

# GRIP OF STEEL

## By Jerry Rabushka

Copyright © 2001 by Jerry Rabushka, All rights reserved.

ISBN 1-931000-89-1

**CAUTION:** Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that this Work is subject to a royalty. This Work is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America and all countries with which the United States has reciprocal copyright relations, whether through bilateral or multilateral treaties or otherwise, and including, but not limited to, all countries covered by the Pan-American Copyright Convention, the Universal Copyright Convention and the Berne Convention.

**RIGHTS RESERVED:** All rights to this Work are strictly reserved, including professional and amateur stage performance rights. Also reserved are: motion picture, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio broadcasting, television, video or sound recording, all forms of mechanical or electronic reproduction, such as CD-ROM, CD-I, DVD, information and storage retrieval systems and photocopying, and the rights of translation into non-English languages.

**PERFORMANCE RIGHTS AND ROYALTY PAYMENTS:** All amateur and stock performance rights to this Work are controlled exclusively by Brooklyn Publishers, LLC. No amateur or stock production groups or individuals may perform this play without securing license and royalty arrangements in advance from Brooklyn Publishers, LLC. Questions concerning other rights should be addressed to Brooklyn Publishers, LLC. Royalty fees are subject to change without notice. Professional and stock fees will be set upon application in accordance with your producing circumstances. Any licensing requests and inquiries relating to amateur and stock (professional) performance rights should be addressed to Brooklyn Publishers, LLC.

Royalty of the required amount must be paid, whether the play is presented for charity or profit and whether or not admission is charged.

**AUTHOR CREDIT:** All groups or individuals receiving permission to produce this play must give the author(s) credit in any and all advertisement and publicity relating to the production of this play. The author's billing must appear directly below the title on a separate line where no other written matter appears. The name of the author(s) must be at least 50% as large as the title of the play. No person or entity may receive larger or more prominent credit than that which is given to the author(s).

**PUBLISHER CREDIT:** Whenever this play is produced, all programs, advertisements, flyers or other printed material must include the following notice:

***Produced by special arrangement with Brooklyn Publishers, LLC***

**COPYING:** Any unauthorized copying of this Work or excerpts from this Work is strictly forbidden by law. No part of this Work may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, by any means now known or yet to be invented, including photocopying or scanning, without prior permission from Brooklyn Publishers, LLC.

## GRIP OF STEEL

by  
Jerry Rabushka

**CAST: one male**

They all said I would never amount to much. And it was easy to believe. After all, I hadn't. Well...not by their standards. Probably not by yours either. When you're growing up, folks don't think much of you if you can't throw a ball, or swing a bat, or you don't want to put on a jersey. They call you things because you can't, and other worse things because you don't want to.

So I figured, I've been called enough by kids. But by Dad? My brothers? And my mom, who never said a word, just silently agreed. So I grew up quietly by myself, realizing that I had disappointed everybody.

**(as a family member)** "Your brother got a letter in track." Yeah, well he got an 'F' in geology, that's a letter, too.

**(as a family member)** "Your sister - you can't even throw a ball as good as your sister!"

And I remember one day, I said, "Maybe, but I'm a decent boy, and a decent human being, and I don't think any of you understand that."

Not a very good thing to say, and by the very nature of saying it, they reminded me again – well of course again – that I wasn't – and by whatever standards they had...I never would be.

I got out when I was eighteen, got a math scholarship to college. Oh I did! But it didn't matter. Trig got me out of the house, away from all that, but you never stop thinking that you're a worthless piece of...coal. Not when you've been told as much all these years. And finally, when it didn't matter what anyone else thought, it mattered more. Enough, that I wanted to come back and wave something in their face. Something that said I could succeed, and I didn't care any more if they liked me.

There was this park I'd walk through at college...slowly of course. I was out of shape and letting some kind of Calculus problem work itself out in my head. Yeah, I like working out Calc to have a good time – never knew why that made me such a bad guy. And everyone in the park looks so happy.

They're jogging, walking the dog, the baby, the husband, making out, reading...whatever you could do in between the time it took to go to the bathroom, because it was always closed for plumbing repairs – at least that's what they said. They put up this workout course...only a few guys used it, but there was this one in particular, I guess he was twenty-five.

Not sure.

When you're eighteen, everything over twenty looks older, and a lot more grown up than you are. He jumps up. He's got this overhand grip, and he sets his teeth and takes a breath and starts pulling himself up. It's like an eighteen-wheeler revving up out of a truck stop.

And you could see his fingers in a grip of steel, holding the bar, more like metal clamping on metal, and all his muscles bulging in and

out of his arms, and sweat dripping off his face down to the sand below. Looked like a gear shaft – like a machine used to mine ore off the side of a mountain. It was in a way, the most beautiful thing I'd ever seen. And I knew somehow that I could do the same thing.

***Thank you for reading this free excerpt from GRIP OF STEEL by Jerry Rabushka. For performance rights and/or a complete copy of the script, please contact us at:***

**Brooklyn Publishers, LLC  
P.O. Box 248 • Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52406  
Toll Free: 1-888-473-8521 • Fax (319) 368-8011  
[www.brookpub.com](http://www.brookpub.com)**