

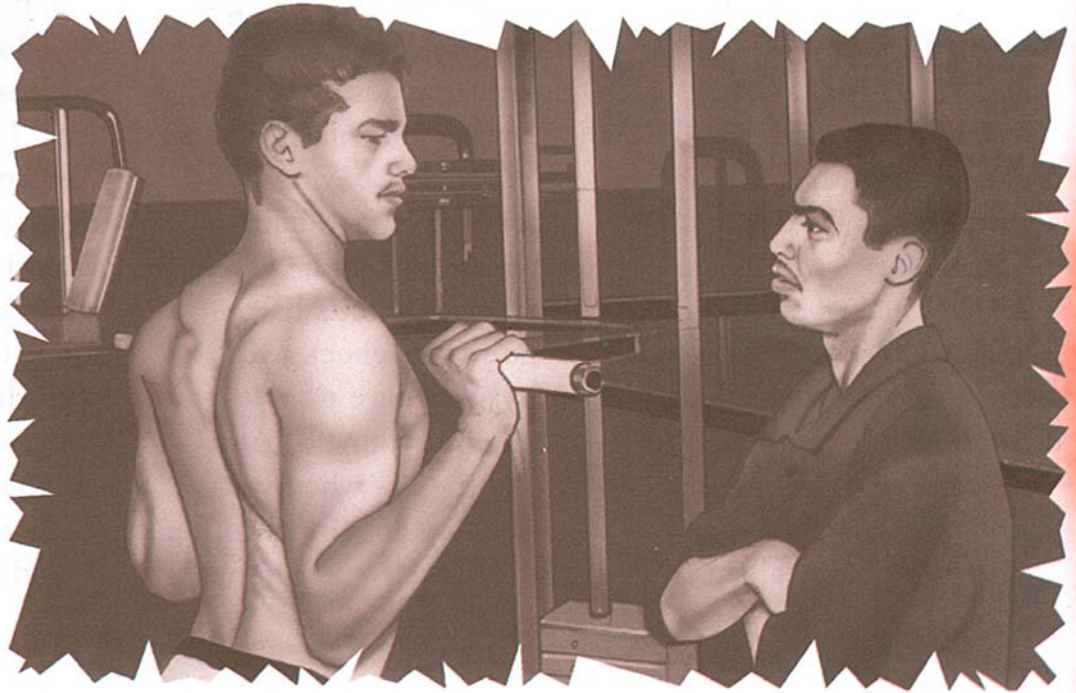
AT THE GYM

It was Thursday night and Manuel was telling his story to the group.

He remembered the first time someone had questioned him about his use of steroids. He had been working out, as usual, when he saw José just standing there, watching him.

“José looked angry. He walked over to me and said, ‘Manuel, how much do you weigh now? You look like you’ve gained forty pounds since Christmas.’ Before I could answer, he said, ‘You’re benching 180! What are you doing to yourself?’”

“What’s it to you?” I asked, grabbing him by the chest and yanking him toward me. “You think I



“SOMETHING’S HAPPENING TO YOU, MAN. SOMETHING I DON’T LIKE.”

want to look like a kid for the rest of my life?”

José wouldn’t let up. “I thought we were friends, Manuel. Now you act like you’re ready to fight me and everyone else. Something’s happening to you, man. Something I don’t like.”

“I finally have girls looking at me. Maybe you’re jealous, José.”

“Roided Out”

José tried again. “Look, buddy, I’m just trying to tell you the truth. Whatever you’re taking is making you look big, but you ain’t ‘big’. No one wants to be around you. I’ve heard people bad-mouthing you including some of those girls you’re trying to impress.”

“I don’t believe you. I can