

LEGEND OF TARZAN BROWN

-- A Native American Hero

A Screenplay Based on a True Story

By David Gary Wilson

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*"What is life? It is the flash of a firefly
in the night. ... It is the little shadow
which runs across the grass and loses itself
in the sunset."*

-- Crowfoot, Blackfoot warrior and orator

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LEGEND OF TARZAN BROWN -- A Native American Hero

BACKGROUND AND SYNOPSIS

This visual story is based on true events in the life of ELLISON MYERS "TARZAN" BROWN, a Narragansett Indian runner from Rhode Island, who competed in the Boston Marathon and Olympic Games during the 1930s. This was the golden age of the Boston Marathon with a cast of memorable characters -- of which the most colorful and larger-than-life was *Tarzan*.

Ellison's tribal name was *Deerfoot*, but he became labelled *Tarzan* by contemporary runners and journalists, who considered the Indian a maverick and wild man who lived in the woods and possessed a physique reminiscent of Johnny Weismuller, who hit the screen as *Tarzan* in 1932. Press described the runner: muscled as the best of the ancient Roman gladiators and yet with the soft and sinuous curves of a Greek god.

As described by Boston Marathon historian Tom Derderian: Brown was regarded by most as a freak -- undisciplined and uncontrollable, a child of nature, an awesome natural talent -- and if he won or lost it was because of his unalterable nature. Thus, as an Indian with physical gifts, he would never get personal credit for what he accomplished. It was expected he could run -- he was an Indian, after all -- so he got no credit for character, courage or work ethic. If he succeeded it was because he did what his handlers prepared him to do, like a thoroughbred racehorse. When he failed, it was his own fault, because he was "just an Indian."

Others -- including marathon-expert Jerry Nason of the Boston Globe, who called Brown "the most fabulous, most fantastic man ever to run in the Boston Marathon" -- recognized the Native American as a well-spoken and intelligent enigma.

All agreed *Tarzan* was a marvelous individual -- sometimes doing his training in barrooms and getting in some wild brawls in the process -- his life full of entertaining adventures.

Opening with the funeral after Brown's tragic death at age 60, back-story then traces his early running and impoverished youth. The main story concentrates on events from 1935 to 1939, as Ellison battles runners on the roads of Boston, racism by the white society, alcoholism, and even Nazis in a Berlin bar -- spurred on by a desire for respect and "a truck, so he could earn a good living." Throughout, Ellison relates with a cast of characters based on real people, including a crusty coach named Tippy, devoted wife Ethel, pressman Nason, the marathon runner among marathon runners, Johnny Kelley, as well as track-immortal Jesse Owens and even Frank Sinatra. The story finishes at the beginning: showing an unlucky and sad end to a man who had become a legendary champion runner and inspirational hero to Native and white people alike.

Few in the world of today -- even in the running community -- know of *Tarzan Brown*, but his is a story deserving to be retold... And remembered.

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SUPER. ON BLACK:

Where today are the Pequot? Where are the Narragansett, the Mohican, the Pokanoket, and many other once powerful tribes of our people? They have vanished before the avarice and oppression of the white man, as snow before the summer sun.

-- Tecumseh, Shawnee warrior and prophet

FADE IN:

INT. A FUNERAL HOME -- DAY

SUPER: A TRUE STORY -- WESTERLY, RHODE ISLAND -- 1975

THE ROOM is hundreds full, with people standing in the back -- actually overflowing out onto the street. PANNING the room -- solemn faces, young and old, American Indian and white, some sobbing openly. Several in the front row are in Narragansett tribal dress. A plain coffin up front, beside it a picture of a shirtless young Native American man -- a magnificent bronze physique and good features under an eagle-feather headdress. A handsome late-50s Native man, ATMORE STANTON, is addressing the assembly with a EULOGY:

ATMORE

As I look around this room, I know many of you think of ELLISON TARZAN BROWN as a legend -- *Deerfoot of the Narragansett*, a champion runner who was a wild and colorful character. Well... he was more than that. He was the kindest man you could ever know, and everyone was his friend... even if maybe they weren't, he thought they were. Oh yeah, to lots of people he was misunderstood. Just that *clown Tarzan*, or... million-dollar legs and a *five-cent* head... scatter-brained red-skin... Oh yeah, we heard it all... didn't bother *him* though. And it *wasn't* true. Sissy, his daughter, says he read more than anyone she ever saw. If he ran outta books, papers, encyclopedias -- *anything* -- he would start readin' labels, like what's written on a bottle... *Anything*. He liked to keep his mind busy.

PANNING the room as Atmore speaks. Some are smiling with moist eyes, others serious and one man sobbing loudly.

ATMORE (CONT'D)

Ellison could be cutting wood...
and you'd see him look up at an eagle
or at somethin' in the woods. Then,
he'd put the ax down and you wouldn't
see him for a while. It could be a
few hours or maybe two days...
Now, I know a lot of you are angry
right now about what happened...
(pause)

SOME NATIVE AMERICAN FACES in the room have stern, tight features. A man shuffling in back, one hand clenched in a fist, takes a quick pull from a flask in the other hand.

ATMORE (CONT'D)

Well, ETHEL wants you to know, there's nobody to blame for what happened to her husband. The family doesn't want no retribution or trouble started. Far as we all know, it was a... just a tragic accident. El, he never held grudges against anybody, white or Indian, and he wouldn't want any of us to either. He lived through a time when Indians were treated badly -- worse than now. He never really got the respect or lucky breaks he deserved... but he always stayed cheerful, even when he was down. Sure, Ellison was down sometimes, but never out. Mostly, he was a *survivor*, taking each day as it came, keeping his humor and seeing the best in everything.

Atmore pauses to wipe an eye. He coughs and continues.

ATMORE (CONT'D)

My cousin Ellison was my best friend my whole life. He was a hero to Ethel and his family and me and to many of you too. Indian and white. And the real reason he was such a fast runner... his heart was just way bigger than everyone else's.
(emotion breaks through)
We'll all miss him so very much.

Atmore takes a seat in the front row, and is comforted by family. A NATIVE PASTOR takes the pulpit.

PASTOR

Now, before we free Ellison's spirit to run with his ancestors, please help us to celebrate his life as we listen to a song he was known to enjoy.

A VINYL RECORD, a 33 L.P., spins on a turntable. The needle placed on the disk is corrected somewhat as sound sputters from speakers. A song, "My Way", by FRANK SINATRA, resonates over the room:

SINATRA (V.O.)

And now, the end is near, and so I
face, the final curtain. My friend,
I'll say it clear, I'll state my
case, of which I'm certain. I've
lived, a life that's full, I've
traveled each and every highway.
But more, much more than this, I did
it my way.

As the song plays, the room is panned again, showing wide reaction from smiles to sad faces to outright crying.

CLOSE to a PICTURE BOARD near the back of the room: a sequence of images of a Native man at the peak of his athleticism.

SINATRA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Regrets, I've had a few, but then
again, too few to mention. I did,
what I had to do, and saw it through,
without exemption. I planned, each
charted course, each careful step
along the byway,
But more, much more than this,
I did it my way.

(OPENING CREDITS as Sinatra continues)

SINATRA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Yes, there were times, I'm sure you
knew, when I bit off,
more than I could chew.
But through it all, when there was
doubt, I ate it up, and spit it out.
I faced it all and I stood tall, and
did it my way.

EXT. FUNERAL HOME -- A BIT LATER -- LATE-SUMMER DAY

Pallbearers in Narragansett tribal dress exit the hall, carrying the coffin to a waiting hearse. A drum beats and Native singers wail a tribal song. The family follow with bowed heads. As the hearse pulls away and people continue to file from the hall, a lean white man in his 60s touches the arm of an elderly stout white man as he passes. Both are dressed similarly in older-fashion sports jackets, a loud tie and a wide-brimmed hat on the stout man.

JERRY (LEAN MAN IN 60s)

Excuse me, I think I know you. Aren't
you Tippy... Salerno? The coach?

TIPPY

Haven't been called "the coach" in a long time. But I'm Tippy. And you are...

JERRY

Jerry Nason -- haven't seen you in ages. Good to see you again.
(offers his hand)

TIPPY

(takes it)
Nason... Yu'know -- I remember yuh of course. The marathon writer... Yer with the Herald, right?

JERRY

Boston Globe actually. And I retired last year.

TIPPY

Okay, well it's all the same to me, yu'know.
(snorts loudly)
Yuh here for a story? I got lots of stories.

JERRY

I'm *retired*. And I'm here out of *respect* for a great man.
(pause)
Anyway, think all the stories about Tarzan have already been told. You know, I followed him for years -- since way back when you first started working with him. I remember we talked together about him way back when.

TIPPY

Yeah... I remember. Yuh showed a lot of interest in him.

JERRY

I kind of felt like one of his promoters sometimes.

TIPPY

Well, he sure didn't need a whole lotta promotin' -- did a pretty fair job of that himself, yu'know.

JERRY

He was an unforgettable character, that's for sure.

TIPPY

A wonderful piece a work tuh behold.

JERRY

Yes sir. Crude and undisciplined...
And such a beautiful runner. Poetry.

TIPPY

(nodding)

*What a runner. Best damn, purest
runner I ever saw, yu'know.*

JERRY

Yes, I have to say he was the most
fabulous... the most fantastic man
ever to run in the Boston Marathon.
And that was back in the golden age
of Boston -- with guys like KELLEY
and PAWSON and COTE...

TIPPY

All great runners sure, but the Indian
was...

(intense)

More than that.

JERRY

(nodding)

Absolutely.

TIPPY

That kid had *amazing* ability,
yu'know... Uncanny endurance. Right
from the first time I laid eyes on
him, I knew he was somethin' special.
Altogether different than anyone
else -- before or since. With these
marathoners of today, yu'know, there
ain't none of 'em that could compete
with him and do the things he did.
Not one of 'em!

(pause, snorts)

TIPPY'S EYES... CLOSER

TIPPY (CONT'D)

Yu'know... must be about 50 years
ago I first laid eyes on that kid...

CLOSER...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. A COUNTRY ROAD IN 1925 RHODE ISLAND -- MID AFTERNOON

A NATIVE MAN in his prime is running, striding easily and
with graceful long-distance form. He passes some small
tarpaper houses, where several Native kids are playing near
the road. A small figure begins following the runner -- it
is 11-year-old ELLISON BROWN: bronze-skinned, sinuous and
well-proportioned, with fine features under long dark hair.

ELLISON

Hey Uncle Horatio, where you off
runnin' to?

HORATIO STANTON glances back -- the boy is about 100 feet
behind.

HORATIO

Ellison. I'm on a training run.
Gonna meet up with my coach up at
the Shannock ball field.

ELLISON

Can I come?

HORATIO

Sorry Ellison, not this time. It's
too far and I'm running too fast for
you to keep up.

ELLISON is picking up his pace, closing some distance.

ELLISON

What did you say, Uncle Horatio? I
like running -- think I can keep up.

HORATIO

Go back home and play with Atmore.
It's nearly sixteen miles to Shannock --
almost two hours of running. That's
way too far for a kid.

ELLISON

How we gonna get back? Can I get a
ride in a motorcar with you?

HORATIO

(shaking his head)
Bye bye Ellison. I'm picking up my
pace now.

ELLISON

So how far we runnin' again?

EXT. BALLFIELD AT SHANNOCK -- LATER AFTERNOON

TWO MEN are engaged in conversation as they watch a ball
game from a small set of uncrowded bleachers. One of the
two, a stout man of thirty wearing a wide-brimmed hat, snorts
as he inspects his pocket watch.

OTHER MAN

What're you -- late for dinner, Tippy?

TIPPY

Na, gotta keep my eye on the time
here, yu'know.

(MORE)

TIPPY (CONT'D)

Pretty good Indian runner I'm handling should be coming in any time. Got him runnin' all the way in from Westerly.

OTHER MAN

Westerly? That's a fair chunk of road...

(pause)

Hey, if you're here, how do you know what time he left, or even if he left at all? Them Indians sure ain't known for their punctuality -- know what I mean?

TIPPY

Oh, he'll be here. This guy's one of the good ones. Horatio Stanton... Chief Horatio Stanton.

OTHER MAN

Oh yeah -- fast runner, huh?

TIPPY

Good runner, a natural, yu'know -- like a lot of Indians. And I got him stickin' to his training -- no firewater allowed. Expect big things outta him one of these years at Boston, yu'know.

OTHER MAN

Ah, Tip, yer wastin' yer time -- trainin' savages. Don't got the heart and brains tuh win races.

TIPPY

Yeah? Ever hear a Tom Longboat? Full-blooded Injun. Anyway, I kinda like workin' with em -- can't be runnin' myself with *these* stubby legs, yu'know. And helpin' em out makes me feel good, yu--

CRACK!! THE SWEET SPOT OF A BAT ON A BASEBALL

TIPPY (CONT'D)

Here we go!

Full attention is back on the ball game, as a batter has hit a long ball and several runs are being scored.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD THROUGH FOREST -- THAT MOMENT

A YOUNG DEER stands on the road, ears up, startled by the sight of a man running around a curve toward it. The deer slowly starts to trot down the road, away from the runner.

HORATIO
 (closing the distance)
On Your Left!

The deer, more startled, veers off the road toward the cover of trees, stopping to watch the man run by and away. Then the animal's attention is diverted to a smaller figure coming around the bend.

ELLISON'S P.O.V. -- spotting the deer as he rounds the curve. Slowing to a walk, he approaches the animal.

ELLISON
 Hey little fella. I won't hurt you.

EXT. SHANNOCK BALLFIELD -- LATER

TIPPY'S P.O.V. from the bleachers spots Horatio Stanton running up toward the ball field.

TIPPY
 Here comes Chief Smoking Feet now.
 Time tuh go feed him some hero
 biscuits, yu'know.

OTHER MAN
 (laughs)

EXT. ROAD BESIDE BALLFIELD -- MOMENTS LATER

Tippy, smoking a large cigar, claps Horatio on the back.

TIPPY
 Good running Chief. How the feet
 doin' this time?

Horatio bends to pull off one of his shoes, a heavy-looking black boot.

HORATIO
 Bleeding I think. Damn shoes are no
 good for nothing. Say -- you got an
 extra one of those?

Tippy hesitates, then reaches into a pocket and hands Stanton a cigar.

TIPPY
 Yeah, guess these things won't make
 yuh faster, but at least they can't
 hurt yuh...
 (beat)
 Just keep eatin' lots of eggs and
 gettin' lots of sleep -- like I told
 yuh, yu'know?

HORATIO

Whatever you say, you're the boss.
 (inspects the cigar)
 Hey, we gotta go back and find my
 nephew. Damn kid was runnin' right
 behind me -- almost all the way from
 Westerly.

TIPPY

What? Yer tellin' me some kid ran
 all the way from Westerly -- and I
 ain't never heard of him before?
 You been holdin' out on me, Chief?

HORATIO

No.

TIPPY

How old? Must be over 16 if he can
 run over 15 miles with the likes of
 you.
 (relights cigar)
 Anyone handlin' him yet, yu'know?

HORATIO

Relax Tippy. He's only about 10 or
 11 -- you got lots of time.

TIPPY

(disbelief to excited)
 WHAT? Ten or 11 years old -- *really?*
 I gotta see this kid. C'mon, let's
 go find him -- c'mon *let's go.*

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD THROUGH FOREST -- A BIT LATER

A CAR, early 1920s Ford, slows to a stop, its motor *popping*
 as it shuts down.

INT. CAR

TIPPY

(at the wheel)
 Well?

HORATIO

This is where I last saw him behind
 me. There was a deer on the road so
 he probably thought he could bring
 it home for a pet... Yeah, there he
 is, in those trees over there.

EXT. IN TREES BESIDE THE ROAD.

ELLISON is swinging from a low branch, making whooping noises.
 Tippy and Horatio approach, both still smoking cigars.

TIPPY
 (softly, meant to
 himself)
 Like a little Tarzan.

HORATIO
 What?

TIPPY
 Oh, just some guy I seen in one of
 them picture books. Plays with
 monkeys, yu'know. You learn how to
 read, yuh'll know about him too.

Tippy appraises the young Ellison as the youngster drops
 from the branch, landing lightly on his feet just in front
 of the two men.

TIPPY (CONT'D)
 What's yer name, son?

ELLISON
 Ellison.

HORATIO
 His Narragansett tribal name is
 Deerfoot.

TIPPY
 Deerfoot, huh? Yu'know, with a name
 like that, no wonder yer a runner.
 Nothin' runs like a deer. Hey son,
 yer Uncle tells me you want a ride
 in a motorcar; I suppose we got room
 for yuh.

ELLISON
 GOOD. My feet hurt.

HORATIO
 Welcome to the club.

TIPPY
 Okay kid, here's the deal. Yuh get
 yer ride home today. Eat lots, get
 lots of sleep. Don't go runnin' no
 15 miles every other day... But run
 around lots when yer playin' --
 yu'know what I'm sayin'? How old
 are yuh, anyway?

ELLISON
 Eleven, sir.

TIPPY
 Come see me when yer 16.
 (MORE)

TIPPY (CONT'D)

Yuh'll be old enough to run in A.A.U. competition races by then... Maybe yuh'll make me forget all about this bum, yer uncle.

(playfully punches
Horatio's shoulder)

Just kiddin', Chief -- you were lookin' *real good* comin' in today.

EXT. PORCH OF A TARPAPER CABIN, WESTERLY -- DAY

An attractive but stressed woman, appearing late-30s and of Mexican descent, stands on the porch, looking out to the road in front.

MRS. BROWN

Ellison. ELLISON. You come home now!

YOUNG ELLISON is seen, running down the road, right by and past the porch -- another young Native boy in pursuit.

MRS. BROWN (CONT'D)

ELLISON! ELLISON MYERS BROWN! You come *back* here, COME BACK HERE NOW I SAY!

Ellison continues as though he hasn't heard. The follower stops, looks back toward the porch. He is lighter-skinned and taller than his quarry -- seems rather awkward.

MRS. BROWN (CONT'D)

ATMORE! You tell Ellison to come back *NOW*.

ATMORE

But Mrs Brown -- we're in the middle of a game! It's his turn to be King Philip, so I hafta kill him first!

Ellison stops, turns to look back at Atmore. CLOSE to Ellison's narrowing eyes -- so dark brown they appear black.

ELLISON

You'll have to *catch* me first white man! *Ha Ha!*
(cuts into woods)

ATMORE

(taking up the chase)
You're DEAD, King!

Mrs Brown shakes her head in frustration, then smiles as she turns and stoops to pick up a toddler girl watching from just behind.

MRS. BROWN

Now GRACIE, you don't go taking after
that misbehaving brother of yours --
no no.

Holding the child close, she walks off the porch, around to the back of the cabin, following the sound of chopping wood. A NATIVE MAN, slim early 40s, looks up and lays down his ax as she approaches and puts down Gracie -- who runs gleefully to her father's waiting hands.

MRS. BROWN (CONT'D)

BRYAN, that son of yours don't come
when he been called.

BRYAN

That's 'cause he's a boy, not a dog.

MRS. BROWN

You're very funny, Mr Brown, 'cept I
ain't laughin'.
(then she laughs)

BRYAN

So what do you need him for?

MRS. BROWN

I don't hafta need him... I just
want him to come when I call!

BRYAN

(laughs)
Aw, they're just playin', anyway.
Them kids get so wrapped up havin'
fun, half the time they can't even
hear you.

MRS. BROWN

'Cause they ain't listenin'.
(pause)
Hey, tell me something... Who was
this King Philip again? Was he a
white king or an Indian king? Having
trouble remembering things lately.

BRYAN

(patiently)
Like I told you before, he was a big
chief, so big they called him a king.
King Philip united our people 300
years ago, beat back the Waumpeshau,
the white man...
(puts Gracie down,
picks up the ax)
...before they finally got the best
of him and sent him to the Happy
Hunting Ground.

(MORE)

BRYAN (CONT'D)

All the stories end like that --
white man wins, red man is a conquered
nation.

(shrugs)

How did you Mexicans make out?

MRS. BROWN

I just don't know if those kids should
be playin' that the Indians *always*
have to lose... I know this is a
world for the white man...

BRYAN

Hey, I heard someone say once that
games imitate life...

(shrugs)

We might not get to *win*, but the
most important thing is to *survive*.
So maybe we don't get much respect
from the white man, we just gotta
respect ourselves... remember who
we are -- and have some fun.

(beat)

Even if we gotta get a job in this
crazy white man's world.

(shrugs again)

Besides, they can take our land but
not our hearts -- and we carry the
true land in our hearts...

Smiling, Bryan thumps his chest, winks at his daughter, and
resumes chopping wood.

INT. A ONE-ROOM SCHOOLHOUSE, WESTERLY -- DAY

A young, serious-looking schoolmarm stands at the front of
the class. Native children are at their desks, working
intently with pencils on paper. THE TEACHER surveys her
charges, then spotting something amiss, starts down a row
toward the middle of the classroom.

MISS FRANCIS

ETHEL? ETHEL WILCOX -- what are you
doing sitting behind Ellison? *Again*.
That is *not* your proper seat, young
lady, now is it?

A TINY GIRL, about seven, shrinks down in her seat as a
smirking Ellison turns full around to laugh at her plight.

ETHEL

(shrinking even lower)

No Miss Francis. Sorry Miss Francis.

The teacher arrives at Ellison's desk.

MISS FRANCIS

Ellison, please turn around young man.

Ellison turns back to his desk, where -- close up -- it is revealed he has apparently been drawing an elaborate picture: an eagle flying over a pack of running wolves. The drawing is detailed and lifelike.

MISS FRANCIS (CONT'D)

(spotting the artwork)

Ellison Brown! Now what in God's good heaven is that?

ELLISON

(little smile)

My masterpiece?

MISS FRANCIS

Well, it is *supposed* to be your *a-rith-me-tic*.

Miss Francis snatches the picture from Ellison's desktop, then refocuses her attention on the girl behind.

MISS FRANCIS (CONT'D)

Now, Miss Wilcox, you will return to your proper seat, and we will have no more of this... *foolery* with the seating plan. Do I make myself clear?

ETHEL

Yes Miss Francis.

The teacher, holding Ellison's drawing, studying it, spins and walks toward the front of the room. Ellison turns to smile at Ethel as she takes her proper seat two rows over. Catching his look, she smiles back, then discreetly blows him a kiss. There is stifled laughter from another girl, cutting off as the teacher abruptly turns around to face the class.

INT. SCHOOLROOM -- A LITTLE LATER

CLANG-CLANG-CLANG! MISS FRANCIS, standing by her desk, is waving a small but effectively noisy bell -- the seated children exploding instantly up and, with excitement, toward the door.

MISS FRANCIS

Now children -- let's have some order, please! ELLISON, stay behind, I would like to have a word with you, young man.

Ellison exchanges a look with Ethel as she hesitates in the bottle neck of exiting children, before being the last to leave.

Ellison lingers by the desk as his teacher seats herself.

MISS FRANCIS (CONT'D)

Now Ellison...

She fumbles with some papers, pulling his wildlife drawing out, inspecting it before holding it up to its creator.

MISS FRANCIS (CONT'D)

You know, this is very good work -- the best drawing I've ever seen from an 11-year-old.

ELLISON

You can keep it if you want.

MISS FRANCIS

I don't recall saying you could have it back to give it away... but thank you.

(slight smile)

I'm interested... did you copy it from other pictures? I don't recall seeing any quite like it in our books.

ELLISON

I did copy it from some pictures, but I keep them in my head. From things I see in the woods.

MISS FRANCIS

Really? Well Ellison, you should keep on drawing, keep practicing. I think you could someday be a very fine artist if you work at it.

ELLISON

Thanks. I like to draw, but I'm gonna be a famous runner when I'm old enough. Uncle Horatio says I got born with magic feet.

MISS FRANCIS

Well, I think you should remember you have other gifts as well. It's very difficult for Indians to make anything of themselves in this world. I think if you keep practicing your artwork, someday people might pay money for it.

ELLISON

So, maybe I got magic feet *and* magic hands?

Ellison inspects his palms and smiles.

MISS FRANCIS

That should be "maybe you have"...
magic feet -- not "got". But
Ellison...

(now sternly)

Please refrain from practicing your
artwork during arithmetic. Do I
make myself clear?

ELLISON

Yes Miss Francis.

EXT. MAIN STREET -- WAKEFIELD, RHODE ISLAND -- DAY

YOUNG ELLISON and his cousin, Atmore, are beside a young
BLONDE BOY; the trio have their noses pressed up against a
window. The sign above says "WAKEFIELD EMPORIUM".

BLONDE BOY

I can't believe you've never been
inside. I've been in lotsa times,
even without my dad. C'mon, I'll
show you all the good stuff in there.

INT. WAKEFIELD EMPORIUM -- MOMENTS LATER

Ellison and Atmore follow the blonde boy as he leads them by
previously unseen treasures.

ATMORE

Hey, this is great... So much stuff
to look at all at once.

BLONDE BOY

Ain't seen nothin' yet -- wait'll
you see all the penny candy up at
the counter.

A BIG MAN behind the counter looks down at the three hurrying
up to inspect the candy selection.

BIG PROPRIETOR

HEY -- You kids! Get outta my store!
NO INDIAN KIDS ALLOWED in here -- I
gotta sign up somewhere.

BLONDE BOY

(reaching in his pocket)
It's okay, MR JOHNSON, they're with
me. An I got money. Five cents.
(holds out his palm)

MR JOHNSON

You can stay. But not if you're
bringin' in *Indian kids*. Now...
(red-faced angry)
Go on -- SCRAM. OUTTA HERE NOW!

Ellison is frozen in the glare of the fierce proprietor.

CLOSE to Ellison's dark eyes -- no fear as they begin to narrow...

ATMORE
(grabbing Ellison)
C'mon El, let's go!

Atmore yanks Ellison to motion, the two scramble toward the door.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PORCH OF BROWNS' WESTERLY CABIN -- DAY

IT IS FOUR YEARS LATER. CLOSE UP, a newspaper headline: *Stock Markets CRASH -- Wall Street PANIC!* The paper is the Providence Journal, the date is Oct 29, 1929. The paper collapses forward to reveal Bryan Brown behind it, laying it onto his lap as he picks up a plain coffee mug. Sitting close by is Horatio Stanton, smoking a big cigar -- looking slightly older and thicker in the middle than when last seen.

HORATIO
So anything *else* goin' on in the world, Bryan -- besides all that gloom an' doom everyone keeps talkin' about?

BRYAN
Yeah, these funny papers in here are good.
(chuckles)
There's this new one about some fella lives over in Africa with big apes. Gets himself around by swingin' on vines through the jungle.

HORATIO
Like that son of yours.

BRYAN
(laughing)
Yeah, kinda like Ellison.

HORATIO
He's runnin' pretty fast now you know. Faster than me -- at least in the short haul. Lotsa energy.

BRYAN
Yeah, one of the neighbors was just bitchin'. Said Ellison keeps chasin' his animals around -- guess his cows were too tired to stand up for milkin'.

Horatio laughs.

HORATIO

Them magic feet could take him a long ways. I mean, he could become more than just another fast Indian -- really make somethin' of himself.

BRYAN

Yeah, maybe. But you know runnin' ain't a way to put food on a poor man's table. Indian or white.

HORATIO

Hey, nobody's ever gonna get rich from running. Anyhow, It's more love than money that pushes a man to win races.

BRYAN

(shrugs)
Can't eat love neither.

HORATIO

Well, you know what I mean though. El wants to go get trained by Tippy next year. Tip can help him lots.

BRYAN

Yeah... Can't hurt if it settles him down some. Boy's got lotsa spunk, just gotta learn to *listen* a bit now and then.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD THROUGH WESTERLY WOODS -- DAY

TEENAGE RUNNING ELLISON, stops mid-stride in his tracks as he hears a young girl calling after him.

GRACIE (V.O.)

ELLISON. *Wait for me, ELLISON!*

ELLISON turns to see the small figure of his little sister, Gracie, trailing behind. He watches as she closes the distance.

ELLISON

Not this time, Gracie, I'm on a training run. You can't keep up.

Ellison resumes running down the road -- accelerating.

GRACIE, looking exasperated, stops. Panting. She looks longingly down the trail after her brother.

GRACIE
 (still panting)
 OKAY... You can go... By yourself...
 THIS TIME.

ELLISON -- striding gracefully and effortlessly ahead. He runs with his chin up, his head tilted slightly to his left.

ELLISON'S P.O.V. -- A young deer darts across the road just in front, disappearing into the forest. Ellison veers off course, following its trail.

EXT. IN THE WOODS -- A MOMENT LATER

THE DEER pauses to look back at its pursuer, then resumes flight.

ELLISON'S P.O.V. -- giving chase, leaping over deadfall and dodging trees, actually closing the distance... Then... Ellison trips over a log, plowing to a stop -- face first into ground moss. The chase has ended. Slowly... he picks himself up, shaking his head, spitting out moss fragments.

ELLISON
 (calling after deer)
 OKAY. YOU WIN THIS TIME. NEXT TIME
 IS MY TURN. I AM DEERFOOT OF THE
 NARRAGANSETT! YOU'RE JUST A DEEERRRR!

Smiling, Ellison turns and jogs back toward the road.

EXT. SHORELINE OF A POND -- EVENING

TEENAGE ELLISON and his cousin, Atmore, are wading in the pond, shoulder deep and about 15 feet apart, slowly making their way toward shore. Each has his top hand just above water, controlling a pole, the bottom hand apparently holding the submerged part of some contraption. As they reach shallower water, the homemade seine net they are pulling begins to reveal itself.

ELLISON
 Okay Atmore, start curling in a little
 more toward me, don't wanta lose any
 big ones this time.

ATMORE
 Sure feels heavy, bet there's some
 real lunkers back in the net already
 for sure.

ELLISON
 Bottoms been really draggin' in the
 muck, probably full of all kinds of
 shit.

Ten feet from shore, at knee depth, pulling gets easier as the two boys corral the makeshift seine in to the small beach.

Quicker now, they reach the water's edge and eagerly but carefully bring the bottom of the net to the land. The lower center of the net reveals... mud, rocks, leeches, a bottle, a boot, and a few small fish flapping silver just as they slip out the back through tears in the material.

ELLISON (CONT'D)

Damn. Stupid holes. Shit.

ATMORE

I think we need a stronger net.

ELLISON

You think?

ATMORE

Yeah.

ELLISON

Well, hard to get anything better than potato bags -- didn't think they'd rip. But I can fix it.

ATMORE

Figured you can.

Both boys begin wiping at the mud coating their legs from the knees down, under their soaked rolled-up pants.

ELLISON

Let's count bloodsuckers... I got four on my right leg, *oh five* -- bet I got more than you.

ATMORE

No fair -- I was rubbing 'em off in the water.

ELLISON

No wonder you're so slow, shit brain!

ATMORE

Shit-brain yourself.

ELLISON

Me first, you last. I got nine leeches -- *I win*.

ATMORE

SO?

Ellison throws a handful of mud and leeches at Atmore, who deflects the attack just in time with his arm.

ELLISON

Good reflexes, Atty.
(MORE)

ELLISON (CONT'D)

Okay, let's prop this thing up to dry and get outta here. We can fix it tomorrow and clean this lake out.

The two friends stretch out their potato-sack seine net, propping it between two trees.

ELLISON (CONT'D)

Race yuh home -- I'll give you a 50-count head start.

ATMORE

NO -- that's not enough. Besides, *you always cheat.*

ELLISON

Okay, I'll count to 100 then. Starting NOW! One... two... three...

Atmore turns and sprints away.

ATMORE

(yelling back)

DON'T CHEAT THIS TIME!

ELLISON

DON'T HAVE TO -- 17 18 19 20...

INT. A HOUSE IN CHARLESTOWN, RHODE ISLAND -- DAY

TIPPY SALERNO, cigar in mouth, is about to open the door as someone is knocking loudly, over the sound of driving rain.

TIPPY

Okay, okay, hold yer horses, yu'know... I'm gettin' it.

Tippy opens the door to reveal a rain-soaked Ellison Brown, who stands shivering, making no attempt to come inside. Tippy stands quietly for a moment, measuring the teenager.

TIPPY (CONT'D)

So? Yer 16 now, are yuh? Kinda skinny, even for an Indian.

Ellison just nods his head.

TIPPY (CONT'D)

Yuh run here, kid?

Nods again. Hopeful smile.

TIPPY (CONT'D)

So? Yuh gonna be worth takin' on? Gonna make me proud one day?

ELLISON

Maybe I'll... make us both proud...
more'n just one day. Maybe *two days*.

TIPPY

(amused -- snorts)

Okay... Well, let's get yuh inside
for some grub. Hope yuh like eggs.
Then I'll get yuh home, and we start
yer trainin' with me tomorrow.

ELLISON

Thanks, Mr. Salerno.

TIPPY

Don't thank me, yu'know. Thank the
Lord for making yuh a fast Indian.
And thank yer uncle for bein' such a
bum. Came in 25th or somethin' in
Boston last year -- he tell yuh that?

Shaking his head as he turns around, Tippy hides a smile
from Ellison.

EXT. FRONT OF TIPPY'S HOUSE -- THE NEXT MORNING

TIPPY, standing on his front porch, inspects his pocket watch
as a car slows to a stop in front. Out from the back jumps
Ellison, waving at the car as it drives off; he then hurries
up to the porch.

TIPPY

Yer late, yu'know, kid. Rule number
one: don't be late.

ELLISON

(flashing smile)

Sorry Mr. Salerno, took me awhile to
hitch a ride.

TIPPY

If yer runnin' in a race, yu'know,
and yer late -- yuh lose! And don't
say *sorry*. I get sick of hearin'
that -- so that'll be *rule number*
two. Got it?

Ellison nods solemnly.

TIPPY (CONT'D)

And call me Tippy.

ELLISON

(big smile again)

So when do we get started, Tippy?

TIPPY

Right now, yu'know, right around the back. Got somethin' to show yuh.

Ellison follows Tippy around back of the house, revealing a huge pile of unsplit firewood. The coach steps up to the pile and picks up an ax, offering it to Ellison.

TIPPY (CONT'D)

Yer first assignment: let's see how much of this wood yuh can get split in an hour. Then, we'll see how much yuh can split in the next hour.

Ellison takes the ax and gazes solemnly at the woodpile.

TIPPY (CONT'D)

By then, yu'know, it'll be lunchtime.

ELLISON

(hopeful)
After lunch?

TIPPY

It's a big pile, kid.

The coach turns and starts walking away.

TIPPY (CONT'D)

Don't worry, kid, I got eggs for yer lunch.

EXT. BESIDE A LARGE WOODPILE -- DAY

ELLISON is swinging an ax. *TWACK!* He looks up as his father comes around the corner of what is revealed to be the back of the Browns' cabin -- Ellison has been splitting wood in his own backyard.

BRYAN

Hey Ellison, blisters gettin' any better?

Ellison lowers the ax, lets it drop to the ground, inspects his hands, then shows the palms to his dad.

ELLISON

Pop, I got blisters on my blisters!

BRYAN

They heal. Turn to callus -- sign of a man.

ELLISON

Pop, *all* I do is chop wood! I do it all day for Tippy, then I have to come home an' do it here too.

BRYAN

(shrugs)

Fall's coming... Winter ain't too far after that. Wood don't split itself -- you'll toughen up. How's the runnin' going?

ELLISON

Running? I'm too TIRED to do any running.

BRYAN

Too tired to help me go check my trap line?

ELLISON

Now?

(big grin)

Okay, *let's go.*

Ellison *charges* past his smiling father.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BACK OF TIPPY'S HOUSE -- TWO YEARS LATER -- DAY

ELLISON IS CHOPPING WOOD, quickly and powerfully. There is a small pile of unsplit logs next to a very large pile of split firewood. Ellison is bigger, much more grown-up looking than when last seen; at 5' 9", 145 lbs, he is muscular but not overly so -- dark-skinned, sleek and sinuous. Shorter hair accentuates his finely chiseled features.

TIPPY (O.S.)

Leave some for tomorrow, sport. We gotta save some energy for yer run to Hope Valley!

Ellison, flashing a big grin, tosses down the ax and charges past Tippy, who smiles as he sucks on his trademark cigar.

EXT. BESIDE A CINDER TRACK, EMPTY BLEACHERS -- DAY

Tippy stands by the track, stopwatch in one hand, cigar in the other. Ellison is alone on the ringed surface, striding swiftly around the final curve -- running barefoot.

HORATIO (O.S.)

Hey Tippy, Sorry I'm late.

Tippy glances back as a smiling Horatio joins him. Both men then watch Ellison charge up the final straightaway.

TIPPY

Late. Yah, you were makin' that too big a habit yer last few races -- yuh bum.

(MORE)

TIPPY (CONT'D)

(chuckles)

Hey, yu'know, yer favorite nephew
sure ain't gonna be late this run.

Ellison zooms past the two men as Tippy, overly dramatic,
clicks his watch.

TIPPY (CONT'D)

(excited)

Four minutes... *24 seconds!* By
himself -- and *barefoot!*

HORATIO

Yeah... Well, it *is* easier to run
fast with less weight on the feet.
But of course for a marathon, gotta
have shoes... Biggest enemy for a
distance runner is them damn shoes.

Ellison, slowed to a jog, turns and heads back toward the
two men.

TIPPY

Ahhh, shoes won't hurt him when I
enter him in Boston next spring.
He's got all the tools to be a great
marathoner -- speed *and* endurance.
And pretty bright too, yu'know, for
an Indian. No offense, Chief.

Tippy turns to Horatio, prodding the Indian's once-flat belly
with the unlit end of his cigar.

TIPPY (CONT'D)

Yu'know, I expected a lot more outta
you than that... *23rd place* back in
'28, Chief.

HORATIO

Hey, I finished *18th*, and under three
hours, Tippy!

TIPPY

Yeah well, *23rd*, *18th*... It's all
the same tuh me, yu'know. What's
the difference -- *yuh lost*.
(snorts)

A beaming Ellison joins them.

ELLISON

How fast this time, Tippy? Felt
really strong. Did I break four and
a half?

TIPPY

Close enough, kid, close enough.
 But, yu'know, speed ain't yer problem.
 When yuh run the Legion race in
 Medford next week, yuh gotta
 remember... *hold-back, hold-back.*
 Right till the very end -- yu'know?
 Don't go tryin' to run away from
 everyone right from the start.

(beat)

Like *Last time.*

Tippy playfully nudges Ellison, who has been absorbing the lesson, nodding his head.

EXT. A COUNTRY ROAD -- RHODE ISLAND -- DAY

ELLISON and HORATIO are running side by side. The pace is quite strong, but the two athletes converse easily, though Horatio is laboring a bit. Ellison surges slightly ahead, his shirtless bronze torso glistening in light sweat.

HORATIO

C'mon, hold back El, *too fast* -- you just wanna run easy now till the marathon. And this'll be your last long run.

ELLISON

How far we goin'?

HORATIO

I don't know. Tippy said over two but under three hours for sure. Maybe 18 to 20 miles. We'll turn around in a bit.

ELLISON

So what's the farthest you ever ran?

HORATIO

Twenty-six miles, 385 yards, exactly a marathon -- that's enough for me.

ELLISON

Tell me again why it's that long.

HORATIO

You mean, why it's exactly that distance?

ELLISON

Yeah, the one about the Olympics.

HORATIO

Okay, well... When they had the Olympic Marathon in England, they

(MORE)

HORATIO (CONT'D)

had to make the race start in front of some castle so the Queen's kids could watch it. Then... the ending had to be right in front of the Queen watching in the stadium. So... it just worked out to be that long -- 26 miles, 385 yards.

ELLISON

But this is the United States. We don't got no queens.

HORATIO

(shrugs as he runs)

They just wanted to keep the marathon runs always the same distance after that. Make it standard.

ELLISON

Okay. Now tell me the one about the Greek guy that died after running. "Fee-uh-something".

HORATIO

Yeah, "Pheidippi-- something". He was the first marathon runner. Had to run back a long ways to tell the other Greeks about some enemies they conquered. So he...

ELLISON

(interrupting)

Yelled "rejoice, we conquered the bad guys" -- then he dropped dead. Yeah, I remember.

HORATIO

So, why'd you ask?

ELLISON

Why'd he die?

HORATIO

I don't know.

(pause)

Maybe running all that way in heavy armor killed him.

ELLISON

How far did he run? Twenty-six miles, 385 yards?
(grins)

HORATIO

NO, of course it wasn't *exactly* that far.

(MORE)

HORATIO (CONT'D)

This was hundreds... maybe thousands of years ago. I don't know how far he ran. He probably didn't know either.

ELLISON

After he dropped dead, bet he didn't know anything.
(big grin)

HORATIO

OKAY, far enough, time to turn around.

The runners turn and head back down the dusty road, Ellison surging slightly ahead.

EXT. HOPKINTON, MASSACHUSETTS -- STARTING LINE OF THE BOSTON ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION MARATHON -- APRIL 1934 -- LATE MORNING

A large group of runners -- about 150 -- are preparing themselves behind the starting banner of the race. Some are running on the spot, others are flexing themselves, self-massaging legs, in various last-minute, pre-race rituals. Spectators line the start area. From a raised platform, the B.A.A. RACE ANNOUNCER addresses the crowd.

B.A.A. ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the 1934 Boston Athletic Association Marathon Footrace. Today, we have runners from all over the east coast and from as far away as Canada. Please give these fine young men the applause they so deserve as they prepare to run the amazing distance of 26 miles, 385 yards, ending in the city of Boston. Runners... Please prepare yourselves for the start.

Spectators applaud, and runners acknowledge the crowd as they step up to the starting line. All athletes are dressed in similar running apparel for the period: racing vests, or *singlets*, displaying various club insignia, with large-block numbers pinned to their chests.

B.A.A. ANNOUNCER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Among the outstanding athletes we have with us today, we have the defending champion, from Pawtucket, Rhode Island, LESLIE PAWSON... Les, please step forward and say hello to your supporters...

Cheers and Applause.

B.A.A. ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)
 We have SEVEN-time winner, CLARENCE
 H. DEMAR...

Louder Cheers.

B.A.A. ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)
 We also have, from Canada, the second-
 place finisher from one year ago...
 DAVE, uh... KOMONEN...

A runner with a maple leaf on his vest steps forward and waves to the appreciative crowd.

B.A.A. ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)
 Ladies and gentlemen, last year this
 man had to sell his shoes *right off*
his feet after the race, so he could
 afford to travel home.

Back in the crowd of runners is Ellison Brown, wearing a distinctive running singlet -- home-sewn from scraps of cloth of every conceivable color all pieced together. Bouncing up and down, he seems happy and eager to begin racing. Beside Ellison, a runner tugs at the multicolored fabric.

RUNNER
 Hey Chief, what's with the crazy
 quilt -- your mother make this?

ELLISON
 (proudly)
 Yeah, leftovers from some of her
 dresses.

B.A.A. ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
 Runners... Take your marks... Get
 set...

CUT TO:

AN OLD RIFLE FIRING INTO THE SKY

CUT TO:

THE CROWD OF RUNNERS surging forward, jostling for position as spectators roar their approval. Well back in the beginning stage of the race, Ellison stands out in his multicolored vest.

EXT. FRAMINGHAM RAILROAD STATION -- BOSTON MARATHON COURSE -- EARLY AFTERNOON

A small group of runners passes by, including the Canadian, Komonen. Cars, filled mostly with press, follow alongside the lead runners, reporters jabbering to each other and taking notes. A few motorcycle cops and some bicycles cruise nearby.

Onlookers line the course, cheering the racers as they go past. A long string of runners follow in the wake of the lead pack. After about 25 athletes pass by, Ellison appears -- waving to the crowd, he seems to be thoroughly enjoying his experience.

ELLISON'S P.O.V. -- People are stepping out of the crowd onto the road, holding up cups of water and offering orange slices as runners pass by.

ELLISON

Anybody giving out soda pop?

RUNNER BESIDE ELLISON

(sweating, panting)

You're... having too much fun... I'm working harder... than you. Why don't you go try to... catch the leaders?

ELLISON

Not yet. My coach, Tippy, he wants me to hold-back, hold-back till the last few miles.

EXT. SLIGHT HILLS ALONG BOSTON MARATHON COURSE -- NEWTON -- MID AFTERNOON

Ellison, alternately jogging and walking, stops to remove his shoes.

CLOSE to a foot -- a mess of broken blood blisters.

ELLISON

(muttered to self)

Magic feet...

Shaking head, he carries the footwear as he resumes running, barefoot -- leaving a trail of blood. His pained expression improves after he casually tosses his shoes to some onlookers.

INT. BUSY PRESSROOM OF THE BOSTON GLOBE -- DAY

JERRY NASON, a lean young Globe reporter, sits at a desk, pecking semi-rapidly at a typewriter, glancing to and from his notes as he works.

JERRY'S P.O.V -- CLOSER to text as it forms on the paper. The reporter's voice narrates as he types.

JERRY (O.S.)

Though this year's race was won by Dave Komonen, a flying Finn from Canada -- with local boy, JOHNNY KELLEY, valiantly coming in second -- a colorful story was transpiring back in the pack.

(MORE)

JERRY (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Dressed in his "vest of many colors" ran a poor Narragansett Indian from Rhode Island, named Ellison "Deerfoot" Brown. Early in the race, he ran to the promise of his name, proudly with chin up, as beautiful in stride as any racehorse. He finished the race with bloody bare feet, in 32nd place. Muscled like the best of the ancient Roman gladiators and yet with the soft and sinuous curves of a Greek God... Deerfoot looks like he would be more at home in the jungles of Africa than the streets of Boston. This reporter wonders if "TARZAN" Brown will return next year to once again challenge the mighty marathon.

-- By Jerry Nason

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HOPKINTON -- BOSTON MARATHON STARTING LINE -- LATE MORNING

SUPER: *ONE YEAR LATER -- APRIL, 1935*

Runners are milling about behind the start banner, making last-minute preparations. Spectators and supporters interact with athletes; reporters with note pads out are querying runners and taking notes. Ellison Brown sits cross legged by the roadside, again wearing the multi-fabric singlet.

B.A.A. ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

Attention All Runners. It is ten minutes till noon, please begin moving to the starting line.

Runners move closer to the start, exposing Ellison, sitting stoically and expressionless. A young pressman notices the Indian and approaches.

JERRY

Hey, I remember you, hard to forget that outfit. I'm Jerry Nason -- with the Globe. Mentioned you in a story last year.

Ellison looks up at Nason.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Say, shouldn't you be getting ready to run? Race is set to start.

ELLISON

I remember. My coach told me you called me "Tarzan". Now lots of people are calling me that.

(grins)

I don't mind.

JERRY

Well, Tarzan, how are you going to run this year? Don't think you'll get a mention this time if you come in 32nd.

Ellison slowly gets to his feet and stretches.

ELLISON

Last year I was just here for all the fun, and besides, my feet weren't tough enough. Got more callus this time -- sign of a man.

Nason jots a quick note on his pad.

ELLISON (CONT'D)

You writing this down? Okay, this year could be a surprise for people. I'm gonna run as fast as I can, for as long as I can... But don't tell Tippy -- he's my coach.

B.A.A. ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the 1935 Boston Athletic Association Marathon Footrace. Please show your appreciation to all these fine young athletes representing clubs throughout the U.S.A. and even Canada... Runners, please prepare for the start.

Ellison starts toward the crowd of racers.

JERRY

Well, good hunting, Tarzan. Have a good race.

The Indian runner looks back at Nason.

ELLISON

If I win, maybe you can write in your paper that my victory is to honor my mother's spirit. She passed away, just a few days ago. So I'm wearing this shirt she made from her dresses...

(tugs at the fabric)

...to remember her. Even though last year I sorta got laughed at.

Nason says nothing as Ellison moves away. ANOTHER REPORTER comes up behind Nason, claps him on the back.

REPORTER

Well Jerry, Spring's here for sure.
The saps are running.
(laughs, shaking head)
I love that line. Wrote it first,
yuh know that?

JERRY

Don't kid yourself. Takes a rugged athlete with plenty of guts to run a marathon.

REPORTER

Well, if you ask me, they're all just a bunch of working-class oddball freaks.
(shrugs)
Me, I'd rather be coverin' baseball.

The pressmen move up to a better position for viewing the start.

B.A.A. ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

Returning to this year's race, we have defending champion, Dave Komonen from Canada. Dave had to drive through a snow storm to get here just in time...

Some applause.

B.A.A. ANNOUNCER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Second-place finisher last year, a local florist, Johnny Kelley...

Significant crowd reaction for local favorite Kelley.

B.A.A. ANNOUNCER (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Returning once again, SEVEN-TIME winner, Clarence H. Demar...
Clarence...

More applause and cheering.

B.A.A. ANNOUNCER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Okay gentlemen, prepare to start and have a good race!

ELLISON, back in the pack of runners, feels someone pulling at his singlet.

RUNNER BEHIND ELLISON

Hey, I heard yer squaw made this.

ELLISON'S DARK EYES NARROW as the STARTING RIFLE EXPLODES. The Indian runner has an explosive start himself, weaving and pushing past human obstacles to the lead pack of the early race.

A diminutive, fair-skinned man in his late twenties, JOHNNY KELLEY, pulls up beside Ellison. Wearing a small shamrock on his singlet, Kelley's eyes twinkle as he smiles, a little crookedly, at his neighbor.

JOHNNY

Hey, lots of time to give it the leather later on. Jeepers, this is a marathon, not a mile race, son.

Ellison doesn't look over at Kelley.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

You've got a nice running gait there, fella. Say, I recognize you, you're that Tarzan fella -- ran barefoot last year, didn't yuh?
(offers his hand)
I'm Johnny Kelley.

Ellison shakes hands with Kelley.

ELLISON

I hate shoes -- these ones are foot killers. When are you white men gonna invent something useful... like special shoes for running?

JOHNNY

Got news for you, my friend -- they already make 'em! Wearing 'em myself for the first time -- S.T.A.R. Streamlines. *Hey, you gotta get some.* They're lighter weight and white instead of black -- supposed to absorb 38% less heat.

Another runner pulls up on Kelley's other shoulder.

NEW RUNNER (PAT)

Hey Kel, last year I started a marathon with a dollar bill in my shoe... When I finished, I found ten dimes there.

JOHNNY

Heard that one before, PAT.

ELLISON

Is it supposed to be lucky to put money in your shoe?

JOHNNY
No Tarzan, it's a joke.

ELLISON
Oh.

With a little smile, Ellison picks up his pace and separates from the two men.

PAT
Guess he didn't like my humor.

JOHNNY
Don't worry, he'll be back. If he's a typical Indian runner, he'll burn himself right outta fuel... Besides, he ain't wearing S.T.A.R Streamlines.

EXT. A 1934 STUDEBAKER PRESIDENT (MOVING) -- EARLY MARATHON COURSE -- EARLY AFTERNOON

INT. STUDEBAKER -- FAVORING JERRY NASON

Nasson, scribbling in his notebook, chats with another reporter.

JERRY
Who just dropped out -- that Komonen?

OTHER REPORTER
Yeah, heard he missed a night of sleep driving down from Canada through that blizzard.

JERRY
What happened to Pawson? Haven't seen him the whole race.

OTHER REPORTER
Ah, he's way back, he's not fit this year.

JERRY
Kelley sure looks fresh. I got him pegged to win.

OTHER REPORTER
Yeah, he looks good all right. Heard he's on a special diet, lots of protein.

JERRY
He told me he's taking glucose pills this time too -- some scientists said they'd help the last few miles.

OTHER REPORTER
And he's got those new special shoes.

EXT. SLIGHT HILLS ALONG BOSTON MARATHON COURSE -- NEWTON --
MID AFTERNOON.

ELLISON -- struggling to hold his form as the race wears on.
He runs virtually alone, out of contact with runners ahead
and behind. Some onlookers tap hands lightly as he goes by.

CLOSE to Ellison's half-closed eyes...

CLOSER... into the dark eyes...

ELLISON'S P.O.V. -- A VAGUE, BLURRY IMAGE IS FORMING...

THE IMAGE -- a ghostlike apparition hovers low in the sky
ahead. Evolving supernaturally, the image forms into the
features of Ellison's mother... Her expression radiates with
what could be proud love, as she nods her head slightly...

CLOSE TO ELLISON'S EYES -- brimming with tears...

ELLISON'S MOTHER (V.O.)

You honor me. Show the Waumpeshau
your warrior heart will not give up.

THE APPARITION fades into something shapeless, indistinct...

TEARS are streaming down Ellison's cheeks as he runs on.

ROADSIDE -- AS ELLISON PASSES

OLDTIMER

(to his buddy)

See that? That's the marathon.
He's in so much pain he's got tears.

BUDDY

Yeah? I'd be cryin' too if I was
seen wearin' that patchwork rag he's
got on.

EXT. A MILE OR SO UP THE COURSE -- A BIT LATER

Ellison, jogging down to a walk, stops and removes his shoes.
He tosses them immediately aside as he resumes jogging,
barefoot, leaving a trail of blood. There are few other
runners in view, as some onlookers cheer and shout
encouragement. At least one heckles.

ONE ONLOOKER

C'mon Tarzan! Only five miles left!

HECKLER

Hey, you're still the *first Indian*.

Ellison acknowledges the spectators with a small wave, as he
picks up his pace slightly.

ELLISON

Anybody got any soda pop?

Someone steps onto the road, holding out a bottle.

ONLOOKER WITH BOTTLE

You like orange soda?

ELLISON

Yup, that's my favorite.

(takes it)

Thanks, buddy.

EXT. FINISH LINE OF BOSTON MARATHON -- A LITTLE LATER

Officials, press, coaches and spectators surround the finish-line area. A B.A.A. official on a scaffold looks down the course through binoculars, while an announcer addresses the crowd.

B.A.A. ANNOUNCER

Ladies and gentlemen, the first runner is now heading for the finish... and it is... *Kelley*. Johnny Kelley is about to win his first Boston Marathon!

JOHNNY KELLEY'S P.O.V. -- the finish banner in sight, Johnny takes one quick glance over his shoulder -- there is no pursuer to be seen. Johnny smiles, then suddenly clutches his stomach and slows to a stop.

He bends over and vomits several times, straightens and crosses himself, then runs through the finish.

EXT. RAISED PLATFORM NEAR THE BOSTON MARATHON FINISH --
LATER AFTERNOON

JOHNNY KELLEY, wearing a laurel wreath, a winner's gold medal around his neck, holds a bouquet of flowers as he addresses the crowd below.

JOHNNY

Who could believe this? Jeepers -- a florist running 26 miles to get a laurel wreath! Well, I just want you all to know what a *swell feeling* this victory gives me. You can win every five and ten mile race in New England, but nobody really *repects* you till you win the B.A.A. Marathon; this one's as *big as baseball!* I know this glory will be over in a few days, so I intend to *really enjoy it!*

(MORE)

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

I'd like to thank my coach, Fred Faller, my trainer, Angus MacDonald, my doctor, Kenneth Tilotson, and of course my parents --and everyone who supported my win today! Thank-you to the Boston Athletic Association -- you fellas are great. *God be willing*, I hope to come back here for many years to come.

THE CROWD BELOW KELLEY'S PLATFORM -- CHEERS AND APPLAUDS

CLOSER IN -- ELLISON, watching as Kelley waves to the onlookers below.

ELLISON

(to anyone listening)

Next year, with better shoes, maybe that'll be me up there.

A MAN beside Ellison glances at the Indian, then leans to his opposite neighbor's ear.

MAN BESIDE ELLISON

Now *that* would be something... Indian giving a victory speech to a bunch of white men.

EXT. DOWNTOWN BOSTON STREET CORNER -- THAT EVENING

ELLISON, walking alone, comes to a corner pub; he hesitates, then enters.

INT. BOSTON CORNER PUB -- MOMENTS LATER

The atmosphere inside is loud and celebratory. Ellison is at the bar, a beer already in hand, when he hears a familiar voice calling a familiar name.

JOHNNY (O.S.)

Hey! You -- Tarzan! C'mon over and join us.

Ellison glances over at Johnny Kelley, sitting at a nearby table; with Johnny are a dozen men and women -- chatting, laughing, drinking and smoking.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

C'mon, don't be shy, always room for another runner.

As Ellison hesitates, Johnny gets up from his chair -- too quickly for the evening after running a marathon -- grimaces dramatically, then shuffles over and slaps the Indian on the back. With twinkling eyes and crooked grin, the smallish Kelley could easily be cast as a leprechaun.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

Ooooo -- wouldn't want to hafta run for it right now, that's for sure. Hey, good race today, son. C'mon join us, I'm buying drinks tonight.

ELLISON

Good race yourself. You won. I lost.

JOHNNY

Hey, where'd you end up coming in? Jeepers, when I passed you after Wellesley, sure looked like you were wearin' a few dimes in your shoes.

Kelley laughs at his new twist on the old joke. Ellison smiles politely.

ELLISON

I came in 13th... Faster than last year, anyway. Maybe by next time I can figure out a way to get me some of them fancy white shoes.

JOHNNY

Hey, trust me, they help. Most of the top runners are wearing 'em now. Only trouble is, they cost seven dollars and 50 cents a pair. A fella up in Peabody takes 16 hours to custom make 'em for yuh.

ELLISON

(shaking his head)

That's a lot of money for shoes.

JOHNNY

Well, you're young and fast, you'll just hafta go get yourself some sponsors. Say, you do any of the Legion race circuit?

ELLISON

Ran a few last year.

JOHNNY

With your speed, you don't really need good smarts to win some of those shorter races... Impress a few of the right people -- *Bingo*, you get sponsored. And, play your cards right, you're gettin' top *appearance* money -- all paid under the table.

(winks)

Ten bucks comes in handy for expenses.

Kelley puts his arm around Ellison, leading him back toward his table. The support doesn't hurt Kelley, who has been enjoying celebratory drinks for hours.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

Anyway, trust me, takes more than just fast shoes to win a marathon. We'll go run a few races together this summer. Maybe you can rabbit for me... Now, c'mon, I'm buyin' you a drink.

EXT. SHORELINE OF NARRAGANSETT BAY, RHODE ISLAND -- COOL SUMMER AFTERNOON

TIPPY SALERNO Stands on the the beach, well back from the water's edge. There is a breeze coming in off the bay. Tippy's attention is on a small figure up the shoreline, growing larger as it approaches. CLOSER -- it becomes Ellison "Tarzan" Brown. Nearer Tippy, the runner cuts away from the water, running right up to stop in front of his coach. Ellison's face displays his utter displeasure.

ELLISON

(points at bare feet)
Tippy! My feet are frozen and sore, and this is *not* training... this is some kind of... *torture*.

TIPPY

(patiently)
The *idea*, yu'know, is for it *not* to be comfortable... The *idea* is for the sun and the sand and the cold and the salt to work *together* to toughen up them baby-soft feet... Yuh need leather feet tuh protect yuh from yer shoes, kid.

ELLISON

What I need, is *better shoes*. Like Johnny Kelley has -- S.T.A.R Streamlines.

TIPPY

Better shoes won't help yuh run a *smarter* race... Better shoes won't stop yuh from *going out too fast*...
(shrugs)
Better shoes will come in time, kid. First, yu'know, we gotta get yer feet tanned up so yuh can win us some races.

Tippy motions back to the bay with his cigar.

TIPPY (CONT'D)

Now... Time to run back the other way. And try to keep yer feet more in the water this time. Trust me, yu'know, I been at this a long time already, I know what I'm doin'. Before yuh can be a champion, gotta get champion's feet.

As Tippy watches, Ellison turns and trots toward the bay.

TIPPY (CONT'D)

(to himself)

Good kid, yu'know. Hard worker.

INT. ELLISON'S VERY SMALL BEDROOM -- WESTERLY -- DAY

ELLISON lies stretched out on his narrow bed, reading a pulp magazine: the title is "Tarzan And His Mate". His sister Gracie's face peeks into the open doorway.

GRACIE

Ellison, Ellison. Ethel's here. Did you forget about your date?

ELLISON

(puts magazine down)

Hey, don't you ever knock?

(sitting up)

And it's not a date.

GRACIE

Your sooo funny. There's no door to knock on -- hafta have a door before you can knock, silly.

EXT. PORCH OF BROWNS' WESTERLY CABIN -- MOMENTS LATER

ETHEL, waiting on the porch, wearing a yellow dress, looks perky and pretty at 16. She lights to a warm smile as Ellison comes out the door.

ETHEL

Hi, handsome hero.

ELLISON

(smiling back)

Hi Ethel. Uh, wanta go for a walk?

ETHEL

Sure. You look nice.

Ellison looks down at his somewhat ragged shirt and cut-off pants.

ELLISON

Uh, so do you.

Ethel and Ellison step off the porch together, close but not touching.

GRACIE
 (peeking out the door)
 If it's not a date -- then what is
 it? And can I come?

Ethel turns a little crossly toward Ellison, who is turning to glare back at Gracie.

GRACIE (CONT'D)
 Just kidding, have fun!

Ellison and Ethel walk, almost touching, along the road.

ETHEL
 Your sister's so cute.

ELLISON
 Yeah. Cute.

ETHEL
 So, where we going?

ELLISON
 I don't know...
 (beat)
 Hey, I know. Want to pet a deer?

ETHEL
 Sure.
 (smiles shyly)
 And I want to pet a Deerfoot too.

Ellison grins.

EXT. IN THE WOODS -- A LITTLE LATER

ELLISON is just ahead of Ethel, one arm stretched across her body; he barely turns and puts a finger to his mouth, motioning silence.

ELLISON AND ETHEL'S P.O.V -- A young deer just 50 feet ahead is feeding on a fresh sapling.

ELLISON very slowly takes a short step forward. CLOSE UP, his foot gently... touches the ground with the outside front first, the rest of the foot slowly... compressing behind. Slowly... and gently... his weight is transferring to his front leg. Ellison nods softly to Ethel, who carefully moves a leg forward. As her foot touches the ground, there is a tiny sound of a cracking twig.

THE DEER stops feeding, its ears rotate slightly -- then the animal gracefully bounds ahead, disappearing into some foliage.

ELLISON

Hey, not bad, Ethel. We were getting close.

ETHEL

Any closer, I was worried it could hear my heart beating.

ELLISON

(grins)

I could hear your heart beating. Remember, the closer you get, the slower you go. Everything's gotta slow right down, even your heartbeat.

ETHEL

How close have you come? You haven't really petted one, have you?

ELLISON

(looks at her -- pause)

Almost.

ETHEL

This was fun. Thanks for bringing me.

ELLISON

Sure. Next time we'll get closer.

(looks away)

Now... uh, wanna go for a soda pop down at Sammy's? I do some odd jobs for him -- he pays me with sodas.

ETHEL

Okay. If we can take the long way.

(smiles)

ETHEL'S HAND reaches to find Ellison's. ELLISON looks down and then over at Ethel, smiling back at her.

EXT. A COUNTRY ROAD -- RHODE ISLAND -- MORNING

A CAR slows to a stop at the side of the road. Ellison Brown, tote bag in hand, runs up and climbs in the back.

INT. CAR -- A MOMENT LATER

ELLISON'S P.O.V. -- two men are in front.

DRIVER

How far you going, kid?

ELLISON

Up to Boston. I'm catchin' a ride from there to Fitchburg for a race.

DRIVER

I can take you as far as Pawtucket.
That's where we're headed.

ELLISON

Sure. Thanks.

EXT. CAR -- MOVING DOWN THE ROAD

EXT. A ROAD -- OUTSKIRTS OF 1935 BOSTON -- LATE AFTERNOON

A CAR MOVING up the road, slows and pulls over beside a waiting Ellison Brown; he opens the back door and gets it.

INT. CAR (MOVING) -- A MOMENT LATER

Another man is in the back seat with Ellison. Johnny Kelley, beside the driver, turns to face the back.

JOHNNY

So, gentlemen, this is the Deerfoot himself, Tarzan Brown. Tarz, this is my coach, FRED FALLER up here, and that there's FRED BROWN Senior in the back with you. He's runnin' tomorrow's race too. Don't think you two are related -- at least, you sure don't look it to me.

ELLISON

Yeah, I don't think so.

Fred Brown holds up a freckled arm.

FRED BROWN

Not much chance.

ELLISON

I know Brown's mostly a white name, but I've got lots of cousins not as dark as me.

He holds his arm next to Fred Brown's

ELLISON (CONT'D)

I get really brown from runnin' out in the sun with no shirt.

FRED BROWN

No chance -- we're not related.

A few beats of silence.

ELLISON

Hey, *thanks* for bringing me along. I'm really happy to be goin' up there with you fellas.

FRED FALLER

So, who you got handlin' you, Tarzan?

ELLISON

Tippy. Tippy Salerno. He used to coach my uncle, Horatio Stanton. Unc's a really good runner, you fellas probably heard of him.

FRED FALLER

I know Tippy. He'll keep you in line.

(smiles)

Yuh know?

ELLISON

Yeah, he does. And he's trying to get me to not eat so many potatoes.

FRED FALLER

He's right about that -- low-starch diet is what's best for running. Stick to meat and eggs.

ELLISON

I can really eat a lot. When I get a chance to.

FRED BROWN

Hey, what runner can't?

JOHNNY

You guys ever see Pawson eat? If he ran as fast as he eats, he'd never lose a race.

FRED BROWN

Kel, you'd give him a good run for his money in that department.

FRED FALLER

Now Tarzan, Tippy's probably got you running from the front. That's the best way for you Indian runners -- just hafta do what comes natural for you people. Never see too many Indians coming from behind.

JOHNNY

Except maybe in the movies -- *with tomahawks.*

Ellison laughs with the other three.

ELLISON

That's right, I just like to run as fast as I can go.

(MORE)

ELLISON (CONT'D)

But Tippy, he always says *hold-back*,
hold-it-back. Someday I'll stay
fast right till the end of the Boston
Marathon.

JOHNNY

And I'll be *right there*, ready to
kick by you at the very end -- just
after your shoes come flyin' off!

Everyone laughs again at that.

EXT. Y.M.C.A. -- FITCHBURG, MASSACHUSETTS -- EVENING

FRED FALLER'S CAR pulls up in front.

INT. CAR

FRED FALLER

Okay boys, get your gear and you can
get settled in here. I'll go park
the car around back. There's a place
down the street with good grub, and
we can all have a night cap afterward.

INT. FITCHBURG TAVERN -- NIGHT

Ellison, Johnny, and Fred Brown sit at a table, drinks in
front. The room is about half full, many listening to a
slight young man crooning to a piano's accompaniment.

JOHNNY

You know, when you stop and listen,
that kid's gotta good voice. Bad
dresser though, that wrinkled suit's
way too big for him.

FRED BROWN

Helluva way to make a livin' --
travelin' and hustlin' to sing in
smoky taverns all over the place.

JOHNNY

Yeah, bartender says he's from way
down in Jersey someplace.

ELLISON

I like the way he sings. Maybe I'll
stay here all night listening...
Long as they stay open, an' I got
somethin' to drink.

FRED BROWN

Not a good idea.

JOHNNY

Yeah, there's a time for fun and a time for business. Our business is putting on a good show for the people out watching us race tomorrow.

ELLISON

I'll give 'em a good show.

JOHNNY

Yeah? Well then I suggest we go get some shuteye so no one gets disappointed.

ELLISON

C'mon Johnny. It's still early. I gotta have one more drink for sure. Why don't you fellas just stay for one more drink with me?

JOHNNY

Why do I get the feeling, if you have another drink, we'll never get you outta here?

ELLISON

Hey, c'mon, just one. What're you, afraid to have fun?

JOHNNY

No. It's a ten-mile race tomorrow, not a stroll in the park. We all need our sleep to be ready for that.

FRED BROWN

Kelley's right, Tarzan. Time to call it a night.

Kelley and Fred Brown get up to leave.

ELLISON

Okay, you boys do whatever you want. Me, I'm stayin' for one more. And then maybe one more after that.

JOHNNY

Have it your way then, but you'll be eating my dust for sure tomorrow.

ELLISON

Johnny boy?

JOHNNY

Yeah, Tarz?

ELLISON

You gets in my way tomorrow, I'll run right over yuh!

JOHNNY

Ah, c'mon Fred, let's leave him.
He's half-drunk already sure as shit.

Kelley and Fred Brown walk away from the table.

ELLISON

(annoying razz)

Hey Johnny boy, I hear your mommy
callin' you. "Bedtime Johnny --
JOHNNY, you come home to bed this
instant!"

Johnny's ears are turning red but he doesn't turn around.

INT. FITCHBURG TAVERN -- TWO HOURS LATER

Ellison is at the same table, several empty beer bottles in front of him. He appears drunk and disheveled, as THE SINGER addresses the few patrons left in the tavern.

SINGER

Well folks, I'm done for the night,
thanks for listening. I'm just
starting out, but I'm hoping to make
a career out of music -- singing's
what I love. If you liked what you
heard, I'd sure appreciate you telling
some friends...

Ellison stands up, wobbly, applauding.

ELLISON

Hey! You Sing *Real Good*. DON'T
STOP -- *KEEP GOIN!*

SINGER

Why, thank you, sir. I will keep on
singing, but not tonight. I'm all
finished for this evening. Thank
you.

Ellison is cheering and clapping loudly, then puts his fingers in his mouth to whistle shrilly.

SINGER (CONT'D)

Good night folks. *Thanks again* -- I
truly do appreciate your applause.
Don't forget -- my name's Frank
Sinatra.

EXT. FRONT OF Y.M.C.A. -- LATER, SAME NIGHT

Ellison is knocking and pulling on the locked front door, a beer bottle in his other hand. Finally giving up, he takes a pull from his beer, then staggers away. Spotting a nearby bench, he struggles to reach it... sets down his beer... Stretching out on the bench, his body goes motionless.

EXT. FRONT OF Y.M.C.A. -- MORNING DAYLIGHT

ELLISON'S EYES -- they open and immediately squint against the brightness of morning sunshine. Hands shield his eyes as he rolls away, and... falls off the bench, grunting as he hits the ground. Pulling himself back onto the bench, he sits for a moment, shaking his head. Spotting the beer bottle still standing, Ellison picks it up and finishes the contents.

EXT. STARTING LINE OF FITCHBURG LEGION RACE --LATER MORNING

Johnny Kelley and Fred Brown flex, stretch and bounce up and down just behind the start banner, as do several dozen other runners. A little back of the crowd, Ellison Brown sits with arms and legs crossed, his head bowed.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

(from a platform)

Welcome to the Fitchburg Legion Ten-Mile Footrace. I am pleased to announce that entered in today's competition, we have defending champion, from Pawtucket, Rhode Island, Les Pawson. LES!

Applause from the sparse crowd.

ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

We also have, from West Medford, Massachusetts, the current Boston Athletic Association Marathon Champion, Johnny Kelley.

More polite applause.

ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

We would like to thank all these dedicated athletes for entering and wish them all... *Godspeed*. Now remember, this is a loop course, it will finish back here at the start. Runners, prepare to race...

The runners crowd the starting line. Kelley and Pawson shake hands as they stand front and center of the pack. Well behind them, Ellison stands up, shakes his head a few times as he moves to the back of the lineup of racers.

ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

Runners, ready... Set...

A PISTOL FIRES INTO THE AIR

The throng of runners gallop forward, Kelley and Pawson leading the way...

EXT. AROUND FIRST CORNER -- FITCHBURG RACE COURSE -- MOMENTS LATER

KELLEY and PAWSON are still at the head of the pack, beginning to separate themselves.

ELLISON BROWN suddenly emerges from the crowd behind, giving chase to the leaders.

EXT. FURTHER ALONG RACE COURSE -- LATER

ELLISON SURGES past Pawson, moving up to Kelley's shoulder. Looking over, surprised, Kelley pulls ahead, arms pumping furiously.

EXT. START/FINISH LINE -- LATER

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

Ladies and gentlemen, the lead runner is closing to the finish line... it is... number twenty... seven. That is... Ellison Tarzan Brown. *Tarzan Brown is going to win*, he is well out in front. No one can catch him now!

ELLISON strides swiftly toward and through the finish, breaking the tape, then jogs onward a few strides. Two race officials move to his aid as Ellison stops and bends at the waist, hands on his knees. As he begins vomiting generously, the officials recoil with haste. JOHNNY KELLEY, crossing the line ten seconds after Ellison, appraises the vomiting Indian with a look somewhere between disbelief and admiration, tempered with a little disgust at the display of vomiting.

ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

Folks, we have an unofficial time announced as... 53 minutes, 14 seconds -- that will be a *new course record*. A new course record by Tarzan Brown. I've just been told he's a full-blooded Indian, born in Alton, Rhode Island.

INT. FRED FALLER'S CAR -- BETWEEN FITCHBURG AND BOSTON -- LATER THAT DAY

Fred Faller glances back at Ellison Brown, fast asleep in the back seat, a big loving cup clutched to his chest.

FRED FALLER

Well, Johnny, you were right about one thing. We're bringing the trophy back with us today.

JOHNNY

C'mon coach, I got what what I came for -- 15 dollars appearance money and a good speed workout. Tarzan, I'll give him credit, he ran fast -- there was no catchin' him today.

FRED FALLER

You shoulda seen the look in his eyes coming up to the tape -- like a wolf closing in on a sheep.

JOHNNY

Yeah, but all that blazing speed won't win a marathon. It takes tactics and good judgement too. You know I got lots of that.

FRED FALLER

Hey, who's the coach here anyway? But you're right, good Indian runners is same as thoroughbreds. Handle 'em the right way and they might run some good races for yuh. Hardest thing about training 'em is just getting 'em to do what they're supposed to do. Brains just ain't organized right.

The coach glances quickly over his shoulder again at the sleeping Ellison.

FRED FALLER (CONT'D)

Hey, just in case you ain't really snoozing, I don't mean no harm... Your brain's just *different*, that's all. You people are better suited for stuff like hunting and fishing.

CLOSE to ELLISON, snoring softly and peacefully.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. A SMALL ROOM -- MIDDLEBORO, MASSACHUSETTS -- DAY

ELLISON sits at a table, composing a letter. His voice narrates as he writes.

ELLISON (V.O.)

Dear Gracie and Little Sister Nina too:
Looks like spring is finally here at Lake Assawamsett, but we still got some snow in the woods. My running's been going real good, but sometimes I feel more like some kind of salesman, selling myself -- or what
(MORE)

ELLISON (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I can do -- to people so they can help me. Since I've run some good races, I get to stay up here and train because I got sponsored by some rich men from Providence. Tippy said I'll get extra coaching from Jack. That's Mr Farrington, the Rhode Island A.A.U. chief. He's in charge. It's pretty good, all I got to do is run lots and run fast, but I get to eat all I can eat. Steak and eggs and lots of vanilla sodas. They even got me some new running shoes -- S.T.A.R. Streamlines, just the same as Johnny Kelley has. Me and both my feet are real happy about that. And besides running, I been meeting lots of people, and staying out of trouble. Most of the time.

Ellison stops writing and stares into space.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. A SALOON -- ELLISON'S RECENT PAST

ELLISON, bellied up to the bar, sips at a beer, a few empty bottles in front on the counter. He turns his head as a large hand grasps his shoulder. A VOICE with the grasp.

MEAN-AND-ANGRY MAN (O.S.)

(deep and unfriendly)

So yer the fast Indian we keep hearin' about, eh? Well, how fast are yuh, Tonto? Bet yer not so fast between four walls now, are yuh?

ELLISON'S P.O.V. -- Spins full around to expose a mean and angry looking face above a very large, muscular body.

MEAN-AND-ANGRY MAN'S P.O.V. -- Ellison's dark eyes narrow.

INT. SALOON -- MOMENTS LATER

Ellison is ducking punches thrown by the mean and angry man, counter punching back, the blows having negligible effect on the big man, who grins wickedly as he backs the Indian into a corner...

Ellison grabs a chair and quickly smashes it over his opponent's head. The mean and angry man slumps unconscious to the floor.

ELLISON

Yeah -- I'm pretty fast.

DISSOLVE BACK TO:

INT. SMALL ROOM IN MIDDLEBORO -- ELLISON'S PRESENT

Ellison resumes writing.

ELLISON (V.O.)

...Hope you are all well. I really miss you both and of course I miss Ethel too. Gracie, please tell Ethel I miss her the most... But somehow I can't see you doing that. Give my love to Pop.

Your Brother, Ellison

(pause)

Ps. The Boston Marathon is in three weeks, I hope you can come watch.

Oh, ps.ps. They say the winner gets to go to the Olympics in Germany.

ps.ps.ps. I hope some of you get to come watch because this year I'll be the winner.

EXT. HOPKINTON -- BOSTON MARATHON STARTING LINE -- APRIL -- LATE MORNING

It is close to start time for the marathon; runners are mixing with press, handlers and well-wishers. Jerry Nason spots Johnny Kelley moving around behind the start-line, apparently looking for someone. Nason seizes his opportunity, as do two other members of the press.

JERRY

Hey, our defending champion. Feeling up to the challenge of another happy Patriots' Day, Johnny?

JOHNNY

Oh, hello Jerry. Well, I've trained really hard this year, as you know. My fitness is better than last year.

JERRY

Do you think last year taught you to be a more patient runner? That was a bit of a problem for you before, I think.

JOHNNY

Yeah, definitely you have to be patient to win here. And I think dealing with you fellas helps me out in that department.

(grinning)

ANOTHER REPORTER

How was your recovery from Medford, Johnny? And how's the stomach feeling today?

JOHNNY

Hey guys, I feel great, never felt better. I'm expecting to win -- I will confess I want this one very badly. Last year was a taste, I sure want a spot on the Olympic team.

Reporters scribble in their notebooks as Johnny talks; a few more press arrive, creating a small scrum around the popular runner.

NEW REPORTER (JACK)

What about other challengers this year? Anybody you plan to keep an eye on?

JOHNNY

No sir, I don't plan on running against any particular opponent. I know this course well, so really I'm running against time itself. You can write that in your papers if you like.

REPORTER JACK

Well, you certainly sound confident, not overconfident are you?

JOHNNY

Jumpin' jeepers -- c'mon Jack, what kind of answer do I give to that one?

JERRY

Kel... The Indian, Ellison Brown, has been running well. You know him -- what are his chances of a good result?

JOHNNY

Hey... Tarzan's a lovable character, ain't he? Never has a bad word to say about anyone. Far as running goes, he's fast as lightning, but we all know tactics are more important than raw speed -- it's a marathon, after all.

(trying to look through
the scrum)

Okay fellas, I'm trying to find my dad here. See you at the finish.

Kelley pushes through the circle. As reporters disperse, one nudges Nason.

REPORTER JACK

Get a load of this. Here comes Chief Crazy Horse and his tribe.

Indians in full tribal dress are approaching. Horatio Stanton and Bryan Brown, wearing feather headdresses, flank Ellison, clad in a "Providence Tercentenary" running singlet.

JERRY

Now there's a good interview for you.

Jack the reporter rushes into the Native entourage's path.

REPORTER JACK

Hey Tarzan, Kelley says you're gonna burn yourself out in the hills. Whatdoya say to that?

The Indian procession stops as one. Ellison's eyes narrow as he looks at the reporter.

ELLISON

Kelley can get lost. I'll lick him like a postage stamp.

The procession continues onward; the reporter turns to Nason.

REPORTER JACK

Crazy Injun. Doesn't he know he's a 100-to-one long shot?

JERRY

Yeah, well, I got him picked to win.

CUT TO:

OLD RIFLE FIRING INTO NOON SKY

CUT TO:

MOB OF RUNNERS RACING FORWARD FROM THE STARTING LINE

EXT. STUDEBAKER (MOVING) -- EARLY MARATHON COURSE -- EARLY AFTERNOON

THE CAR slows as it pulls alongside Johnny Kelley, running strongly and alone. The Studebaker hums to the sounds of Kelley's slapping footfalls and light crowd noise.

INT. STUDEBAKER -- FAVORING JERRY NASON

NASON scribbles on his pad. Spectators lining the road begin cheering more loudly. The driver leans over to Nason, yelling to be heard above the crowd.

DRIVER

Kelley's race. He's gotta be our leader, no one else in sight ahead.

Just then a MAN ON THE COURSE steps up to the passing Studebaker.

MAN ON COURSE

(yelling)

HEY, what're you following him for?
The Indian from Rhode Island passed
by here a couple of minutes ago!

JERRY

We're following the wrong guy!
Tarzan's way out in front -- we've
got to move up ahead.

EXT. STUDEBAKER -- ACCELERATING AWAY FROM KELLEY

EXT. FURTHER UP THE RACE COURSE -- LATER

ELLISON BROWN, running powerfully, the street lined with
cheering spectators. The studebaker and a motorcycle cop
cruise close behind.

Ellison passes a small group dressed in Native tribal costume,
some pounding on drums.

NATIVE SPECTATOR

(yelling)

YER THE WARRIOR!

He runs past a pocket of pretty girls, who smile, wave and
whisper to each other -- eyes stay fixed on his backside.

But Ellison acknowledges no one as he runs past, eyes narrow
and focused.

INT. STUDEBAKER -- FAVORING JERRY NASON

Nason is watching Ellison, running strongly, close to the
car. Another reporter, Jack, leans to Nason's ear.

REPORTER JACK

He's smashed all the checkpoint
records and he's almost four minutes
ahead of Kelley.

JERRY

(nodding, yelling)

At this pace, he's got time for a
dip in Friske pond, and at Natick
he'd still be out in front!

JOHNNY KELLEY, RUNNING POWERFULLY BY FRAMINGHAM RAILWAY
STATION

ELLISON BROWN, RUNNING THROUGH NATICK TOWN CENTER

KELLEY, RUNNING POWERFULLY THROUGH NATICK TOWN CENTER --
MINUTES LATER

As the crowd roars, Kelley increases his speed, pumping his
arms harder and starting to breathe heavier.

INT. STUDEBAKER -- FAVORING JERRY NASON

JERRY

(to Jack)

Looks like Tarzan's slowing down a bit. We aren't far from the Newton hills, that's where the real race begins, at 20 miles.

KELLEY -- STILL RUNNING POWERFULLY AND FAST

But sweating and breathing hard.

Kelley's coach, Fred Faller, steps onto the course just ahead of the runner, passing him some water.

FRED FALLER

You're closing, Johnny. Less than two minutes ahead. You can get him.

Kelley drops the water and pumps his arms even harder -- he is almost sprinting.

BROWN -- SLOWING FOR WATER

Ellison takes his time drinking before tossing the empty cup aside. As he continues running, he is moving considerably slower than the pursuing Kelley.

KELLEY -- RUNNING HARD AND FAST

KELLEY'S P.O.V. -- Brown is visible not far ahead.

INT. STUDEBAKER -- FAVORING JERRY NASON

Nason and the others inside have a great view of the closing gap between the two runners.

REPORTER JACK

(into Nason's ear)

Kelley's got him. He'll catch him right at the top of this last hill.

JERRY

Brown hasn't looked back once. He has no idea what's coming.

KELLEY'S P.O.V -- CLOSING TO JUST BEHIND BROWN

Kelley moves up beside Brown, leans over and pats him on the butt.

JOHNNY

Nice running, Tarzan, but time for a real man to take over.

Ellison glances over at Johnny, surprised, as Kelley moves into the lead.

ELLISON

Hey, where'd you come from?

INT. STUDEBAKER -- FAVORING JERRY NASON

Jack leans to Nason's ear, but still has to yell to be heard over the cheering spectators.

REPORTER JACK

What did he say? Kelley said something.

JERRY

I don't know. But Kelley looks like he's about ready to blow a gasket. And Tarzan's barely sweating -- he's been playing possum.

EXT. TOP OF THE NEWTON HILLS -- A MOMENT LATER

FAVORING ELLISON BROWN running just behind Kelley. Brown's skin is dry, his breathing deep and quiet. Kelley is drenched with sweat and gasping for air.

CLOSER, Brown's eyes become narrow slits. Suddenly, he surges past Kelley -- the gap between the two men grows quickly. Trying to respond, Kelley appears helpless... suddenly pathetic. His head *bobs* in panic -- as Brown's floats away.

INT. STUDEBAKER -- THAT MOMENT

REPORTER JACK

What happened? Kelley's falling apart!

JERRY

Tarzan broke him. At the top of that hill. It broke Kelley's heart.

CLOSE to NASON'S PAD as Jerry jots a note, his pen in unison with his brain and his voice.

JERRY (CONT'D)

(to himself as he
jots)
Heartbreak Hill.

EXT. A FEW MILES FROM THE FINISH LINE -- LATER

ELLISON BROWN is now running ungracefully and slower, appearing to be losing control over his legs. Suddenly he veers to one side, nearly staggering into the path of an oncoming car.

THE CAR'S HORN *BLARES!*

INT. STUDEBAKER -- FAVORING DRIVER -- THAT MOMENT

THE STUDEBAKER HORN *BLARES* as the oncoming car passes.

DRIVER

(pointing to his head)
IDIOT! They oughta ban cars from
the road!

REPORTER JACK

Wow. That was close. I don't know
if Tarzan can hold on.

JERRY

He's lucky there's no one close
behind.

ELLISON. A smile on his face as he slows to a wobbly jog.
CLOSER to his LOWER BODY, a wet stain is forming on his white
shorts, as a stream of urine trickles down one leg.

INT. STUDEBAKER -- THAT MOMENT

REPORTER JACK

My God, is he peeing himself?

ELLISON. A man carrying a bucket steps up beside him, douses
the Indian with a bucket of water.

ELLISON shakes his head and, refreshed by the shower, begins
running again, more or less in a straight line ahead.

EXT. FINISH LINE OF BOSTON MARATHON -- A BIT LATER

From a scaffold above, an official aims his binoculars down
the course.

SCAFFOLD P.O.V. -- a distant runner is revealed intermittently
running, walking and jogging toward the finish banner.

B.A.A. ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

We have the lead runner now
approaching the finish... It is the
Indian, Ellison Tarzan Brown...
Ladies and gentlemen, *no one will*
catch him. His tribe calls him
Deerfoot, we like to call him Tarzan.
TARZAN BROWN will win the Boston
Marathon!

ELLISON BROWN crosses the finish line. Looking very tired,
he is surrounded by race officials. Press rush to take his
picture as he is wrapped in a blanket and handed some water.

RACE OFFICIAL

(patting Brown's back)
Fine running, son. Congratulations,
you're the champion.

Ellison is exhausted and still catching his breath.

ELLISON

Thanks... It's the shoes... S.T.A.R.
Streamlines... They helped me win.

EXT. MARATHON COURSE -- LESS THAN A MILE FROM FINISH LINE --
THAT MOMENT

JOHNNY KELLEY Is walking -- like a balance-impaired drunk.
His eyes are glazed and his face shows his complete
exhaustion. Cheering onlookers urge him to the finish.

ONLOOKER

Come on, Johnny, you're almost there --
you can still hold onto fifth place.

As Kelley tries to run, it is with the stumbling shuffle of
a broken, depleted athlete.

EXT. PLATFORM NEAR THE BOSTON MARATHON FINISH --LATER THAT
AFTERNOON

Ellison "Tarzan" Brown, crowned with a laurel wreath, a medal
shining on his chest, smiles as he looks over the crowd
gathered below. Beside Ellison is an official of the Boston
Athletic Association.

B.A.A. OFFICIAL

(to Ellison's ear)

Okay, Tarzan, this is where you get
to make a speech.

ELLISON

What should I say?

B.A.A. OFFICIAL

Say whatever you want.

The official applauds lightly as he steps away from Ellison.

Ellison hesitates, then steps forward.

ELLISON

Well...

(pause)

I guess you white people can't say
after this that the only good Indian
is a dead Indian.

Silence in the crowd. They are waiting for more from Ellison,
but he is done.

Panning expressionless and puzzled faces, then the few
costumed Indians in the crowd cheer and beat their drums.
Scattered nervous and half-hearted applause follows from
some of the white people.

EXT. MAINSTREET -- WESTERLY, RHODE ISLAND -- DAY

ANOTHER CROWD -- a gathering of several dozen people, mostly Native Indian, cheering and waving as a car pulls up. A small band plays in the background.

ELLISON BROWN emerges from the car, dressed in a suit, still wearing his laurel wreath. Smiling as he takes in the welcome, he waves back as he shows off the champion's medal around his neck.

ETHEL WILCOX rushes up to Ellison, giving him a hug. Gracie waits her turn behind.

ETHEL

Welcome home, handsome hero.

ELLISON

Wow, this is real swell.

ETHEL

You're great. I've missed you.

ELLISON

I missed you too.

Ellison looks over at Gracie

ELLISON (CONT'D)

And you too, Gracie. C'mon.

Gracie hugs her brother.

GRACIE

There's a surprise for you after it gets dark. Bet you can't guess.

ELLISON

Bet I can -- but give me a hint?

GRACIE

No... Okay, it's loud... And they have it on the Fourth of July.

ELLISON

Fireworks? Really? Wow. Told you I'd guess it.

EXT. IN FRONT OF SAMMY'S DINER -- WESTERLY, RHODE ISLAND -- THAT NIGHT

Ellison and Ethel leave the diner, walking down the poorly lit street. Ethel takes Ellison by the hand.

ETHEL

Lots of stars out tonight. I love being out under the stars.

ELLISON

Me too.

A few beats of silence.

ETHEL

Ellison... how long are you staying this time?

ELLISON

(shrugs)

Coaches say I should rest up for awhile. Then they want me to get ready for the Olympic Games.

ETHEL

The Olympics? But Horatio told me they won't even pick the team till after some race next month. You don't know for sure you'll be picked.

ELLISON

Yeah, that's the A.A.U Championship in Washington. Some people said I should have to run it to prove that Boston wasn't just lucky.

ETHEL

Lucky? Even I know you can't win a marathon with luck.

ELLISON

Luck helps.

(shrugs again)

Anyway, Coach Farrington told me not to worry. He'll make sure I'm on the team.

A few beats of silence as they walk slowly.

ETHEL

Germany is so far away. And maybe if you win the Olympics, you'll get a job far away from here. They say an Olympic gold medal can buy almost anything.

ELLISON

I never want to get a job in some factory someplace.

(stops, looks at Ethel)

I can make a living right here, no one better at catching shellfish than me. And I'm good working with my hands.

ETHEL

You are. And you love these woods. It's like they're part of you. I adore seeing the look on your face when you're heading out to check your traps.

More silence, more walking.

ETHEL (CONT'D)

I love it here too. Can't imagine living anywhere else.

More walking, more silence.

ELLISON

Ethel, do you still want to get married? I mean, to me?

ETHEL

Of course. You and nobody else -- you know that.

ELLISON

'Cause I was thinkin'... Let's get married *now*. I'll be 22 after the Olympics -- that's *old*. Let's just get married now.

ETHEL

Now? Like, tomorrow, or in a few weeks?

ELLISON

Tomorrow would be good... Or maybe next week, so we have time to tell everyone to come.

(smiles)

They'll all want to make it a big party.

ETHEL

Before the Olympics is a *really* good idea.

(pause)

I love you, Ellison Myers Brown.

ELLISON

I love you Ethel... *Brown*. Hey, like the sound of that.

ETHEL

I always liked the sound of it.

A few beats of silence. Ethel stops.

ETHEL (CONT'D)

Sweetheart?

Ellison just looks at her.

ETHEL (CONT'D)

Now... I think... this is where
you're supposed to kiss me.

Ellison and Ethel kiss, a nice long drawn-out kiss under the stars.

ETHEL (CONT'D)

(softly)

You'll always be my handsome hero.

EXT. MAIN STREET -- CHARLESTOWN, RHODE ISLAND -- DAY

Ellison Brown walks by a barbershop, slowly, looking through the open door. The barber sits in his chair, reading a newspaper -- no one else there. Ellison takes two steps past the shop, stops and glances around. There is no one else on the street. He turns and walks into the shop.

INT. BARBERSHOP

ELLISON

Hi Jimmy, it's me, Ellison.

JIMMY

(behind paper)

Hello Tarzan.

ELLISON

Jimmy, do you think you could give
me a haircut today?

JIMMY

(lowering paper)

Come on Tarzan. You know better.
No cuts for Indians in my shop.

ELLISON

I know, I know. But, well... I gotta
leave for the Olympics tomorrow...
So I was thinkin' maybe you could do
it just this one time.

JIMMY

(brightens)

Hey, I know, I was just reading about
that in the paper here. That's gonna
be *some* adventure for you -- going
all the way to Germany.

ELLISON

Yeah, I've been really looking forward
to it.

JIMMY

You gonna win?

ELLISON

Sure gonna try.

JIMMY

Yeah... Well, sure wish I could help you out, son, but you know what people are like. Soon as I cut one Indian's hair, someone'll hear about it and next thing you know, everyone's complaining.

ELLISON

yeah.

JIMMY

Sorry, but I got a business to run.

Ellison turns and goes through the open door.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Hey, good luck in the Olympics -- bring home the gold!

Jimmy resumes reading his paper.

EXT. A SHIP, THE MANHATTAN -- LEAVING NEW YORK HARBOR -- DAY

EXT. UPPER DECK -- THAT MOMENT

ELLISON, clad in navy blazer with white trousers, is at a stern railing, watching the slowly shrinking New York skyline. Stretching his arms back, one hand reaches to the back of his head, stroking the hair against the grain, feeling the bristle of a new haircut. A voice behind him:

JOHNNY (O.S.)

Hey, if you changed your mind on going, there's still time to swim back to land. If you swim as good as the other Tarzan.

Ellison turns to face Johnny Kelley and another man.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

Tarz, you remember BILLY McMAHON, don't you?

Ellison nods, smiling with the other two.

ELLISON

Hi Billy. I remember the paper said something like you, "took up the white man's burden of chasing down the Indian" at Boston. I liked that.

BILLY

And I didn't catch you. You liked that too.

JOHNNY

Hey, let's not talk about that day, fellas. Jeepers, I don't have a particularly fond memory of making like an Indian the morning after the morning before payday.

ELLISON

Payday -- what's that? You sayin' white man give us Injuns jobs?
(laughing)

BILLY

(laughs too)
Yeah, when I passed you, Kelley, you were almost going *faster sideways*.

Ellison is laughing harder, slapping his knee.

JOHNNY

(NOT laughing)
Okay-okay. Let's go check out the grub on this boat. I've got a swell idea to eat lots before we all start gettin' too seasick.

The three marathoners walk off together.

EXT. UPPER DECK, THE MANHATTAN -- ON THE ATLANTIC -- A FEW DAYS LATER

Ellison, Johnny and Billy are running laps around the stacks above the deck. Kelley and McMahon run side by side, chatting, as Ellison lags just behind.

McMahon glances back at the Indian, turns to Kelley.

BILLY

What's he, practicing *tactics* or somethin', Kel?

Kelley looks back at Brown.

JOHNNY

C'mon Tarzan, *pick it up*. You usually run out in front, you're making me nervous back there.

ELLISON

It's not a race and it's not even fun.

BILLY

Of course it's not fun. Who ever heard of runnin' for *fun*?

JOHNNY

Hey, it's a long trip across the Atlantic -- we owe it to our country to stay in shape.

ELLISON

This makes me feel like some kind of zoo animal, running around in a cage. We should be resting up instead.

BILLY

I bet the Finns are training hard right now.

ELLISON

Yeah -- on solid *ground*.

JOHNNY

Don't make me laugh... Can't run when I laugh.
(laughs anyway)

BILLY

I'm saving my laughing for the talent show tonight. Listening to you sing should be worth a laugh, Kelley.

JOHNNY

Hey, I sing like I run -- like a champion. You fellas will find o--

Just then the ship, which had been on a calm sea, absorbs a rogue wave and lists to one side -- sending the three runners crashing into each other and onto the deck like bowling pins.

INT. SHIP'S DINING COMPARTMENT -- ON THE ATLANTIC -- EVENING

JOHNNY KELLEY is up on a stage, singing "You Are My Sunshine" to the large cabin with its tables of Olympic athletes and officials, transfixed. ELLISON Brown and BILLY McMahon are seated together at a back table.

JOHNNY

(finishing up)
You'll never know dearrrr, how much I love youuu... Please don't take my sunshine awayyy.

As Johnny finishes, all in the room applaud with enthusiasm. Kelley sang well -- in tune, with great natural tone.

CLOSE IN TO ELLISON AND BILLY

BILLY

Okay, guess I gotta eat my words, Kelley sings like a canary... or more like Bing Crosby. He must've been in a choir.

ELLISON

You going up?

BILLY

You kidding me? If Kelley sings like a canary, I sound like a real mean crow.

KELLEY -- still onstage, enjoying his moment.

JOHNNY

THANKS everyone. I loved doing that. Who's next? C'mon... Anyone? How 'bout you, JESSE -- why not give it a try?

Kelley gestures toward a table of black men near the front, CLOSE to JESSE OWENS flashing a big grin as his well manicured head shakes vigorously.

ELLISON AND BILLY

BILLY

Tough act to follow, that one.

ELLISON

I'm going up.

BILLY

Really? We gotta listen to some Injun pow-wow mumbo jumbo?

ELLISON

(stands up)

No, I got a good one. My Pop taught me all the words -- hope I remember 'em.

ELLISON MOVING toward the stage.

JOHNNY

OKAY, looks like we have our next performer... Tarzan Brown.

ELLISON jumps up beside Kelley

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

What're you gonna be singin', sport?

ELLISON

I'm doing "Take Me Out To The Ball Game." Want to stay up and join me, Johnny?

JOHNNY

You're on your own with that one, son. HERE'S TARZAN, FOLKS.

As Kelley abandons, Ellison looks over the audience. Then... He begins singing, loudly and fairly competently, starting with the original first verse:

ELLISON

Katie Casey was baseball mad,
Had the fever and had it bad;
Just to root for the home town crew,
ev'ry sou Katie blew On a Saturday,
her young beau called to see if she'd
like to go, To see a show but Miss
Katie said "NO, I'll tell you what
you can do:"

(then the refrain)

TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALL GAME, TAKE
ME OUT WITH THE CROWD.
BUY ME SOME PEANUTS AND CRACKER JACK,

By this point, most of the audience have joined in singing the chorus known by every American.

ELLISON AND AUDIENCE

I DON'T CARE IF I EVER GET BACK.
LET ME ROOT ROOT ROOT FOR THE HOME
TEAM, IF THEY DON'T WIN IT'S A SHAME,
FOR IT'S ONE, TWO, THREE STRIKES,
YOU'RE OUT! AT THE OLD BALL GAME.

INT. SHIP'S DINING COMPARTMENT -- LATER

ELLISON BROWN, wearing an eagle-feather headdress, is posing for a picture with a taller man, miler GLENN CUNNINGHAM. Ellison beams as camera flashes. The two shake hands.

ELLISON

Thanks, that was a big honor for me.

GLENN

Hey, me too.

ELLISON

Uh, Glenn, you're the *Kansas Flyer*,
the greatest mile runner of all
time... Me, I'm just a poor Indian.

GLENN

Well, Kellie tells me you've got the
most beautiful stride and most
potential in the marathon he's ever
seen.

ELLISON

Kellie said that? What did he say
next -- like most Indians, I'll never
amount to anything?

GLENN

(smiling)

Said nothing but good things.

ELLISON

Johnny's a great fella -- I really like him a lot. And he sure thinks a lot of you. Told me the story about you gettin' your legs burnt when you were a kid and how they said you'd never even walk again...

(pause)

Say Glenn, you gonna be the first miler to run under four minutes?

GLENN

(laughs, shaking head)

That's a long ways off for anyone, Tarzan. Some people still think it's an impossible barrier.

ELLISON

But you know it's not. And you're only a few seconds away from it.

GLENN

Someday, four minutes will be broken... but not anytime soon. Those are very long seconds to lose.

ELLISON

Well... I think, in our lives, we'll see people run way under four -- maybe under 3:50.

GLENN

(nodding)

I hope so. And under 2:20 for the marathon.

ELLISON

(laughs)

Hey, those are some tough minutes to lose. And way too many of 'em for this Injun!

A few more athletes have gathered around, waiting to have pictures taken with Ellison in his headdress.

ELLISON (CONT'D)

Anyway, it was really swell talking to you.

GLENN

Yeah, me too, Tarzan. Hey, what grade did you reach in school?

ELLISON

Finished sixth, but never got through seventh.

GLENN

Hmmm, could've fooled me. You ain't dumb, chum.

(taps his head)

See yuh, Tarz.

ELLISON

Thanks, Glenn. Great meetin' yuh.

(pause)

Okay now... Who's next to get their picture taken with the fierce Indian warrior? *Step right up!*

EXT. UPPER DECK -- MIDDLE OF THE ATLANTIC -- STORMY DAY

Ellison leans on a railing, looking ahead over the bow as the ship crashes though large rolling waves. A voice behind.

VOICE (O.S.)

Hey, someone crazy enough to be out here. Mind if I join you?

Ellison looks over as a black man -- a hat pulled down, coat collar up against the fierce elements -- joins him at the rail. Just then a wind gust blows the hat from the man's head. Ellison turns as the man, with catlike quickness, retrieves his hat before it can be blown far across the deck. Just as quickly, he slides back in beside Ellison.

JESSE OWENS

Man, I'm holdin' onto this thing from here on. Some kinda weather, ain't it?

ELLISON

I recognize you. You're Jesse Owens, the sprinter. They say you're gonna win a bunch of gold medals and set records.

JESSE OWENS

Hey, right now I'm just thinkin' about us gettin' there. And keepin' breakfast down every mornin'.

ELLISON

(offers his hand)

I'm Ellison Brown. Almost everyone calls me Tarzan.

JESSE OWENS

(grasping the hand)

Hey, I know -- I heard you sing.

(MORE)

JESSE OWENS (CONT'D)

You're a brave man. Gotta say, you know I got no idea how you folks run those marathons. Me, I get tired just drivin' that far in a car -- *crazy stuff.*

ELLISON

I don't know, I just do what comes natural, I guess the same as you.

JESSE OWENS

Well... Way I figure it, you win one gold medal in the marathon, it should be worth three or four of those other ones. I'm sayin' I'd take my hat off to you... 'cept I'm just holding on to it right now, thank-you-very-much.

ELLISON

I don't know if I can win a gold medal, but I know if I don't slow down, no one can catch me.

JESSE OWENS

Well, I don't know *nothin'* about runnin' no marathon -- though I think *not slowin' down* probably helps. But I do know *one* thing. The Olympics only come along every four years, so you gotta make the most of your opportunity when you get it. And, if we can win us some gold medals -- people gonna remember us for a long time... You want to be remembered 100 years from now?

ELLISON

(shrugs)

Guess it's better to be remembered... than forgotten.

JESSE OWENS

Then *don't slow down.*

(pause)

Hey, I'm going below -- it's *crazy* being out here. We can talk about runnin' that Nazi propoganda down Hitler's throat another time. Nice meeting you, Tarzan Brown.

EXT. BERLIN OLYMPIC STADIUM -- OPENING CEREMONIES 1936
OLYMPIC GAMES -- DAY

The stadium is filled with cheering thousands as legions of Olympic teams march patriotically onto the track, following their countrys' flags.

High above the field, above the familiar Olympic symbol of linked rings, hangs the logo of the Nazis: a solemn eagle perched on a swastika. ADOLF HITLER and associates watch from a box nearby. A band is playing Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, "Ode To Joy". The atmosphere is one of loud, excessively majestic pageantry.

Ellison Brown marches proudly with the American team, beside Kelley and McMahon, all wearing period team uniforms, navy blazers with white trousers and flat-topped boater hats.

CLOSE IN to the three American marathoners.

BILLY

This is really somethin', ain't it,
Kel?

JOHNNY

(with moist eyes)

I've never felt more proud to be an
American.

Ellison says nothing as his head swivels to take in all the sights and sounds of the awesome event, but his smile and waves to the crowd display some of the joy he is feeling at being part of the historic world spectacle.

A LITTLE LATER

A TINY FIGURE of a man, wearing a little white skirt and a black vest, finishes climbing stairs to Hitler's viewing box. CLOSE IN, Hitler smiles, as SPIRIDON LOUIS, 63-year-old Greek winner of the first Olympic marathon, bows slightly and presents the Nazi leader with an olive branch.

CUT TO:

JOHNNY KELLEY'S MOIST EYES -- THAT MOMENT

JOHNNY

Who could've imagined... Spiridon
Louis, winner of the first Olympic
marathon -- I'll never forget this
moment as long as I live.

EXT. DOWNTOWN BERLIN -- NIGHT

ELLISON walks alone along a lively street, taking in sights and sounds offered by the German culture. He stops outside a tavern, listens momentarily to the lively music from inside -- before entering.

INT. BERLIN TAVERN -- A MOMENT LATER

As Ellison approaches the bar, a bartender looks up, raising his eyebrows expectantly.

BARTENDER
Guten abend. Ja bitte?

ELLISON
Un, you have beer? I like ein beer...
Bitter.

BARTENDER
(nodding)
Ah, das bier.

Ellison takes a stool at the bar, looking around as the bartender returns with a beer. A band, complete with an accordion, plays period German music, with many patrons enthusiastically singing along. The atmosphere is festive.

Ellison takes a sip from his beer, then a long pull.

ELLISON
Hey, this is good -- very good beer.

BARTENDER
(smiling and nodding)
Bitte schon.

LATER

Ellison still sits at the bar, several beer bottles now in front of him.

The tavern door opens and in walk four young black-uniformed Nazis. Ellison watches as they walk past him and take seats at a nearby table. Some of the other patrons glance nervously at the Nazis and most who were singing reduce their volume or stop altogether. The four men confer at their table as a waitress takes their order. One of the Blackshirts looks curiously over at Ellison, who acknowledges the look by raising his beer toward the German.

A LITTLE LATER

THE BAND is about to begin a new set. One of the Nazis yells something to the musicians, who confer briefly, then start playing a somber German hymn. The four Blackshirts all begin singing along, with great passion if poor tone, raising large mugs of foamy beer in time with the music. As the Nazis glance around the room, some of the other bar patrons join in the singing.

After listening to a few bars, Ellison joins in singing the chorus, mimicking the German lyrics as he raises and swings his beer back and forth with the song. As his actions become increasingly animated, all four Nazis take notice of him, beginning to scowl back in his direction. One by one, the four stop singing. The band reaches the end of the hymn, but Ellison continues with the chorus, having fun with his best impression of German song. The four Blackshirts stare at Ellison with stone faces.

Aware of the attention, the Indian stops singing, bows to his audience, then spins his stool back to the bar.

THE FOUR NAZIS confer, then one, a tall blonde, stands up and walks over to slide onto the stool next to Ellison. The blonde Nazi turns toward the Indian, who is drinking his beer and staring straight ahead.

BLONDE NAZI
Sprechen zie Deutsch?

ELLISON
(turning toward)
No thanks, I'm American. But I do like your beer.

BLONDE NAZI
Ahh... Die U.S.A. -- a Yankee.
Okay. I speak English quite well, actually. I spent some time in London.

His eyes measure Ellison for a few seconds.

BLONDE NAZI (CONT'D)
You have very dark skin. Are you part Negro? Or American Indian -- a Cherokee, perhaps?

ELLISON
(nodding)
Yup, I'm Indian all right. But it's not like in the movies...
(then mockingly slow)
There's... More... Than... One... Tribe.
(shakes his head)
What is it about the Cherokees?

Ellison turns away and takes a long pull on his beer.

BLONDE NAZI
You are here for the Olympic Games?

ELLISON
That's right. I'm here to put on a good show for your "Doichland" people. I'm runnin' in the marathon two days from now.
(points at his beer)
This stuff seems to help me run better for some reason.

BLONDE NAZI
Ahhh, you are an athlete, and an Indian. Like Jim Thorpe... or perhaps more like Tom Longboat.

(MORE)

BLONDE NAZI (CONT'D)

What do you think of our wonderful facilities? The Reichssportfeld is something of which we are all very proud.

ELLISON

(shrugs)

Nice enough place. But if I hafta be honest, most of us Americans think it's all just a bunch of propa... prop-agation? Prop-aganda -- *that's* the word. To make Hitler look good to all you people over here.

BLONDE NAZI

The Fuhrer has done a magnificent job ensuring all preparations were made with perfection, and that Germany welcomes the entire world with open arms.

(shakes his head)

I think you are *privileged* to come and see for yourself the achievement of our Aryan nation.

ELLISON

(smug smile)

Your Aryan nation? I find it kinda funny, the way you folks like to go around acting like you're so much better than people like me.

BLONDE NAZI

People like you? Well... It is a fact that we are more advanced -- Darwin himself said so. And look at how your people were living before the Europeans came. You could not even invent the wheel on your own.

ELLISON

The wheel? Well... we didn't *need* the wheel... Because there *weren't* any roads -- didn't seem to need them things either till the white men came. Besides...

(holds up his palms)

I know I can do just about anything with these hands.

BLONDE NAZI

(shaking his head)

You are just... what we call *der dummkopf*. I will not debate with a fool.

(MORE)

BLONDE NAZI (CONT'D)

(stands up to leave)

But, if I can give you some advice, you should understand that our tasty Deutch beer is much stronger than what you drink in America. Perhaps you should be advised to return to the Olympic Village and prepare for your race.

ELLISON

Okay... What do you want me to say?

He stands up suddenly, just as the blond German steps away. Ellison straightens his right arm up high in a theatrical salute.

ELLISON (CONT'D)

HEIL HITLER!

BEER from the bottle still in Ellison's hand spills out, some wetting the Nazi.

BLONDE NAZI

(frozen in his tracks)

You are... *mocking* me? You are...
Insulting us.

The other three Nazis, interested spectators to this point, get up from their chairs.

ELLISON sets down his beer, his eyes narrowing.

ELLISON

No, I am... *Challenging* you. I
don't like being called *stupid*...
dumb-cops!

(raises fists)

Now, let's see if your Aryan blood
is red like everyone else's.

THE BLONDE NAZI hesitates, then steps into Ellison, swinging with an uppercut aimed at the head. Ellison deftly blocks the punch with his left forearm, then connects to the Nazi's head with a hard right. The blonde man goes down hard to the ground.

THE THREE OTHER BLACKSHIRTS charge wildly at Ellison, the first planting his face right into the Indian's hard fist -- he drops as well. The third, a big man, lunges in, pounding Ellison in the stomach, then pinning him in a bear hug against the bar. The big Nazi spins him around, where the fourth assailant delivers rapid blows to Ellison's chest... then goes for the head, misses, hitting the bigger man, who releases the Indian. Ellison kicks the fourth man in the crotch, finishing him with a blow to the head as he doubles over in pain. The other fallen Germans are up and back at Ellison.

When the big man grabs the Indian from behind in another bear hug, the others overwhelm Ellison with blows till he slumps unconscious.

ELLISON is on the floor, absorbing kicks, when several German police rush through the door

BLONDE NAZI
(stepping back, arms
out)
Genug. Ich bin voll.

He leans forward over Ellison.

BLONDE NAZI (CONT'D)
Seems you've chosen a jail cell over
the Olympic Village -- not a wise
choice I'm afraid. Viel glueck,
Cherokee.

Wiping blood spilling from his nose, the blonde Nazi spits on the fallen Ellison.

INT. A BERLIN JAIL CELL -- DAY

ELLISON, his face showing cuts and bruises, stands with his hands on the bars of his cell door, listening to the sound of approaching footfalls and voices.

A UNIFORMED GUARD appears in front of Ellison's cell, followed by several men wearing suits. One of the men is Johnny Kelley.

ELLISON
About time you guys showed up, Kelley.
The food in here is terrible.

JOHNNY
Just *keep quiet*, Tarzan. I'm here
to make sure you don't say the wrong
thing to these people. They can be
a little sensitive.

ELLISON
Okay, I just want to get out of this
joint.

OLDER MAN
(looks in charge)
We're taking you back to the village,
son. The Germans don't want an
international incident made out of
this any more than we do.

The German guard opens up the cell door. Ellison steps out and shakes the older man's hand.

ELLISON

Thank you sir.

OLDER MAN

Well, I don't mind telling you, one of my colleagues suggested we leave you in here to learn some discipline.

(beat)

Just run well tomorrow afternoon and you'll make us all happy.

The older man pats Ellison on the back as they leave the cell area.

EXT. BERLIN OLYMPIC STADIUM -- AFTERNOON

Fifty-eight runners are on the track, large numbers pinned to their racing singlets; some men are stretching, some jumping lightly on the spot, going through pre-race rituals.

OLYMPIC ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Achtung! Attention! The marathonlauf will start momentarily. All runners are to line up behind the starting line.

ELLISON BROWN, sitting cross-legged on the side of the track, gets up slowly, moves toward the pack of runners lining up just ahead. A voice diverts his attention. It is Jesse Owens, calling over from the infield.

JESSE OWENS (O.S.)

Tarzan. Tarzan Brown.

OWENS is quickly over to grasp Ellison's arm.

JESSE OWENS (CONT'D)

Just wanted to wish you good luck, my friend. Remember, your race starts right where mine did, same starting line exactly as the sprints. Of course yours is longer.

(grins)

ELLISON

(grinning back)

Yeah, just a little.

JESSE OWENS

May the Lord be as generous to you as He was to me.

ELLISON

Thanks Jesse. I feel real strong.

JESSE OWENS

Bring home the gold, Tarzan. For yourself. Don't slow down.

As Owens retreats, Ellison jogs up to insert himself in the tight crowd of marathoners, finds Kelley and McMahon, squeezes in beside them.

BILLY

Nice of you to get let out of the clink in time for the race, Tarzan.

ELLISON

Wouldn't miss this for anything, Billy.

Kelley and McMahon are both wearing white wool racing singlets, large race numbers blocking the U.S.A. cresting. Kelley tugs at Brown's number, 754, pinned to his shorts.

JOHNNY

Hey -- good idea yer coverin' something less important than the Stars 'n Stripes.
(grins)

ELLISON

Aw, these shirts are too hot an scratchy to wear on a warm day. Gonna lose mine after we get started.

JOHNNY

Hey, not a bad plan, this thing feels like sandpaper. But not wearin' it seems kinda unpatriotic, Tarz.

BILLY

I guess the advantage goes to the Indian, huh Kel?

JOHNNY

Now remember fellas, today we're a team. Godspeed to both of you.

ELLISON

Kelley boy, you gets in my way today, I'll run right over yuh.
(laughs)
Okay, good luck to you fellas too.

Kelley, McMahon and Brown shake hands and ready themselves for the start.

CRACK OF A STARTING PISTOL

THE TIGHT PACK of runners is quickly into full stride, moving down the track, looking like one flowing creature from high in the stadium. As the runners circle the track:

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Welcome, listeners, to the first ever *live* radio broadcast of an Olympic marathon. Thanks to the marvels of modern technology, this race is actually being shown on screens in special halls throughout Germany on what some are calling "the wave of the future", an amazing invention known as *tel-e-vision*. Incredible as it may seem, ladies and gentlemen, some expect television to someday become almost as common as radio -- some day *far* in the future I would think. And now, as the runners circle the track where the great Negro Jesse Owens immortalized himself in winning an *incredible* four gold medals, it is a warm afternoon here in Berlin. After one and 3/4 laps, the race will continue outside the stadium onto the Havelchausee, meandering through the streets of Berlin before ending back on the track within this magnificent facility. It is estimated that close to one million people will be lining the streets to catch a view of these Olympians in their quest for glory.

EXT. BERLIN OLYMPIC MARATHON COURSE -- TEN KILOMETER MARK -- AFTERNOON

A RUNNER strides along, his head covered by a white kerchief, followed a short gap behind by a second unidentified runner. Then there is another gap before Ellison Brown, sans scratchy vest, comes into view, running comfortably. The course is lined by German soldiers and spectators.

INT. SAMMY'S DINER -- WESTERLY, RHODE ISLAND -- AT THAT MOMENT (BUT MORNING ON THE U.S. EAST COAST)

A SMALL GROUP, mostly Native, are clustered around a radio. Bryan and Gracie Brown, Horatio and Atmore Stanton, Ethel Wilcox Brown, and even Tippy Salerno are there, listening attentively.

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Just past the six-mile mark in the Olympic marathon, ZABALA from Argentina is still the leader. Portugal's MANUEL DAIS continues to run well in second place. It has just been reported that Tarzan Brown, from the United States, has put on a surge and moved into third spot, about 85 seconds behind Zabala...

A LOUD CHEER drowns out the broadcast, as the excited listeners wave their arms in the air.

EXT. BERLIN OLYMPIC MARATHON COURSE -- 25 KILOMETER MARK -- LATE AFTERNOON

The RACE LEADER, ZABALA, runs past the marker. A short distance behind, an Asian runner passes a third, unidentifiable man. There is a fair gap till the next runner becomes visible, running strongly in fourth, just ahead of a few pursuers.

CLOSER on the bare-chested fourth runner, it is Ellison.

AHEAD -- there are some corners on the course; the runner in front of Ellison turns right, then just ahead is directed left by a POLICEMAN in the center of an intersection.

ELLISON'S P.O.V. -- as he turns right, then sees the policeman ahead, who has temporarily diverted his attention away from the approaching direction. Ellison puts his arms up as there is no clear indication whether to turn left or run straight through the intersection.

ELLISON
(confused)
Which Way? WHICH WAY?

His speed forcing him to make a decision, Ellison picks *straight*, running past the inattentive policeman.

SEVERAL ONLOOKERS AT ONCE
NEIN! NEIN! STOP! STOP!

As people yell, the policeman starts blowing his whistle and waving Ellison back, at the same time directing the next two runners arriving at the corner to turn left. Ellison looks back in confusion, then stops completely... before turning and running back to the point of error. He stops again and throws up his arms in frustration, before continuing to run in the proper direction. But as the Indian surges hard ahead, he grabs at his lower abdomen.

INT. SAMMY'S DINER -- A BIT LATER

Quiet. No cheering, just concentration and concern on faces gathered around the radio.

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
Listeners, past the 18-mile mark of the marathon, there have been some dramatic developments. The leader, Zabala, had collapsed at some point and is now struggling to get back into the race. The new leader is SON from Japan, followed closely by HARPER from Great Britain.
(MORE)

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Zabala is still in third, though hurting, followed by COLEMAN of South Africa. Next are all three members of the Finnish team, then a sizeable gap till the next athlete... We have just had a report that Tarzan Brown, the Indian runner from the United States, has either been disqualified or has dropped out of the race...

Panning the group: some hands go up over faces, some are exhaling, a few groaning, Gracie and Ethel are starting to cry. Horatio stands up, shaking his head.

HORATIO

(to himself or anyone)

Damn. I thought he was gonna do it.
But it was just too good to be true.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SHIP'S DECK -- APPROACHING NEW YORK -- DAY

ELLISON BROWN at the bow railing, looking out at the approaching New York skyline. Kelley and McMahon join him. Kelley puts his arm around the Indian's shoulder.

BILLY

Hey that looks good, don't it? Almost home.

JOHNNY

Home, yeah. Where we get to explain one more time to the press and all our friends how we choked and screwed up at the Olympics. Always something to look forward to.

BILLY

Hey, you've got nothing to hang your head about, at least you *finished* -- unlike us two bums. And Tarzan, well, at least you were up there challenging for the lead most of the race.

ELLISON

Yeah? Well *don't forget*, I'm just an Indian runner -- all natural talent, no brains and heart -- so they probably didn't expect me to win anyway.

(grins)

Kelley slaps Brown on the back -- a little too hard.

JOHNNY

We'll never forget you're an Indian, Tarzan, don't worry about that. And you forgot to say *lazy* -- that's another thing they like to say about you Indians, you're too *lazy* compared to us hard-workin' Irishmen.

BILLY

Lazy and undisciplined runners. Don't forget about *undisciplined*.

ELLISON

Hey, you looked kinda *lazy* coming in 18th, Kelley.

JOHNNY

At least I stayed on the course and *finished!* Hey, you know there's a story goin' around you got busted from the race for stopping to wet your throat in a German beer hall. And all I heard about it from you that day was "*too tough for me today.*"

ELLISON

Kelley boy, if you hadn't been so far back you might of seen... Anyway, I'll tell yuh what really happened. First, I got directed off the course. Then after I get back in the race, I gets this terrible pain in my gut. So, I lay down to try to stretch it out, and somebody tries to pick me up just as this car goes by. Then this guy yells out: "Out! You're out of the race -- *you are disqualified!*" Not my fault -- I never asked for help. That's exactly what happened, but don't matter now anyway. I just had a bad race, same as you guys.

(looks away)

Maybe I just need some time away from running for awhile.

JOHNNY

(nudging McMahon)

See Billy, just like a lazy Indian. Soon as things go wrong, they *quit*.

ELLISON

Hey -- we don't quit till after we get our first paycheck! At least, according to you white folks as an excuse not to hire us.

All three laugh at that.

JOHNNY

Seriously, Tarz, you're a great runner, but you don't train properly. You could be even better than you are if you just worked harder at it... And yuh gotta lay off the booze.

ELLISON

Ah c'mon, you know better than that, Johnny, I train just as hard as you... when I feel like it. And I sure don't feel like it right now.

Johnny puts his arm around Ellison...

JOHNNY

Maybe you just need a hug.

...tries to headlock the Indian.

ELLISON

(squirming free)
Get lost, Kelley.

JOHNNY

Anyhow fellas... Just remember that line they told us at the start of the Olympics. "The important thing is not to win, but to take part... just as the most important thing about life is not to conquer but struggle well."

BILLY

And you believe that stuff?

JOHNNY

Well... No, I like to win.

INT. SMALL MEDICAL CLINIC -- CHARLESTOWN, RHODE ISLAND --
DAY

ELLISON sits shirtless on an examining table, as a stethoscope is moved over his chest. A DOCTOR examining Ellison steps back, picking up a chart.

ELLISON

So, what's wrong with me, Doc?

DOCTOR

It's what we call an inguinal hernia. The good news is it's somewhat reducible. You should recover fine.

ELLISON

And there's bad news too?

DOCTOR

No more running for you this year.

(jots on the chart)

If you've had this since the Olympics,
it's no wonder you didn't finish the
race. Now you've got to be careful
or it might reoccur and you'll run
the risk of infection.

ELLISON

What about fishing? I plan on doing
lots of that.

DOCTOR

Just make sure all the fish you catch
are small ones. No heavy lifting --
no running. Now, go home and get
some rest.

Ellison nods and smiles.

ELLISON

There's no bad news, Doc. I was
planning on taking some time away
from running anyway.

Ellison is still smiling as he stands up and heads out the
door.

DISSOLVE TO:

MONTAGE -- TO MID-1930S JAZZ

Ellison with Atmore Stanton, fishing at a pond.

Beaming Ellison holding a crying baby, beside happy Ethel in
a hospital bed.

Ellison in a boat, pulling up a net full of shellfish.

Ellison and Horatio Stanton, jogging down a country road.

Smiling Ellison doing stonemason work on a wall, carefully
fitting a rock in place.

Wearing hip-wading boots and with a catch of fish in hand,
Ellison arriving home to Ethel and new baby waiting on the
porch.

Ellison running down a road, looking faster and stronger
than when jogging with Horatio.

Ellison hitchhiking, tote bag in hand; a car slowing to a
stop as Ellison runs up to get in.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FINISH LINE OF THE YONKERS MARATHON -- DAY

ELLISON BROWN runs in to break the tape at the finish line.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

And the winner here at the New York Marathon Championship is Tarzan Brown from Rhode Island. This is Tarzan's first race since he failed at the Olympics, and he is obviously back in fine form...

ELLISON'S P.O.V. -- at the finish, as he turns and waits for the second runner to come in. It is Billy McMahon, a few seconds behind. Ellison hugs him as soon as he crosses the line.

ELLISON

Great race Billy, you really pushed me there.

BILLY

(still winded)

I... believed you... when you said... you were out of shape.

ELLISON

Hey Billy, can you do me a favor and pick up my trophy for me? I'll get it from you later. Right after I get my money, I'm leaving for New Hampshire -- gonna try to make tomorrow's race.

BILLY

You know... just when I start thinking you're not just another crazy Indian... you prove that's *exactly* what you are. It's impossible to run two marathons a day apart. And stupid.

ELLISON

Yeah, well, Manchester promised me 16 bucks for show-up money; poor Indian like me can't pass that up.
(grinning)

And, I got something to prove to all those people callin' me a quitter and making jokes about me gettin' lost in Berlin. I'll make 'em eat their words.

BILLY

(shaking his head)

You're crazy, Tarzan. It'll be your funeral. Dead Indians got no use for money.

EXT. FINISH LINE OF MANCHESTER MARATHON -- NEW HAMPSHIRE --
THE NEXT DAY

A MAN looks through binoculars from a tower above the finish.

MAN WITH BINOCULARS

Okay, I see the first runner coming
in... it's number four...

MAN'S P.O.V. THROUGH BINOCULARS shows number four, ELLISON
Brown, eyes squinting, struggling toward the finish.

MAN WITH BINOCULARS (CONT'D)

Looks like he's got a big lead, can't
see anyone close behind.

A RACE ANNOUNCER beside him moves to a microphone.

RACE ANNOUNCER

Ladies and gentlemen, the lead runner
is nearing the finish, and it is
Tarzan Brown, the Indian from Rhode
Island.

ELLISON jogging in across the finish line.

RACE ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

Let's give this fellow lots of
applause. *Incredible* as this may
sound, I've been told this is Tarzan's
second full marathon in 24 hours.
He arrived this morning just in time
to race, hitchhiked here after winning
yesterday's Yonkers Marathon. Ladies
and Gentlemen, this is truly an
astounding achievement in athletics!

Ellison walks beyond the finish line, ignoring the
congratulations of race officials and press. With a pained
expression, the exhausted runner drops to one knee, clutching
his lower abdomen. Then he rolls to the ground in agony.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. A HOSPITAL ROOM -- LATER

ELLISON lies, shirtless, on an examining table. His doctor
turns from viewing a chart and makes some notes; he looks
with concerned expression at his patient.

DOCTOR

Now what we've got here son, is a
double inguinal hernia... Now this
is a *really serious* condition; you
might have died if they hadn't brought
you in here.

(MORE)

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

You had better listen to me this time when I say -- *slow down*.

(slowly, patiently)

No More Marathon Running This Year. Understand?

Ellison pushes up on his elbows.

ELLISON

Yes sir. I plan on doing lots of fishing, no running.

DOCTOR

(shaking his head)

Just remember: double marathons lead to double hernias. You... *Have... To... Let... The Body... Heal*. You're not indestructible. Do you understand me?

ELLISON

(suitably concerned)

Yes sir, I do. And thank's Doc.

EXT. THE BOSTON MARATHON -- NATICK -- WARM APRIL AFTERNOON

SUPER: 18 MONTHS LATER

JOHNNY KELLEY and LES PAWSON lead a small pack of runners through the village, as the voice of Jerry Nason narrates his report of the 1938 edition of the race.

JERRY (V.O.)

The 1938 Boston Marathon proved to be a battle between PAT DENGIS of Baltimore, and past champions, Les Pawson of Pawtucket, and Johnny Kelley of Medford. In the end...

EXT. BOSTON FINISH LINE --LATER

LES PAWSON crossing the finish line, arms raised in victory.

JERRY (V.O.)

...it was the personable Pawson's turn to win, his 2:35 clocking just ahead of second-place Dengis and third-place Kelley.

PAWSON is assisted and congratulated by officials and well wishers as he walks through the finish area.

JERRY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

A popular champion, Pawson is unlike many marathon runners, in that he is well-groomed, well-spoken, polite

(MORE)

JERRY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
and intelligent. One former champion
who did not fair so well in today's
race...

CUT TO:

ELLISON BROWN RUNNING LABORIOUSLY BESIDE A LAKE

JERRY (V.O.)
...was Tarzan Brown, who finished
more than an hour slower than his
winning time in 1936.

ELLISON slows down and, glancing over at the nearby water,
suddenly waves to the onlookers, veers off the course toward
the water's edge.

JERRY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Apparently the warm weather got the
best of Tarzan, or perhaps the nature-
loving Indian could not resist the
calling of the scenic Lake Cochituate.

ELLISON dives into the lake and swims out from shore, stopping
to tread water.

ELLISON'S P.O.V. -- looking back and waving at perplexed
runners and spectators along the race course.

JERRY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
To his credit and unlike the Olympic
Marathon, Tarzan did eventually finish
the race. However, many observers
feel this former champion is now
simply fulfilling his true calling --
that of shiftless and carefree Indian,
forgoing the white man's ways to
live like his forefathers. I, too,
must wonder: have we seen the end of
running glory for the talented but
unpredictable Tarzan Brown?

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SALOON -- CHARLESTOWN, RHODE ISLAND -- DAY

TIPPY SALERNO approaches the entrance to the bar.

INT. SALOON -- A MOMENT LATER

INSIDE, Tippy looks around the mostly empty room, as a radio
plays soft jazz.

TIPPY'S P.O.V. -- spots Ellison Brown, perched at the bar, a
few beer bottles parked in front. Approaching... Tippy taps
the slumped backside of the Indian.

TIPPY

Can I buy yuh a drink, sailor?

ELLISON

(barely turning)

Tippy. How'd you know I'd be in here?

TIPPY

According to my sources, yu'know, you're here a lot these days -- drinkin' like a fish. But what makes yuh think I was looking for yuh?

ELLISON

Nice and quiet in here this time of day. I like to relax with a beer and think sometimes...

TIPPY

Okay Ellison, Horatio told me yuh said maybe yuh wanted me to help out a little, yu'know, with yer training. I also heard yuh ain't gettin' handled by anyone else right now, yu'know.

ELLISON

Handled? Most people seem to think I'm done with racing. One guy said it was a shame I'm broken down and used up, something like that.

(shrugs, sips beer)

Hey, listen to this, Tippy. The song on the radio, I like this one. HEY RICK, TURN UP THE RADIO, WILL YA?

RICK, behind the bar, obligingly turns the radio volume up a notch. There is a very early Frank Sinatra song, "All Or Nothing At All", with the Harry James Band, crooning from the speaker.

ELLISON (CONT'D)

I really like the way this guy sings, he's real good. They said his name is... "something" Sinatra. This song keeps getting stuck in my head, but I don't mind. Just Listen...

Tippy listens for a couple lines, as Ellison intermittently joins in singing the lyrics.

ELLISON (CONT'D)

(singing along softly)

...half a love... never appealed to me... if your heart... never could

(MORE)

ELLISON (CONT'D)

yield to me... then I'd rather...
rather have nothin' at all...

TIPPY

All or nothing at all, hmmm...
Yu'know, makes me think of yer
running, maybe...

ELLISON

(getting into it)
...if it's love... there ain't no
inbetween...

TIPPY

Yer either *all out*... Or *nothin'*.
What do you think, Ellison?

ELLISON

...why begin and cry for something
that... might have been...
(pauses singing)
I don't think much when I'm listening
to this song, I just relax and go
somewhere peaceful... It's like
when I'm an hour into a good run. I
can move outside my body and just
watch myself.

TIPPY

Okay...
(pause)
But I mean, what do yuh think about
yer runnin? Are people maybe...
Yu'know, *right* about you? Do you
think yer done winning races?

ELLISON

I don't care what people say about
me -- most of them don't know me.
They think they do, but they don't.
Let 'em say whatever they want.
(shakes his head)
I just don't see why everyone is so
surprised I live like an Indian...
(beat)
I'm an Indian.

TIPPY

A *fast* Indian.

ELLISON

(abruptly back singing)
...and if I fell... under the spell
of your call... *I love this part!*
(fingers snapping)
I would be... be caught in the
undertow...

TIPPY

A *fast* Indian. And, yu'know, one that doesn't *answer* my questions. Are yuh finished with racing or do yuh still wanta win?

ELLISON

(bobbing his head,
not just to the music)

I can still run fast -- faster and longer than anyone else. But if you want to help me win some more races, I'll listen to you. I always did whatever you told me to do, and it worked.

As Sinatra's voice pauses, there is a long instrumental track, allowing Tippy more of Ellison's attention.

TIPPY

Hey, c'mon, yuh didn't always listen -- and I wasn't always right, yu'know. At Boston in '36, yuh proved yuh can run away from everyone. They almost caught yuh, but they didn't.

(relights his cigar)

Ellison, yuh've got the greatest combination of speed and endurance I've ever seen in a human being. But I don't think yuh've reached yer full potential. Yu'know... I can help yuh with that.

ELLISON

Nice speech, Tippy. But I just wanna know one thing. Do you respect me?

TIPPY

Hey -- didn't I just say that? Of course I respect yuh. Everyone respects yuh as a runner. What yuh've already accomplished is amazing... But, yu'know... *You can do more.*

ELLISON

Okay... This is what I've been thinkin' about.

(pauses to drink)

I just told you I don't care what people say -- I don't. And I joke around with Kelley and some of them guys about Indian stuff -- that's all kiddin' around. I think we all respect each other, that's why it's okay. But... Some things just get me pissed-damn mad.

TIPPY

(nodding slowly)

So yer saying yuh want more respect
from white people.

ELLISON

Tippy, I had to go to New London to
get my last haircut. In Charlestown
and Westerly, they say: "We don't
cut your kind of hair here." And I
say, "Why not? My hair's as good as
yours." Yeah I want more respect --
that stuff hurts... gets me steamed.

TIPPY

(nodding faster)

AHA. Yu'know, I *knew* it. I knew
all along, yuh run to get the respect
of the white man -- first time yuh
admitted it to me though, yu'know.
Well, son, win Boston again... set a
world record, and America will respect
the hell outta yuh!

ELLISON

(shaking head)

I don't think so. When I win, it's
because I'm this gifted Indian runner.
When I lose... It's because I'm
just an Indian.

TIPPY

But it's always better to be a winner!
DAMN. We've got somethin' tuh prove
here, yu'know! The best way to get
respect, yu'know, is get back up off
the canvas and punch the crap outta
the guy that put yuh there.

(relights cigar again)

Which is why we start tomorrow.
Yu'know? All it's gonna take is
lots of steak, eggs, and sleep. And
lots and *lots* of miles.

(claps Brown's shoulder)

Yu'know we'll get yuh back in shape,
Champ.

ELLISON

Okay Tippy, but first... how about
that drink you promised me?

SINATRA (V.O.)

(finishing up)

All... or Nothinn' at ALLL...

EXT. A ROAD -- JUST OUTSIDE CHARLESTOWN -- DAY

A YOUNG BOY, TOMMY -- perhaps 10 or 11, riding a bicycle -- glances over his shoulder as a voice from just behind:

ELLISON (O.S.)

Hey Tommy, you're pedaling pretty hard... took me awhile to catch up.

ELLISON, running, pulls alongside Tommy.

Tommy focuses ahead over the handlebars, pedaling harder.

ELLISON (CONT'D)

Haven't seen yuh for awhile -- ready for a race to the next pole?

TOMMY

Nope. Not today.

ELLISON

Gettin' chicken? Cuz I always win?

TOMMY

Nope -- ain't chicken. Pa just don't want me talkin' to you no more. When I told him I was sorta friends with Tarzan Brown -- he got all mad.

Tommy eases up a little on the pedaling.

ELLISON

Well... we don't need to talk to race. Your pop don't like me, huh?

TOMMY

Not just you. My pa hates Indians. Says you're worse than niggers... cuz you think you own the land that white folks worked hard tuh get. Pa says we won the war.

ELLISON

(shrugs)

That's what white men keep sayin'.

TOMMY

Tarzan... You a drunk? Pa says y'are.

ELLISON

A drunk? Hmmm... Well, I like to drink... sometimes I drink lots.

(beat)

But same as I like runnin' and sometimes I run too hard. Anyhow, you should be able to beat a drunk to the next pole.

TOMMY

Well...

(long pause)

Okay -- *let's go!*

Tommy, suddenly pedaling with wild urgency, races away...

CUT TO:

ELLISON -- PULLING EVEN AND EDGING PAST TOMMY JUST BEFORE
FLASHING PAST THE POLE

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HOPKINTON, MASSACHUSETTS -- BOSTON MARATHON STARTING
LINE -- LATE MORNING

SUPER: *APRIL 19, 1939*

The sky is dark for near noon -- a northeastern storm has blown in wet snow and sleet. Athletes, supporters, and press take shelter against nearby buildings. Some of the press are in a huddle, comparing racers' odds.

FIRST REPORTER

I don't know guys, I've still got Pawson picked as the favorite. He was 56 minutes for the Brighton ten-miler, and this ugly weather should only help him.

JERRY

Yeah, but he was nosed out in that race by Tarzan.

FIRST REPORTER

So? That's ten miles. The Indian won't even be a factor in the full distance. He's washed up -- does all his training now in bars I hear.

JERRY

That might be true. I've heard he's been in some terrific barroom brawls -- probably make a helluva welterweight.

(pause)

But what about Syracuse? He broke the course record up there, and that's 16 miles.

SECOND REPORTER

So what're you sayin', Jerry? You got him favored to win or to place?

JERRY

Hell no, I wouldn't figure him as anything but a long shot.

(MORE)

JERRY (CONT'D)

Too hard to figure out, and never a good tactical runner. I think WALTER YOUNG is the guy this year. And Pat Dengis might show well today.

FIRST REPORTER

What about Kelley?

SECOND REPORTER

What about him? This is his first race this year, I heard he's not in shape. I'm keeping my eye on Cote, the Canadian.

JERRY

That's right -- he won at Medford, and he's in great condition. But remember fellas, this is the Boston Marathon. Look at this weather. And there's a partial eclipse today -- could get even darker. Anything can happen.

FIRST REPORTER

What's happening now is I'm heading into the Lucky Rock Manor for a cup of mud before we head up the road. You guys comin'?

JERRY

You fellas go ahead, I'll join you in a few minutes.

NASON'S HEAD ON A SWIVEL has caught a glimpse of Tippy Salerno, ever-present cigar between collar pulled up against the weather, heading alone toward his car further back down the road.

Nason quickly intercepts.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Mr... Salerno? Jerry Nason, the Globe. I hear you're back working with Tarzan Brown.

TIPPY

(turning to look)

Nason? Oh yeah, yu'know of course I recognize yuh. What d'yuh wanta know about Tarzan? Don't worry, yu'know, I can promise he won't be divin' intuh no lake this year! Weather's not fit fer ducks, ain't it.

JERRY

Your boy's been running well again so far this season. Just wondering if he's fit enough to go the distance.

TIPPY

Hey Nason, yu'know, he's fit as a fiddle, that's fer sure. But yuh know how hard it is to figure out a marathon... We should all know how it's gonna come out by the hills.

JERRY

The hills usually do tell the tale.

TIPPY

Yu'know, I can tell yuh one thing 'bout Tarzan. It'll be *all or nothin'* at all.

JERRY

Huh? What are you telling me -- are we expecting another lightening start?

TIPPY

Nah. I don't know. That's just, yu'know, some song he keeps in his head sometimes. It's this Sinatra guy on the radio -- good singer, yu'know, yuh gotta listen sometime. But that's kinda how Brown runs: *all or nothin'* at all.

(trys relighting cigar)

To be perfectly honest... I got no idea what's gonna happen today. But yu'know what? I gotta go -- got him back stayin' warm in my car till the start.

(turns away)

JERRY

Okay, well... tell Tarzan *good luck* from me, will you?

TIPPY

(walking off)

Nason, yu'know what, he'd rather have yer respect than yer luck.

JERRY

(calling back)

HEY, THAT TOO -- you gotta respect a man gives you the stories Tarzan's given me!

CUT TO:

OLD RIFLE FIRING INTO SKY

THE RACE IS UNDERWAY. Early on, Ellison is well back in the pack, wearing his familiar "Westerly, R.I." singlet, number 189 pinned to the chest.

INT. STUDEBAKER, (MOVING) ON THE COURSE -- EARLY AFTERNOON

Nason scribbles notes, glancing at runners just outside. Les Pawson is running close to another runner, Walter Young. Just ahead of both is an INDIAN RUNNER -- but it is not Ellison Brown.

Nason leans over to Jack, the reporter next to him.

JERRY

Who ever expected to see an Indian leading -- other than Tarzan?

REPORTER JACK

(yelling back)

Kelley and Brown are well back. Either they're both running smart or just not fit enough to keep up.

JERRY

Neither one of those two ever run what I would call "smart".

EXT. FURTHER BACK THE COURSE -- THAT MOMENT

In the midst of a small pack of runners, Ellison Brown runs beside Johnny Kelley. Pawson and Young are practically specks in the distance.

FAVORING ELLISON

JOHNNY

Okay Tarz, we're five miles in. This some kinda new strategy, or are you just slow like me today?

ELLISON

(narrow eyes ahead)

Just holdin' back, still too early to go.

JOHNNY

(breathing harder)

Well, don't hold back on my account... I'm no threat this year... can feel them extra five pounds.

ELLISON

(a little smile)

You soft an' lazy Irish.

JOHNNY
 (laughing)
 Jeepers, don't make me laugh...

EXT. NATICK -- A LITTLE LATER

ELLISON is pulling up behind Pawson and Young. (The other Indian has dropped back.) The Studebaker cruises nearby.

INT. STUDEBAKER -- FAVORING NASON

REPORTER JACK
 (into Jerry's ear)
 Hey, how come Tarzan's wearing 189?
 Don't the top runners usually get
 low numbers?

JERRY
 Yeah, I noticed that at the start.
 Apparently, he was the last one to
 pay his entry fee -- had to borrow
 the buck from the starter -- so he
 got the last number. There's exactly
 189 entries this year.

ELLISON'S P.O.V. -- He is pulling right up beside Pawson and Young.

PAWSON
 (glancing at newcomer)
 Welcome aboard, Tarzan. Feel free
 to break the wind anytime you want.

YOUNG
 I think the wind's at your back,
 Les.

PAWSON
 It's swirlin'.

ELLISON silently surges slightly ahead. Breathing deeply, he appears very comfortable with the pace as he takes the lead in the wind and driving sleet.

YOUNG
 Is he always so chatty?

PAWSON -- calls out to Ellison as the Indian moves further ahead out of normal earshot:

PAWSON
*Hey -- looking good, Tarzan, nice
 running!*
 (then to Young)
 Don't worry, let him go. He'll slow
 down by Newton. We can work together
 to rein him in well before the finish.

YOUNG

I don't know, he looks pretty strong
right now.

PAWSON

Trust me, we'll catch him.

EXT. NEWTON HILLS -- LATER

THE STUDEBAKER cruises beside Ellison Brown, who is running powerfully, staring ahead with narrow, focused eyes. RAIN is coming down in sheets.

INT. STUDEBAKER -- FAVORING NASON

REPORTER JACK

He's still got a big lead, can't see
anybody coming up behind him... yet.

JERRY

Yet? What do ya mean -- yet? Tarzan
looks uncatchable to me.

EXT. BOSTON, WITHIN SIGHT OF THE FINISH LINE -- LATER

ELLISON BROWN is still running swiftly and easily, staring through steady rain toward the distant finish banner. He slows somewhat, turns and glances behind... Then, slowing virtually to a stop, he turns again and takes a long look behind him.

ELLISON'S P.O.V. -- There is no one in sight behind, just wind and rain. He turns back toward the finish, focuses on the banner as he resumes running and strides toward victory.

FINISH LINE

ELLISON crosses the line, surrounded by officials, police and press, all in hats and raincoats. An official drapes a small tarp over Ellison as he slows to a walk.

B.A.A. OFFICIAL

2:28:51! That's the *world's best*
time this year, son! You're the
fastest marathon runner in the world!

EXT. BOSTON -- FINISH LINE AREA -- LATER

JOHNNY KELLEY, looking rain-drenched and exhausted, spots Ellison being interviewed by the press. He cuts through to congratulate the champion.

JOHNNY

(clutching Ellison)
Helluva race, Tarzan! The way you
held back early on showed a lot of
patience. Didn't think you had it
in you.

ELLISON

Thanks, Johnny. Old Indian trick.
(winks)

EXT. PLATFORM NEAR THE BOSTON MARATHON FINISH -- LATER THAT
AFTERNOON

Light rain is still sprinkling. Ellison "Tarzan" Brown, wearing a laurel wreath and champion's medal, holds a bouquet of wet flowers as he surveys the crowd assembled below. A B.A.A. official beside Ellison steps back, relinquishing the microphone to the champion.

ELLISON

Well... Last time I was up here, some of you might remember I said something like, "you don't have to be a dead Indian to be a good Indian"... something like that.

Pause. Panning smiles and some laughter in the crowd.

ELLISON (CONT'D)

Well... I'm not good at making speeches, but I just want to say that lots of people were saying before today that I was kind of a dead Indian. Broken down and useless. Well, today I proved all those people wrong. My plan was just to wait a bit, then run my head off -- go as fast as I could go till I dropped dead. Well... I didn't drop dead. And I want to thank all the people back home who still believed in me... Ethel... my family, and my coach, Tippy Salerno -- they helped me do the work to get back up here. 'Cause it takes a lot of work to run a fast marathon... Even for a fast Indian.
(pause)

APPLAUSE and SOME CHEERING in the crowd, not just from the Native representation.

ELLISON (CONT'D)

I never tried to use my running to say Indian people can be as good as white people... But maybe I *should* say that. Maybe you can all respect me a little more, not just because I'm a fast Indian... but because I'm an American too... And I'm proud to be who I am. American Indian... Narragansett. And I'm real happy and proud I won the race today... And glad I didn't drop dead too.

(MORE)

ELLISON (CONT'D)

(pause, sparse laughter
in the crowd)

Now I think I'm gonna take a break
from running, spend more time with
my family... and working to earn a
living. Someday... I'd really like
to buy me a truck... that would be
swell. Well... thanks for listening.

After a beat of silence, there is LOUD CHEERING and DRUM
BEATING from the Indian supporters, less enthusiastic applause
from the rest of the crowd. Panned expressions range from
smiles and nodding support to rolling eyes and shaking heads.

INT. BROWN FAMILY SHACK -- NEAR CHARLESTOWN, RHODE ISLAND --
DAY

ELLISON sits at the dinner table in the two-room cabin, with
Ethel and the couple's 18-month-old daughter. Ethel feeds
the toddler as Ellison eats chicken with his fingers, sucking
bones clean as he goes.

ETHEL

Ellison, what are you doing tomorrow?
Are you going up north for that wood-
cutting job, or is it all finished?

ELLISON

(licking his fingers)
All done.

ETHEL

Did you get paid for it yet?

ELLISON

Yeah, but I only got 20 bucks.
Shoulda been a lot more.

ETHEL

Well, 20 bucks is 20 bucks. Seems
you weren't working at it long.

ELLISON

Ethel, I can sometimes get 20 bucks
now just for showing up at a big
race. There were *lots* of trees to
take out. Seems to me they shoulda
paid a *lot* more than 20 bucks to do
it.

ETHEL

Well, maybe you work so fast, folks
don't know how much money it's worth.
Maybe you should've asked for more.

ELLISON

No. I know these people. They would've just found some other Indian to do it then. There's always Indians around to work for half the wages of white men.

(picks up more chicken)

Anyway, you're right -- 20 bucks is 20 bucks.

ETHEL

Well... Charlie Adams told me your stone work is some of the best he's seen. Said you might find yourself real busy doing that, once folks start building more again.

ELLISON

(shaking his head)

I need work right now. Who knows or cares what might happen down the road.

ETHEL

Well, at least your running is going real good. Now everyone is proud to know you. That should help you get more work.

ELLISON

It better. Can't eat medals and trophies.

ETHEL

Sweetheart, you wouldn't even if you could; I know how proud you are of winning all those races.

ELLISON

Guess you could eat a laurel wreath... Probly wouldn't taste good though.

ETHEL

Things will work out -- you know they always do.

Ellison pushes his plate away and starts trading smiles and funny faces with his daughter.

ELLISON

Sure they will. And if they don't...
(big funny face)
We'll make 'em!

DISSOLVE TO:

MONTAGE -- TO "I'LL BE SEEING YOU" BY FRANK SINATRA

Old tape of Hitler addressing Germany's military.

New York Times headline: *It's War! Hitler Invades Poland.*

Tape of Allied troops, mobilizing against Nazi Germany.

New York Times headline: Japanese Attack Pearl Harbor!

More images of World War II action.

Ellison, carrying a lunch box, going to work in a factory.

New York Times headline: *VICTORY!*

Ellison cheerfully doing stonework.

Ellison, wearing hip waders, arriving home with a catch of fish -- Ethel, baby in arms, and two toddlers greeting him.

Ellison, looking slightly heavier and more mature, running strongly down a country road.

Ellison, in a desolate barroom, slumped over the bar -- head down on crossed arms, surrounded by a squad of beer bottles.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. TIPPY'S HOUSE -- CHARLESTOWN -- DAY

TIPPY SALERNO, a little older and thicker than when last seen, moves slowly to open the front door as someone knocks loudly.

TIPPY

Okay, okay, hold yer horses, I've got it.

Tippy opens the door, revealing Ellison Brown. The two men just look each other in the eyes for a beat.

TIPPY (CONT'D)

Well? Yuh here tuh cut some firewood for me?

He pokes his cigar in Ellison's belly.

ELLISON

(smiles)

Hello, Tippy.

TIPPY

Yu'know, I think yuh could use the exercise.

(chuckles)

Well, c'mon in, son. Good tuh see yuh.

ELLISON

Good to see you too.

TIPPY

Ever since yuh moved near Charletown,
seems like I hardly see yuh. Place
is gettin' too damn big, yu'know?

ELLISON

I know.

Ellison follows Tippy to his kitchen. Tippy opens the door
of his fridge, fishes through stacked egg cartons...

TIPPY

Have a chair. Think I got a beer
for yuh in here somewhere. Ah, here
we go.

ELLISON

(taking beer)

Thanks, Tip.

TIPPY

Now where's that bottle opener...

Ellison opens the beer with his teeth.

TIPPY (CONT'D)

That can't be good for yuh.

Tippy takes the chair across.

TIPPY (CONT'D)

So? Heard yer all done at the defense
plant.

ELLISON

Yeah. Since the war ended they don't
need so much of that stuff I guess.
That's okay, I never liked factory
work. But it put food on the table.

TIPPY

How many kids yuh got now -- five,
right?

ELLISON

Four. I got four kids.

TIPPY

Yuh want a cigar?

ELLISON

No thanks.

TIPPY

I meant, yu'know, five kids for Ethel.
Countin' you.

(chuckles, snorts)

Seen yuh runnin' by a few times.
Gonna go back to Boston next spring?

ELLISON

I want to. But I got a long ways to
go to be ready.

(beat)

To win.

TIPPY

(relighting cigar)

Really? So yuh wanta win again,
huh?

ELLISON

Yeah.

TIPPY

Really?

ELLISON

Yeah.

TIPPY

Yu'know, last time I saw yuh run
Boston, yuh showed off how many hot
dogs yuh could eat just before the
start. What'd yuh have -- three or
four?

ELLISON

Four. I didn't have breakfast so I
was really hungry. I threw up half
way through the race, but I think it
was 'cause of the ice cream along
the way.

TIPPY

Yeah, the ice cream. I forgot.

(pause)

Hey... Remember, yu'know, when yuh
first got me listenin' to that Sinatra
guy? I'm thinkin' of that song,
"All Or Nothin' At All".

ELLISON

Yeah, still like that one.

TIPPY

Well, don't take offense kid, but
yu'know, lately, the way I hear yer
drinkin' like a piss tank, yuh've
been more the "nothin' at all" part.

ELLISON

(nodding)

Whole lotta nothin' at all.

TIPPY

Gonna be hard yu'know... to put the "all" back in yer "nothin". Yuh gotta be willin' tuh pay the price, yu'know.

ELLISON

I have to. There's nothing left for me to do, I have to win again. And I want a world record.

TIPPY

Really? Yu'know what? -- that's great!

(relights cigar again)

So... Yuh still runnin' for respect?

ELLISON

Still can't get a haircut in this town. Probably never will.

(shrugs, little smile)

Yeah, it's about respect. But maybe this time... I'm running more for my own self-respect.

TIPPY

That's good enough for me, sport.

ELLISON

There's more.

TIPPY

There usually is.

ELLISON

If I can win the marathon, maybe set a world record... maybe I can get steady work. If I could just get me a truck, I could make a good living around here.

TIPPY

Self respect and a truck. That's good motivation.

ELLISON

Yeah.

TIPPY

Yeah. Got some work to do, but yu'know what? We can win the damned thing again. And maybe get yuh that world record.

(MORE)

TIPPY (CONT'D)
 (snorts, nodding head)
 And world-record holders drive cars
 or trucks. Nice ones.
 (smiles, sucks cigar)

CLOSE TO ELLISON'S DREAMY EXPRESSION...

CLOSER...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. A COUNTRY ROAD -- DAY

A 1946 FORD PICKUP TRUCK accelerates up the road.

INT. TRUCK -- THAT MOMENT

ELLISON'S DREAMY EXPRESSION behind the wheel as he shifts gears and pushes the throttle wide open... ..as Sinatra's voice croons "All or Nothing At All"...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BOSTON GLOBE PRESSROOM -- DAY

JERRY NASON, looking a little older and wearing glasses, sits typing at his desk. His typing speed has improved. CLOSE UP to the text as it forms. Nason narrates his words.

JERRY (O.S.)
 One of the past champions returning to the 1946 Boston Marathon is Ellison Tarzan Brown, winner in '36 and '39. Though he hasn't run the race since placing 21st in '43, I am picking Tarzan as the favorite to win tomorrow's marathon. Recently I accepted the Indian runner's invitation to visit him at his home, near Narragansett Bay in Rhode Island...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BROWN FAMILY SHACK -- DAY

NASON and A CAMERAMAN, walking up a path through the woods are greeted by Ellison and Ethel, a few dark-eyed toddlers in tow. (NASON'S VOICE-OVER CONTINUES as he tours the primitive Brown accommodations.) The cameraman snaps pictures. The two-room shack sits in a clearing, a small brook out back where Ellison has hand scooped out a large basin for bathing. There is an outhouse nearby with a flapping blanket for a door. A homemade punching bag hangs from a tree branch; two enormous dumbbells sit below -- evidence of the source of the famous Tarzan physique.

JERRY (V.O.)

Tarzan still lives as if the white man never came to this country. Surviving in a small tarpaper shack with his wife and four children, he ekes out a living as a part-time tree surgeon, stonemason, fisherman, and handyman -- doing anything to earn a dollar. Privately, he expressed some frustration that his past marathon victories have brought him little fame and no fortune, and that he is still treated with discrimination by the white society. Now Tarzan says he has been back training hard and is determined to again win the Boston Marathon -- in world-record time. His objective is to gain a little financial backing. "If I could just buy myself a truck," says Tarzan, "I could make a good living around here." A desperate man, living on the very edge of desperation, the Deerfoot of the Narragansett returns to Boston with nothing to lose.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. STARTING LINE OF BOSTON MARATHON -- HOPKINTON -- NOON

A PACK of runners gathered at the start.

CUT TO:

OLD RIFLE FIRING INTO SKY

CUT BACK TO:

THE PACK of runners surging forward, ELLISON BROWN close to the front in the early going of the race.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FINISH LINE OF BOSTON MARATHON -- MID AFTERNOON

ELLISON, running slowly... painfully toward the finish banner.

B.A.A. ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

Now approaching the finish, we have former champion, Tarzan Brown. A good showing, but just outside the top-ten finishers this year... C'mon folks, give him some encouragement -- he's having some trouble. Let's cheer and help him get to the line.

EXT. FINISH-LINE AREA -- MOMENTS LATER

TIPPY SALERNO drapes a blanket over a spent Ellison, as the grimacing Indian tries to walk out the cramps that destroyed his race.

TIPPY

Hey, I know yer not happy with 12th, kid, but yuh showed some good stuff not quittin' when yuh cramped up. Yu'know... most runners woulda dropped out... but yuh slugged it out to the finish. I'm damn proud of yuh -- yer not done yet!
(snorts)

ELLISON

(shaking his head)
I don't know, Tippy, I feel like I might be done... don't think I'll be back.

TIPPY

Well, yu'know, it's too soon to talk about that. Just remember one thing. I respect the hell outta yuh. Yer the best runner I've ever seen -- Champ.
(claps Ellison's back)
Now, time tuh get some rest -- yuh deserve it. And keep eatin' lots of eggs -- we gotta keep yer strength up. Never know what the future holds, yu'know.
(snorts, sucks cigar)

EXT. A COUNTRY ROAD OUTSIDE CHARLESTOWN -- DAY

Ellison and Ethel stand on the roadside, looking out over a wooded area.

ELLISON

Our great grandparents lived on this reserve land. Their spirits will be guiding us, helping us build here.

ETHEL

Hope they bring their axes. Seems like a lot of trees to cut down first.

ELLISON

That'll be the easy part. I've been saving up old used planks and nails. There's lots of stuff at the dump. But it ain't gonna be easy... building out of nothing. We need money.

ETHEL

The hardest thing for me is being away from the kids -- losing a home is so much harder on them. They just don't understand why we all can't live together right now... I'm worried they'll think we don't love them.

ELLISON

(puts arm around Ethel)

Then we better get started. Gotta get this house built before they all grow up and want to move out anyway...

(smiling)

And at least they can stay with family. They'll be well looked after till we're done.

ETHEL

(kisses his cheek)

You always make me feel better. I love you, handsome hero.

INT. A PAWN SHOP -- DAY

THE DOOR opens, and Ellison Brown enters the small shop. A scrawny, rat-faced man behind the counter looks up, appraising Ellison with no expression.

RAT-FACED MAN

So? Ya bring 'em?

ELLISON reaches into his pocket and lays the contents on the counter: two gold medals attached to blue and yellow ribbons. The man picks up a medal, inspecting it closely.

RAT-FACED MAN'S P.O.V -- CLOSE to a medal in his unclean hands: beautiful, gold-crafted with an eagle above two Greek runners, diamond studded and the words "*April 19 American Marathon Boston A.A. First Prize*" engraved.

RAT-FACED MAN (CONT'D)

Okay.

The man opens up his till, extracts some money, places it on the counter and picks up the two medals.

RAT-FACED MAN (CONT'D)

There ya are. One fifty for both of 'em.

Ellison reaches for the medals back.

ELLISON

Hold on. You told me 200 bucks.

RAT-FACE

My buyer lowered his offer.

Ellison hesitates... then lowers his hands to take the money instead, stuffs it in his pocket, turns and shuffles out the door.

EXT. MAIN STREET -- A RHODE ISLAND TOWN -- DAY

ELLISON and A RIVAL are running hard, side by side. A few onlookers lining the street are cheering as they go by. The other runner takes a quick glance over his shoulder.

RIVAL RUNNER

No one close. Looks like it's you or me gonna win this thing.

AHEAD, the finish banner is 200 yards away.

ELLISON

You go ahead. I heard second prize is a nice wrist watch.

RIVAL RUNNER

So? You don't want the winner's trophy?

ELLISON

Naw. Got lotsa trophies. They turn black after awhile. I can get some money for the watch. One time I won a refrigerator but had to sell it 'cause I got no electricity. You go ahead, this one is yours.

The other runner nods, tips an invisible hat to Ellison, then accelerates ahead toward the finish. The thickening crowd lining the course cheers and applauds the decisive move to victory.

EXT. BY A COUNTRY ROAD OUTSIDE CHARLESTOWN -- SUMMER DAY

A small, uncompleted house -- looking patched together out of used materials -- stands on cleared land. A man is on the roof, using an ax to nail down bark shingles. Closer, the man is Ellison Brown, cheerfully whistling a tune -- "The Coffee Song" by Frank Sinatra.

A HAWK flies overhead, its CRY causes Ellison to look up, setting down his ax. He watches the bird disappear over the trees, then he continues to gaze toward the forest...

ETHEL comes out the front door -- looks up toward her husband gazing off into the summer heat.

ETHEL

Are you done pounding? Must be getting hot up there.

ELLISON
Done for now. Time for a run.

ETHEL
Not too hot to run?

ELLISON
(moving to roof edge)
Never too hot. You know me.

ETHEL
(laughing)
I know you. And I love you.

CUT TO:

EXT. A COUNTRY ROAD -- DAY

ELLISON RUNNING. CLOSE IN, as he tosses away his shirt...

CLOSER. Chin up, head leaning slightly to his left... his expression is dreamy... eyes squinting against bright sun...

CLOSER... INTO THE SQUINTING EYES... (IN A CREATIVE DREAMLIKE STATE -- PERHAPS STIMULATED BY ENDORPHINS, A "RUNNER'S HIGH" -- ELLISON'S MIND BEGINS A SORT OF VIRTUAL "MOVIE")...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FINISH-LINE AREA OF BOSTON MARATHON -- DAY

TIPPY has his arm draped over the shoulders of Ellison.

TIPPY
Now, time tuh get some rest -- yuh deserve it. And keep eatin' lots of eggs -- we gotta keep yer strength up. Never know what the future holds, yu'know...
(snorts)
Besides, when yuh do retire from marathon runnin', I got a plan for how yuh can make some real money. Maybe help get yerself that truck.

ELLISON
(turns, all ears)
Huh?

TIPPY
Yuh heard of some guy over in Connecticut named BOBBY CALLAHAN?

ELLISON
You mean THE BEARCAT? Yeah, of course, who hasn't? But nobody calls him "Bobby"... not to his face.

TIPPY

Think yuh could beat him?

ELLISON

In a footrace, of course. In a fight -- are you crazy? He's a monster -- probably outweighs me by 100 pounds.

TIPPY

Well I hear he's takin' challengers. Yuh last six rounds with The Bearcat, yuh make 150, maybe 200 bucks. There's serious money in the fight game, yu'know.

Tippy's hand reaches to massage Ellison's neck.

TIPPY (CONT'D)

I used to train boxers, yu'know. Ain't that different. Yuh need good wind, instincts and skill... Yuh got the first two already.

ELLISON

He's awful big... but I sure could use the money...

CLOSE to Ellison's dreamy expression...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD -- RUNNING ELLISON'S DREAMY EXPRESSION...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE ROOF OF THE UNCOMPLETED BROWN CABIN -- DAY

ELLISON GAZING (same dreamy expression) toward the forest, as A HAWK disappears over the treeline.

ETHEL comes out the front door and looks up toward her husband.

ETHEL

Are you done pounding? Must be getting hot up there.

ELLISON

Done for now. Time for a run.

ETHEL

Not too hot to run?

ELLISON

(moving to roof edge)
Never too hot. You know me.

ETHEL

I know you. And I know you don't like running in the heat. You're training. And I know what for -- Ellison Myers Brown. You're actually going to fight that bear man in New London. You'll get yourself killed.

ELLISON

It's The Bear-cat. And the fight's actually gonna be in Pawcatuck. Tippy's got it all worked out.

ETHEL

(shaking her head)
I bet he has.

ELLISON

(grinning)
Save your betting for the fight. Don't worry, it'll turn out okay. We got a good plan.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD -- RUNNING ELLISON'S DREAMY EXPRESSION...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BESIDE THE UNCOMPLETED BROWN HOUSE - EVENING

Ellison sits with Horatio and Atmore Stanton -- on log stools around a fire pit. They are drinking beer (Atmore soda pop) and laughing as they share stories.

ELLISON

Best one was when my neighbor, Ed, challenged me to a potato-digging contest. We cleared the whole field before I beat him.

(laughs)

He got so mad for losing, he bet me he could split firewood faster than me.

Horatio Stanton, now past 50, holds his thick belly as he laughs.

HORATIO

Big mistake that.

ELLISON

Yeah. He put up a couple face cords before I beat him. Best part was... it was *my* wood we were splittin'. I was all set for the winter.

All three laugh hard at that. Then a pause.

HORATIO

Now Ellison...

(lighting big cigar)

I was talkin' to Tippy about that fella, The Bearcat, you're gonna fight next week. Tip says we gotta help find out his weakness so you stand a chance of lasting six rounds.

ELLISON

Weakness? Tippy never said nothing like that to me. Said I just have to move around real quick, stay out of reach for a few rounds, wear the big guy out. Get my shots in too.

ATMORE

Maybe that's his weakness -- lack of wind. Or maybe he's just slow footed.

HORATIO

No, I think Tip means more like how Goliath had a weak forehead against that kid with the slingshot... Everyone's got a weak spot.

ATMORE

Like that Greek guy -- weak heel.

Ellison reaches for an empty soda bottle.

ELLISON

Like this soda-pop bottle.

In a second, Ellison has bitten the neck off the bottle -- spits it into the fire pit. He holds up two fingers close together...

ELLISON (CONT'D)

The glass is thin with soda bottles... and there's a weak spot right at the base of the neck.

HORATIO

That can't be good for yuh.

ATMORE

Maybe a good shot to the base of The Bearcat's neck. Right below the Adam's apple. *Smack* -- down he goes.

Atmore makes a hard air punch toward Horatio -- who springs to his feet and assumes something awkwardly between a wrestling and martial-arts stance.

HORATIO

C'mon tough guy. I already know *your* weak spot -- your whole body.

More laughter -- fades with the scene.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD -- RUNNING ELLISON'S DREAMY EXPRESSION...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. A TENT ENCOMPASSING A PRIMITIVE BOXING RING --
PAWCATUK, RHODE ISLAND -- EVENING

ELLISON (prizefighter edition) is in one dirt-floor corner of the ring getting last-minute instruction from Tippy. In the opposite corner, THE BEARCAT, large, hairy and menacing, sits on a stool, glaring toward his opponent. The ring is surrounded by makeshift bleachers holding 150 or more NOISY FIGHT FANS.

RINGSIDE ANNOUNCER (INTO MICROPHONE)
GOOD EVENING fight fans and welcome to Pawcatuk. And now, what you have been waiting for, our MAIN EVENT of the evening, a challenge featuring two worthy adversaries...

HORATIO AND ATMORE are ringside, Ellison's corner.

ATMORE
What a monster. He looks twice as big as El.

HORATIO
Bigger they are, harder they fall. Just like Goliath and slingshot kid.

RINGSIDE ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
In one corner, wearing the red shorts, we have the challenger, a 50-to-one underdog, from Charlestown, Rhode Island, weighing in at 149 1/2 pounds -- TARZAN "THE JUNGLE MAN" BROWN!

LOUD CHEERS AND SOME DRUM POUNDING

RINGSIDE ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)
And in the other corner, wearing black, we have the UNDEFEATED CHAMPION from New London, Connecticut, weighing in at... an even 260 pounds... MR ROBERT "THE BEARCAT" CALLAHAN!

THUNDEROUS CHEERING FROM THE WORKED-UP CROWD

RINGSIDE

SCREAMING FAN
KILL THE RED-SKIN -- YAAAAA...

ATMORE

(above the noise)

Even the ring announcer's afraid to call him "Bobby".

RINGSIDE ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

Ladies and gentlemen, the fight will be for six rounds or until a knockout or stoppage at the decision of the referee for tonight's fight, JAKE MUNRO. Okay here we go, let's make it a clean fight, and may the best fighter win!

IN ELLISON'S CORNER

TIPPY

Okay Tarzan, remember everything I told yuh. This guys a palooka, yu'know, just keep movin' and don't do nothin' stupid in the first round.

ELLISON

Just me being here's not stupid?

TIPPY

Don't worry Champ, we'll take this thing round by round. We can do it.

A RINGSIDE BELL IS HAMMERED -- *CLANG!! CLANG!!*

Ellison and The Bearcat come out to the center of the ring and touch gloves. THE BEARCAT'S EYES are raging -- like a Viking berserker warrior -- down on his opponent.

THE BEARCAT

I hate Injuns. I'm gonna kill you.

THE BEARCAT'S P.O.V. -- Ellison's eyes narrow.

ELLISON

Okay, let's go... *Bobby*.

THE BELL AGAIN

ELLISON AND THE BEARCAT are shuffling around the ring, each looking for an opening...

THE CROWD is already expressing its restless nature.

THE BEARCAT, impatient, lunges clumsily toward Ellison, swinging wildly with haymakers, catching only air...

ELLISON deftly counterpunches back, then bounces clear as the big man tries an uppercut.

CUT TO:

RINGSIDE -- HORATIO AND ATMORE

HORATIO

At this rate, The Bearcat'll punch
himself out in no time.

CUT TO:

IN THE RING -- LATER (ROUND FOUR)

ELLISON'S P.O.V. -- A HUGE BOXING MITT EXPLODING into his
face -- BLOOD SPURTS from the impact.

The Bearcat follows with a blow to the midsection, as Ellison
staggers... another shot to the head snaps it back... the
Indian is in big trouble...

Ellison ducks the next punch as he tries to recover, bobbing
and weaving, but like in s l o w m o t i o n.

ELLISON'S P.O.V. -- The out-of-focus Bearcat moving in,
looking for a knockout... AS THE CROWD ROARS FOR THE KILL...

THE BELL -- saves Ellison.

CUT TO:

ELLISON'S CORNER -- MOMENTS LATER

ELLISON'S P.O.V. -- An out-of-focus Tippy.

TIPPY

Okay Champ, yer doin' great. Just
two more rounds, he's gettin' tired.
We can start lookin' for the knockout.

ELLISON'S FACE -- nodding. Bruised, puffy and bloody. One
eye is nearly swollen closed.

THE BELL

RINGSIDE -- HORATIO AND ATMORE

HORATIO

I think it's time -- let's do it,
Atmore.

Atmore reaches into a sack. Extracts THE SNAKE and flings
it into the center of the ring, between the two fighters.

IN THE RING -- THE SNAKE'S P.O.V. as it *hisses*, its attention
aimed up at The Bearcat.

THE BEARCAT

(high pitched)
EEK! -- A Snake. I HATE Snakes!

TO RINGSIDE

HORATIO

Our source was right -- *his weakness*.
I think this is gonna work.

IN THE RING -- BOXING GLOVES reach and scoop up the snake...

ELLISON'S P.O.V. -- as he swiftly *BITES the snake in half*,
tossing the squirming pieces in front of his shocked
opponent... who backpeddles on the smooth clay surface.

RINGSIDE

HORATIO (CONT'D)

Like a gauntlet. Okay, *let's go*,
Now Tarzan's ready tuh rumble!

IN THE RING -- "The Jungle Man" is now stalking his quarry.

THE BEARCAT'S EYES -- unsure... beginning to show fear.

ELLISON JABS with his left then leaps to *rocket* his right
into the big man's forehead.

CLOSE TO A GIANT FOOT -- stepping back... onto slimy snake
guts -- quickly skidding straight back and up...

THE BEARCAT crashes face first -- down *hard* to the floor.

REFEREE JAKE MUNRO hesitates... looks to the ring announcer...

RINGSIDE ANNOUNCER

Nothing in the rules about snakes.

JAKE MUNRO COUNTS OUT THE BEARCAT... AS THE CROWD ROARS...

ELLISON IS MOBBED BY HIS PEOPLE

TIPPY

(hugging Ellison)

YUH DID IT -- CHAMP. Always knew
yuh had the guts tuh be a boxer!

ELLISON

Tippy... uh, me and my face kinda
think maybe we stick to running.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. A COUNTRY ROAD -- DAY

ELLISON RUNNING -- a smile lighting his features -- as he
picks up his pace and begins to fade... into the distance...

DISSOLVE TO:

MONTAGE -- TO "THAT'S LIFE" BY FRANK SINATRA

FOOTNOTES OF THE 50s AND 60s -- SUCH AS:

New York Times headline: *War In Korea Inevitable!*

Tape of Roger Bannister running the *world's first sub-four-minute mile.*

Tape announcing *Hoola-hoop Craze* sweeping America.

New York Times headline: *Russia Puts First Man In Space*

J.F.K. Assassination.

New York Times: *AMERICA FACES WAR AGAIN -- VIETNAM*

Martin Luther King Assassination.

Tape of *Black-gloved 1968 Olympic Protest OF U.S. Racism.*

Tape of *First Lunar Landing.*

Tape of *"Flower Power" and anti-war protests.*

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

INT. A HALL IN WESTERLY -- EVENING

SUPER: NOVEMBER, 1974

PANNING the large room: seated at tables are over 400 people, most Native Indian, young and old. Seated at a long head table are Ellison Brown, now looking a former athlete at 60 years, his wife Ethel and a large family including two sons, two daughters, two sisters, and 13 grandchildren. Elderly Horatio -- with cigar -- is there; his son Atmore at a PODIUM, addressing the assembly. Everyone's dressed up.

ATMORE

Now as you all know, tonight is to honor our hero, Ellison Tarzan Brown, and celebrate his recent induction into the American Indian Hall of Fame in Albuquerque...

Applause interrupts.

ATMORE (CONT'D)

...AND I know you've already heard lots of funny stories -- some even a bit true -- but I've got just one more about one of his *last* victories... or maybe I should say "one of his *most recent* victories", 'cause he ain't done... not yet...

More applause and cheering.

ATMORE (CONT'D)

This one happened just a few years ago when Ellison was already past 50 years old... Sorry El, but I think everyone here knows you're over 60 now, you old fossil! Anyway... Ellison was just comin' in to Peace Dale from Charlestown Pond to sell some shellfish...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. 1969 PEACE DALE MAIN STREET -- DAY

ELLISON, wearing hip-wader boots, is carrying a basket as he walks along the street...

ATMORE (V.O.)

Now, standing right there on the street was this South Kingstown High School track star with his buddies...

(THE VISUAL)

ATMORE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

...this guy had been braggin' that he was faster than Tarzan Brown was in his prime. So now here they are, face to face... so to impress his buddies, the track star issues a challenge to Ellison: a race to downtown Wakefield and back.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. WESTERLY HALL (1974)

ATMORE

Of course, we all know how Tarzan Brown reacts to a challenge...

Applause and cheers.

ATMORE (CONT'D)

...so here's 50-something-year-old El, still wearin' his hip waders, racing off down the road against this young hot-shot whippersnapper...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PEACE-DALE FLASHBACK

The young track star is out in front of Ellison, as they head around the corner and out of town.

ATMORE (V.O.)

So the track star's buddies are waiting there expectin' him to come back in way out in front... when what they see is...

ELLISON coming around the bend back into town, arms pumping -- sprinting hard despite wearing hip waders...

ATMORE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Ellison has got the race wrapped up, so when he sees the jaw-droppin' expressions on the kids watching, what's he do? Well... he turns around and finishes the race runnin' backwards -- all this wearin' *hip waders*.

(VISUAL)

DISSOLVE BACK TO:

INT. WESTERLY HALL

LOUD APPLAUSE AND CHEERING.

ATMORE

Friends and neighbors, I am *thrilled* to have the privilege of asking the newest member of the American Indian Hall of Fame to come up and say a few words... or LOTS of words, whatever he wants... But first I'd like to say, *Thanks El*, for all you've accomplished for yourself and your people... Everyone here loves you -- hope you know that. And for being my best friend for as long as I can remember... *Thank you!* Now Folks, I give you our own Mr Ellison Tarzan Brown, still and always, the *Deerfoot* of the Narragansett!

MORE LOUD APPLAUSE, CHEERING AND TRIBAL DRUMS BEATING

ELLISON BROWN Strides to the podium.

ELLISON

Wow, thanks Atmore...
(wiping his eyes)

You told that story so good it gets me all fired up and makes me want to go run against Johnny Kelley again in the Boston Marathon... *Almost*.

Laughter and applause. Kelley and Les Pawson are beaming from a back table. Ellison's dark eyes search them out.

ELLISON (CONT'D)

Thanks so much for coming, Johnny boy and Les. It means a lot to me having you both here tonight. I feel so good, my heart is *singing* -- no, not *Sinatra*...

He pauses for effect and more laughter.

ELLISON (CONT'D)

It makes me feel very *happy* to see friends I haven't seen in years, an to share some memories of the good old days. It's swell for you to get together and say so many nice things about me. Too bad I got DQ'd outta the Olympics, or maybe I'd be real famous... like Johnny Kelley.

CLOSE to KELLEY'S BLUE EYES, twinkling through tears.

ELLISON (CONT'D)

Anyway, I never saw myself as gettin' old, but I guess you can't stay young forever... though I sure as hell tried... And I know back after I stopped winnin' races, lots of people seemed to think I should've done better in life than I did... maybe I would have if I'd got me that truck I always wanted...

(pauses, dabs an eye)

But all this makes me think maybe there's some things I haven't got around to *sayin'* more than *doin'*... Things that should be said to lots of you... but all I really want to say for now is... *thanks* to all of you for being part of my life -- and making it so much fun...

APPLAUSE AND CHEERING. Ellison holds up his hands.

ELLISON (CONT'D)

BUT... MOST of all, I want to thank my wife. *Ethel*, you were beside me from the beginning... and through some tough times -- you were always there. I know I never said it enough... But -- *I love You!* As much as a man can love anything in this life. I'm such a lucky man to have a whole lifetime of your love.

APPLAUSE, CHEERING AND DRUM BEATING as ETHEL BEAMS through tears of pride and joy.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE WRECK BAR -- WESTERLY -- NIGHT

SUPER: AUGUST 23, 1975.

INT. WRECK BAR

ELLISON BROWN is seated at the bar, a few beer bottles on the counter in front, each side of him are empty stools. The tavern is *busy* -- mostly with American Indian patrons, but two young white men are playing pool against two young Natives. A jukebox is playing "Rhinestone Cowboy" by Glen Campbell (*again* -- it was a popular song that summer).

Out of nowhere, a middle-aged Native man takes a seat beside Ellison, who looks over.

ELLISON

Hey WILLIE, where'd you come from?

WILLIE

Nowhere. Warm night out there.
Just in to wet my whistle. You by
yourself?

ELLISON

Yeah. Just waitin' for a ride home.
Relaxin' for a bit... Thinkin'.

WILLIE

Hmmmm.

VOICES at the pool table are getting louder, more noticeable as the Rhinestone Cowboy rides into the sunset...

A *SHOW*.

Ellison and Willie turn to view the developing altercation.

INDIAN POOL PLAYER

You scratched.

LONG-HAIRED WHITE POOL PLAYER

I didn't fucken scratch!

INDIAN POOL PLAYER

You scratched.

LONG-HAIRED WHITE POOL PLAYER

(heatedly)

Heard you the first time! Fuck off --
I didn't *Fucken* Scratch. Learn The
Fucken Rules!

Willie turns to Ellison.

WILLIE

You think they'll fight?

ELLISON

Doubt it, unless the hippy's stupid.
This place is full of Indians.

WILLIE

Hmmm. Don't have to be stupid, just
drunk.

ELLISON

I know all about that.

WILLIE

(smile)

Yeah... You used to grow ten feet
tall after you had a few.

ELLISON

Still do.

Willie chuckles with Ellison.

The long-haired pool player tosses his cue down and strides
over to join his buddy at a table close to Ellison and Willie.
Glancing over, Long-hair makes eye contact with Ellison.

LONG-HAIRED FORMER POOL PLAYER

What the fuck you lookin' at,
Geronimo?

Ellison says nothing, but his eyes narrow as he stares, stone-
faced, back at the long-haired man. After a few seconds,
the young man's eyes look away, he shakes his head and engages
his buddy in conversation, extra-loud "F" words still his
favorite modifiers. Just then the jukebox starts up -- this
time it's "Please Mr. Please" by Olivia Newton-John.

WILLIE

Those guys are in for trouble if
they stick around here.

ELLISON

Can't stick around much longer.
Place is closing up soon.

WILLIE

I mean if they're smart, they'll
high tail it outta here quick.

ELLISON

Hey, you driving -- can I get a ride?

WILLIE

(shakes head)

No, but I'm sure if you hang around
out front, you won't have any trouble.
Somebody'll give you a lift.

EXT. WRECK BAR -- A LITTLE LATER

A MOB of people loiter outside the front of the pub, spilling into a lane to a side parking lot. Lighting is poor under a single street light.

INT. A WHITE CHEVY VAN PARKED IN THE LOT -- THAT MOMENT

A LONG-HAIRED MAN inside *slams* the driver-side door.

EXT. WRECK BAR -- A MOMENT LATER

THE VAN creeps forward up the lane, is about to turn onto the street, honks its horn once to disperse the crowd...

But instead... THE MOB is surrounding... closing on the van

Loud Banging on the side of the vehicle

The van creeps ahead into the crowd...

LOUDER BANGING

The van's motor *Guns* --

The vehicle suddenly *plows forward* through the mob

Yelling and Swearing -- *Panic!*

The van *zooms* away, headlights penetrating the darkness.

A man is down on the side of the street. People are kneeling beside him... Quiet.

Then...

SOMEONE

*Hey, it's bad! Somebody --
CALL AN AMBULANCE!*

FADE OUT:

SUPER. ON BLACK:

IN RESPECTFUL MEMORY

ELLISON MYERS "TARZAN" BROWN -- DEERFOOT OF THE NARRAGANSETT

BORN SEPTEMBER 22, 1914 -- PASSED AWAY AUGUST 23, 1975

An Olympian and two-time Champion of the B.A.A. Boston Marathon, Ellison twice raced and won two full marathons within 24 hours -- an unprecedented athletic feat.

Ellison was survived by Ethel, two sons, two daughters, and 13 grandchildren.

(MORE)

Friend and rival, Johnny A. Kelley, completed the Boston Marathon a record 58 times. He won twice and finished second an amazing seven times. Kelley lived to be 97, passing away in October 2004.

In 1975, the year of Ellison's passing, the Narragansett Indian Tribe filed a land claim suit against the State of Rhode Island and several landowners for the return of approximately 3200 acres of undeveloped reservation land.

The suit was settled out of court in 1978, with about 1800 acres of land passing to the Narragansett people.

In 1983, the Narragansetts received official reinstatement as a federally recognized and acknowledged Indian Tribe.

Traditional Narragansett culture, passed down from generation to generation, is today as strong as ever among over 2400 tribal members.

And in today's world, Narragansett men and women have careers in every profession; they are doctors, lawyers, teachers, cooks, commercial fishermen, artists, and stonemasons.

In them lives on the pride and spirit of Tarzan Brown.