
upbringing? Could she take this chance
to experience the sensual thrill of
total release and gratification? Or
would she turn her back and retreat
into frigid denial? Desire and fear,
temptation and terror, yearning and
horror, warred within her beautiful
young body...

revellers.
hands
hacksaw.

Luke is not to be seen among the music-makers and
Moving through the crowd, the CAMERA FINDS Luke on his
and knees, sawing at the floorboard with a piece of

ANGLE ON CARR

over
the din.

as the tire iron SOUNDS and SOUNDS again to be heard

CARR

First bell! Let's git to bed. You
done had your fun.

song,
time,
Blondie,
anatomical

The singers and music-makers around Luke finish their
reaching a high, piercing, noisy crescendo. At the same
Dragline has been reading another sex book to Stupid
Blind Dick and Chief who are trying to act out the
description, tying themselves into an intricate
knot.

DRAGLINE

(reading)

She moved her head another inch while he reached up and put his left hand on Carol's cheek as Carol pressed her lips to... Oh Lord, I can't read it!

attracting
still
He wriggles, panting with eye-popping pleasure, Carr's attention. Stupid Blondie, Rabbit and Chief are trying to untie themselves.

DRAGLINE

Carr. Lookit this. Oh I don't believe it.

CARR

What you got there, Drag? You bought yourself another of them dirty books?

follows
is
Intrigued, Carr sits down on Dragline's bunk and Dragline's finger pointing out the lascivious parts. He quickly absorbed.

ANGLE ON DRAGLINE

legs
into
He looks over toward Luke who can be seen between the of the surrounding men, poised, waiting to drop down the hole. Dragline winks.

ANGLE ON LUKE

the
He winks back, grins and disappears through the hole in floor.

ANGLE ON DRAGLINE AND CARR

The tutor and the student.

DRAGLINE

Here's a real hot one!

Carr reads intently.

ON THE HOLE BENEATH LUKE'S BUNK

gaping, empty, inviting.

VARIOUS REACTIONS OF MEN

A. KOKO - suppressing a giggle.

B. SOCIETY RED - considering it, cowardly.

C. ALIBI - tense, nervous.

ANGLE ON TATTOO

eyes
scurries
He has been considering it, weighing his chances, his
darting from the hole to Carr, back again. Now he
to the hole, drops inside.

ANGLE ON CARR, DRAGLINE

as the tire iron SOUNDS. Carr gets up.

CARR

Awright, last bell!

count.
The men are in their bunks, Carr begins to make his
As he comes to Tatto's bunk:

WICKER MAN'S VOICE

HEY, CARR! WHAT'S THAT OUTSIDE?

Carr rushes to the window.

CARR

Somebody's on the fence, boss!

EXT. YARD ON THE FENCE

clamor
starts
It is Tattoo, half-way up the fence, startled by the
as the Wicker Man whales the GONG. He falls back down,
up again, dogs BARKING.

EXT. YARD NEW ANGLE

dogs
as guards come running from the Captain's house, the
HOWLING.

ON TATTOO

starting
canes,
like a
go
and
frantically trying to get up the fence, falling down,
to run, seeing the guards approaching with guns and
turning to the other direction: more guards. Caught
rat, eyes wild with fear, he makes terrified motions to
in one direction, then the other but is rooted by fear
indecision as the guards move in. He SCREAMS.

INT. BARRACKS ANGLE ON WICKER AND DOOR

self-
which is unlocked. Dogboy is dressed, combing his hair,

their
others

importantly putting on his gloves while the men lie in
bunks, staring contemptuously. Boss Paul, Godfrey and
stare with shotguns leveled from the wicker.

BOSS PAUL

Who else?

Carr has been tearing a sheet off Luke's bed.

CARR

Jackson. He cut a hole in the floor,
Boss.

He hands the sheet to Dogboy.

BOSS PAUL

He ain't even got the sense to run
from the road like everybody else.

DOGBOY

Blue'll git him, Boss. We'll git
that bastid, Cool Hand Luke.

OMITTED

EXT. DOG PEN MED. CLOSE SHOT (NIGHT)

screen
sheet.

Boss Paul is unlocking the pen. Dogboy stands by the
letting the yapping, frothing hounds sniff at the

BOSS PAUL

Stan' back, Dogboy. Git the leash
here.

one,
has

As he opens the pen, the hounds rush out. Dogboy grabs
Boss Paul grabs another but Big Blue, the lead hound,
the scent and he bolts, howling and tearing off.

DOGBOY

Blue! Come back here! Come back, I
said.

EXT. SWAMP (NIGHT)

water. In

Luke, smiling, running like hell through the murky
b.g. Blue's baying.

EXT. SWAMP (NIGHT)

Blue in pursuit, sniffing, dashing, on the trail.

EXT. SWAMP (NIGHT)

muddy,
unhappily
Shorty.

Dogboy with the other dogs being pulled through the
murky, thickly-foliaged swamp. Behind him, wading
through knee-deep water are Bosses Paul, Higgins and

Higgins and
Dogboy
the

EXT. ABANDONED RAILROAD STATION NIGHT (LATER)

Boss Paul is on the phone to the Captain, Bosses
Shorty sit disconsolate, dirty, wet, exhausted. Only
is still eager, two hounds by his feet, listening in
distance to the howl of Blue baying.

DOGBOY

Listen to Blue sing. She's on to
him. She says: got him.

BOSS SHORTY

Hail, that dog is jus' runnin' in
circles.

BOSS PAUL

(returning from phone)

Captain says to wait 'til the Patrol
gits here.

DOGBOY

(listening to Blue)

She's on to him. You shoulda waited
fer me to git her out -- loose like
she is, he kin run her crazy.

BOSS PAUL

It ain't my fault you don't know how
to handle your dogs.

DOGBOY

How my suppose to handle a dog someone
jus' let loose?

BOSS HIGGINS

I'm beat. This ain't mah job, nohow.

BOSS SHORTY

Me neither.

A Highway Patrol car pulls up.

BOSS PAUL

Here's the Patrol.

DOGBOY

(pulling up dogs)

She's got him! You hear that?

Higgins and Shorty shake their heads wearily.

OFFICER
(to Dogboy)
Okay, let's get started.

EXT. FARM COUNTRY (PIPELINES) (NIGHT)

Luke steps under and through the pipeline supports and vanishes. In b.g. Blue's plaintive HOWLING.

EXT. FARM COUNTRY (PIPELINES) DAY (DAWN)

having
behind
Dogboy moves ACROSS the SCENE with his pack of dogs, trouble following through the supports. The Officer him.

CLOSE SHOT DOGBOY

pull
plodding along, exhausted, yanking at the dogs as they in different directions.

DOGBOY
Come on, Rudolph, Austin, you no good buncha chicken-eaters, we're lookin' for a man. We got us a job to do.

EXT. BUSH BY FENCE (NEAR RAILROAD TRACKS) (DAY)

yards,
the
Luke carefully slips through the barbs, runs a few slips back through again, runs a few yards, returns to other side.

EXT. BUSH BY FENCE (NEAR RAILROAD TRACKS) DAY (LATER)

HOWLING,
that
the
Dogboy with his pack and the Officer. In b.g. Blue is the dogs are BAYING frantically. It is with trouble Dogboy and the Officer get through the fence, pulled by eager dogs. Then they must cross it again.

OFFICER
Your dogs are crazy.

DOGBOY
He keeps criss-crossin'. He's smarter'n a dog. But he ain't got us boxed yet... Blue'll get him.

OMITTED

EXT. RAILROAD BRIDGE DAY

break
A trestle built of creosoted timber. The dogs reach it,

out
BAYING.
up into a milling, confused mass. Dogboy wrestles them
of the trestle. In b.g. as always, Blue's plaintive

ANGLE ON BRIDGE

as Dogboy fights the dogs to get them across.

ANGLE ON FAR SIDE OF BRIDGE

different
as Dogboy hauls at the dogs who are pulling in
directions.

CLOSE SHOT DOGBOY

exhausted, disappointed, looking around, puzzled.

NEW ANGLE

The dogs are confused, seem to mill around aimlessly.

DOGBOY

(almost in tears)

Dammit.

(calling)

Blue! Blue!

No answer.

EXT. FARMLAND ORCHARD TRACKING SHOT OF LUKE

jungle.
cover
is a
which,
free.
running through the thick overhead cover. It is like a
PULLING UP SLOWLY to HELICOPTER SHOT, we SEE that the
is only a small patch of foliage and on the other side
huge panorama of rolling, empty moor-like country in
after a moment, Luke enters, a tiny figure, running

EXT. CAMP (LATE AFTERNOON)

spoons,
pulls
yipping of
rocker
toward
The men are coming out of the mess hall, washing their
about to line up for inspection. A Highway Patrol car
up outside the gate; from the back seat comes the
dogs. Every head turns. The Captain moves from his
and starts down the porch. Boss Paul and Godfrey move
the car.

CLOSE ON PATROL CAR (LATE AFTERNOON)

and
figure
Rudolph
be
Officer
of
Dogboy

as the Officer (seen at the railroad station) gets out
opens the front door. He nudges a sleeping, grizzled
who emerges. It is Dogboy. The back door is opened and
and the other small dogs leap out, cavorting, glad to
home. Then the Officer and Dogboy go to the trunk. The
opens it. Dogboy reaches in and carries out -- the body
Big Blue. Staggering with fatigue, tears in his eyes,
stumbles up to the Captain.

DOGBOY

Look, Cap'n. Look what he done to
Blue. He's dead, Cap'n. Dead! Run
hisself plumb to death. That crazy
sadis Cool Hand Luke run her 'til
her heart bust.

ANGLE ON DRAGLINE KOKO

DRAGLINE

He made it.

EXT. BARRACKS (NIGHT)

CARR'S VOICE

Forty-eight, Boss. One in the box
and one in the bush.

EXT. ROAD

embankment
heads,
away at

The Bull Gang is working at the bottom of a high
and the guards stand on the road high above their
looking down, shotguns out now, alert. The men work
a racketsy pace.

EXT. GODFREY'S EYES (DAY)

and
glasses.

as he turns at the SOUND of a distant motor approaching
the image of a car coming closer enlarges in his

EXT. ROAD

The
says

The car pulls up beside the guards and the door opens.
Captain steps up to the road edge and looks down. He
something to Boss Paul.

BOSS PAUL

Awright, hold it!

the car
grins
filthy and
dirty

The men stop working, puzzled, looking up. Then from a guard escorts Luke to the edge of the pavement. Luke down at the men sheepishly. His prison uniform is torn, his hands are cuffed behind his back, his face is and stubbled.

EXT. ROAD PAN REACTIONS OF MEN

They are stunned, saddened.

ANGLE ON LUKE, CAPTAIN, GUARDS

the
held
others
leg
Luke
the
straight
ahead.

Behind Luke are Godfrey, Paul, Bosses Six and Seven and Captain. Kean and Shorty flank the gang. The guns are levelled at the men. One guard uncuffs Luke's hands; produce a sledge hammer, ballpeen hammer and a set of irons from the Captain's car. Two guards kneel before and begin hammering on the irons. Silence except for HAMMERING AND CLINKING. Luke is silhouetted, a tall, figure on the low horizon. The Captain looks directly ahead.

CAPTAIN

(to Luke)

You gonna get used to wearing them chains after a while, Luke. But don't you never stop listenin' to them clinkin'. That's gonna remind you of what I been sayin'.

LUKE

Yeah, they sure do make a lot of cold, hard, noise, Captain.

his
chain
Captain
behind
embankment

The Captain feeds his fury staring, then reaches out hand and Boss Paul lays the blackjack in it. As the guards finish and stand up, trembling with rage, the takes a convulsive step forward and brings the sap down Luke's ear. As Luke tumbles down the littered toward the men:

CAPTAIN

Don't you never talk that way to me!
You hear? You hear? Never!

reasonable. His rage subsides and his voice becomes calm,

CAPTAIN

(to the men)

What we got here is a failure to communicate. Some men you can't reach, that is they just don't listen when you talk reasonable so you get what we had here last week, which is the way he wants it, well he gets it, and I don't like it any better than you men.

Someone
throws a shovel down the embankment. It CLATTERS until
it
lands beside Luke. Dragline and the others are by his
side,
helping him to his feet. Above Godfrey stares down at
them.

ANGLE ON DRAGLINE, LUKE AND OTHERS

DRAGLINE

Awright, buddy. You be awright. You give 'em a run for their money. Jus' take it slow and easy, baby. You gonna make it fine.

shovel
piece of
As Luke tries to get his bearings, someone thrusts the
into his hands and they get him going like a rusty
machinery.

DRAGLINE

Come on, buddy. Show 'em you're awright.

back
work,
Luke seems to nod and begins to work slowly. The others
away, glancing fearfully at the guards, go back to
quiet and sullen.

ANGLE ON LUKE

aching.
He is working with great difficulty, stiff, tired,

BOSS KEAN'S VOICE

Awright, let's eat them beans.

Luke stumbles gratefully toward the chowline.

ON THE CHOWLINE

gloating. Dogboy dishing it out to Luke. Dogboy is gleeful,

DOGBOY

I knew they'd git you. With them chains an a bonus of a coupla years, you runnin' days is over forever. Ah'd like to see you try to run agin. You gettin' so you smell so bad, I could track you myself.

LUKE

For a natural born son of a bitch like you, that oughta be easy.

NEW ANGLE THE MEN

spots
Tattoo in
as Luke settles down with his beans, the others find around him so he is the focus of the group. We SEE chains, forlorn. Luke wolfs his food hungrily.

DRAGLINE

Jus' take it slow, buddy.

KOKO

(unable to restrain himself)

What happened? How far did you get?

DRAGLINE

Shut up. Let him eat. Don't pay them no mind, boy.

TATTOO

(urgently)

I gotta know -- How... how'd they get you?

LUKE

(between mouthfuls)

Topflight police work.

GAMBLER

Tell us about it.

BLIND DICK

You steal a car?

LUKE

Yeah, found one in this supermarket, keys in the ignition.

KOKO

Well, how far didya get?

LUKE

(eating)

Fat mile'n a half. Hit this red light, highway patrol pulls up alongside.

LOUDMOUTH STEVE

Didya fight it out with him?

LUKE

Nope. I jus' kept lookin' straight ahead waiting for that light to change. And he kept lookin' over, wondering what somethin' that looked like me was doin' drivin' a shiny new car.

ALIBI

And then...?

LUKE

Then he leans over and sees this state issue... All there was to it. Feller's probably a lieutenant by now.

clearly Luke continues to shovel in his beans. The men are disappointed. Only Dragline understands.

DRAGLINE

Well now we jus' gonna lay low and build time and afore you know it the heat'll be off you and things be back where they was. Right, sweet buddy?

cheek. Luke winks and slaps Dragline affectionately on the
kite During this last, Luke has been idly winding a piece of
shoves string found on the ground beside him. As, idly, he
it into his pocket.

ANGLE ON BOSS KEAN LATER

at the The gang has resumed working, Kean stands looking out
his horizon, not talking directly to Luke, just leaning on
calm and gun, following Luke whenever he moves, his voice as
secure as a priest in his study.

BOSS KEAN

Ah hears tell you don't believe in no God, Luke. Ah was wonderin' how come a nice lookin' feller like you come to get put on the Hard Road. But now ah reckons ah knows. Ah been on the Road Gang for twenny-two year, Luke, and in all that time I ain't never killed no white man but I ain't afeerd to cause a body has to do his work. And I ain't never seen no man

that wasn't afeerd to die neither.

LUKE

'Scuse me, Boss. Don't mean to interrupt... but... caught short here.

Boss Kean is stunned.

BOSS KEAN

(slow, dangerous)

Awright, Luke. Thas okay... You go on up there in them trees. Man's gotta have some privacy sometime. But you grab a bush and keep shakin' it, hear? Jes' so we know you're there. Jes' keep shakin' that bush.

LUKE

Yes, boss.

looks at
means
rifle
pocket.

He begins to trot off, awkward in his chains. Kean Godfrey who snaps his fingers to Dogboy, a gesture that rifle. Dogboy runs to the truck and brings back the which Godfrey loads and arms with the bolt from his

ANGLE ON LUKE

catching

Slowly walking off into the rough grass, his chains on brush and stumps. He disappears behind a large bush.

CLOSE SHOT GODFREY

shoulder

Luke's bush is in distance. He raises the gun to his and FIRES.

REVERSE HIS P.O.V.

The bush shakes, we can't see Luke.

LUKE

I'm shakin' it, Boss. I'm shakin' it!

SHOT.

We see the dust kick up behind the stump and another

LUKE

Still shakin' it, Boss.

CLOSE SHOT GODFREY

impassively: SHOOTS again, aiming.

REVERSE HIS P.O.V.

The bush goes on shaking. Then it stops.

GODFREY

Caught loading. He brings up the rifle fast, FIRES.

CLOSE THE BUSH

It is still.

FULL SHOT

The gang stops working, looks up stunned.

ANGLE ON BOSS KEAN AND GODFREY

hit
A long beat of shock -- they (and us) think Godfrey's
him. Boss Kean trots hurriedly up to the bush.

ANGLE BY THE BUSH

so
bush
Boss Kean appears, looking down and off. CAMERA ADJUSTS
we see what he sees: a piece of kite string tied to the
and leading off into the brush.

BOSS KEAN

Damn!

He turns and rushing back down toward Godfrey, others.

BOSS KEAN

He's gone! Git the dogs!

EXT. DIRTY ROAD (DAY)

Luke
in
sharecropper's
WOMAN
him to
quickly
and
It is a rutted country road with farms on both sides.
appears, a filthy wide-eyed, stumbling, bearded beast
filthy uniform and chains. PAN with him past
village of ramshackle huts, rusted junk. An OLD NEGRO
sees Luke and goes inside, closing the door. PAN with
a General Store where an OLD NEGRO MAN watching,
retreats inside leaving only two small Negro boys (BEN
LAWRENCE) staring at Luke as he shambles toward them.

LAWRENCE

(looking at chains)

Whattaya got them on for?

BEN

How do you take your pants off?

LUKE

(smiling)

Well -- the best way is to take the leg irons off first.

(to Lawrence)

But you ain't strong enough.

LAWRENCE

Strong enough for whut?

LUKE

You couldn't heft an axe.

LAWRENCE

Can, too.

He's off, running toward a house. In the distance now, we hear the dogs baying, coming closer. Luke smiles at Ben.

LUKE

What's your name?

BEN

Ben.

(a beat)

Had'n you better take them stripes off your pants?

Smiling, Luke sits in the dirt and begins ripping off the stripes as Lawrence appears, dragging a huge double-bitted axe behind him.

LUKE

(to Ben)

You wanna see somethin' funny? Go get some chili powder, pepper, curry, dried mustard and like that. A lot of it.

Ben rockets off and Luke turns to see Lawrence, struggling mightily, attempting to bring the axe over his head and down on the chains.

LUKE

Hold it!

He takes the axe, sets the chains up on a stump and begins to back heavily, BAYING OF DOGS growing louder.

LAWRENCE

No, me, me. Let me do it!

as
with an
Lawrence cries and stomps unhappily, clouding up dust
Luke severs the chain from one shackle. Ben APPEARS
armload of spices.

BEN
Here's them spices.
(looks at Lawrence,
crying, stomping)
What's wrong with him?

dust,
Luke begins backing away, scuffing his feet in the
pouring out the spices as he goes.

ANGLE ON LUKE
closer
stopping at Lawrence. The baying of the dogs is much
now.

LUKE
You remember how them dogs do when
they get here so you can tell me
about it someday.

He is gone.

ON DOGS IN DISTANCE

They are approaching quickly.

ON VILLAGE

Some of the people have reappeared, now go back inside.

ANGLE ON DOGS

noses.
They fill the FRAME, milling around the empty street,
sneezing, howling, stirring up dust, pawing at their

CLOSE LAWRENCE

smiles.
He is peeping from a corner. His tears stop and he

EXT. ROAD CLOSEUP YOYO TRANSITIONAL DEVICE (DAY)

...cutting away at the time.

INT. CAGE TRUCK (PROCESS) (DAY)

as it passes the Negro Church.

DRAGLINE'S VOICE
Thas the church. After he chopped
off those old chains and whilst he
was layin'd down the pepper --

GAMBLER'S VOICE

I heard it was curry powder.

DRAGLINE'S VOICE

It was pepper and curry powder and dry mustard. Now shut your face. Whilst he was layin' down them spices, Luke heard them choir practicin' in there. So he just sauntered inside, cool's kin be, and sung along with them... my baby Luke... and he was still singin' when the dogs come by, singing and grinning and eatin' the food the people had brung him.

EXT. ROAD TRANSITIONAL DEVICE

EXT. ROAD (DAY)

The bull gang at the end of bean time.

BOSS PAUL'S VOICE

Awright, let's git to work.

Dragline and the others deposit their chow plates, pick
up their yoyos and start to work.

DRAGLINE

He ain't eating beans fer lunch.

KOKO

He's eatin' steak and corn with butter and green beans and...

LOUDMOUTH STEVE

...fried clams, pizza, chocolate, malted milkshakes.

SOCIETY RED

(yoyoing)

...and a Brown Bomber.

DRAGLINE

(yoyoing)

Shut your mouth. He's out there doin' it for all of us.

OMITTED

INT. BARRACKS (DAY)

It is Saturday afternoon. Carr is distributing mail and packages, the men clustered around; others lying on
bunks, making wallets, etc.

CARR

Magazines for you, Dragline!

ANGLE ON DRAGLINE

Dragline sits up from his bunk, astonished.

DRAGLINE

Magazines? Who's sendin' me magazines?

He looks at the package. Carr has tossed on his bunk.

DRAGLINE

From mah uncle? Ah never heard from him in eight years and now he's sendin' me magazines. He musta gone crazy.

magazines,
In
Dragline's
closes

He has torn open the package, looks through the which are movie fan books, lies back to flip the pages. b.g. Carr is continuing the mail call. Suddenly eyes widen, his mouth opens, but he catches himself and it before he has revealed himself.

INSERT THE PICTURE

suit
arms
front
Scrawled

It is taped to page in the magazine. It shows Luke in a and tie, holding up four aces and a joker in one hand, around two buxom over-made strippers. On the table in of them is a giant bottle of champagne and glasses. across it is something in Luke's writing.

ANGLE DRAGLINE KOKO SOCIETY RED OTHERS

Seeing Dragline's reaction, they have gathered around.

DRAGLINE

Looka that! Two of them. Oh my...

KOKO

I'm dyin'. I'm dyin'.

book so
reluctantly
Society

Dragline suddenly realizes the danger and closes the Carr and the Wicker Man don't catch on. The others move away. Dragline casually hands the magazine to Red.

DRAGLINE

(whispering)

What's the writing say?

SOCIETY RED

(opening to the picture, reading)

Dear Boys. Playing it cool. Wish you were here. Love, Cool Hand Luke.

DRAGLINE

Oh my. Oh my... Give it back here!

and a Red surrenders the magazine. Dragline opens it again
look of pure bliss settles over his face.

KOKO

Lemme see it!

DRAGLINE

(violently)

Get away!

talking to He looks over at Carr but Carr has moved away, is
Steve, the Wicker Man, his back to the men. Koko, Loudmouth
Dragline. Gambler and the others hurriedly cluster around
Their voices are eager intense whispers.

KOKO

Lookit the brunette...

BLIND DICK

The blonde's gotta better set.

GAMBLER

Some legs.

LOUDMOUTH STEVE

They must be six feet tall.

TATTOO

...And the champagne.

SOCIETY RED

(from his bunk)

Domestic.

TRAMP

Wonder how he got the dough.

ALIBI

He's probably a salesman. You can make pretty good money if you know what your doing in selling.

GAMBLER

A salesman! Cool Hand Luke a salesman?

BLIND DICK

He's probably a gigolo.

MECHANIC

Or a con artist.

LOUDMOUTH STEVE
The head of the rackets.

KOKO
(reverently)
Oh lookit that brunette.

DRAGLINE
Mah baby! We're diggin' and dyin'
but our boy Luke is lovin' and flyin'.

painful
They all gaze at the picture with loving, dreamy,
rapture.

OMITTED

INT. BARRACKS (NIGHT)

flicking
cards
Blackass time, dull, sad, boring. Koko sits idly
cards from the poker deck, men staring into space. The
sail by Society Red who is clipping his nails.

SOCIETY RED
Stop that.

KOKO
How about you tryin' to make me?

SOCIETY RED
Oh for...

They slowly subside.

KOKO
Dragline, lemme look at the picture.

DRAGLINE
(feigned innocence)
What for?

LOUDMOUTH STEVE
Yeah, Drag. Get it out for a look.

DRAGLINE
You're just a kid. Whatta you know
about it? You don't wanna see that
dirty picture. Luke and those broads
an' all that booze.

KOKO
Come on, Drag. Lemme take a look.

DRAGLINE
It'd go to your coconut head. You'd
start getting ideas. Maybe even pass
right out.

BLIND DICK

Dragline! Be a buddy!

DRAGLINE

How much you figure it's worth, a peek at this here picture? A quick look, I'm not talkin' about no memorizin' job.

KOKO

A cold drink.

DRAGLINE

A cold drink? You mean one cold drink? To feast yore starvin' fishy l'il eyes on The Picture? A true vision of Paradise itself? With two of the angels right there in plain sight a-friskin' round with mah boy?

KOKO

A cold drink? Okay?

DRAGLINE

Well --- okay. It's a deal. One cold drink, if'n you please. In advance. One chilly bottle right here in mah hot l'il hand... That goes for the rest of you mullet-heads, too.

Dragline Activity as the men dig out coins to purchase drinks.
gazing pulls out the magazine and the men all gather round,
wicker into it as though it were a crystal ball. Suddenly the
door slams open and as the men look up...

THEIR P.O.V.

Boss Luke is dumped to the floor, face down, unconscious, by
over Paul, Boss Kean, others. The Captain is standing there
chains. him. Luke wears a new prison uniform and two sets of

CAPTAIN

(to Luke)

You run one time, you got yourself a set of chains. You run twice, you got two sets. You ain't gonna need no third set because you're gonna get your mind right... And I mean right.

juxtaposition of He looks at the men who are stunned by the
unconscious their hero in The Picture and the reality of the
figure before them.

CAPTAIN

Take a good look at your Cool Hand
Luke.

With his foot he prods Luke over onto his back.

CLOSE ON LUKE

As he rolls over we can see he has been badly beaten.

OMITTED

NEW ANGLE THE MEN

follow,
others

As the Captain turns and walks out past the guards who
and the wicket chute CLANGS shut, Dragline, Koko and
move forward and gently lift Luke onto the poker table.

DRAGLINE

Oh mah poor baby. They done you real
good... I don't know if you gonna
have them gals chasin' after you for
a while...

CLOSE ON LUKE

lying, eyes closed.

SOCIETY RED'S VOICE

I've got some aspirin.

KOKO'S VOICE

They half killed him.

ALIBI'S VOICE

He should have a doctor.

DRAGLINE'S VOICE

Don't you never learn nuthin'? They
ain't gonna let no doctor see what
they dont to him...

ANGLE ON DRAGLINE, OTHERS

Dragline looks up at Carr who stands hovering above
them.

DRAGLINE

Carr, kin we use your razor to clean
up where they cut his head?

Carr moves off to his canteen area.

CLOSE ON LUKE

as Blind Dick, Gambler, others move in...

GAMBLER

How you feelin', buddy?

TRAMP

He don't hear.

TATTOO

Somebody get him something to drink.

SOCIETY RED

Here.

holds
open, he

Gently he tucks two aspirin tablets into Luke's mouth,
a cup of water to Luke's mouth. Luke's eyes slowly
drinks the water.

DRAGLINE

That's my baby.

KOKO

He's gonna be awright.

NEW ANGLE ON MEN

clear

as Carr moves in with a razor, bandage, etc. The men
to give him room.

KOKO

Luke?... We got the picture! See?

He holds it up.

CLOSE ON LUKE

His eyes squint open, close.

BLIND DICK'S VOICE

A pair of beauties. Best I ever seen.

TATTOO'S VOICE

You really know how to pick 'em.

LOUDMOUTH STEVE'S VOICE

Tell us about 'em. What were they
like?

CLOSE ON LUKE

as his lips open. He speaks slowly, painfully.

LUKE

Picture's a phoney... Cost me a week's
pay.

NEW ANGLE THE MEN

KOKO

A phoney? Whatta you mean, a phoney?

GAMBLER

We saw the broads.

BLIND DICK

Yeah. Did you have them both at once
or --

LUKE

It's a phoney. Made it up just for
you guys.

LOUDMOUTH STEVE

Aw, come on. We saw it all.

TATTOO

The champagne.

TRAMP

Some life.

FIXER

You really had it made.

LUKE

Nothin. I had nothin, made nothin.
Couple towns, couple bosses. Laughed
out loud one day and got turned in.

KOKO

(about to cry)

But -- but --

LUKE

That's all there was. Listen. Open
your eyes. Stop beatin' it. And stop
feedin' off me. Now get out of the
way. Give me some air.

Stunned, the men shrink back.

DRAGLINE

He ain't himself. He's all beat up.
Cain't you see that? He don't know
what he sayin'.

EXT. ROAD DAY

under
right
Luke is working with great difficulty, pained, weary
the double set of chains. Bosses Paul and Kean stand
over him, watching every move.

ANGLE ON GODFREY

standing far behind, his mirrored eyes on Luke.

ON LUKE

cane.
moving, he stumbles on the chains, gets hit by Paul's

BOSS PAUL
You was eyeballin', Luke. You can't
gitcha mind on them weeds if yer
eyeballin'...

LUKE
(wearily)
Boss, you don't need reasons to hit
me.

He gets the cane again.

BOSS PAUL
Gonna learn you not to back sass!

EXT. THE BOX (NIGHT)

as Luke is slammed into it and the door is closed.

INT. THE BARRACKS (NIGHT)

Dick,
stands at
The poker game is in progress: Dragline, Koko, Blind
Gambler, Tattoo with Tramp behind him. Society Red
the window, looking out as he brushes his hair.

SOCIETY RED
He'll never make it.

KOKO
What are you talking about?

SOCIETY RED
He doesn't know when to give in.
They'll kill him.

KOKO
Give in? That's our Luke out there.

DRAGLINE
That ole box collapse and fall apart
before Luke calls quits.

SOCIETY RED
Your Luke's got more guts than brains.

KOKO
I don't see no sign of guts in you.

SOCIETY RED
No. No chains either.

KOKO
(heating up)
You ain't man enough to wear them!

SOCIETY RED
But you're dog enough. Maybe they'll
let you sleep outside the box near
your master.

KOKO

Big deal paper hanger! Hell, anyone who can write can pass fifty-sixty dollar checks. Like breakin' open a piggy bank.

SOCIETY RED

You've been having bad luck with masters, haven't you? Your last one left you when the cops came... and now Luke. You should complain to the S.P.C.A.

KOKO

(rushing him)

You phony creep!

Dragline steps in to separate them.

DRAGLINE

Awright, that's enough. You wanna end up in the box, too?

The tire rim sounds.

CARR'S VOICE

First bell! First bell!

INT. MESS HALL (NIGHT)

serving
unusually

The men file in from work, sullen and quiet, Dogboy but without his usual chatter. Higgins leans back, alert.

ANGLE ON DOORWAY

his
accustomed

Suddenly Luke appears, unshaven but cleaned up and in uniform. The men make room as he moves to his place at the head of the line, before Dynamite.

DOGBOY

Here's our champeen hog gut. Ain't et for four days, gonna need a little extra... Well we got plenty for you...

He's heaping food onto Luke's plate.

DOGBOY

(continuing)

Now you know the rules... gotta eat everything on the plate or go back in the box, right, Boss?

tries

Higgins nods, Dogboy continues to pile it on. When Luke

his
Jabo,
to move on, Dogboy reaches out and grabs the plate with
free hand and continues to ladle it out. Behind Dogboy,
the cook, looks sympathetic to Luke.

JABO
(to Dogboy)
We ain't got but one pot of stew,
you know. He ain't the only one
eatin'.

DOGBOY
(piling it on)
Man use to Free World food gotta big
appetite... so here's some more
potatoes and here's some ice cream
and some cake with choclat fudge
sauce... there you go, stretch that
hog-belly right out.

Luke looks at the impossibly piled plate and moves off.

LUKE AT A TABLE

spoon
over
by
behind
leaves.
He is eating with great difficulty, finally puts his
down and his eyes close with weariness. Koko reaches
and takes a bite off the plate. Luke sits there and one
one the men get up and file out, each one passing
Luke and taking a bite until, as Deacon takes the last
mouthful, the plate is empty and Luke stands up and

EXT. CAMP YARD (DAY)

from
Dragline
It is Saturday afternoon. The men have just returned
the road. Luke moves slowly toward the barracks,
helping him.

DRAGLINE
You made the week, boy. Plenty of
time to rest up for old Monday.

They move a few feet until confronted by...

THEIR P.O.V. BOSS PAUL AND BOSS KEAN

BOSS PAUL
Luke!

the
a
Kean steps forward, draws a long line in the dirt of
yard, barring the path, moves three feet back and draws
parallel line.

BOSS PAUL

Boss Kean say that's his ditch. I tol' him that their dirt is yore dirt. What's yore dirt doin' in his ditch?

Luke looks up at them blindly.

LUKE

(weakly)

I don't know, Boss.

Boss Paul canes him and the other prisoners scatter.

Boss

Kean throws a shovel at Luke's feet.

BOSS PAUL

You git yore dirt outa his ditch, boy!

Luke takes up the shovel and starts to dig.

BOSS PAUL

Roll! I wanna see you roll it!

He canes Luke across the back, Luke digs.

ANGLE ON BARRACKS

Saturday

It is later. The men sit on the stoop, the usual activities.

ANGLE ON LUKE

about
drew.

He is hidden up to his waist in the trench he has dug, three feet deep and wide and as long as the lines Kean

ANGLE ON MEN

watching.

ANGLE ON BOSS SHORTY

Luke

walking along briskly, feigns surprise at seeing what is doing. He stops.

TWO SHOT BOSS SHORTY AND LUKE

BOSS SHORTY

Luke, what you think you doin'?

LUKE

(not stopping)

Diggin' my dirt outa Boss Kean's ditch, Boss.

on Shorty is carrying a hoe handle with which he hits Luke
the head. Luke slumps to the ground.

BOSS SHORTY
Be damned iff'n you gonna put your
dirt in mah yard. You hear me?

LUKE
(getting to his feet)
Yes, Boss.

BOSS SHORTY
Then git it out there. Roll it, heah?

ditch. Luke begins slowly shoveling the dirt back into the
Boss Shorty nods with satisfaction and walks away.

ANGLE ON LUKE (LATE AFTERNOON)

falls on The dirt is almost all back in the ditch. A shadow
buttocks the dirt beside him. A walking stick falls across his
and he staggers to his knees.

BOSS PAUL'S VOICE
Ah done told you to get yore dirt
outa Boss Kean's ditch, didn't ah?

LUKE
(getting to his feet)
Yes, Boss.

BOSS PAUL
Then how come it ain't done yet?

LUKE
I don't know, Boss.

BOSS PAUL
You don't know!

rolls He canes Luke on the back of the legs. Luke falls and
on all over and Paul canes him across the head. Luke gets up
weak and fours and makes a rush right at Boss Paul. He is so
blood uncoordinated that the attack does nothing but smear
and dirt over Paul's uniform. The guards beat Luke away
and he falls on his back in the soft dirt.

INT. BARRACKS (NIGHT)

happening The men are restless, their efforts to ignore what's

into
picture.

are futile. Dragline gets up and looks out the window
the yard. Koko leans over beside him. He holds the

DRAGLINE'S P.O.V.

shovel
shovel.
thud

Luke under the lights, working again, slowly, dumps a
full of dirt and hasn't the strength to move the
Momentarily, he stops moving and is hit. We HEAR the
and the groan he gives.

INT. BARRACKS (NIGHT)

and a
begins to
their
posts.

Dragline goes back to his bunk. We HEAR another thud
cry from outside. Dragline begins to WHISTLE. Koko
chink his chains. Onionhead and Dynamite join in with
chains. Other prisoners rhythmically beat on bunk
Only Society Red does not join in.

EXT. YARD (NIGHT)

prisoners.

Luke works. From inside we HEAR the music from the
Boss Paul and Boss Kean appear.

BOSS PAUL

What's all this dirt in the yard?

LUKE

I... I... I...

dirt.
He can't talk. Paul hits him and he falls again on the

Paul hits him again.

LUKE

Please! Please!

BOSS PAUL

Git to work!

LUKE

Don't hit me! Please, for God's sake,
don't hit me.

BOSS KEAN

What was that? What was that name
you said, Luke?

LUKE

God. I pray to God you won't hit me.
(he grovels in the
dirt before them,

tears streaming down
his cheeks)
I'll do whatever you say, but I can't
take no more. Please.

TWO SHOT PAUL AND KEAN

A trace of smiles.

BOSS PAUL
(kindly)
You got your mind right, Luke?

CLOSE LUKE

LUKE
Yes, Boss. I got it right.

ON KEAN AND PAUL

BOSS PAUL
Supposin' you was to backslide on
us, Luke? Supposin' you was to
backsass or try to run again...

LUKE
No, Boss! I won't. I won't. I got my
mind right. I got it right, Boss.
Please don't hit me no more.

INT. BARRACKS (NIGHT)

The music has stopped, the men listening.

ON KOKO

His face tightens into an expression of contempt,
hatred. He
tears
grabs the picture on the bunk beside him and violently
it in half.

EXT. YARD LUKE, BOSSES PAUL AND KEAN (NIGHT)

BOSS PAUL
(kind and reasonable)
Luke, you run again and we'll kill
you.

LUKE
I know, I know. Just don't hit me.

The Captain steps in -- out of the dark. He has been
watching
from his porch.

CAPTAIN
Okay, son. Go get shaved and cleaned
up and get you some sleep. I reckon
you need it.

Luke slowly struggles to his feet and begins painfully stumbling toward the barracks.

INT. BARRACKS (NIGHT)

door is as the chute opens and Luke staggers inside and the slammed behind him.

LUKE

I got my mind right. I got it right.

who He stumbles toward his bunk, passing Tattoo and Alibi turn away embarrassed.

LUKE

I got my mind right.

seeing Others like Dragline and Koko stare straight ahead, not Dick, him; Society Red has his back turned; Dynamite, Blind Loudmouth Steve meet his gaze contemptuously.

LUKE

(collapsing on his bunk)

Where are you now? I got my mind right. You hear me? I got it right!

Silence.

EXT. ROAD (DAY)

wounds The gang is working. Over a week has passed. Luke's are healed. He works in a slow, spiritless way, broken.

CLOSE GODFREY

looking somehow less menacing.

BOSS PAUL

pulls He is sitting, not even looking at the men, relaxed, out watch looks over to Godfrey in b.g. Godfrey nods.

BOSS PAUL

Awright, smoke it up.

The men break and sit down for smoking.

BOSS PAUL

Luke! Water 'em.

the Without a moments hesitation, Luke jogs over and gets group of water pail and dipper from Rabbit and moves to the

men.

CLOSE THE GROUP

silent, as Luke moves around filling their cups. The men are some embarrassed, some sympathetic, some confused, some disappointed.

CLOSE GODFREY

He signals with his cane for his rifle.

ON RABBIT

rifle. He hurries to the cab of the truck, gets Godfrey's The other men, but not Luke, watch as Godfrey slips in the bolt, loads, fires at something out in the swamp.

ON BOSS PAUL

Rabbit. As Godfrey takes bolt out of rifle, returns the gun to

BOSS PAUL

Go git it, Luke.

LUKE

Yes sir, Boss Paul!

the Grinning, cheerful, he begins to hobble away through swamp and grass.

CLOSE ANGLE ON TURTLE IN THE MUCK

stick. The Luke's hands COME INTO FRAME AND OFFER the head a jaws clamp down on the stick and Luke lifts the turtle up.

FULL SHOT LUKE

grinning, holding up the turtle by the stick.

LUKE

Here he is, Boss. Deader'n hell but he won't let go.

THE GROUP

as Luke walks back through them carrying the turtle.

BOSS PAUL

You cut that up fer lunch, Luke.

LUKE

Yes, Boss.

HOLD
Dragline.
He moves off toward the trucks with the turtle, and we
on the disappointed reactions of the men, featuring
Then there is the SOUND of a motor starting.
ON THE GROUP NEW ANGLE
as they turn to look, as one man.
THE TRUCK
as Luke tries to get it in gear, there is the SOUND of
gears
dump
grinding and as the truck begins to move the bed of the
body begins to raise. The truck begins to move past the
prisoners, away from the guards.
ON THE GUARDS
As they begin to run toward the truck, raising their
guns.
ON DRAGLINE
on his feet.
DRAGLINE
Oh Lord!
SOCIETY RED
That fool. That damn fool.
DRAGLINE
Oh mah baby Luke.
He starts to run like hell toward the truck coming
past.
ANGLE ON GUARDS
stopping to fire but bullets ricochet off the rising
bed of
the dump body.
MOVING SHOT PARALLELING TRUCK
Dragline running alongside trying to grab the door
handle.
sounding.
PAN
steel
Inside Luke, grinning fiercely, as he drives. SHOTS
Dragline gets hold of the door, swings inside. HOLD AND
the truck off down the road until all we can see is the
dump body.
REVERSE THE ROAD

truck
It is littered with tools and equipment dumped from the
body. The guards stand there, their guns empty.

BOSS KEAN
(from another truck)
He's taken the keys. He's got the
keys!

Boss Shorty pokes his head out of another truck.

BOSS SHORTY
Here, too.

INT. TRUCK LUKE AND DRAGLINE

DRAGLINE
We're free, Luke. You terrible man.
Think of that. We're free. Free!

Over them, appears the SUPERIMPOSED image of Godfrey's
glasses, the Man With No Eyes, watching them, denying
Dragline's words.

LONG

DISSOLVE:

EXT. PALMETTO SWAMP

cover
Dragline is exuberantly hacking away at palm fronds to
the truck while Luke is filing away at his chains.

DRAGLINE
(rattling frond)
Shakin it here, Boss. Shakin it...
Oh my baby Luke.

ignores
worshipful
He laughs, shakes his head in appreciation. Luke
him, continues to file. Dragline does another
imitation.

DRAGLINE
Don't hit me no more, Boss! Don't
hit me! I'll do anythin' you say but
just don't hit me! Oh Luke. You are
an original, you truly are. You really
fooled them.

LUKE
Foolin', Hell! I would have eaten
that dirt for them. They coulda used
my head for a shovel and a my face
for a broom... They just never did
get a piece of my mind.

DRAGLINE
And all the time you was plannin' on
runnin' again.

Luke has filed through the chains, stands up.

LUKE

Yeah, well... I never planned nothin'
in my life...

starts He tosses the severed chain link into the swamp and
to walk off, Dragline hurrying behind him.

EXT. NEAR NEGRO VILLAGE (DUSK)

having Luke and Dragline appear, tired and cold. Dragline is
looking trouble keeping up. Seeing this, Luke stops and rests,
off at church visible in distance.

DRAGLINE

Whoee, it's cold. Wisht I had
somethin' to eat. Bread, grits, beans
even. Soon's we get to my house,
we're gonna have us one big meal and
then I'm gonna show you some farm
girls that...

LUKE

We ain't goin' nowhere.

DRAGLINE

(confused)

What you talkin' about, Luke? We're
together, you and me, just like
always. Now the thing we gotta work
out is how to get Koko outa there
and then the Terrible Trio be all
complete again. Man, this old Free
World ain't gonna know which ear to
stand on.

LUKE

Yeah, well, you and Koko kin handle
it without me.

DRAGLINE

What you mean, Luke?

LUKE

I've done enough world-shakin' for a
while. You do the rest for me. Send
me a postcard about it.

He gets up, starts off.

DRAGLINE

But, Luke...

LUKE

Take it easy, Drag.

DRAGLINE

Luke. Where you goin'?

LUKE

On my own.

DRAGLINE

But what am I gonna do all by myself?

(hangs head)

Oh if 'n I hadn't lost mah head. I only had two more years to go. But when I saw you tearin' down with that truck... But you right Luke. We oughta split up. Be safer for us both.

He looks up. Luke is in the distance.

DRAGLINE

Luke?

(calls out)

Just the same, you're a good old boy, Luke. You take care, hear?

There is no answer.

OMITTED

EXT. NEGRO VILLAGE (NIGHT)

as Luke trots down the main street, passes the church.

LUKE

Hey, Old Man! You home tonight?

He starts across the bridge.

LUKE

If you kin spare a minute, it's about time we had ourselves a little talk.

INT. CHURCH

Luke mounts the steps of the lectern, looks up.

LUKE

Old Man, I know I'm a pretty evil feller who killed people in the war and got drunk and chopped up municipal merchandise and like that. I admit ain't got no call to ask for much. But even so, you ain't dealt me no cards in a long time. I mean it's beginning to look like you got it fixed so I can't never win out. Inside or out, it's just different bosses and different rules. Where am I supposed to fit in? Old Man, I got to tell you: I started out pretty strong and fast but it's starting to get to me... When does it end?...

What you got in mind for me next?
Old Man. What do I do now? Awright.
On my hands and knees a skin'. Yeah.
That's what I thought. I guess I'm
just a hardcase and I gotta find my
way out myself.

that the
Dragline
up at

We HEAR the SOUND of vehicles outside, telling Luke
police have arrived. He starts for the back just as
enters from the side entrance. Seeing him, Luke looks
the ceiling.

LUKE

Is that your answer, Old Man? You're
a hardcase too, ain't you?

DRAGLINE

Luke, are you alright?... They got
us, boy. They're out there thicker'n
flies. Bosses and dogs and sheriffs
and more guns than I ever seen in my
life. We don't have a chance, Luke...
They caught up with me right after
we split up and they was aimin' to
kill you, Luke. But I got 'em to
promise if you give up peaceful,
they wouldn't even whip you this
time.

LUKE

(amused)

Do we even get our same bunks back?

DRAGLINE

Why sure, Luke. I mean I didn't talk
to them about that. But why not?
They're reasonable, Luke. Hell, we
only been gone a coupla hours.

LUKE

You don't understand a thing, do
you, Drag?

DRAGLINE

Luke, you got to listen to me. All
you got to do is just give up nice
and quiet, just play it cool.

LUKE

Like I always do?

DRAGLINE

Thass right. Just play it...

He sees Luke moving toward the window.

DRAGLINE

Luke, what are do doin'?

OMITTED

ANGLE BY WINDOW

in
moment. His
as Luke steps out of pitch black into the harsh light
full view, calm, slight smile, having chosen his
voice is loud, clear, mocking:

LUKE
WHAT WE GOT HERE IS A FAILURE TO
COMMUNICATE...

back,
A SHOT! It catches Luke in the throat and throws him
but he stays in the light, still smiling.

DRAGLINE
Luke!

EXT. CHURCHYARD (NIGHT)

smoking
look
ON guards and police, FEATURING Godfrey, who holds his
rifle. There are confused SHOUTS and movements by the
sheriffs, but the Captain and the prison guards only
toward Godfrey, then turn away, stoic.

INT. CHURCH

Dragline
as Luke falls to one knee, trying to hold himself up.
is by his side, helps him up and to the door.

EXT. CHURCHYARD (NIGHT)

Dragline,
charges
ground,
Godfrey
Dragline
where Bosses Kean and Paul move in to handcuff Luke.
seeing Godfrey, bellows out an INCOHERENT ROAR and
past the surprised guards to knock Godfrey to the
tear his glasses from him. Confused, bewildered,
gropes for the glasses as the prison guards beat
into submission.

ANGLE ON CHURCH (PRE-DAWN) (NIGHT)

toward the
paralyzed,
on
as Luke, handcuffed behind his back, is being led
Captain's car by Bosses Paul and Kean. He is half-
blood pouring from him. The Captain has turned his back
Godfrey, talking to the Sheriff.

SHERIFF
You follow me and I'll radio the
emergency clinic to open up...

CAPTAIN
I'm takin' him to the prison hospital.

SHERIFF
But that's an hour away. He ain't
gonna last twenty minutes.

CAPTAIN
Git outa the way. He's ours.

MOVING SHOT LUKE

several
at
car.
as he is brought past Dragline, who is being held by
guards. Tears stream down Dragline's cheeks. Luke looks
him, still smiling as he is pushed into the Captain's
car.

LUKE INT. THE CAR

we SEE
the
already
as it begins to move out. In the b.g. across the road
the Negro villagers watching, silently. The window of
car is up and the reflections on the glass make Luke
dim, a little distant.

MOVING SHOT THE CAR (DAWN)

mystic
the
as it moves down the road, over the trestle. It is the
hour of dawn, the sun's rays just diffusing as we watch
car until it disappears over the rise in the road.

EXT. ROAD CLOSE ON YOYO (DAY)

SEE
now we
Boss
and
The yoyo is swinging in the sun. As the shot WIDENS we
it is Dragline, wearing chains, wielding the yoyo and
SEE the others working around him. Godfrey is gone;
Paul is now the Walking Boss. The MUSIC gains strength
speeds as

determination
imperceptibly
the CAMERA PULLS BACK and RISES SLOWLY TO:

HELICOPTER SHOT

as the men grow smaller in the limitless field of gold stretching in all directions as far as the eye can see, intersected by four roads that reach out to infinity.

Now

the men are specks, now invisible in the fields and

there

are only the roads, lines in the gold, going on

forever.

OVER THIS, SUPERIMPOSE the PICTURE OF LUKE, now scotch-

taped

together, HOLD and

FADE

OUT:

THE END