

"BULL DURHAM"

by

Ron Shelton

In baseball, you don't know nothing.

--Yogi Berra

better

Whoever wants to know the heart and mind of America had
learn baseball.

--Jacques Barzun

You could look it up.

--Casey Stengel

Titles over --

FADE IN:

giant

The

A series of still photos. Black and white. Ancient.
BABE RUTH SWINGS -- An icon of American history. His
upper body balanced delicately on tiny ankles and feet.
huge bat in an elegant follow-through...

DISSOLVE TO:

them

TY COBB ROUNDS THIRD -- The most vicious ballplayer of
all, a balletic whirling dervish.

DISSOLVE TO:

tag.

JACKIE ROBINSON STEALS HOME -- Yogi Berra applies the

Too late.

DISSOLVE TO:

Walking
JOE DIMAGGIO WITH HIS SON in the Yankee clubhouse.
down the runway, Joe in uniform. Number five.

PULLBACK REVEALS:

table
covered with objects and lit candles. A baseball, an
old
baseball card, a broken bat, a rosin bag, a jar of pine
tar --
Isadora
also a peacock feather, a silk shawl, a picture of
it
Duncan. Clearly, the arrangement is -- A SHRINE -- And
glows with the candles like some religious altar.
We hear a woman's voice in a North Carolina accent.

ANNIE (V.O.)

I believe in the Church of Baseball.

(beat)

I've tried all the major religions
and most of the minor ones -- I've
worshipped Buddha, Allah, Brahma,
Vishnu, Shiva, trees, mushrooms, and
Isadora Duncan...

afternoon
PAN AWAY FROM THE SHRINE across the room. Late
light spills into the room, across fine old furniture,
to a
small dressing table. A WOMAN applies make up.
ANNIE SAVOY, mid 30's, touches up her face. Very
pretty,
knowing, outwardly confident. Words flow from her
Southern
lips with ease, but her view of the world crosses
Southern,
National and International borders. She's cosmic.

ANNIE (V.O.)

I know things. For instance --

(beat)

There are 108 beads in a Catholic

rosary. And --

(beat)

There are 108 stitches in a baseball.

(beat)

When I learned that, I gave Jesus a chance.

(beat)

But it just didn't work out between us. The Lord laid too much guilt on me. I prefer metaphysics to theology.

(beat)

You see, there's no guilt in baseball... and it's never boring.

ANNIE OPENS A CLOSET DOOR -- Dozens of shoes hang from the door. She chooses a pair of RED HIGH HEELS, with thin straps. She sits on a bench and

ANNIE

Which makes it like sex.

(beat)

There's never been a ballplayer slept with me who didn't have the best year of his career.

(beat)

Making love is like hitting a baseball -- you just got to relax and concentrate.

ANNIE SLIPS ON THE RED HIGH HEELS -- Smoothing her hands up her calves as she does.

ANNIE

Besides, I'd never sleep with a player hitting under .250 unless he had a lot of R.B.I.'s or was a great glove man up the middle.

(beat)

A woman's got to have standards.

SHE HOLDS OUT HER LEGS DISPLAYING THE HEELS, side by side. Like a little girl showing off her new shoes.

ANNIE

The young players start off full of enthusiasm and energy but they don't realize that come July and August when the weather is hot it's hard to perform at your peak level.

(beat)

The veterans pace themselves better.
They finish stronger. They're great
in September.

(beat)

While I don't believe a woman needs
a man to be fulfilled, I do confess
an interest in finding the ultimate
guy -- he'd have that youthful
exuberance but the veteran's sense
of timing...

official

ANNIE STARTS PACKING A HUGE HANDBAG -- With fruit, an
scorebook, binoculars, a radar gun, and lipstick.

ANNIE

Y'see there's a certain amount of
"life-wisdom" I give these boys.

(beat)

I can expand their minds. Sometimes
when I've got a ballplayer alone
I'll just read Emily Dickinson or
Walt Whitman to him. The guys are so
sweet -- they always stay and listen.

(beat)

Of course a guy will listen to
anything if he thinks it's foreplay.

slightly,

ANNIE TOUCHES PERFUME BEHIND HER EARS and, ever so
in her cleavage.

ANNIE

I make them feel confident. They
make me feel safe. And pretty.

dress

sunglasses.

ANNIE POSES IN FRONT OF THE MIRROR -- She smoothes her
along her hips. And puts on a flashy pair of
Stylish and slightly mad.

ANNIE

What I give them lasts a life-time.
What they give me lasts 142 games.
Sometimes it seems like a bad trade.

(quickly rebounding)

But bad trades are part of baseball --
who can forget Frank Robinson or
Milt Pappas, for God's sake!

(beat)

It's a long season and you got to
trust it.

ANNIE STARTS FOR THE DOOR and grabs her baseball glove

CUT TO:

EXT. ANNIE'S HOUSE -- DUSK

Wolfe
A frame house with porch and lots of trees -- a Thomas
house... with a 1959 faded red Volvo in the driveway.
ANNIE LEAVES ON FOOT, turning onto the sidewalk of a
bucolic,
other
DURHAM
head.
people are heading the same direction ANNIE PULLS A
BULLS BASEBALL CAP from her handbag and pulls it on her

ANNIE

I've tried them all -- I really have --
(beat)
and the only church that truly feeds
the soul -- day in, day out -- is
the Church of Baseball.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE CHURCH -- DURHAM BASEBALL PARK -- DUSK

stadium
Now visible In the late afternoon sun, a rickety old
carved into the center of an old Tobacco town.
People are arriving on foot from all around...
"Rock Around the Clock" by Bill Haley fills the air.
CLOSE ON A BASEBALL CLOWN -- MAX PATKIN, 60, at home
plate
windup
doing his famous Bill Haley routine. A comic pitcher's
full of twists and goofy choreography.

RECORDING OVER P.A.

One o'clock, two o'clock, three
o'clock, rock... Four o'clock, five

o'clock, six o'clock rock...

wiped
next to
ANNIE SITS DOWN IN HER PRIVATE BOX SEAT -- Her chair is
off by a young black boy, JACKSON, 11, who then sits
her. He is her employed errand runner, note sender, and
friend.

girl/women,
A GROUP OF GROUPIES ENTERS THE PARK -- 20 year old
dressed in tight pants, tight everything.

Friendly, eager, innocent -- THEY WAVE TO ANNIE.

special
FIVE PLAYERS' WIVES AND THREE SMALL CHILDREN sit in a
box seat behind a small sign "Players' Wives".

RECORDING OVER P.A.

Seven o'clock, eight o'clock, nine
o'clock rock... we're gonna rock
around the clock tonight

CUT TO:

EXT/INT. THE DURHAM BULL DUGOUT -- NIGHT

and --
short
with
leaguer
As Max Patkin continues his routine, players warm up,
THE MANAGER, JOE RIGGINS, 45, known merely as SKIP,
for "Skipper", a chaw of tobacco in his cheek, stands
his pitching coach, LARRY HOCKETT late 30's, an ex-big
whose body has seen too many cocktail lounges.

pink
neatly
the
LARRY ROLLS SOME RED MAN CHEWING TOBACCO into a slab of
bubble gum, carefully folding the corners, tucking it
together. Larry examines it as they talk -- And shoves
giant chaw into his mouth.

SKIP

Where's Ebby?

LARRY

Ain't he warning up?

SKIP

(cynically)

No. The guy's professional debut and he forgets about it.

LARRY

Better find our bonus baby, eh?

A PLAYER, DEKE, 25, stuffs a hot dog into his mouth.

SKIP

Seen Ebby?

DEKE

(mouthful of food)

Nope.

SKIP WHIRLS AND HEADS UP THE TUNNEL into the:

CUT TO:

INT. THE DURHAM CLUBHOUSE -- NIGHT

SKIP enters, shouting --

SKIP

Ebby?!

ankles,
EBBY
great
confidence,
CLOSE ON A BARE ASS -- Baseball uniform around the
short t-shirt on top, and on top of that the head of
CALVIN LALOOSH, baseball cap on backwards. EBBY is a
looking energetic man-child with the endless
naivete and horniness of youth.

Life is a party.

quickly.
A YOUNG WOMAN, MILLIE, 20, half nude, is dressing

EBBY WHIRLS as Skip enters.

SKIP

Jesus. Game starts in four minutes!

(beat)

Why ain't you warm?!

EBBY

I am warm.

SKIP

I'm fining you a hundred dollars.
Jesus, Ebby, this is your professional
debut tonight -- you know how many
guys out there'd give blood to be in
your shoes an' you're leavin' your
fastball in the locker room for some
piece of ass!

MILLIE LOOKS OUT FROM BEHIND A BAT RACK -- Outraged.

MILLIE

Skip, It's me! I'm not some quote
piece of ass unquote.

SKIP

Oh, Millie, jeez, sorry -- I didn't
recognize ya. Don't take it personal
but if I catch you in here again
you're banned from the ballpark.

MILLIE

You can't ban me from the ballpark
'cause Daddy donated the scoreboard
and if you banned me he might take
the scoreboard away.

SKIP

Whatta we need a scoreboard for? We
haven't scored any runs all year
(tough, to Ebby)
Get your ass out there.

As Skip starts to leave.

EBBY

Hey Boss, I got a question.

SKIP

(stops, exasperated)
What?!

EBBY

You think I need a nickname? I think
I need a nickname. The great ones
have nicknames -- somethin' like Oil
Can or Catfish...

Skip stares at him. He can't believe this guy.

SKIP

Ya got three minutes.

SKIP WHIRLS AND HEADS BACK OUT TO THE FIELD -- And Ebby unperturbed, turns his attention back to Millie.

EBBY

Got time for another quickie?

MILLIE

Jesus, you got a game to pitch!

EBBY

But we got three minutes.

EXT. THE BALLPARK -- MOMENTS LATER -- NIGHT

CUT TO:

MAX PATKIN STILL FLAILING AWAY to "Rock Around the Clock".

RECORDING

When the clock strikes two, three,
and four and the band slows down
we'll yell for more, gonna rock around
the clock tonight.

ANNIE LOOKS THROUGH HER BINOCULARS -- Studying the
players
his
warming up casually on the sidelines as Patkin winds up
act.

P.O.V. A LATIN PLAYER PLAYING PEPPER.

ANNIE

Number twenty-two's thighs are just
great. Who's he?

JACKSON

(reading the program)
Jose Galindo. He hit .314 at Lynchburg
last year.

ANNIE

Three-fourteen? Hmmm... Look't those
thighs, Jackson.

BACK TO MAX PATKIN -- He finishes his routine.

RECORDING OVER P.A.

Gonna rock, gonna rock around the
clock tonight.

INT. PRESS BOX -- NIGHT

CUT TO:

A WOMAN ANNOUNCER, MARYLOU, 30, speaks into the P.A.
mike.

ANNOUNCER

Let's hear it for Max Patkin --

Applause as Patkin takes his bows, leaves the field,
shakes
hands with a the BULL MASCOT LEADING THE APPLAUSE.

ANNOUNCER

"The Greatest Show on Dirt" -- your
own Durham Bulls!

CUT TO:

INT. THE DUGOUT

CLOSE ON ANOTHER PLAYER -- MICKEY MCFEE, 23, black.
Smoking
out his
team,
as --
a cigarette -- always smoking a cigarette. He snuffs
cigarette and RUNS onto the field with the rest of the

EBBY ENTERS THE DUGOUT from the runway. Larry and Skip
encourage their players running onto the field. Ebby is
trying
at
to get the zipper on his fly unstuck. He smiles broadly
Skip and Larry, and grabs his glove.

EBBY

I'm there, Skip, I'm ready.

CUT TO:

INT. THE PRESS BOX

the
is the
they've

THE RADIO ANNOUNCER, TEDDY CULLINANE, 50, leans into
radio mike of a very small local station. Next to him
local SPORTSWRITER, WHITEY SHERRARD, 40. Between them
seen a million minor league players come and go.

WHITEY

Is this guy LaLoosh worth a hundred
grand? I hear he's a quart low?

TEDDY THE RADIO MAN

(covering the mike)

He's left handed. Whattya expect?

(on the air)

The Bulls are off to a slow start
having dropped their first three
games, but hope to turn it around
tonight with the professional debut
of the heralded young left hander,
Ebby Calvin LaLoosh.

(beat)

Stepping in for the Peninsula White
Sox is leadoff hitter Willie Foster

CUT TO:

EXT. THE BALLFIELD -- NIGHT

and
for

ANGLE TO ANNIE'S BOX SEAT -- Millie has joined Annie
Jackson. Clearly, the younger women look up to Annie
wisdom and insight.

ANNIE

-- Millie, you've got to stay out of
the clubhouse. It'll just get
everybody in trouble.

MILLIE

I got lured.

ANNIE

You didn't get "lured". Women never
get lured. They're too strong and
powerful for that. Now say it -- "I
didn't get lured and I will take
responsibility for my actions".

MILLIE

"I didn't get lured and I will take responsibility for my actions".

ANNIE

That's better.
(to Jackson)
Got the radar ready?

JACKSON

Ready.

JACKSON AIMS A RADAR GUN at the plate.

THE PENINSULA WHITE SOX LEADOFF HITTER steps in.

TEDDY THE RADIO MAN (V.O.)

The word on LaLoosh is that the good looking young lefty has a major league fastball but sometimes has problems with his control.

EBBY CALVIN LALOOSH WINDS UP and fires. The pitch sails
over
backstop,
the batter's head, over the catcher's head, over the
and CRASHES INTO THE PRESS BOX.

CUT TO:

INT. THE PRESS BOX

the
THE ANNOUNCER AND SPORTSWRITER CRASH to the floor as
ball smashes into their booth.

CUT TO:

INT. THE DUGOUT

SKIP SPITS TOBACCO, mumbles flatly to Larry.

SKIP

Little high.

LARRY

(shouts to EBBY)
C'mon big 'un, you're okay...

ANNIE'S BOX SEAT -- She turns to Jackson.

JACKSON

Ninety-five miles an hour.

ANNIE

He looks great, just great!

CUT TO:

EXT. THE PITCHER'S MOUND

THE CATCHER TALKS TO EBBY, trying to calm him down.

CATCHER

What the hell was that?! Lighten up a little. Awright?

EBBY

(to catcher)

Hey -- what's your name again -- I'm bad with names --

CATCHER

Ed. You want me to write it on my chest? Jesus ...

EBBY

Sorry. Hey, Ed, I got a question.

CATCHER

What?

EBBY

Who's the beef sitting behind the third base dugout?

CATCHER

(slowly)

That's Annie Savoy. Nice eh? But that's more woman than you ever dreamed of, Rook. She could kick your ass and have you for breakfast.

THE CATCHER RETURNS to the plate.

INT. THE PRESS BOX

CUT TO:

WHITEY AND TEDDY WARILY CLIMB back to their seats.

TEDDY

One ball and no strikes to Willie Foster...

CUT TO:

EBBY'S NEXT PITCH HITS FOSTER in the ribs. He crumples.

CUT TO:

ANNIE'S BOX SEAT -- She's writing a note. She hands it to Jackson.

ANNIE

Take this to Ebb in the dugout between innings.

JACKSON

What's it say?

ANNIE

It says he's not bending his back on his follow-through.

JACKSON RUNS OFF with the note. Annie turns to Millie.

ANNIE

Well let's get down to it, honey -- how was he?

MILLIE

Well, he fucks like he pitches. Sorta all over the place

P.O.V. EBBY LALOOSH FIRES ANOTHER ONE INTO THE STANDS.

AND --

Hit "Rock Around the Clock" --

DISSOLVE

INTO:

QUICK MONTAGE OF EBBY'S FIRST GAME -- Strikeouts and wild pitches. A young, gifted, uncontrollable thrower.

BILL HALEY AND HIS COMETS

When the chimes ring five, six and

seven -- We'll be right in Seventh
Heaven, Gonna rock around the clock
tonight...

EBBY UNLEASHES A WILD ONE -- And decks the Bull Mascot.

EBBY IN THE DUGOUT READS THE NOTE from Annie.

EBBY STRIKES OUT a Peninsula batter.

EBBY UNLEASHES ANOTHER WILD ONE and a batter hits the
dirt.

End "Rock Around the Clock" and --

CUT TO:

INT. THE BULL LOCKER ROOM -- NIGHT

SKIP WALKS THROUGH THE PLAYERS ROOM -- Players are up,
joking irreverently.

JOSE

Hey Lefty, hold 'em to 12 runs every
night, you'll win 20 --

EBBY

(he might be serious)
Had 'em all the way.

A DURHAM PLAYER SITTING HALF DRESSED in front of his
locker.
A PICTURE OF JESUS hangs amidst his gear. The player,
JIMMY,
25, has a Bible and prays softly to himself.

JIMMY

Dear Lord, thank you for being with
us tonight, thank you for protecting
us from injury and --

DEKE WALKS BY, shaking Jimmy irreverently as he prays.

DEKE

Wake up, wake up --

MICKEY (A BLACK) COMPLAINS TO TONY as they undress.

MICKEY

This league is racist, man.

TONY

Every time you go 0 for 4 you think the league is racist -- face it, Mick, you're an equal opportunity "out".

CUT TO:

Larry
charts.

THE MANAGER'S OFFICE -- A tiny cubicle, a desk, phone
joins him with the pitching charts. Skip studies the

SKIP

He walked eighteen?!

LARRY

It's a league record.

SKIP

Struck out eighteen...

LARRY

League record.

(beat)

And he hit the Radio Announcer, a Sportswriter, and the Bull Mascot twice -- also league records --

(beat)

Joe, the guy's got some serious shit.

carrying
players.
a
wherever
about the
baseball

THE DOOR OPENS -- A PLAYER ENTERS, in street clothes,
his suitcases. CRASH DAVIS, 30, older than the other
And different. More than just opinions, he actually has
point of view. A career minor leaguer, hanging on
he can get a job. Unlike Ebby -- Crash knows a lot
world without baseball. Also unlike Ebby -- he loves
desperately.

LARRY

Who're you?

pride,

Crash speaks slowly, with a trace of cynicism and

like an old warrior who knows he's just a hired gun.

CRASH

I am the player to be named later.

Beat. Skip looks out, half dressed, from his cubicle.

SKIP

Crash Davis?

CRASH

The Crash Davis.

(beat, then nonstop)

And you, Larry Hockett, should recognize me 'cause five years ago in the Texas League when you were pitching for El Paso and I was hitting cleanup for Shreveport, you hung a curve on an 0-2 pitch of a 3-2 game in bottom of the 8th and I tattooed it over the Goodyear Tire sign, beat you 4-3 -- and I got a free wheel alignment from Goodyear.

LARRY

(remembering)

Oh yeah. I shoulda throwed a slider. Damn, Crash, how're ya?

SKIP

I'm Joe Riggins. Sit down

CRASH

I'm too old for this shit. Why the hell am I back in "A" ball?

SKIP

'Cause of Ebby Calvin LaLoosh.

(beat)

The Big Club's got a hundred grand in him --

LARRY

He's got a million dollar arm and a five cent head.

SKIP

-- we had the gun on him tonight -- the last five pitches he threw were faster than the first five. 96 miles an hour, 98, 97, 97. 97.

(beat)

He's got the best young arm I've seen in 30 years.

LARRY

But he ain't quite sure which plane he's on, y'know what I mean...

SKIP

You been around, you're smart, you're professional, you know what it takes --
(beat)

We want you to mature the kid.

CRASH

"Mature" ain't a fuckin' verb.

LARRY

You go to college or what?

SKIP

We want you to room with him on the road and stay on his case all year.
(beat)

He can go all the way.

CRASH

And where can I go?

SKIP

You can keep going to the ballpark and keep gettin' paid to do it.
(beat)

Beats hell outta working at Sears.

LARRY

Sears sucks, Crash, I tried it once. Sold Lady Kenmores -- it's nasty, nasty work.

SKIP

Even if it's the Carolina League -- this is a chance to play everyday.

CRASH

(angrily)

You don't want a player, you want a stable pony. My Triple A contract gets bought out so I can hold the Flavor o' the Month's dick in the bus leagues?!

(angrily)

Fuck this fucking game... I fuckin'

quit.

CRASH RISES TO LEAVE -- Picks up his luggage, and turns
to Skip and Larry before exiting. A deep breath

CRASH

Who we play tomorrow?

Beat. They know, they share the inability to quit the
game. They're all clinging to the Church of Baseball.

SKIP

Winston-Salem. Batting practice at
4:30.

CRASH LEAVES and as he does -- Ed (the catcher) enters.

ED

You wanted to see me?

SKIP

Yeah, Ed, shut the door...

He does. Remains standing. He can see it coming.

SKIP

This is the toughest job a manager
has, Ed...

(deep breath)

But the organization has decided to
make a change -- we're releasing you
from your contract...

CLOSE ON ED -- Silent. Motionless. Empty.

CUT TO:

INT. THE LOCKER ROOM --

CRASH PUTS HIS BAG IN A LOCKER as other players return
from the shower. Crash watches as EBBY SOAKS HIS ELBOW IN A
TUB OF ICE WATER as the sports writer, Whitey, interviews
him.

WHITEY

How's it feel to get your first
professional win?

EBBY

It feels "out there". A major rush.
I mean it doesn't just feel "out
there" but it feels out there.

CRASH

Hopeless. Utterly fucking hopeless.

CUT TO:

INT. MAXWELL'S BAR -- LATER THAT NIGHT

Loud country music in the players' hangout and pickup
spot.

It's full of players and lots of young women.

MILLIE SITS DOWN NEXT TO YET ANOTHER PLAYER, TONY, 25 -

-

He's slick, urban, smooth.

MILLIE

Hi, I'm Millie.

TONY

I'm Tony. I play left field.

MILLIE

I know.

ANNIE SITS IN THE CORNER at her own table. Max Patkin,
looking spiffy in a turtle neck sweater and double breasted
blazer, sits down next to her. Old friends.

MAX

Love the game, Annie, love it
(dead serious)

When I die I'm gonna have my ashes
sprinkled around a pitcher's mound
in some ballpark somewhere --

(beat)

-- and I'll have a few ashes saved
for the rosin bag so I'll still be
in the game after I'm gone.

ANNIE

What a sweet idea --

A COCKTAIL WAITRESS DELIVERS another round to them.

ANNIE

We didn't order this, honey...

WAITRESS

(she points)

He did.

He P.O.V. Crash davis sitting alone in the other corner.
waves, and smiles easily.

ANNIE

(to Max)

Who's that?

MAX

Hey -- that's Crash Davis. He's played
in more towns than I have. Helluva
guy -- real different... I actually
saw him read a book without pictures
once

ANNIE

Really? Kinda cute...

greet's ANNIE NODS AT CRASH -- He comes over to her table,
Max as an old friend, and introduces himself.

CRASH

I'm Crash Davis.

ANNIE

Annie Savoy. Wanta dance?

CRASH

I don't dance.

ANNIE

I don't trust a man who don't dance.
It ain't natural.

Several SUDDENLY -- HARD CORE ROCK AND ROLL on the juke box.
couples dance, and out of the pack --

a EBBY DANCES WITH A GROUPIE -- Spinning and whirling,
 uninhibited and infectious. He's suddenly dancing with
different WOMAN, then another, and another...

ANNIE, CRASH AND MAX WATCH the mad performance.

MAX

Who's he dancing with?

ANNIE

All of 'em, I think...

whole
finish.
fun. He

EBBY PUTS ON A ONE MAN SHOW ON THE DANCE FLOOR -- The bar stops to watch him, applauding as he spins to a A quirkier "Saturday Night Fever" show. More naive, climbs off the floor and joins Annie's table.

EBBY

Thanks for the note -- you're right, I wasn't bending my back.

ANNIE

You got a live arm there.

He extends his hand to introduce himself.

EBBY

Ebby Calvin LaLoosh.

ANNIE

You need a nickname.

EBBY

That's what I been telling everybody!
Wanta dance?

CRASH

She's dancing with me.

ANNIE

Crash, I didn't think you --

CRASH

I'll learn. C'mon --

EBBY

Just a minute, pal...

The two men square off quickly. Annie mocks them.

ANNIE

You boys gonna fight over little me?

CRASH RISES, pulling Annie with him. But --

EBBY STANDS to challenge Crash.

EBBY

Step outside, pal.

CRASH

Love to --

ANNIE

Oh don't be such guys --

But Crash and Ebby head outside. She turns to Max --

ANNIE

Hell, Max, wanta dance?

CUT TO:

EXT. THE PARKING LOT -- NIGHT

Tony,
A circle is formed. Everybody gathers. Millie clings to her guy of the moment. Crash and Ebby face off.

CRASH

I don't believe in fighting.

EBBY

Pussy.

CRASH

Take the first shot at me.

EBBY

I ain't hitting a man first.

CRASH

Hit me in the chest with this...

it to
CRASH PULLS A BASEBALL from his jacket pocket, tosses Ebby.

EBBY

I'd kill ya.

CRASH

From what I hear you couldn't hit a bull in the ass with a slingshot

EBBY

Don't try me.

CRASH

Throw it. C'mon, right in the chest.

EBBY

No way.

CRASH

C'mon, Meat. You can't hit me 'cause you're starting to think about it already, you're starting to think how embarrassing it'll be to miss, how all these people would laugh.

(teasing mercilessly)

C'mon, Rook -- show me that million dollar arm 'cause I'm getting a good idea about the five cent head --

away,
EBBY REARS BACK AND FIRES THE BALL -- From ten feet right at Crash's chest. But, alas --

distance.
THE BALL GOES THROUGH A SECOND STORY WINDOW in the distance.
Crash never blinks.

CRASH

Ball four.

EBBY IS ENRAGED -- HE CHARGES CRASH, lunging at him.

EBBY

Who the fuck are you?!

there
CRASH LASHES OUT A SHORT LEFT -- With lightning speed, effortless. And brutal. BANG! Ebby goes down. And stays stunned. He looks up.

CRASH

I'm Crash Davis. Your new catcher. And you just got Lesson Number One -- "Don't think -- it can only hurt the ballclub".

(beat)

Buy ya a drink?

CUT TO:

INT. THE CLUB -- NIGHT

Millie

ANNIE AND MAX DANCE to Billy Eckstein on the juke box.
and Tony are also on the dance floor.

ECKSTEIN

(on juke box)
April in Paris, chestnuts in blossom,
Holiday tables under the tree...

right

EBBY AND CRASH WATCH FROM THE CORNER TABLE -- Ebby's
eye is blackened. He holds a drink on it.

EBBY

We fight, she gets the clown -- how's
that happen?

CRASH

Shut up -- I like this song...
(sings along)
April in Paris, this is a feeling,
No one can ever relieve...

EBBY

She's playing with my mind.

CRASH

It's a damn easy thing to play with.

ANNIE SUDDENLY APPEARS at the table.

ANNIE

Well -- you boys stopped fighting
yet? Are you pals now? Good. I love
a little macho male bonding -- I
think it's sweet even if it's probably
latent homosexuality being "re-
channeled" but I believe in "re-
channeling" so who cares, right?
(beat)
Shall we go to my place?

EBBY

Which one of us?

ANNIE

Oh both of you, of course...

CLOSE ON EBBY -- His eyes full of fear and wonder.

CLOSE ON CRASH -- He smiles.

THE THREE OF THEM LEAVE the bar together.

CUT TO:

INT. ANNIE'S LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

THE SHRINE OF BASEBALL GLOWS -- Annie lights the
candles.

EBBY AND CRASH SIT ON OPPOSITE ENDS OF HER COUCH --
Both men
nervous
minor
look around the room with wonder. Ebbby is clearly more
than Crash, who's been in some strange rooms in his
league career.

ANNIE

These are the ground rules.

(beat)

I hook up with one guy a season -- I
mean it takes me a couple of weeks
to pick the guy -- kinda my own spring
training...

(beat)

And, well, you two are the most
promising prospects of the season so
far.

(beat)

So... I thought we should get to
know each other.

CRASH

Why do you get to choose? Why don't
I get to choose?

ANNIE

Actually none of us on this planet
ever really choose each other. It's
all Quantum Physics and molecular
attraction. There are laws we don't
understand that bring us together
and break us apart.

EBBY

Is somebody gonna go to bed with
somebody or what?

ANNIE

You're a regular nuclear meltdown,
honey -- slow down.

Crash rises to leave, and heads for the door.

CRASH

After 12 years in the minor leagues,
I don't tryout. Besides -- I don't
believe in, Quantum Physics when it
comes to matters of the heart... or
loins.

ANNIE

(challenging him)
What do you believe in?

Crash at the door. Annie's question is slightly
taunting.

He stops, and speaks with both aloofness and passion:

CRASH

I believe in the soul, the cock, the
pussy, the small of a woman's back,
the hanging curve ball, high fiber,
good scotch, long foreplay, show
tunes, and that the novels of Thomas
Pynchon are self-indulgent, overrated
crap.

(beat)

I believe that Lee Harvey Oswald
acted alone, I believe that there
oughtta be a constitutional amendment
outlawing astro-turf and the
designated hitter, I believe in the
"sweet spot", voting every election,
soft core pornography, chocolate
chip cookies, opening your presents
on Christmas morning rather than
Christmas eve, and I believe in long,
slow, deep, soft, wet kisses that
last for 7 days.

ANNIE

(breathless)
Oh my...
(softly)
Don't leave...

CRASH

G'night.

door

Crash heads out into the night. Annie hurries to the-
while Ebby sits on the couch, bewildered.

EBBY

Hey -- what's all this molecule stuff?

ANNIE STANDS IN THE DOORWAY -- Crash is on the porch.

ANNIE

Wait, Crash -- don't go -- all I
want is a date. I'm not gonna fall
in love with you or nothin'.

CRASH

I'm not interested in a woman who's
interested in that boy.

ANNIE

I'm not interested yet.

Ebby appears in the door.

EBBY

Who you calling a "boy"?

CRASH

See ya at the yard, Meat.

stand

Crash walks out into the Durham night. Ebby and Annie
in the doorway. She speaks softly to Ebby.

ANNIE

No ballplayer ever said "no" to a
date with me.

EBBY

Well shit, then, let's fuck.

CUT TO:

INT. ANNIE'S BEDROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Cloches".

ANNIE PUTS ON A RECORD -- Edith Piaf sings "Le Trois

EBBY STARTS UNDESSING across the room.

ANNIE

Wait, honey, slow down -- I want to

watch.

his She sits in a chair. Piaf sings. Ebby practically rips
shirt off, exposing a great upper body.

ANNIE

No, no, no. Put it back on and take
it off slowly.

EBBY

Jesus, what kinda broad are you?

ANNIE

When you know how to make love, you'll
know how to pitch.

(turning to the stereo)

Shh. I love this part.

unbuttons Piaf sings. Annie listens. Ebby re-buttons, then
his shirt. It drops, revealing his back.

ANNIE

Oh my -- what a nice back.

Ebby drops his pants.

ANNIE

No, no, honey... first the shoes and
socks.

EBBY

The socks? It's cold in here.

ANNIE

(sweetly, unthreatening)

You think Dwight Gooden leaves his
socks on?

socks Ebby considers this. Pulls his pants back up. Takes his
off. Then his pants.

ANNIE

Ebby honey have you ever been
handcuffed in bed?

CUT TO:

EXT. DOWNTOWN DURHAM -- NIGHT

alone.
stops in
short
another.

Deserted streets of the old tobacco town. Crash walks
He picks up an old newspaper out of a trash can. He
front of a store window. He rolls the newspaper like a
bat. He takes a batting stance, and --

CRASH TAKES HIS BATTING STANCE in front of the window,
studying his reflection. He taken a "swing". And

A GROUP OF OLD BLACK MEN stand in a doorway, watching.

CUT TO:

INT. ANNIE'S BEDROOM - 'CONTINUOUS NIGHT

his
CLICK -- A handcuff is locked onto Ebby's wrist. Both
arms are outstretched -- he's getting very excited.

EBBY

Awright! I read about stuff like
this. Bring it on!

Annie calmly drags a chair over and sits down.

ANNIE

Sweetie, have you ever heard of Walt
Whitman?

EBBY

Who's he play for?

ANNIE

Well, he sort of pitches for the
Cosmic All-Stars.

EBBY

Never heard of 'em.

softly.
Annie opens a book and begins reading as Piaf sings

ANNIE

Good -- then listen.
(reading)

"I sing the body electric. The armies
of those I love engirth me and I

engirth them -- "

EBBY

We gonna fuck or what?

ANNIE

Shh, shh...

(reading)

"They will not let me off till I go
with them, respond to them, and
discorrupt them and charge them"

DISSOLVE TO:

SAME SCENE -- LATER

ANNIE

"Limitless limpid jets of love hot
and enormous -- quivering jelly of
love, white blow and delirious juice --

CLOSE ON EBBY'S FACE -- Intrigued, aroused, frightened.

CUT TO:

EXT. DOWNTOWN DURHAM -- NIGHT

THE OLD BLACK MAN is tossing wadded up balls of paper
at
up
Crash who takes beautiful, fluid swings with the rolled
newspaper. Batting practice.

intense
CLOSE ON CRASH'S EYES -- Studying the "pitches" with
concentration, endlessly working on his game.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE DURHAM FIELD -- NEXT DAY

as a
the
LARRY, DEKE, MICKEY AND BOBBY ARE SINGING at home plate
pre-game show. Larry is Diana Ross, the other three are
Supremes, and the routine is brilliantly tacky.

LARRY (AND THE SUPREMES)

Baby love, oh oh, baby love, I need

ya oh how I need ya, All ya do is
treat me bad, Take my heart and leave
me sad...

CUT TO:

INT. DURHAM BULLS LOCKER ROOM -- DAY

JIMMY STANDS ON A BENCH trying to get the players'
attention.

JIMMY

Listen up, guys, could I have your
attention a minute?

(a few heads turn)

I'm going to be leading a daily chapel
service at three in the afternoons
here in the locker room and you're
all invited to drop by and worship
before batting practice.

BOBBY

Jimmy, God damn it -- loosen up and
get laid.

BOBBY, 25, smooths the creases of his uniform,
preening.

JIMMY

I don't care If you think I'm square
but I believe what I believe.

All heads turn as:

EBBY ENTERS THE LOCKER ROOM -- He looks trashed.

BOBBY

Jesus, Ebby, what truck ran over
you?

EBBY

(glassy eyed)

Call me "Nuke". Annie said it's my
new nickname.

Lots of teasing from around the clubhouse.

DEKE

Annie nailed you? That's great, means
you're gonna have a helluva year.
Does she fuck as good as they say?

EBBY

We didn't do it, man -- she read poetry to me all night, I swear. It's more tiring than fucking.

sits

EBBY GOES TO HIS LOCKER and starts undressing. Crash next to him, looking straight ahead. Bobby nearby.

EBBY

-- of love"... hey, Crash, does that mean what I think it means? What's the deal here?

Crash studies Ebby.

CRASH

Your shower shoes have fungus on 'em. You'll never get to the Bigs with fungus on your shower shoes.

(beat)

Think classy and you'll be classy. If you win 20 in the Show you can let the fungus grow back on your shower shoes and the press'll think you're colorful.

(beat)

Until you win twenty in the Show, however, it means you're a slob.

silently,

CRASH RISES AND HEADS OUT to the field. Ebby sits holding his shower shoes, taking it all in.

CUT TO:

EXT. DURHAM BALLPARK -- GAME IN PROGRESS -- DAY

players

relaxation and

IN THE DUGOUT -- THE GAME FROM A DUGOUT P.O.V. The sit, stand, stir restlessly. A combination of intensity not visible from the stands.

CRASH IS HANDED HIS BAT and helmet by the bat boy.

DEKE

This guy's bringing some serious smoke out there.

DUGOUT P.O.V. THE WINSTON-SALEM PITCHER throwing hard.

CRASH

He ain't got shit.

bat
the

FOLLOW CRASH INTO THE ON-DECK CIRCLE -- The ritual. The boy hands him the pine tar rag and he rubs pine tar on bat with great care.

CRASH RISES -- Heads to the plate. Talking to himself.

CRASH

You ain't getting that cheese by me, meat.

CRASH TAKES HIS STANCE -- Upright. Calm. Head still.

CRASH (V.O.)

Look for the fastball up. He's gotta come with the cheese. Relax. Relax. Quick bat. Pop the clubhead. Open the hips. Relax. You're thinking too much. Get outta your fuckin' head, Crash.

CLOSE ON CRASH'S FACE -- His eyes intensely focused.

CRASH'S P.O.V. THE PITCHER -- Starts his windup.

CRASH (V.O.)

Get on top of the ball. Quick bat. Don't let him in your kitchen --

THE PITCHER DELIVERS -- Crash strides. Curveball.

Crash swings and misses, offstride. Strike one.

Rubs

CRASH QUICKLY STEPS OUT OF THE BOX and picks up dirt. it on his hands. He's pissed.

CRASH (V.O.)

You stupid fuck, Crash. What're you swinging at a breaking ball for? Why's he starting me off with a hammer? Fuck me.

(more dirt)

You're okay. Stay back. Stay back, you dumb fuck. Wait. Wait.

P.O.V. THE PITCHER'S NEXT DELIVERY -- CURVE BALL AWAY.

down the
the

CRASH STRIDES INTO THE PITCH -- Lashes a line drive
first base line. Just foul.
Crash has started to first. Pulls up. Returns slowly to
plate. Picks up his bat.

CRASH

Throw that shit again, meat. Throw
that weak ass shit.

(beat)

Now he's gotta try to slip the cheese
by me. One and one. You're on top.
Now bring me the gas --

Right

P.O.V. PITCHER'S THIRD DELIVERY -- High and tight.
at Crash's head. The ball seems to accelerate. About to
explode his skull. For a moment -- THE FEAR OF DEATH...

CRASH HITS THE DIRT -- It just misses his head.

CRASH CLIMBS OUT OF THE DIRT -- Brushes himself off.

CRASH

This son of a bitch throws hard.

(beat)

Annie, Annie, Annie -- who is this
Annie?

(catching himself)

Jesus, get outta the box you idiot,
where's your head? Get the broad
outta your head.

CRASH HOLDS UP HIS HAND to the ump.

CRASH

Time out.

UMP

Time out!

for the
it to

CRASH STEPS OUT OF THE BOX -- Motions to the bat boy
pine tar rag. The boy brings it over. Crash re-applies
his bat.

BAT BOY

Get a hit, Crash.

CRASH

Shut up.

CRASH WALKS BACK TO THE BOX -- Talking to himself.

CRASH

Awright, awright. You've seen all his pitches. Two and one. Relax. Wait. Quick bat. You can hit this shit --

CRASH IN THE BATTER'S BOX -- Digs in-again. Takes his stance.
Upright. Relaxed. Ready.

CRASH

Shorten up. Bring the gas... Be quick -- be quick -- yeah, yeah...

CUT TO:

ANNIE AND JACKSON IN THE STANDS -- She's writing a note quickly, and hands it to Jackson, who hurries off.

CUT TO:

CRASH'S P.O.V. THE PITCHER'S NEXT PITCH -- A major league fastball. It explodes to the plate. Crash swings. And misses.
Strike Three.

CRASH WALKS BACK TO THE DUGOUT -- Head high, no show of emotion. Almost proud. An old Warrior, not giving an inch even in defeat.

HE RE-ENTERS THE DUGOUT -- Sits down and starts putting the catcher's gear back on. Deke leans over.

DEKE

Serious heat, eh?

CRASH

He ain't got shit.

to
gear

THE BATBOY TAKES THE NOTE FROM JACKSON -- And hands it
Crash, who refuses to accept it, being busy putting his
on.

BAT BOY

From Annie.

CRASH

Read it.

BAT BOY

Dear Crash. You have a lovely swing
but you're pulling your hips out too
early. I'd be happy to meet you at
the Batting Cage tomorrow to discuss
it. Signed, Annie.

DEKE

Well if there's one chick'd know
when you're pulling your hips out
early, Annie's the one.

the
dugout

Crash doesn't seem too amused. He grabs the note, and
pen hanging from the starting lineup card taped to the
wall. He scrawls a quick note.

CUT TO:

through

ANNIE'S PRIVATE BOX -- She's watching the players
binoculars as Jackson returns with the note.

ANNIE

(looking through the
glasses)

What'd he say?

Jackson looks at the note uneasily, then reads --

JACKSON

It says... "I want to -- make...
love to you. Crash".

ANNIE PUTS DOWN THE GLASSES -- Takes the note.

ANNIE

Oh my...

CUT TO:

EXT. A LOCAL BATTING CAGE DAY

feet
pumps

ANNIE DIGS IN AT THE PLATE -- Bat in hand. Crash a few
away. Annie spits on her hands, wear batting glove,
the bat back and forth.

THE MECHANICAL PITCHING MACHINE DELIVERS -- Kawoosh.

ANNIE SWINGS -- Lashes out a line drive. Crash smiles.

ANNIE

See my hips?

CRASH

Yep.

ANNIE

I think Thomas Pynchon's a genius.

CRASH

When you're hitting you shouldn't
think about anything but hitting.

(beat)

But you shouldn't think about it too
much. The trick is to use your brain
to not use your brain.

ANNIE

But you were pulling your hips last
night.

CRASH

So... Wanta make love?

ANNIE SWINGS AND MISSES the next pitch.

ANNIE

I'm committed to Nuke for the season.
You had your chance the other night.

CRASH

What you see in that guy -- he's
dim, pretty boy. A young, wild...

ANNIE

Young men are uncomplicated.

(Crash mutters)
And he's not "dim". He's just
inexperienced. My job is to give him
"life-wisdom" and help him make it
to the major leagues.

CRASH

That's my job too.

ANNIE SWINGS AND MISSES another pitch.

ANNIE

Damn.

CRASH

You're pulling your hips out.

ANNIE

But they're nice hips.

(beat)

I looked up your records -- You've
hit 227 home runs in the minors.
That's great!

ANNIE FOULS ONE OFF and digs in gamely.

CRASH

Don't tell anybody.

ANNIE

Why not? If you hit twenty homers
this year you'll be the all time
minor league champ! The record's...

CRASH

247 home runs in the minors would be
a dubious honor, if ya think about
it.

ANNIE

Oh no, I think it'd be great! The
Sporting News should know about it.

CRASH

No. Please.

ANNIE SWINGS AND MISSES another one.

ANNIE

Damn.

CRASH

Let me.

The CRASH STEPS IN TO HIT -- He takes his familiar stance.
pitch comes. Crash drills it.

CRASH

Your place or mine?

ANNIE

Despite my love of weird metaphysics
and my rejection of most Judao-
Christian ethics, I am, within the
framework of a baseball season,
monogamous.

CRASH

Fact is you're afraid of meeting a
guy like me 'cause it might be real
so you sabotage it with some bullshit
about commitment to a young boy you
can boss around --

(whack -- a line drive)

Great deal. You get to write self-
indulgent little poems all winter
about how hard it is to find a man
even though you just sent him packing --

(whack -- a line drive)

So what do you really want? You wanta
be a tragic woman figure wallowing
in the bullshit of magic?

(whack -- a line drive)

Or do you want a guy?

The pitching machine arm flaps. Empty. Silence.

ANNIE

Oh Crash... you do make speeches...

Crash puts the bat down, heads out the gate. She
follows.

olds in A LITTLE LEAGUE TEAM ARRIVES -- Twenty-five 10 year
uniform with a couple PARENT COACHES.

LITTLE LEAGUER #1

Hey, are you Crash Davis! Can I have
a autograph?!

Leaguers. CRASH STOPS TO SIGN AUTOGRAPHS amidst 25 Little

CRASH

(as he signs autographs)
Well, Annie, your place or mine?

ANNIE

You got me all confused.

CRASH

A batter has two tenths of a second
to decide whether to swing --

ANNIE

I'm not a real batter. I'm a woman.

LITTLE LEAGUER

Hey, when are you guys gonna start
winning? You're terrible!

ANNIE

It's a long season, boys.

SUDDENLY A VOICE -- Nuke pulls up, gets out of his
Porsche.

NUKE

Hey!
(coming over)
What're you guys doing here --
stealing my girl?

CRASH

Now, Nuke, would I do a thing like
that?
(to the little leaguers)
Hey kids, this is the great Ebby
Calvin "Nuke" LaLoosh.

LITTLE LEAGUERS

It's Nuke, it's Nuke! Can I have
your autograph?! Etc.

NUKE

No prob, kids --

And suddenly Nuke is swept up into a sea of Little
Leaguers.
Crash smiles as he turns Annie and the kids over to
Nuke.

CRASH

See you guys at the ballpark.

Crash leaves Annie with Nuke and 25 Little Leaguers.

CUT TO:

EXT. CRASH GETS INTO HIS CAR -- CONTINUOUS

fading, a
AN AGING SHELBY MUSTANG CONVERTIBLE -- The paint's
couple dings in the body, but loaded under the hood.
CRASH PUNCHES HIS TAPE DECK -- Sam Cooke's "You Send
Me".

ANNIE BITES HER FIST watching Crash leave.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ANNIE'S BEDROOM -- DAY

a
The sounds of lovemaking in a darkened room lit only by
few candles.

ANNIE

Yes, yes, yesnnmmmyes...

(beat)

Oh my...

(several beats)

Oh, that was just fabulous, Crash.

Several beats of silence.

NUKE

Crash?

He flips on a lamp near the bed.

NUKE

You mean Nuke. You said "Crash".

ANNIE

I didn't say "Crash". I said Nuke.

NUKE

You said "Crash".

ANNIE

Honey, don't ever listen to a woman
when she's making love. They'll say

the strangest things.

NUKE

You said "Crash".

ANNIE

Would you rather me be making love to him, using your name, or making love to you, using his name?

Nuke considers this fabulous logic.

NUKE

Yeah maybe you're right.

ANNIE

You see how nice things are when we go slow?

Nuke sighs; and lets his head sink in the pillow.

NUKE

Mmm, hmmm.

(beat)

You shoulda seen how many people came to the airport to see me off. When I got drafted first it was the happiest day of my Father's life.

(beat)

He likes baseball more than I do...

ANNIE

You can learn to like it.

NUKE

I wanted to be the host of Dance Fever, somethin' like that...

ANNIE

Y'know if you make it to the Bigs you could still become the host of Dance Fever. Baseball's a good stepping stone for things like that.

NUKE

God, I never thought of that.

ANNIE

(sweetly)

There is a lot of things you never thought of, sweetie -- now get some rest for tonight's game.

wide
Nuke rests his head on Annie's shoulder. His eyes are
open and full of nervous energy.

CUT TO:

EXT. DURHAM BASEBALL PARK -- DUSK

up in
NUKE ON A PAY PHONE -- In his uniform. Players warming
the background as the ground crew prepares the field.

NUKE

Hello? Dad? This is Ebby.

(beat)

Yeah, I know, I know -- you got the
Durham papers yet? Well I been a
little wild...

(defensively)

These hitters down here are better
than the ones in high school...

(trying to change
subject)

How's Mom? Yeah? Well I am trying
hard... I am bending my back... you're
not coming down' here to visit just
yet, are you?

(beat)

Can I talk to Mom?

CUT TO:

EXT. HOME PLATE -- THE BALLPARK NIGHT

mike in
lined
THE MAYOR OF DURHAM AND THE CITY COUNCIL stand at a
front of home plate. 300 LITTLE LEAGUERS in uniform are
up along the foul line, restrained by a rope.

VOICE OVER P.A.

Ladies and gentlemen, the Mayor of
Durham, the honorable Mutt Clark...

THE MAYOR STEPS to the mike. A classic Southern mayor.

MAYOR

Welcome to the "Atlantic Seaboard
Tobacco Growers City Council Little

League Cash Drop Night"!

As the honorable Mutt Clark drones on -- we INTERCUT:

CUT TO:

EXT. THE BULLPEN -- CONTINUOUS

NUKE IS WARMING UP TO PITCH -- Crash and Larry watch
him closely, giving advice. As Nuke delivers --.

CRASH

Drive off your back leg. You pitch
with your legs as much as your arms --

NUKE

I thought I was --

CRASH

Don't think.

A MANGY DOG EATS FROM A DISH provided by the players. A
couple kids sit with the players.

MILLIE SITS DOWN NEXT TO A PLAYER -- BOBBY, 25.

MILLIE

Hi, I'm Millie.

BOBBY

I'm married.

JOSE FASHIONS A SMALL CROSS OUT OF CHICKEN BONES and
rubs it on his bat. Bobby notices this.

BOBBY

What's that?

JOSE

Chicken bone cross take the curse
off this bat and bring me hits.

BOBBY

You a God damn witch?

JOSE

Yes. A switch hitting witch. Very
common in Puerto Rico.

BOBBY

Will that work for me?

JOSE

If you believe in Voodoo.

BOBBY

I'm 0 for 16! Gimme some of that
shit.

BOBBY HOLDS OUT HIS BAT for Jose to rub with the cross.

JOSE

No, that is not belief. That is
desperation.

BOBBY

C'mon, God damn it, gimme some!

ALL HEADS TURN, A HELICOPTER APPEARS ABOVE THE FIELD

CUT TO:

blowing
BACK TO THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL -- Hair and hats
from the chopper turbulence.

MAYOR

...five, four, three, two, one...
let 'er go! One thousand big ones!

field.
THE HELICOPTER DUMPS HUNDREDS OF DOLLAR BILLS above the

DROPPED --
The night sky fills with fluttering money THE ROPE IS
to
THREE HUNDRED LITTLE LEAGUERS charge across the infield
shoving,
the falling money, scooping it up wildly, brawling,
clawing for the cash.

As the money flutters down...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DURHAM BASEBALL STADIUM -- SHORT TIME LATER

up. CLOSE ON THE ROSIN BAG on the mound. A hand picks it

Puffs of rosin "smoke". Nuke is on the mound.

the NUKE NERVOUSLY WALKS AROUND THE MOUND -- Just before
for his first batter. He picks up the rosin bag. Digs a slot
mask lead foot to land. And CRASH APPROACHES, in full gear,
tipped up on his head.

CRASH

Don't try to strike everybody out.

(beat)

Strikeouts are boring. They're
Fascist. Throw some ground balls,
it's more Democratic.

beginning CRASH TURNS AND HEADS TO THE PLATE and we hear the
of Nuke's interior monologue.

NUKE (V.O.)

What's this guy know, eh? If he's so
great why's he been in the minors
for ten years? And if he's so hot
how come Annie wants me instead of
him.

the CRASH TURNS AROUND HALF WAY TO THE PLATE and returns to
mound, as if he knows everything Nuke's thinking.

CRASH

And listen, meat. You don't know
shit. If you want to get to the Show,
you'll listen to me. She only wants
you 'cause she can boss you around,
got it?

(beat, complete tone
change)

Relax, have a ball out here. This
game's fun, okay? Fun, God damn it.

(beat)

And don't squeeze the ball so tight.
It's an egg. Hold it like an egg.

CRASH SMILES -- And trots back to the plate.

the

NUKE'S P.O.V. The first batter steps in. Crash gives
sign for the pitch.

NUKE

Fun? What's he know about fun?
(beat)
Why's he calling for a curveball? I
wanta bring heat.

CRASH

Shake off the pitch. Throw what you
wanta.

to

NUKE SHAKES OFF THE PITCH -- Here comes Crash back out
the mound before Nuke's thrown a pitch.

CRASH

Why you shaking me off?

NUKE

I wanta throw the heater to announce
my presence with authority.

CRASH

"To announce your fucking presence
with authority"? This guy's a first
ball fastball hitter. He's looking
for heat.

NUKE

But he ain't seen my heat --

CRASH

Awright, meat, give him your heat.

CRASH RETURNS ONE MORE TIME to behind the plate.

the

CRASH CROSSES THE PLATE, past the hitter. He speaks to
opposing leadoff batter.

CRASH

Fastball.

NUKE

Why's he always call me "Meat"? I'm
the guy driving a Porsche.

NUKE WINDS UP AND DELIVERS -- A fastball.

line

THE LEADOFF HITTER TEES OFF on the pitch and sends a shot over the right field fence.

home

CLOSE ON BILLBOARD -- "Hit Cow, Win Steak" sign, The run hits the cow on a target painted on the cow's rump. The COW'S MOUTH OPENS AND MOOS.

the

instantly --

THE BATTER STANDS AND WATCHES the home run, admiring shot, enjoying the moment. CRASH GETS IN HIS FACE and gets very tough.

CRASH

What're you lookin' at?! You're showing up my pitcher, bush -- get your ass in gear!

scared.

THE BATTER TAKES OFF ON A HOME RUN TROT -- Slightly

Mooring

AND CRASH HEADS TO THE MOUND where Nuke watches the Cow and the circling batter with dismay. Crash smiles.

CRASH

Guy hit the shit outta that one, eh?

NUKE

Well, I held it like an egg.

CRASH

An' he scrambled the son of a bitch.
(beat)
Having fun yet?

NUKE

I'm having a blast.
(beat)
God, that sucker teed off on it just like he knew I was gonna throw a fastball.

CRASH

He did know.

NUKE

How?

CRASH

I told him.

CRASH SMILES -- Drops the mask, returns behind the plate.

NUKE SIGHS -- Takes a deep breath.

NUKE

Don't think. Just throw. Don't think.
Just throw.

NUKE'S WINDUP AND DELIVERY -- A fastball. A powerful, clean, overwhelming fastball. Strike one.

NUKE

God, that was beautiful. What'd I do?

NUKE WINDS UP AND DELIVERS HIS NEXT PITCH -- A monster. An Ebby Calvin "Nuke" LaLoosh fastball. Twenty feet wide of the plate.

THE BULL MASCOT DIVES FOR COVER -- The ball hits the bat rack. Bats go flying.

CUT TO:

ANNIE IN HER BOX SEAT -- Jackson with the radar gun.

ANNIE

Oh dear... easy honey...

JACKSON

Ninety-five miles an hour...

CUT TO:

BACK TO NUKE -- Pacing the mound. Looks in for the sign.

NUKE PITCHES AGAIN -- The batter lines a single to left.

NUKE'S P.O.V. THE MANAGER AND PITCHING COACH TALKING

NUKE

Christ, Skip and Larry are talking about me. Don't get anybody warm in the pen yet. I'm okay. I'm having fun.

right. NUKE PITCHES AGAIN -- The batter lines a single to

up. NUKE'S P.O.V. THE BULLPEN -- TWO PITCHERS start warming

NUKE

Don't yank me in the first, man.

talk. NUKE'S P.O.V. -- THE MANAGER comes out to the mound to

NUKE

Aw, shit.

THE MANAGER AND CRASH MEET NUKE on the mound.

SKIP

Relax.

NUKE

Don't pull me, Skip. I'll settle down. I'm okay!

SKIP

(fatherly)
Relax, Nuke, Relax...
(to Crash)
What kinda stuff's he got?

CRASH

I don't know. I haven't caught anything yet.

SKIP

What're you thinking about out here, Nuke?

NUKE

I'm trying not to think.

SKIP

Good. But just 'cause you ain't s'posed to think don't mean you ain't s'posed to use your head.

and SKIP SLAPS NUKE ON THE ASS in a gruff, reassuring way,
returns to the dugout. Leaving Nuke and Crash.

CRASH

Have some fun, God damn it.

CRASH SMILES -- And as he returns to the plate...

CUT TO:

ANNIE WATCHES IN THE STANDS with Jackson and the radar
gun.

ANNIE

Here we go again, Jackson, hold on
tight...

Hit Professor Longhair rock and roll... and:

DISSOLVE TO:

with NUKE DELIVERS -- A batter grounds out weakly.
DURHAM AT BAT -- DUGOUT -- Crash lets Jose rub his bat
a chicken bone cross. Then steps to the plate and --
CRASH HITS A LONG HOME RUN -- And circles the bases.
Runners NUKE DELIVERS -- A line drive nearly undresses him.
circle the bases.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LOCKER ROOM -- NIGHT

joking THE SHOWERS -- Naked bodies in the steamy room. No
around. A team on losing streak.

angrily SUDDENLY SKIP STEPS INTO THE SHOWER in his uniform and
throws an armload of bats into the shower.

SKIP

Anybody not outta the shower in ten
seconds gonna get fined a hundred

bucks. One, two...

and: THE SHOWER EMPTIES in seconds. Players grab a seat,

WHITEY THE SPORTSWRITER ENTERS as he does every night.

SKIP

No press for five minutes, Whitey.

WHITEY

I'm doing a column on the Myth of Sisyphus as manifest in a minor league losing streak, Joe, and I thought...

chair SKIP PICKS UP A CHAIR AND FIRES IT AT WHITEY -- The
crashes into a locker. Whitey hurries out.

SKIP

If I ever need a brain transplant I'll choose a sportswriter 'cause that way I'd be getting a brain that's never been used.

A couple snickers from the players. Skip whirls.

SKIP

What're you laughing at?!

Silence.

The Durham Bulls sit and stand quietly.

SKIP

You guys lollygag the ball around the infield, ya lollygag you're way to first, ya lollygag in an' outta the dugout. You know what that makes ya

(beat)

Lollygaggers. What's our record, Larry?

LARRY

We're eight and sixteen.

SKIP

Eight and sixteen?! How'd we ever win eight?

(beat)

Jose, what's this sign?

hand SKIP FLASHES THROUGH A SEQUENCE of signs. Hand to face,
to belt, hand brushes letters, etc.

JOSE

That's the steal.

SKIP

Wrong. That's the bunt. This is the steal.

hands SKIP FLASHES QUICKLY ANOTHER SEQUENCE -- Hand to face,
to hands. He speaks rapidly -- a private language.

SKIP

Face is "skin to skin". Skin starts with "S". "S" stands for steal if it follows the indicator which is hand to eye 'cause the word "indicator" starts with an "I" so I figure "eye" --

(touches his eye)

-- would remind you of "I" for indicator to indicate that what follows is the sign. I figure wrong -- You're a buncha lollygaggers.

(beat)

This is a simple game.

(beat)

ya throw the ball, ya hit the ball, ya catch the ball.

CLOSE ON FACES OF THE PLAYERS -- Sitting silently.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE BALLPARK SIMULTANEOUS -- NIGHT

have THE SIX PLAYERS' WIVES WAIT in a cluster. Three of them
SMALL CHILDREN. The children are crying.

The long-suffering women try to calm the kids.

BOBBY'S WIFE

Bobby went hitless again. He's gonna be in a terrible mood... terrible. How'd Mickey do?

MICKEY'S WIFE

He got two hits.

BOBBY'S WIFE

Lucky you.

CUT TO:

BACK INSIDE THE LOCKER ROOM -- Skip is winding down.

SKIP

We can't win at home -- how we gonna win on the road? We got a twelve day road trip starting tomorrow.

(beat)

Bus leaves at six in the morning.

SKIP HEADS BACK INSIDE his little office with Larry.

CUT TO:

INSIDE SKIP'S OFFICE -- He and Larry open a couple beers.

THE DOOR OPENS -- BOBBY ENTERS wearing only a towel.

BOBBY

You wanted to see me?

SKIP

Yeah, Bobby, shut the door.

(he does)

This is the toughest job a manager has...

(beat)

But the organization has decided to make a change --

BOBBY

Skip, I know I'm in a slump but I hit the ball hard tonight, right at 'em. A couple flares drop in, and I'm back in the groove!

his
The nearly naked 25 year old man pleads helplessly --
career is over.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE STADIUM -- NIGHT

wives
THE PLAYERS EXIT -- The Groupies wait in a cluster. The
wait in another group. Bobby's wife sees Bobby.

BOBBY'S WIFE

(to child)
There's Daddy! Wave to Daddy!

player
-- P.O.V. BOBBY COMING OUT OF THE CLUBHOUSE -- Another
knows.
has his arm around Bobby, consoling him. The wife

BOBBY'S WIFE

Oh God...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. STADIUM PARKING LOT -- DAWN

Sleepy
THE DURHAM BULLS TEAM BUS is parked. Luggage is loaded.
players arriving, escorted by wives and girlfriends.

of
ANNIE BIDS NUKE GOODBYE -- Off to the side. She pulls
something from her handbag and hands it to Nuke. A pair
WOMEN'S RED PANTIES, with lace and frills.

ANNIE

I want you to wear these on the road
trip when you pitch.

NUKE

What?

ANNIE

They'll fit snugly against your balls
in such a wonderful way that you'll
start seeing things differently --
plus they'll remind you of me which
is better than thinking about those
nasty hitters.

NUKE

Jesus, Annie, I don't know --

ANNIE

You've been pitching out of the wrong

side of your brain. These'll help
move things to the right side.

NUKE

Big League pitchers don't use these.

ANNIE

They did when they were in the
Carolina League.

NUKE STUFFS THE PANTIES in his pocket, bewildered. A
small
kiss from Annie, and he hurries to the bus.

CUT TO:

INT. LOCKER ROOM -- DAWN

PLAYERS THROW THEIR GEAR into their travel bags.

A PAPER BEER CUP IS TAPED TO THE WALL -- With a sign:

"Married men deposit wedding rings here for road
trips".

CLOSE ON THE CUP -- A ring is dropped in, and another,
and...

We begin hearing Annie's VOICE OVER:

ANNIE (V.O.)

A woman should never ask questions
about road trips.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE PARKING LOT -- DAWN

THE TEAM BUS PULLS OUT -- Wives and girlfriends head
back to
their apartments, leaving:

ANNIE WALKING BACK HOME -- Several blocks to her house.

ANNIE

Men don't realize that women always
know when they've been unfaithful.

(beat)

The fact is, upon exact moment of
penetration -- the woman knows.

AS ANNIE WALKS BACK through Durham...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY THROUGH THE SMOKY MOUNTAINS - EARLY MORNING

THE TEAM BUS ROLLS through the North Carolina landscape.

ANNIE

This sort of spiritual awareness can be a mixed blessing, especially if you're dating a ballplayer. I believe a woman oughta take care of her man so thoroughly that he can go on the road for a few days without having the desire to search out another pair of panties

(self-aware)

That is probably, however, my most ridiculous belief.

(sigh)

I just hope the boys start winning soon. In some profound way I fear that a last place team is a reflection on its women...

THE BUS ROLLS through North Carolina.

CUT TO:

INT. THE BUS -- MORNING

SKIP SITS IN THE FRONT of the bus, doing a crossword puzzle.

LARRY READS A BOOK -- "How to Make a Million Dollars in Real Estate with No Money Down".

DEKE TURNS UP HIS TAPE DECK -- George Jones sings "He Stopped Loving Her Today".

MICKEY TURNS UP HIS TAPE DECK across the aisle -- Aretha Franklin sings "R-E-S-P-E-C-T".

and
head

DEKE TURNS HIS VOLUME LOUDER -- Mickey does likewise,
soon we have DUELING TAPE DECKS. C & W going head to
with R & B. A cacophony.

SKIP LEAPS TO HIS FEET, WHIRLS and shouts.

SKIP

I got one word to say to you -- Shut
up!

Silence.

but

And then from the back of the bus, some soft, gentle,
slightly dissonant guitar chords.

Crash,
is
Tenderness".

THE BACK OF THE BUS -- Nuke sits across the aisle from
who's re-reading Thomas Pynchon. Nuke has a guitar and
struggling with some chords to "Try a Little
He butchers the chords and the words.

NUKE

(singing softly)
Oh she may get wooly, women do get
wooly, because of all the stress...

CRASH

(in disgust)
Gimme that.

CRASH STRONGARMS THE GUITAR from Nuke.

CRASH

I hate people who get the words wrong.
It ain't "woolly" it's "weary" and
it nobody's got stress, they're
wearing a dress.

(beat)
Listen.

CRASH WHIPS THROUGH THE FIRST FEW BARS of the song.

CRASH

(sings softly)
Oh she may be weary, Young girls do
get weary, Wearing the same old
dress...

HE SHOVES THE GUITAR back at Nuke.

NUKE

How come you don't like me?

CRASH

'Cause you don't respect yourself, which is your problem, but you don't respect the game -- and that's my problem.

(beat)

You got a gift.

NUKE

What do I got?

CRASH

A gift. When you were a baby the gods reached down and turned your left arm into a thunderbolt.

Nuke looks at his left arm rubs his shoulder curiously.

CRASH

You got a Hall of Fame arm but you're pissing it away.

NUKE

I ain't pissing nothing away -- I got a Porsche already. A 944 with A.C. and a quadraphonic Blaupunkt.

CRASH

You don't need a quadraphonic Blaupunkt -- you need a curve ball.

(beat)

In the Show, everybody can hit the fastball.

NUKE

You been in the Majors?

CRASH

Yep.

gets Tony and Deke overhear this and turn around. And Crash wistful, lyrical, and even slightly hopeful.

CRASH

I was in the Show for 21 days, once.

(beat)

It was the greatest 21 days of my life. You never touch your luggage in the show -- somebody else handles your bags. It's great.

(beat)

The ballparks are like cathedrals, the hotels all have room service, the women have long legs and brains -- it's a smorgasbord.

DEKE

The women are hot, eh?

CRASH

Yeah -- and so are the pitchers. They throw ungodly breaking stuff in the Show -- exploding sliders.

Nuke, Tony, and Deke murmur in awe at Crash's pronouncement.

CRASH

You could be one of those guys -- but you don't give a fuck, Meat.

NUKE

God damn it I'm sick of you calling me "Meat"! You wanta step outside!

CRASH HOPS TO HIS FEET as the bus barrels along, grabbing Nuke by the collar.

CRASH

Yeah, let's go.

Nuke quickly has second thoughts -- Crash can be terrifying.

NUKE

No. Wait a minute. Calm down, Crash...

Nuke sits back down. Calms. Reaches for a baseball sitting nearby. He hands the ball to Crash.

NUKE

Teach me how to throw a breaking ball.

Crash takes the ball gently and speaks softly:

CRASH

As I was saying ya hold it like an egg.

As the bus rolls through the country:

at the A LATE 60'S OLDS CONVERTIBLE ROARS PAST -- Max Patkin wheel. He waves at the team bus and honks.

You The opening bars on the National Anthem -- "Oh Say Can See"

And Max roars off through the rolling green-landscape...

Hit Hank Williams music to play over:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. WINSTON-SALEM BASEBALL STADIUM -- DAY

the MAX PATKIN COACHES THIRD in his comic routine, now, for Winston-Salem team, as Durham is in the field.

A WINSTON-SALEM BATTER lines a double off the wall.

CUT TO:

INT. DURHAM RADIO STATION -- DAY

with a TEDDY THE ANNOUNCER re-creates the game for broadcast several second delay.

phone HIS ASSISTANT (P.A. ANNOUNCER FROM THE BALLPARK) has a paper, to her ear, and writes down each play on a piece of holding it up for Teddy who enhances shamelessly in his ON THE AIR "play by play".

LEFT". CLOSE ON PAPER -- His assistant writes "DOUBLE TO

sound of
cassettes
at

TEDDY HITS A TINY MALLET against a jar. Thunk. The
ball hitting bat. He punches one of several tape
cued up. A crowd roars. An array of special effects is
his fingertips.

TEDDY

(on the air)

...double off the wall by Higgins,
and once again the Durham pitchers
are unable to get the first out of
the inning...

HIS ASSISTANT WRITES ANOTHER NOTE -- "ERROR MCFEE"

Thunk -- The mallet again.

TEDDY

(on the air)

Line drive to center -- a diving
stab by McFee -- ohhhh! Ball gets
by his glove, another run in and the
crowd loves it --

PUNCHES A CASSETTE -- A crowd roars.

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY THROUGH SMOKY MOUNTAINS -- NIGHT

The bus rolls through a small town.

CUT TO:

EXT. CHEAP MOTEL IN GREENSBORO -- DAWN

THE TEAM BUS PULLS IN -- Players stagger off, half
asleep.

TEDDY (O.S.)

(on the air)

Bulls will attempt to end a six game
losing streak against the Greensboro
Astros with Nuke LaLoosh on the
hill...

CUT TO:

INT. GREENSBORO BALLPARK LOCKER ROOM -- DAY

out of
He's

NUKE DRESSES FOR THE GAME -- He pulls the RED PANTIES
his bag. Looks around the clubhouse. Nobody sees them.
embarrassed anyway -- and stuffs them back.

CUT TO:

EXT. GREENSBORO BALLPARK DAY

NUKE WINDS AND DELIVERS -- The batter swings, and:

CUT TO:

INT. RADIO STATION -- DAY

-

TEDDY AND HIS ASSISTANT -- A note is held up, "Single"-

THUNK -- The mallet strikes.

TEDDY

(on the air)

Base hit centerfield off LaLoosh...

note.

HIS ASSISTANT (ON THE PHONE) SCRAWLS another quick

striking

THUNK THUNK THUNK -- A rapid sequence of the mallet
the percussive box, and:

TEDDY

(on the air)

That closes the book on LaLoosh today,
5 earned runs, 5 hits, 5 strikeouts,
5 walks, 5 wild pitches...

CUT TO:

EXT. GREENSBORO BALLPARK -- DAY

showers.

SKIP REMOVES NUKE FROM THE GAME and he heads for the

CUT TO:

INT. ANNIE'S KITCHEN -- DAY

ANNIE SITS WITH MILLIE at the kitchen table, listening to the radio. Annie sighs. Millie consoles her.

CUT TO:

INT. GREENSBORO LOCKER ROOM -- DAY

NUKE IN THE SHOWERS ALONE -- Letting the water run over him.

The voice of Teddy on the air, editorializing shamelessly.

TEDDY

(on the air)

It's time to tell it like it is, sports fans -- and this is the most wretched road trip I've seen in 20 years, and possibly the worst Durham team in half a century.

(beat)

Where are the great Bull players of yesteryear? Where are the Footsie Blakes, the Digger O'Dells, the Gus Palowitzes?

TEDDY'S VOICE PLAYS OVER road trip images:

NUKE STARTS TO PUT ON THE RED PANTIES -- Changes his mind, and hides them again.

THE TEAM BUS rolling across North Carolina.

THE TEAM BUS at a drive through hamburger stand somewhere in the Smoky Mountains. Sack after sack of fast food is passed through the window to Skip.

THE TEAM BUS PULLS INTO YET ANOTHER HOTEL and this time, a Bus with a sign -- "Holiday on Ice" pulls in next to them.

TEDDY

(on the air)

Is the modern athlete a pale imitation of the great old warriors? Only Crash Davis stands out this year, begging the question, "What are these boys thinking about, 'cause it sure ain't baseball".

CUT TO:

NIGHT

EXT/INT. THE BUS IN FRONT OF THE KINGSTON HOTEL --

As the players rise in the bus, Deke is trying to work up excitement about the "Holiday on Ice" bus from which great looking women ice skaters are getting off.

twenty

P.O.V. HOLIDAY ON ICE GIRLS getting off the bus.

TONY

Ice skaters. God. Look't em. that's what we need, y'know -- one night with some skaters and we can get back on track...

DEKE

We need a night off just to stop our losing streak. We need a rainout.

CRASH

I can get us a rainout.

MICKEY

It's 90 degrees, there ain't been a cloud in the sky in weeks.

CRASH

Hundred bucks says I can get us a rainout tomorrow.

TONY

You're on.

CUT TO:

EXT. KINGSTON BASEBALL STADIUM -- NIGHT

leaves,
A CAB PULLS UP in the dark. Late at night. The cab
and the four men climb over the fence.

CUT TO:

EXT. INSIDE THE KINGSTON BALLPARK -- NIGHT

CRASH PULLS THE LID OFF A BOX -- Several valve handles.
Crash turns several handles with an iron bar, and...
THE SPRINKLER SYSTEM COMES TO LIFE -- And suddenly the
field
is covered with the clicking of rain-bird sprinklers,
throwing
long slow arcs of water across the entire field.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE SCOREBOARD OF THE BALLPARK -- MINUTES LATER -- NIGHT

THE FOUR PLAYERS sit on the scoreboard, watching the
sprinklers flood the field. A six-pack is passed
around.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE BALLPARK -- EARLY THE NEXT MORNING

MANAGER
A QUAGMIRE ON THE INFIELD -- The Kingston GENERAL
stands in the muck with his ground crew. Wheelbarrows,
shovels, sand is piled around. It's hopeless.

KINGSTON G.M.

God damn it! Vandals. Damn kids!

GROUND CREW MEMBER

We can't get it ready by game time,
boss.

The General Manager studies the field. Hopeless.

He looks up at the sky. Cloudless, sunny.

KINGSTON G.M.

(to his assistant)

Call the radio and the paper.
(with disgust)
The game's been rained out.

Organ music -- "The Blue Danube Waltz".

CUT TO:

INT. THE KINGSTON CIVIC ARENA -- DAY

beautiful,
leggy women skating to the "Blue Danube Waltz".
TEN OF THE DURHAM BULLS sit in the front row. Nuke,
Deke,
Tommy, others, but not Crash. Tony waves to a skater.
THE SKATER WAVES BACK as she swirls past the Bulls.

CUT TO:

INT. THE KINGSTON HOTEL ROOM -- NIGHT

drying
outfit.
DEKE ICES THE CHAMPAGNE -- In the b.g. Tommy is blow
his hair. Mickey puts the finishing touches on his
Several other players get ready to party.

DEKE

Par--ty! I blew a whole day's meal
money for this champagne seven
dollars, man, it better be good.

MICKEY

For seven bucks it better be some
serious shit.

TOMMY

What time is it, eh? When are they
coming?

The guys lounge around nervously, trying to be casual.

CUT TO:

INT. KINGSTON HOTEL COFFEE SHOP -- NIGHT

CLOSE ON A STEAK DINNER set down in front of Crash.

Nuke hands Crash a hundred dollar bill.

NUKE

This is from Tony for the rainout.
C'mon, man, let's go to the party.

CRASH

Naw...

NUKE

"Naw"? There's ice skaters coming!
You ever made love to an ice skater?

CRASH

By the dozen. Holiday on Ice, Ice
Capades, Ice Follies --
(beat)
I'm through with one night stands.

NUKE

You're through with one night stands?!
What do you want?

CRASH

I just wanta play everyday despite
small nagging injuries -- and go
home to a woman who appreciates how
full of crap I truly am.

Nuke just stares at him.

NUKE

You're weird, man -- I want a ice
skater real bad.

CRASH

Go for it.

NUKE

If I get laid, you won't tell Annie?

CRASH

I won't have to.

NUKE LOOKS AT HIM STRANGELY -- And hurries to the
party.

CUT TO:

INT. THE PARTY ROOM -- NIGHT

and
THE GUYS ARE GROOMING TO EXCESS -- Still blow drying
preening for each other.

A knock at the door.

THEY QUICKLY GET "CASUAL" and lounge seductively.

DEKE

It's them, it's them! Be casual.
(calling out)
Come in!

THE DOOR OPENS -- It's Nuke.

NUKE

Hey, guys, pa--rty!

TOMMY

Shut up and be cool, man. Like Mickey
there...

MICKEY "LOUNGES" WITH A DRINK and a cigaret.

MICKEY

You wanta make it to the Show, Rock,
you gotta learn how to "lounge".

version of
NUKE LEANS ON THE BAR with an elbow, striking his
a "lounging" pose.

NUKE

How's this?

MICKEY

You got it.

A knock at the door.

TOMMY

Entre.

EIGHT ICE SKATERS STAND IN THE DOORWAY -- Ready to...

ICE SKATER #1

Pa--rty!

party...
POP THE CORK ON THE SEVEN DOLLAR CHAMPAGNE -- And

CUT TO:

INT. ANNIE'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Annie's
servicing
THE WIVES AND SOME GIRLFRIENDS WATCH "DYNASTY" on
television. Annie hosts, filling their drink glasses,
popcorn, and largely staying in the background.

MICKEY'S WIFE

Do you think your husband plays around
on the road trips?

DEKE'S WIFE

No way. Well... God... do we have to
talk about that?

MICKEY'S WIFE

I guess not... it's just that once I
asked Mickey if he was faithful to
me on the road trips and he said "in
his heart he was faithful".

(beat)

What the hell does that mean?

DEKE'S WIFE

It means he's unfaithful -- but only
a man would put it in those words.

couch,
A BABY CRIES -- Tommy's Wife lifts a baby from the
begins rocking It.

CUT TO:

INT. THE PLAYERS' HOTEL -- NIGHT

skaters, the
Players are dancing, drinking, hustling the ice
music is up, the party swinging, when:

is
SKIP ENTERS -- He's steaming and slightly drunk. Larry
with him.

SKIP

I just got one word to say to
everybody -- shut up!

THE PLAYERS AND ICE SKATERS freeze in mid-party.

SKIP

Nuke -- get everybody in here. Hundred dollar fine anybody's not here in five.

NUKE HURRIES OUT THE DOOR

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY -- CONTINUOUS

NUKE POUNDS ON DOORS in a hurry.

bed,
-- P.O.V. IN FIRST DOOR -- Jimmy is on his knees at the bare chested, praying with an open Bible.

NUKE

Get your holy ass in Room 401.

He hustles to the next door, and pounds madly.

and
-- P.O.V. IN SECOND DOOR -- TWO NAKED WOMEN with Jose Tony, nearly nude.

NUKE

Hundred dollar fine if you're not in #401 in five.

JOSE

Hundred dollars?!

money
JOSE AND TONY LOOK AT THE TWO WOMEN -- It's a lot of in Class AAA ball.

TONY

Christ. Sorry ladies...

JOSE AND TONY HURRY OUT in their shorts.

NAKED LADY

Go to hell! You're in last place anyway!

door.
AND NUKE HURRIES DOWN THE HALL -- Pounding on each

CUT TO:

INT. COFFEE SHOP -- CONTINUOUS

CRASH EATING ALONE -- Peacefully. Nuke arrives excitedly.

NUKE

Crash! Skip wants everybody in #401 for a team meeting. Hundred buck fine if ya don't show!

CRASH PULLS OUT THE HUNDRED DOLLAR BILL and hands it to him.

CRASH

Party without me.

NUKE

God -- what a Big League move.

NUKE TAKES THE MONEY and hurries back.

CUT TO:

INT. THE PARTY ROOM CONTINUOUS

24 PLAYERS AND 8 ICE SKATERS -- Some of the players Nuke rounded up are partially dressed. Skip spots the women.

SKIP

Who are you?

ICE SKATER #1

We're ice skaters. Can we go now?

SKIP

No. I want you to hear my philosophy. It'll do you some good

(beat)

Here it is. This is a simple game. You throw the ball, you hit the ball, you catch the ball. You got that?!

ICE SKATER #1

(frightened)

Yes.

SKIP

Are you lovely creatures aware that
you are about to compromise yourselves
with a buncha bums who are --

(to Larry)

-- what are we?

LARRY

Eight and twenty-four.

SKIP

Eight and twenty-four! How'd we ever
win 8 games?

LARRY

It's a miracle.

SKIP

Look, guys -- I'm a man, I got needs
too. I understand this party --
but...

(beat)

sex is the one thing you can get
further behind in and catch up faster
than anything I know.

(beat)

There's a baseball lesson in there
somewhere.

(looking around)

Where's Crash?

bill.. NUKE STEPS FORWARD -- Hands Skip the hundred dollar

NUKE

He can't make it. Here's his fine.

SKIP

Aw Christ, he don't have to come.
He's hitting .350.

TOMMY

Don't you think that's a double
standard -- we're here and he ain't?

SKIP

I believe in a double standard for
guys hitting .350.

(beat)

Look, men -- you got a choice. You
wanta be roasting your nuts off for
Midas Muffler welding exhaust pipes

up the assholes of Cadillacs... or --
(beat)

You wanta be sitting in the Caddy
while some other guy's crawling around
in a monkey suit with a blow torch?

(beat)

There's only two places you can be
in life -- in the Caddy or under it.

(nearly pleading)

These are the best years of your
lives. These are the glamor days.

(beat)

It don't got any better than this.

(threatening, tough)

But... if this club don't start
winning soon, there's gonna be changes
made!

CUT TO:

INT. ANNIE'S HOUSE SIMULTANEOUS -- NIGHT

CLOSE ON TELEVISION -- "DYNASTY" drones on.

DEKE'S WIFE

(wistfully)

Deke was a great player in high
school. I thought held go right to
the Major Leagues -- I was gonna be
a Big League wife.

(beat)

Pass the Pampers, please.

CRASH

Helluva guy --

Silence.

Crash flips off the T.V. with the remote.

NUKE

Can I ask you something?

CRASH

What?

NUKE

What would you think of a pitcher
who wore women's panties?

CRASH

If he had a good breaking ball, I'd
respect the shit outta him.

Crash turns off the light.

open.
CLOSE ON NUKE -- A bit of light spill on his face. Eyes
A long ways from sleep.

CUT TO:

EXT. A CAROLINA LEAGUE BALLPARK -- NIGHT

brow.
CLOSE ON NUKE'S FACE -- He takes his cap off, wipes his

He's pitching. Everything in SLO-MO.

FANS IN THE BALLPARK LAUGH at Nuke, mocking his.

EXTREME CLOSE UP ON NUKE'S EYES -- Frightened.

cap
SLOW FULLBACK ON NUKE -- HE'S STARK NAKED save for his
and glove. Everyone else is clothed.

the
NUKE WINDS AND PITCHES in the nude. SLO-MO... and as
batter cranks up to take a vicious swing --

CUT TO:

INT. TEAM BUS -- DAWN

CLOSE ON NUKE'S FACE -- He awakes with a start.

NUKE

No!

CRASH LEANS OVER and shakes him.

CRASH

Wake up, it's okay... you're
dreaming...

head,
CRASH HELPS NUKE back to consciousness. Nuke shakes his
trying to wake up. Crash is almost tender.

NUKE

I was playing naked.

CRASH

I know, I know -- I have that dream
all the time. We're almost home.

The Bus continues across the Carolina landscape.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE STADIUM PARKING LOT -- DAWN

of the
girlfriends.
And Annie.

THE PLAYERS SHUFFLE OFF the bus. Tired and beat.

Annie
and waves. She's waiting next to her old Volvo.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREETS OF DURHAM MOMENTS LATER

ANNIE'S VOLVO PULLS OUT -- She drives.

INT. THE VOLVO -- DAY

Annie is up -- Nuke is down.

NUKE

God I'm tired. What a trip I was
lousy. I was worse than lousy.
Everytime I pitched -- it was like
throwing gasoline on a fire. Kaboom.
I --

ANNIE

What is this "I, I, I" stuff? You
only talk about yourself? Aren't you
glad to see me? Don't I look nice?

NUKE

Sorry. You look great. I'm totally
exhausted.

ANNIE

Good. Total exhaustion can be
spiritually fabulous.

(beat)

Let's play catch.

NUKE

Catch?

CUT TO:

EXT. ANNIE'S BACKYARD -- MORNING

Flowers and birdfeeders everywhere. And, 60 feet away
in complete, oversized catcher's gear --

JACKSON IN A CATCHER'S CROUCH -- Nuke stares, in his
street clothes, but now with a glove and ball.

JACKSON

Hum, babe, hum, babe, fire it in
here, hum babe--

ANNIE

That's not necessary, Jackson --
(beat)

Okay, Nuke, now lean in for the sign.

He does. Jackson flashes some ridiculous signs.

NUKE

This is ridiculous. I'm a pro.

ANNIE

Just do what I say. Now, which nostril
are you breathing through?

NUKE

Which nostril am I breathing through?

Annie puts her hand under his nose.

ANNIE

The right nostril. Good.

NUKE

My right nostril?

ANNIE

There are two important psychic conduits called the "pingala" and the "ida". The pingala starts with the left testicle (or left ovary of the female) and ends at the right nostril.

of She touches his left nut through his pants in a matter
fact manner. He stares back.

ANNIE

The ida originates at the right testicle (or ovary) and terminates at the left nostril.

NUKE

I'm really beat. I need some serious "z's" --

ANNIE

The pingala is the nostril used for throwing a baseball.

(beat)

And if you discover before a game you're in the wrong nostril, it's easy to switch.

NUKE

Switch nostrils?

ANNIE

Right. Okay, fire a couple in there.

NUKE TOSSES AN EASY PITCH to Jackson. Annie's incensed.

ANNIE

You're patronizing me! I will not be patronized --

NUKE

If I throw too hard I'll hurt the kid.

ANNIE

He's handled a lotta pitchers whose records were better than one and six.

winds, and Nuke gets a little steamed. He feels his nostril,
fires a medium speed fastball to Jackson.

NUKE

(a bit angry)
How was that?

ANNIE

A little better.

NUKE

Gimme the God damn ball!

NUKE WINDS UP and fires a pitch to Jackson. Alas --

THE BALL SAILS THROUGH A WINDOW -- Crashing glass.

NUKE

(cynically)
How ya like that?

ANNIE

Much better. Your delivery was fully integrated because you weren't thinking about it 'cause you were pissed off at me.

(beat)

This is progress.

Nuke smiles and gives in. And reaches for her.

NUKE

I give up. Let's go inside, make love, and fall asleep till it's time to go to the ballpark.

She takes his hand and leads him up to the back porch.

ANNIE

Or...

(taking his hand)

...We could just take that sexual energy and save it for a few hours and re-channel it into your pitching tonight.

(shouting)

C'mon, Jackson, I've got some lemonade!

Jackson runs over in full gear to join them.

SITTING ON THE BACK PORCH -- A pitcher of lemonade.

NUKE

I can't keep up with you. First you say sex is gonna make me a better pitcher -- now no sex is gonna do it?!

ANNIE

It's all the same thing.

SUDDENLY NUKE'S FACE IS FILLED WITH ALARM -- He points.

NUKE

What's that?!

-- P.O.V. A CARDBOARD BOX ON A TABLE NEARBY -- Scrawled
in
larged letters on the side are the words "MAX PATKIN".

ANNIE

(matter of factly)

That's Max. His ashes anyway. He left no kin...

Nuke stares, unsettled.

NUKE

God... I think I'm gonna be sick --

ANNIE

Oh don't be silly. Death is nothing to be scared of. It's just another way of living. It's just a fresh start -- kinda like spring training.

Nuke thinks about this carefully. Looks at the ashes,
at
Annie, and at Jackson, in full gear, mask on his head.

NUKE

Death is like spring training?

ANNIE

Yes. And so is birth. Now look me in the eyes, Nuke --

(sweetly accusing him)

You haven't been wearing my panties, have you?

CLOSE ON NUKE -- Utterly bewildered.

CUT TO:

INT. BULLS LOCKER ROOM -- NIGHT

NUKE PULLS HIS JOCKSTRAP ON over the red panties.

Crash notices the panties, and snaps the waistband.

CRASH

Hot. Very hot...

Nuke looks around nervously, continues dressing quickly.

NUKE

Annie says her panties will keep one side of my brain occupied while I'm on the mound, thus keeping my brain slightly off center, which is where it should be for artists and pitchers. She also said I should throw whatever pitches you call for.

CRASH

Annie's a smart lady.

Suddenly Deke spots Nuke's panties.

DEKE

Hey, fruit alert! Check out the Rook.

NUKE
SEVERAL PLAYERS GATHER AROUND -- Wolf whistles aimed at Nuke as the players are dressing into their uniforms.

NUKE

Annie says there's no such thing as straight and gay. We're all sexual creatures to start with, and we get formed into certain roles.

TOMMY

You believe that?

NUKE

When I'm one and six I'll believe anything.

(as they dress)

Annie also says that God is a woman. You believe that, Crash, you think God's a lady?

CRASH

God's definitely a woman -- but she's

no lady.

TOMMY

This is all Commie bullshit.

(beat)

God has a dick, man.

TONY

God damn it, Jimmy, you're an expert --
does God have a dick or a pussy?

JIMMY TURNS FROM HIS CUBICLE to answer the theological
question. Ll heads wait for the answer.

JIMMY

The Lord God is tri-une -- Father,
Son, and Holy Ghost.

TOMMY

Father and Son. Awright!

The guys slap fives, convinced God is a man.

MICKEY

(baiting them)

Yeah, but He is a brother.

TOMMY

Bullshit! God ain't no brother!

Deke turns to Crash, full of despair.

DEKE

If there is a God, why am I hitting
.200?

SUDDENLY SKIP AND LARRY APPEAR to restore order.

SKIP

Shut up! This is a damn noisy
clubhouse for a team that's lost 15
straight.

Silence.

Skip takes off his cap -- instantly sincere.

SKIP

Patkin was a tribute to baseball...

LARRY

...and one helluva guy.

CUT TO:

EXT. DURHAM BALLPARK -- DUSK

A BLACK GOSPEL GROUP at a mike at home plate, singing:

GOSPEL SINGER

(singing)

I come to the garden alone, When the
dew is still on the roses, And the
voice I hear, whispering in my ear,.
The Son of God discloses --

ANNIE SPRINKLES MAX'S ASHES on the pitcher's mound, as:

extra JACKSON SITS IN THE DUGOUT FILLING ROSIN BAGS with the
ashes from a box.

EXTREME CLOSE UP -- A ROSIN BAG MARKED "MAX"

DISSOLVE TO:

EXTREME CLOSE UP -- "MAX" ROSIN BAG on the mound.

EXT. DURHAM BALLPARK -- GAME IN PROGRESS -- NIGHT

A NUKE ON THE MOUND -- PICKS UP the rosin bag, and paces.
for the small crowd. A batter steps in to hit. Nuke looks in
sign.

NUKE

God, these panties feel great. That
don't make me queer, right? Right.
Whoo.

(reads the sign)

Breaking ball.

NUKE WINDS AND DELIVERS -- Breaking ball for a strike.

NUKE

I ain't queer. I know I ain't...

(reads the sign)

Fastball.

NUKE WINDS AND DELIVERS -- Fastball for a strike.

CUT TO:

ANNIE'S BOX SEAT IN THE STANDS -- She charts pitches.

JACKSON

Ninety-three miles an hour.

ANNIE

He looks wonderful, Jackson...

CUT TO:

NUKE ON THE MOUND -- He looks in for the sign.

NUKE

Fastball again? Why's he want the
heat -- I just threw heat. Don't
think, Meat -- give 'em the gas.

NUKE WINDS AND DELIVERS -- An eye-popping fastball. The
batter swings and misses. Strike three.

CUT TO:

IN THE DUGOUT -- SKIP AND LARRY LOOK AT EACH other
warily.

SKIP

Jesus -- what's got into Nuke?

LARRY

I heard he's wearing women's underwear --
and he's breathing through his pingala
nostril.

SKIP

(spitting tobacco)
I'm getting too old for this game.

P.O.V. NUKES FASTBALL SHATTERS A BAT -- THE HITTER
hits a weak roller to third for the second out.

CUT TO:

BACK TO THE MOUND -- Nuke is pumped up. Paces.

NUKE

God, Annie's got a great ass... How
come her panties fit me? That's one
of the mysteries of sex I guess...

swing
run
NUKE WINDS AND DELIVERS A VICIOUS CURVEBALL -- A check
dribbler to first for the third out. And the players
into the dugout.

CUT TO:

INT. THE DUGOUT

Crash,
NUKE PUTS ON HIS WARM UP JACKET and sits down next to
who's taking off his gear, readying to hit.

NUKE

I was great, eh?

CRASH

Your fastball was up and your
curveball was hanging -- in the Show
they woulda ripped you.

NUKE

Can't you let me enjoy the moment?

CRASH

The moment's over.
(rising to get a bat)
If this guy starts me off with a
breaking ball, I'm going downtown --

CRASH SMILES in his disarming way, and grabs a bat.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE ON DECK CIRCLE

studies
Crash kneels, rubbing the bat handle with pine tar. He
the pitcher working the first two hitters.
CRASH RISES and heads to the plate.
CRASH STEPS INTO THE BOX -- Digs in.

CRASH

I dare you to throw me the hammer --
you ain't that stupid...

CRASH'S P.O.V. IN SLOW-MOTION -- The pitcher winds and
delivers. And as the ball leaves the pitcher's hand--

CRASH

Breaking ball -- you fool!

CRASH UNLOADS ON THE PITCH -- Crushing a home run deep
over
the left field wall.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE PRESS BOX

TEDDY THE RADIO ANNOUNCER is wary about these events.

TEDDY THE RADIO MAN

Two-nothing Bulls in the second --
first time the Bulls have been ahead
in weeks, eh Whitey --

(beat)

Let's see if the real Nuke LaLoosh
will show up --

CUT TO:

NUKE FIRES THREE QUICK PITCHES for another strike out.
Curve
ball, fast ball, curve ball. Overpowering.

CUT TO:

ANNIE AND JACKSON in her box seat.

ANNIE

Oh my...

CUT TO:

SKIP AND LARRY IN THE DUGOUT -- Skip looks at Larry as
if to
say "What's happening?" Larry just shrugs.

CUT TO:

BACK TO THE FIELD -- Nuke's next pitch.

ground to

THE NEXT BATTER POPS UP -- Crash circles into foul
make the catch, whipping the ball around the infield.
AND CRASH GOES TO THE MOUND for a visit.

NUKE

Hey, I'm cruisin', man -- what're
you doing out here?!

CRASH

I want you to throw this one at the
bat rack.

NUKE

Why?! I'm finally throwin' the damn
thing where I want to.

CRASH

It'll keep the fear of God in the
hitters. Trust me.

NUKE

You're the boss.

CRASH RETURNS TO THE PLATE -- Flashes a sign.

CUT TO:

THE PRESS BOX Teddy's getting worked up.

TEDDY THE RADIO MAN

-- a staggering start by LaLoosh --
he's thrown 5 cuts on 9 pitches, all
of them strikes -- he's got pin point
control here tonight, Bull fans...
here's the pitch --

CUT TO:

off

NUKE'S NEXT DELIVERY -- A wild ass rocket thirty feet
line. The BULL MASCOT DIVES for cover.

THE BATTER STEPS OUT OF THE BOX nervously, muttering.

BATTER

This guy's crazy.

CRASH

Yep. Next one might be at your head.
Hell if I know where the damn thing's
going...

CLOSE ON NUKE -- Smiles. Winds. Delivers. A change up.

Crash

THE BATTER SWINGS TERRIBLY OFF STRIDE -- Strike three.

whips the ball around the infield.

CUT TO:

SCOREBOARD: DURHAM 11, KINGSTON 0 -- TOP OF THE NINTH

TEDDY THE RADIO MAN

-- top of the ninth, two outs, one
out away from a stunning two hit
shutout for LaLoosh...

CUT TO:

NUKE ON THE MOUND -- Bearing down.

NUKE

Bear down, Meat, don't let up. You
own these guys. Dad'll love a
shutout...

P.O.V. CRASH FLASHES THE SIGN -- Nuke doesn't like it.

NUKE

No, no -- this guy's looking for
heat -- lemme give him the deuce --

NUKE SHAKES OFF THE SIGN Cocky, full of himself.

CUT TO:

ANNIE AND JACKSON in her box seat.

ANNIE

Oh no -- he's shaking off the sign,

Jackson. Big mistake...

JACKSON

He'll learn.

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON CRASH BEHIND THE PLATE

CRASH

This son of a bitch is throwing a two hit shutout and he's shaking me off?!

(to batter and umpire)

Hey Charlie, here comes the deuce.

batter
until
moment it
off
the

NUKE WINDS AND DELIVERS -- A hanging curveball. The batter takes an ungodly cut, and BLASTS a long home. THE BATTER STANDS AT THE PLATE watching the blast... CRASH SHOVES HIM toward first with a sneer. For a moment it looks like there'll be a fight -- but the hitter backs off and takes the home run trot as: NUKE STARES AT THE OUTFIELD WALL as the batter circles the bases. Crash walks to the mound.

NUKE

You told him I was throwing a deuce, right?

CRASH

Yep. He really crushed that dinger, didn't he. Musta gone 450 feet... damn...

new
weak

NUKE HOLDS OUT HIS GLOVE -- Says nothing. Crash puts a ball in the glove. Returns to the plate. NUKE GETS THE SIGN -- Winds. Delivers. Batter hits a one hopper back to the mound. Game's over.

CUT TO:

INT. MAXWELL'S BAR -- LATER -- NIGHT

A raucous celebration of the victory. Booze flows.
And we begin hearing the familiar sounds of Piaf...

CUT TO:

INT. ANNIE'S HOUSE -- LATER -- NIGHT

ANNIE COMES OUT OF THE BATHROOM -- Dressed in a long,
flowing
nightgown, elegant and old fashioned. She looks
fabulous,
PRESENTING HERSELF to Nuke.

ANNIE

I'm yours.

NUKE

Y'know, Annie, I been thinking if it
works for one game, maybe it'll work
for a whole buncha games.

ANNIE

Breathing through your pingala always
works, honey --

NUKE

Not that. I mean the re-channeling
of my sexual energy.
(beat)
Maybe we shouldn't make love for
awhile.

ANNIE

Now don't go overboard, I look
incredibly hot, right?

She strikes a pose. She does look hot.

NUKE

You know what it feels like to throw
a three hitter?
(nervously, with
resolve)
We better not fuck.

ANNIE

Nuke?!

NUKE

Just till I lose.

ANNIE

Get over here.

NUKE

No.

ANNIE

Ebby Calvin "Nuke" LaLoosh --

into She starts toward him -- and Nuke flees. Out the door,
the night. Annie slumps in disbelief.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ANNIE'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

puzzled ANNIE SITS IN BED ALONE -- Lights a cigarette. A
expression -- things have got out of control.

ANNIE (V.O.)

Nuke was so encouraged that he took
a vow to not have sex until they
lost...

and Annie reaches over, opens a drawer in her nightstand,
her pulls out her baseball glove. She cradles it fondly in
lap, puts it on, pounds it gently...

ANNIE (V.O.)

Y'see a ballplayer on a streak
considers himself touched with magic
and he'll do anything to keep from
breaking the spell...

CUT TO:

INT. DURHAM BULL LOCKER ROOM -- DAY

NUKE NEATLY UNFOLDS THE RED PANTIES in his locker.

ANNIE (V.O.)

In fact the whole team started making

religious connections and everybody
got hot.

JOSE BLESSES THE BATS with a chicken bone cross.

JIMMY READS THE BIBLE and prays alone in the corner.

CUT TO:

EXT. DURHAM BASEBALL FIELD -- DAY

PLAYERS TAKING GROUND BALLS and batting practice.

ANNIE (V.O.)

I figured Nuke would win a couple,
then lose, and things would get back
to normal...

PLAYERS PLAYING "FLIP" PEPPER like kids.

ANNIE (V.O.)

But it didn't happen like that...
and for one extraordinary June and
July, the Durham Bulls, for whatever
perverse reason, began playing
baseball with joy and verve and poetry --

NUKE WARMING UP in the bullpen, listening to Crash.

ANNIE (V.O.)

The two sides of my own brain were
all jumbled up and cross-wired...
while one side was being neglected,
the other was in paradise watching
our Bulls play like Big Leaguers...

MICKEY RIPS A TRIPLE UP THE ALLEY -- Slides into third.

DEKE AND TOMMY TURN A SPECTACULAR DOUBLE PLAY

ANNIE (V.O.)

We swept a four game series with
Kingston, back to back doubleheaders
with Winston-Salem, and kicked the
holy shit out of Greensboro in a
three game series...

SEVERAL PLAYERS SIGNING AUTOGRAPHS at a local mall. A

line

of kids to meet them. A banner -- MEET YOUR BULLS!

ANNIE (V.O.)

They were in demand all over town --
and Crash, who kept hitting dingers,
was approaching the minor league
record... though I told nobody.

CRASH BLASTS ANOTHER HOME RUN -- Another win.

dressed as
JULY 4 PROMOTION -- LARRY, DEKE, TOMMY, AND JOSE
the "Spirit of 176 Drum and Fife Corps" at home plate,
surrounded by a Boy Scout Troop.

ANNIE (V.O.)

After sweeping a July 4 doubleheader,
the Durham Bulls were tied for first.

players
THE WIVES, THE GROUPIES, AND MILLIE WAIT for the
outside the clubhouse following a game.

empties.
ANNIE SITS ALONE IN HER BOX SEAT as the stadium

ANNIE (V.O.)

But beautiful as the winning streak
was, I was getting damn lonely.

(beat)

Something had to be done. I needed a
man...

CUT TO:

EXT. THE TEAM BUS ON THE ROAD BACK --DAY

The sounds of Diana Ross and the Supremes.

INT. THE BUS -- DAY

"Stop
LARRY, DEKE, TOMMY AND MICKEY as the Supremes, singing
in the Name of Love" at the front of the bus.

NUKE

I love winning, Crash, you hear me?
I love it. Teach me everything.

CRASH

It's time you started working on
your interviews.

NUKE

What do I gotta do?

CRASH

Learn your clichés. Study them. Know them. They're your friends.

Crash hands Nuke a small pad and pen.

CRASH

Write this down.

(beat)

"We gotta play 'em one day at a time."

NUKE

Boring.

CRASH

Of course. That's the point.

(beat)

"I'm just happy to be here and hope I can help the ballclub."

NUKE

Jesus.

CRASH

Write, write -- "I just wanta give
It my best shot and, Good Lord
willing, things'll work out."

NUKE STARTS WRITING them down.

NUKE

"...Good Lord willing, things'll
work out."

CRASH

Yep. So how's Annie?

Nuke looks up from his clichés, startled.

NUKE

She's getting steamed 'cause I'm
still re-channeling my sexual energy --
maybe I should cave in and sleep
with her once just to calm her down.
What'ya think?

CRASH

You outta your mind? If you give in
now you might start losing.

(beat)

Never fuck with a winning streak.

Nuke nods seriously, listening to the master.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE STADIUM PARKING LOT -- DAY

THE BUS PULLS IN -- Wives and girlfriends are waiting.

The players get off, greet their women.

ANNIE GREET'S NUKE -- They head for her Volvo..

JIMMY STARTS ACROSS THE LOT on foot, dragging his
luggage,
when Millie pulls up in her car.

MILLIE

Hi, Jimmy. Want a ride?

JIMMY

(nervously)

Have you accepted Jesus Christ as
your personal savior?

MILLIE

No.

JIMMY

Can I give you my testimony?

MILLIE

You can do anything you want.

(a tiny grin)

Hop in.

JIMMY NERVOUSLY GETS IN WITH MILLIE They roar away.

CUT TO:

INT. ANNIE'S KITCHEN -- DAY

NUKE SITS AT THE TABLE -- He's just finished eating.

Annie circles him. A pot of soup on the stove.

ANNIE

I'm so proud of you and all the guys.

Want some more soup?

NUKE

No, no, it was great.

ANNIE

How 'bout a back rub?

NUKE

No, that's okay. All I need's a little nap.

ANNIE

I'll tuck you in.

NUKE

(nervously)

You can't seduce me.

ANNIE

I'm not gonna try to seduce you, sweetie...

ANNIE STRETCHES OUT HER LEG and lays it an the table.

NUKE

What's that?

snaps

She pulls back her skirt slightly, exposing her garter attached to her stockings.

ANNIE

That's my leg.

NUKE

I know what it is.

ANNIE

I figure we could work on some fundamentals even if we don't make love.

She strokes her leg. Nuke stares fearfully.

NUKE

Fundamentals?

ANNIE

Sure.

(beat)

Unsnap my stockings.

stops.
Nuke squirms, then reaches for her garter snaps. And

NUKE

Crash once called a woman's, uh --
pussy -- y'know how the hair kinda
makes a "V" shape? --

ANNIE

Yes I do...

NUKE

Well -- he calls it the Bermuda
Triangle. He said a man can get lost
in there and never be heard from
again.

ANNIE

What a nasty thing to say.

NUKE

He didn't mean it nasty. He said
that gettin' lost and disappearing
from the face of the earth was
sometimes a good thing to do --
especially like that.

ANNIE

Oh...

(beat)

Crash is a very smart man. Now c'mon,
honey, give it a try.

fumbles,
NUKE REACHES FOR THE GARTER SNAPS with two hands. He
groping awkwardly. Annie stops him gently.

ANNIE

Watch... one hand --

flick,
WITH A SINGLE HAND ANNIE FLICKS each snap. Flick,
flick. Magic. The snaps open effortlessly.

NUKE

oh.

ANNIE RE-SNAPS THEM QUICKLY, offering her leg to Nuke.

ANNIE

Now you try.

NUKE TRIES AGAIN -- One handed. Awkwardly again, but --

ANNIE

(sighing sexually)

Mmmmmmm... oh yes...

nervously,
BUT NUKE LEAPS TO HIS FEET -- Reacting vigorously,
desperately. The soup crashes on the floor.

NUKE

No! You're playing with my mind!

ANNIE

I'm trying to play with your body!

NUKE

I knew it -- you're seducing me!

ANNIE

Of course I'm seducing you for
Godsakes, and I'm doing a damn poor
job of it --

(beat)

Aren't I pretty?

NUKE

I think you're real cute.

ANNIE

Cute?! I hate cute! Baby ducks are
cute! I wanta be exotic and
mysterious!

NUKE

You're exotic and mysterious and
cute -- that's why I better leave.

Nuke starts to leave.

ANNIE

Nuke! You got things all wrong!
There's no relation between sex and
baseball. Ask Crash.

NUKE

I did.

ANNIE

What'd he say?

NUKE

He said if I gave in to you I'd start losing again.

ANNIE

He did?

NUKE

I'll be back when we lose.

NUKE HURRIES OUT THE DOOR -- Annie just stares.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE DOWNTOWNER MOTEL -- DURHAM -- DAY

A run of the mill cheap modern motel.

INT. CRASH'S ROOM AT THE MOTEL -- DAY

CRASH WORKS ON HIS SWING in front of a mirror.

A knock at the door.

CRASH

Come in.

ANNIE ENTERS the room. Crash stays with his stance.

ANNIE

Crash... I want you.

CRASH

Nuke won't go to bed with you, eh?

ANNIE

He's confused --

CRASH

Aren't we all?

ANNIE

Don't you think I'm pretty?

he
begins
Crash puts down the bat, and looks directly at her. As
does he picks up two spring loaded hand exercisers and
pumping them an he talks.

CRASH

You're gorgeous, God damn it! From the moment I first saw you I knew I had to have you. I had to have you!

ANNIE

I want to be had.

CRASH

I think of you and the "boy" all the time.

ANNIE

He won't make love to me anymore.

CRASH

And he's right! A ballplayer on a streak has to respect the streak. They don't happen very often.

(beat)

You know how hard this game is? If you believe you're playing well because you're getting laid or because you're not getting laid or because you wore red silk panties -- then you are!

(beat)

And I still think Thomas Pynchon is full of shit.

ANNIE

I want you desperately!

Crash can hardly keep up. So he slows her down --

CRASH

Who are you? Do you have a job?

ANNIE

I teach part time at the Junior College. What if I told you I was through with Nuke? He learned his lessons quickly and left me.

CRASH

And now you wanta teach me?

ANNIE

I don't imagine there's much I could teach you.

CRASH

I doubt that.

ANNIE

Crash, I get wet just thinking about you.

CRASH

I thought you wanted an "uncomplicated" boy?

ANNIE

I'm ready for a complicated man.

CRASH

-- and as soon as we lose a game, he'll be back in your arms.

ANNIE

I said when I think about you, I get wet.

CRASH

Annie, I think you should leave.

self-
Annie launches into a tirade without orchestration or awareness. She's frustrated, confused, angry and...

ANNIE

God damn you -- what is happening?
Is there no man who'll have me?

(beat)

This is the weirdest season I ever saw -- the Durham Bulls can't lose and I can't get laid!

CRASH

(softly)

You okay?

flow.
Annie slides against the wall down to the floor. Tears
Her makeup runs. Her eyes are red.

ANNIE

(shakily)

I need a drink.

Crash gingerly helps her to her feet.

CUT TO:

INT. MAXWELL'S BAR -- DAY

ANNIE AND CRASH SIT IN THE CORNER of the empty bar.

CRASH

Why baseball?

ANNIE

(sighs)

I was raised in a Baptist church got dipped in the water when I was 5 -- born again before kindergarten... by the time I was 10 I knew it was bullshit and at 15 I ran away from home...

SHE SMILES at the most painful memories.

ANNIE

pregnant, had an abortion, got pregnant again, had an abortion again... gave up men. Tried women. Missed men. My mother died.

(beat)

I bought a car for \$200 and drove to Ft. Lauderdale to bury her.

(beat)

And after we'd sung some hymns in some wretched Florida funeral home, I went outside and something happened --

Her tone becomes wistful, nostalgic.

ANNIE

The smell of cut grass in the warm March air overwhelmed me and I heard a noise --

(makes the sound)

-- tok, tok, tok -- and some men shouting... then tok, tok, tok.

Crash smiles slightly. He knows.

ANNIE

I crossed the street -- it was the New York Yankees spring training field -- tok, tok, tok, was the sound of a ball hitting a bat -- and I sat in the warm bleachers to think about my mother...

(beat)

And I saw him.

CRASH

Who?

ANNIE

Thurman Munson.

(beat)

He was covered with dirt and he was fighting with everybody -- it was beautiful...

(beat)

And he called the ump a cocksucker and got thrown out of the game even though it was an exhibition!

(beat)

So I stayed in the bleachers all spring and gradually came to understand what's so great about baseball.

CRASH

What's so great about baseball?

ANNIE

If you know where home plate is, then you know where 1st base is, and 2nd, and everything else -- 'cause they're always in the same place in relation to home.

(beat)

Don't you see? If you know where home plate is, then you know where everything else in the universe is!

Silence.

CRASH

I don't know if I'd go that far.

ANNIE

It's true, It's true!

(beat, down)

Least it used to be true. It ain't possible that baseball's not enough anymore, is it, Crash?

CRASH

It's possible.

ANNIE

No.

CRASH

Are you gonna be waking up next to
20 year old ballplayers when you're
60?

ANNIE

Well... I used to think that wasn't
the worst thing in the world to look
forward to. Lately I'm not so sure.

CRASH

Why not?

ANNIE

(angrily)

Whatta you mean "why not"? Are you
gonna play forever?!

Before Crash can answer --

SUDDENLY A VOICE interrupts. They both turn to see:

MILLIE EXCITEDLY DRAGGING JIMMY into the nearly empty
bar.

She leads him by the hand.

MILLIE

Annie, Annie! There she is -- we've
been looking all over for ya. Hi
Crash.

MILLIE LEADS JIMMY right up to their table. And as they
hold hands. Jimmy stands there shyly.

MILLIE

Well tell 'em, honey.

JIMMY

(nervously)

We're getting married.

MILLIE STICKS OUT HER LEFT HAND Displays a huge ring.

ANNIE

Omigawd, honey, I'm so happy for
you.

MILLIE

He's a virgin.

Jimmy squirms defensively.

JIMMY

Well, yeah...

(to Annie and Crash)

I guess that probably seems pretty corny to people like you.

ANNIE

Oh Jimmy, honey, I think it sounds wonderful!

MILLIE

Annie, will you be the bride's maid?

CUT TO:

EXT. DURHAM STADIUM -- LATER -- NIGHT

GAME IN PROGRESS -- Nuke on the mound.

NUKE WINDS AND DELIVERS -- Very high. Ball three.

CUT TO:

INSIDE THE DUGOUT -- Skip and Larry spitting tobacco.

SKIP

Nuke's overthrowing tonight, he don't look loose. Anything bothering him?

LARRY

He said his chakras were jammed and he was breathing out of the wrong nostril.

SKIP

(spitting tobacco)

Okay...

CUT TO:

BACK TO THE MOUND

NUKE WINDS AND DELIVERS AGAIN -- Very high. Ball four.

CRASH IS QUICKLY to the mound.

CRASH

What's wrong?

NUKE

I'm nervous -- my old man's here.

NUKE MOTIONS -- They both look.

-- P.O.V. NUKE'S FATHER SITTING in a special box seat.
man is 45, and is operating a home video camera taking pictures of his son.

The

CRASH

Hey, he's just your father, man --
he's as full of shit as anybody.

TOMMY AND DEKE JOIN THEM at the mound.

DEKE

What the hell's going on?

TOMMY

You breathing through the wrong
fucking nostril again?

DEKE

Hey, you guys hear Jimmy and Millie
are engaged?! Wait'll I tell him
she's gone down on half the Carolina
League --

CRASH

(threatening)

Anybody says anything bad about
Millie, I'll break his neck.

NUKE

Hey, guys, I got a game to pitch.

JOSE THE FIRST BASEMAN JOINS THEM ALL at the mound.

JOSE

Don't throw anything to me -- my
girlfriend put a curse on my glove.

NUKE

I'll take the curse off the son of a
bitch!

JOSE

Then you got to cut the head off a
live rooster.

NUKE

Shit.

MICKEY JOINS THE CROWD from third base.

MICKEY

Don't worry, man, this umpire's a
God damn racist.

P.O.V. THE UMPIRE -- He's black.

CUT TO:

THE DUGOUT -- SKIP AND LARRY watch the growing meeting.

SKIP

What the hell's going on out there?

LARRY

It's a damn convention.

SKIP

Check it out.

CUT TO:

THE MOUND -- Larry joins the convention.

LARRY

What the hell's going on out here?

CRASH

Nuke's scared cause his nostrils are
jammed and his old man's here, we
need a live rooster to take the curse
off Jose's glove, and nobody knows
what to get Jimmy and Millie for
their wedding present -- there's a
whole lotta shit we're trying to
deal with --

LARRY

Oh. I thought there was a problem.

CUT TO:

INT. ANNIE'S HOUSE NIGHT

ANNIE IS HELPING MILLIE make her WEDDING DRESS.

The game can be heard on the radio in the b.g.

MILLIE

You should be at the game.

ANNIE

No, no -- I'm fine. Millie, how much time did you and Jimmy spend together before he proposed?

Annie holds the dress up to Millie.

MILLIE

Five hours. We both just know.
(studying the dress)
Do you think I deserve to wear white?

ANNIE

We all deserve to wear white.

BOTH WOMEN TURN THEIR HEADS to the radio to listen.

TEDDY THE RADIO MAN

...line drive up the alley's gonna score at least two, here comes the relay --

CUT TO:

EXT. DURHAM BALLPARK THE GAME NIGHT

for
the
the
the

CRASH FLIPS HIS MASK -- A runner rounds third heading home. Here comes the throw, on a line. It hits once on infield grass, takes a long hop --

the
the

AS THE RUNNER BARRELS TOWARD THE PLATE -- Crash takes throw.

dust.

THE RUNNER SLIDES -- Crash blocks the plate. A cloud of A close play.

second

THE UMPIRE SIGNALS "SAFE" -- And Crash flips out. In a he is nose to nose with the UMPIRE.

CRASH

I got him on the knee!

UMPIRE

You missed him!

CRASH

God damn It, Jack, he still ain't
touched the plate.

THEIR FACES ARE INCHES APART -- Screaming face to face.

UMPIRE

Don't bump me.

CRASH

It was a cocksucking call!

UMPIRE

Did you call me a cocksucker?

CRASH

No! I said It was a cock-sucking
call and you can't run me for that!

UMPIRE

You missed the tag!

CRASH

You spit on me!

UMPIRE

I didn't spit on you!

CRASH

You're in the wrong business, Jack --
you're Sears-Roebuck material!

UMPIRE

You're close, Crash, you want me to
run you? I'll run you!

CRASH

You want me to call you a cocksucker?!

UMPIRE

Try it! Go ahead. Call me a
cocksucker!

CRASH

Beg me!

UMPIRE

Call me a cocksucker and you're outta here!

CRASH

Beg me again!

UMPIRE

Call me a cocksucker and you're outta here!

CRASH

You're a cocksucker!

UMPIRE

You're outta here!

THE UMP THEATRICALY THROWS CRASH out of the game.

CUT TO:

INT. ANNIE'S HOUSE -- SIMULTANEOUS

ANNIE AND MILLIE STARE at the radio.

TEDDY ON THE RADIO

...I've never seen Crash so angry and frankly, Bull fans, he used a certain word that's a "no-no" with umpires...

MILLIE

Crash musta called the guy a cocksucker

ANNIE

God, he's so romantic...

CUT TO:

INT. THE SHOWERS NIGHT

CRASH STANDS AGAINST the water, letting it stream across him. He raises a can of beer to his lips, drinks it slowly in the shower.

As the water runs over Crash...

ANNIE

When Crash got thrown out, the game
got out of hand...

(beat)

...Jose made three errors with his
cursed mitt...

JOSE BOOTS A GROUND BALL -- A runner scores.

ANNIE

Nuke never quite got in the groove
though he didn't pitch bad...

NUKE JUST MISSES WITH A PITCH -- Ball four.

ANNIE

...and the winning streak came to an
end with a 3-2 loss...

(beat)

The good news was that a man was
about to come calling... the bad
news was -- it was the wrong guy.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ANNIE'S LIVING ROOM NIGHT

AS PIAF PLAYS on the stereo -- A knock at the door.

ANNIE GOES TO THE DOOR -- Then refuses to answer it at
first.

She hides in a corner. Bites her fist.

NUKE'S VOICE

Annie! You gotta be in there -- I
can hear that crazy Mexican singer!

Annie smiles slightly, and opens the door.

NUKE

We lost.

ANNIE

It's okay...

She opens the door fully. Nuke's father stands there.

NUKE

I'd like you to meet my father.

ANNIE

(surprised)
Oh -- won't YOU come in?

CUT TO:

INT. ANNIE'S HOUSE

AS THEY ENTER -- She leads them into the kitchen.

NUKE'S FATHER
Ebby's told me a lot about you.

ANNIE
Uh oh...
(beat)
Can I offer you some coffee?

THE KITCHEN -- CONTINUOUS -- NIGHT

She puts a pot of water with a swirl of graciousness.

NUKE'S FATHER
Yeah... Ebby tells me you're a very spiritual woman. He tells me you've taught him a lot about discipline and self-control.

Annie and Nuke exchange glances. Nuke smiles.

ANNIE
He's a good student.

NUKE'S FATHER
We were worried that Ebby might get involved with the wrong crowd in professional baseball -- we're so pleased, he met a Christian woman.

ANNIE
Praise the Lord, eh?

The Piaf record begins skipping in the next room.

ANNIE
Oh my -- I better fix that. Ebby will you help me? I'm no good with mechanical things

Nuke picks up his cue and follows her to:

THE LIVING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS -- NIGHT

Annie fixes the record.

NUKE

I couldn't dump my old man but maybe later I can sneak away from him...

ANNIE

You don't have to...

NUKE

I'm starting to understand what you're teaching me. I mean the panties and the nostrils and all that shit... I mean I'm getting it --

ANNIE

So am I. Nuke, honey, we need to talk --

Nuke gets very aggressive and playful, pinning her.

NUKE

Aw hell, let's have a quickie right here --

ANNIE

-- but you're father's in there!

NUKE

Crash says I gotta quit worrying about him -- c'mon, honey, we got a lotta catching up to do --

He pins her to the wall, she squirms away.

ANNIE

Nuke -- we do need to talk!

CUT TO:

BACK IN THE KITCHEN

Nuke's father is studying pictures on Annie's wall.

afghans,
CLOSE ON A HELMUT NEWTON PHOTO -- A nude woman, two
and a toilet.

CLOSE ON A PHOTO OF SWAMI PRABHAVANANDA YOGANDA

inscription

CLOSE ON A POSTER OF A MARIJUANA LEAF with the

"Better Living Through Mexican Agriculture".

Nuke's father is a bit unsettled by all this, when:

The phone rings.

ANNIE SWEEPS BACK into the kitchen -- saved by the bell

--

to answer the phone. Nuke trails.

ANNIE

(on phone)

Hello? Skip? Yeah, as a matter of fact, he is here.

She hands the phone to Nuke.

ANNIE

It's Skip, for you.

NUKE (ON PHONE)

Yeah, Skip, it's me.

(several beats)

Jeez... Jeez... God... Jeez...

Nuke hangs up the phone. Looks at Annie and his father.

NUKE

I'm going to the Show.

(beat)

They're sending me up to finish out the season with the Big Club. I'm going to the Show!

NUKE'S FATHER LEAPS TO HIS FEET and embraces his son.

NUKE'S FATHER

Let's have a quick word of prayer, right here, to thank the Lord for all this --

ANNIE

Oh let's not...

NUKE

I gotta leave first thing in the morning.

ANNIE

That's great!

NUKE

How can I possibly thank you?

He embraces her rather formally.

ANNIE

Just pitch well and do good.

Nuke hustles his father out of the house.

NUKE

I will, I will -- C'mon, Dad, I'll
dump you off. I gotta find Crash.

As they exit, Nuke's father turns to Annie:

NUKE'S FATHER

God bless you.

ANNIE

(to herself)

She will, Mr. LaLoosh, she will...

ANNIE SITS DOWN in a kitchen chair. An enormous sigh.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE DOWNTOWNER MOTEL -- NIGHT

arriving
Nuke knocks on Crash's door. Nobody home. Tony is
with his GROUPIE GIRLFRIEND to the next room.

TONY

Crash ain't there. He never gets
back till four or five --

NUKE

Where does he go?

TONY

Well, I'd rather not say.

NUKE

They called me up to the Show and I
wanta tell Crash goodbye.

TONY COMES OVER AND GIVES NUKE a heartfelt "five".

TONY

Goddamn, that's great! Jesus!

(beat)

Listen, Crash don't like anybody to know it but --

(beat)

Most nights he goes down to, you know, down to Niggertown. To Sandy's... the whorehouse.

NUKE

He goes to a whorehouse every night?

TONY

Don't tell him I told you -- he'd break my neck.

CLOSE ON NUKE -- Disturbed.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE BLACK SECTION OF DURHAM -- NIGHT

A CAB MOVES SLOWLY through a poor neighborhood. Stops at:

AN OLD HOUSE -- Decades of ad hoc add-ons.

BLACK CABBIE

That's Sandy's. Keep your extra cash
In your shoes.

NUKE GETS OUT and goes to the door.

CUT TO:

EXT. SANDY'S WHOREHOUSE -- NIGHT

NUKE KNOCKS AT THE DOOR -- A small barred window opens.

A face appears -- a TOUGH BLACK, SANDY, 50.

SANDY

What'you want, kid?

NUKE

I'm looking for somebody.

SANDY

Who ain't?

NUKE

Looking for Crash Davis.

SANDY

Ain't here.

NUKE

I'm Nuke LaLoosh. With the Bulls.

SANDY

(studying him)

Your breaking ball's getting better
but ya need a change up.

The door opens. Nuke enters.

CUT TO:

INT. SANDY'S WHOREHOUSE -- NIGHT

NUKE ENTERS TENTATIVELY -- Another world. Grim. Sleazy.

The Doorman leads him down a hallway full of doors. A

BLACK

PROSTITUTE enters a room with a HUGE REDNECK. As they

go

down the hallway, and as they do:

We begin hearing singing -- raucous, soulful, drunk.

room".

NUKE STOPS IN A DOORWAY -- Looks into the "waiting

undress, sit

-- P.O.V. SEVERAL HOOKERS in various stages of

WHITE

on couches and chairs. Bored, smoking, ancient. The ONE

around

HOOKER, a skinny 25 year old, accompanies on a guitar,
struggling to keep up. And a couple HOOKERS are hanging

a piano that --

is

CRASH IS PLAYING and singing. He doesn't look up. Crash

mouth as

dressed but barefoot. A cigarette dangles from his

chords.

he accompanies himself with decent cocktail lounge

Two Hookers at the piano hum along.

CRASH

(singing and playing)
But when she does get weary -- Try a
little tenderness...

never
NUKE STEPS INTO THE ROOM -- All the Hookers rise in
anticipation of a new customer. Crash keeps playing,
looking up.

CRASH

(singing)
You know she's waiting, just
anticipating, the things that she'll
never possess...
(beat)
While she's there waiting -- Try a
little tenderness...

Nuke interrupts the instrumental passage:

NUKE

Crash. I'm going to the Show.

Crash Ignores him, keeps playing.

NUKE

Club's expanding its roster to finish
the season --

CRASH

Shut up. I'm playing.
(singing last 8 bars)
Oh you won't regret it, young girls
don't forget it, lost in their own
wilderness...
(beat)
But it's all so easy -- Just try a
little tenderness...

As Crash plays on --

NUKE

I'm going to the Show.

CRASH

Then go.

The
NUKE GRABS CRASH by the hair and jerks him to his feet.
two men are face to face.

NUKE

I'm trying to thank you.

CRASH

Let go of me!

the
NUKE LETS HIM GO and Crash staggers drunkenly against
piano, regaining his balance as:

SANDY RUSHES IN WITH A GUN to break it up.

SANDY

He makin' trouble for you, Mr. Davis?

CRASH

No, no, Sandy, put it down.

(drunkenly, to Nuke)

Nuke, you know Sandy Grimes? Hit
.367 at Louisville in 155.

SANDY

I hit .371.

CRASH

He hit .371 -- C'mon, Nuke -- you
and me, let's step outside and settle
this.

NUKE

Settle what?

CRASH

C'mon!

NUKE

I don't wanta fight you, I wanta
thank you. Let's have a drink and
forget this --

CRASH

God damn it, you fucking virgin prick --
step outside.

Crash drunkenly heads out the back door in his
underwear.

Nuke reluctantly follows.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE ALLEY BEHIND THE WHOREHOUSE -- NIGHT

and

Several of the Hookers follow to watch. Crash is drunk
lost. Nuke in control.

NUKE

C'mon, we got nothin' to fight about.

CRASH

You fuck!

NUKE

Why am I a fuck?

CRASH

Why are you a fuck?

(beat)

'Cause you got talent. I got brains.
But you got talent! You're God damn
left arm is worth a million dollars
a year.

(drunken insight)

All my limbs put together are worth
7 cents a pound -- and that's for
science and dog meat.

NUKE

You're a great catcher.

CRASH

Come over here into the light so I
can kick your ass.

NUKE

No.

CRASH

Okay, I'll kick your ass there.

Crash takes a step toward Nuke. Pulls up his bare feet
quickly, stepping on a sharp stone.

CRASH

...God damn... I forgot my fucking
shoes. Honey, go get my shoes.

One of the Hookers goes inside for his shoes.

NUKE

I'll take you back to the hotel.

CRASH

(drunken, mad)

You know what the difference is between hitting .250 and hitting .300? I got it figured out.

(beat)

Twenty-five hits a year in 500 at bats is 50 points. Okay? There's 6 months in a season, that's about 25 weeks -- you get one extra flare a week -- just one -- a gork, a ground ball with eyes, a dying quail -- just one more dying quail a week and you're in Yankee Stadium!

CUT TO:

INT. THE WHOREHOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

THE HOOKER FINDS CRASH'S SHOES -- Starts to bring them out to him when... she notices cash in one of them. The Hooker takes a few bills for herself, and continues out --

CUT TO:

BACK IN THE ALLEY -- Crash finishes his tirade as:

THE HOOKER COMES OUT WITH CRASH'S SHOES

He struggles drunkenly to put them on.

NUKE

Forget it. You ain't worth thanking --

NUKE STARTS TO WALK AWAY -- Crash fires his one free shoe at Nuke hitting him in the back of the head.

NUKE WHIRLS -- Comes after Crash.

CRASH

Come on, Meat...

CRASH SWINGS WILDLY -- Nuke ducks it and levels Crash with a short right hand.

CRASH CRASHES INTO SOME GARBAGE CANS -- Lies there on his

back for several beats. Nuke stares.

CLOSE ON CRASH -- Blood trickles from his mouth.

CRASH

Nuke... tell me something. Did you
hit me with your right or your left?

NUKE

My right.

we
he's
Silence. Crash's next line is both drunk and sober and
don't know if he's just being clever or if, somehow,
staged It all. Maybe even he doesn't know.

CRASH

Good. Good. That's terrific...

NUKE

What?

CRASH

If ya get in a fight with some
asshole, never hit his with your
pitching hand. Ya might get injured.
(smiles)
That's another lesson for ya -- now
quit fucking around and help me up.

CRASH REACHES UP A HAND FOR HELP -- Nuke stares back.
AND FINALLY NUKE REACHES DOWN AND HELPS CRASH to his
feet.

NUKE

Ya look like shit.

The two men head inside.

CUT TO:

EXT. DURHAM STADIUM -- NEXT MORNING -- EARLY

the
AND
NUKE'S PORSCHE -- The Clubhouse Boy drags Nuke's out to
car and loads the trunk. Annie, Larry and a COUPLE KIDS
DOGS are watching.

CUT TO:

INT. THE LOCKER ROOM -- CONTINUOUS -- DAY

NUKE CLEANS OUT HIS LOCKER -- Filling his travel bag.

Crash sits on a stool next to him. Sober.

CRASH

Sorry about last night.

NUKE

Forget it.

CRASH

I have been known, on occasion, to howl at the moon. D'you understand that?

NUKE

No.

CRASH

You will.

(beat)

Look, Nuke -- these Big League hitters are gonna light you up like a pin ball machine for awhile -- don't worry about it. Be cocky and arrogant even when you're getting beat. That's the secret.

(beat)

You gotta play this game with fear and arrogance.

NUKE

Fear and ignorance.

CRASH

(raging)

No. Fear and arrogance, you, hayseed, not ignorance!

NUKE

(smiles calmly)

I know. I just like to see you get all worked up.

Crash calms down. Sighs. Nuke nods and picks up his bags.

NUKE

(knows it's not true)
Well, I got Annie all warmed up for
ya...

(knows it is true)
She's just waiting for you to show
up, y'know...

CRASH

I don't need a crazy woman in my
life.

NUKE

Maybe you do.
(quick beat)
Y'know I'm starting to like this
game -- baseball's a helluva good
way to make a living.

Crash speaks with quiet passion, from his soul.

CRASH

It's the best, Nuke... the absolute
fucking best.

NUKE

Yeah, thanks for everything.

They shake hands, and Nuke heads out the door.

CRASH

Nuke --
(Nuke stops)
Good luck.

NUKE

You too... Meat.

Nuke smiles. A little arrogance and fear.

CUT TO:

EXT. DURHAM STADIUM -- CONTINUOUS DAY

NUKE TOSSES HIS BAG in the Porsche and motions to
Annie.

They step away from the others.

ANNIE

Well I guess this is it.

NUKE

(smiles)

I won't be needing these anymore.

NUKE PULLS ANNIE'S RED PANTIES from his jacket pocket.

been

The frilly, silk lace is tattered. The panties have
through the mill. She accepts them graciously.

ANNIE

Neither will I.

NUKE

I think I'm ready for the Show.

ANNIE

Ebby Calvin Nuke LaLoosh -- don't
think too much.

NUKE

Don't worry.

They look at each other awkwardly, sweetly, and:

and

NUKE KISSES ANNIE GENTLY ON THE LIPS -- They hesitate,
Nuke heads for his Porsche.

farewell to

CRASH ARRIVES IN THE DOORWAY to watch. Nuke bids
his father and climbs into his car.

NUKE

I gotta go now, Dad.

FATHER

I was thinking I could fly up and
spend a week in the Big Leagues with
you -- help you get comfortable.

NUKE

No. If I screw up, I wanta do it
alone. I'll call.

FATHER

We'll be praying for you.

NUKE

Dad -- if my curveball is hanging,
God ain't gonna help me.

FATHER

We'll pray anyway.

NUKE

(kindly)

If it makes you and mom feel better,
go for it. I gotta run --

They shake hands, and:

leaving a CRASH'S P.O.V. -- NUKE ROARS AWAY in his Porsche,
trail of dust in the Stadium parking lot.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DURHAM STADIUM -- DUSK

MILLIE AND JIMMY'S WEDDING -- A formal wedding on the
pitcher's mound. Millie in white. Jimmy in his uniform.
Skip
and
is the best man, also in uniform, and several players
groupies are the attendants, Annie as the Bride's Maid.
Organ music plays the wedding march.
JIMMY LIFTS MILLIE'S VEIL and kisses her. The stands
are
full of fans.
JIMMY LEADS MILLIE DOWN THE "AISLE" towards home plate.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DURHAM STADIUM -- GAME IN PROGRESS -- NIGHT

CLOSE ON SCOREBOARD -- Ninth inning. Durham is leading
by a
score of 1 to 0. Two outs.
JIMMY IS PITCHING -- He delivers. The batter rockets a
line
drive up the alley. A PENINSULA RUNNER races from
first,
rounding third, trying to score. A relay.
CRASH WAITS AT THE PLATE -- Here comes the runner. Here
comes
the throw. A close play. A terrible collision.

of
Crash goes rolling. The umpire waits -- and in a cloud
dust, Crash holds up the ball.
THE CROWD ROARS -- Jimmy jumps victoriously in the air.

CUT TO:

INT. THE LOCKER ROOM -- NIGHT

are
The air of victory. The mood is up and goofy. Beer cans
squirted at Jimmy, the groom.

JIMMY

I wanta thank everybody and the Lord
for the victory, it's a wonderful
way to celebrate my marriage -- and
I guess we're all back on a winning
streak, he? A few raucous "Fuckin
A's" from the team.

TONY

Hey, Jimmy -- we chipped in and kind
got a little gift for ya of a special
wedding cake from the Durham Bulls.

embarrassed
DEKE CARRIES OUT AN WEDDING CAKE -- It's X-Rated. The
decorative Bride and Groom are fucking. Jimmy's
but it's all good natured.

CUT TO:

watching the
locker,
CRASH COMING OUT OF THE SHOWER -- Toweling off,
innocent, vulgar fun. He sits down in front of his
drying his hair, when the CLUBHOUSE BOY approaches:

CLUBHOUSE BOY

Hey, Crash -- Skip wants to see ya.

only a
CRASH RISES AND HEADS FOR SKIP'S CUBICLE -- Wearing
towel and his shower shoes.

CUT TO:

INSIDE SKIP'S OFFICE -- Skip and Larry sit in postgame routine, checking charts, smoking, half dressed.

CRASH ENTERS as he's still drying off.

CRASH

Yeah, Skip, you wanted to see me?

SKIP

Crash, shut the door.

the
who
And it hits him. Crash looks at Skip, who looks down at floor, unwilling to face Crash who then looks at Larry, also looks away nervously.

CRASH SHUTS THE DOOR -- The party rages beyond.

SKIP

(heartfelt)

This is the toughest job a manager has...

stoicism
CLOSE ON CRASH -- He's been in the game too long to be surprised; nonetheless, he's surprised. And hurt. His is professional.

SKIP

The organization wants to make a change... now that Nuke's gone they wanta bring up some young catcher...

LARRY

Some kid hittin' .300 in Lynchburg... probably a bust.

SKIP

I put in a word for you with the organization -- told 'em I thought you'd make a fine minor league manager someday... Might be an opening at Salem next year --

EXTREME CLOSE UP ON CRASH -- His eyes are moist.

SKIP

Helluva year, Crash -- you know how it is.

Silence.

Without
raucous
Crash stands there nearly nude. He just nods slightly.
rancor or bitterness, he turns and re-enters the
locker room.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREETS OF DURHAM -- NIGHT

of a
reflection.
CRASH WALKS THE STREETS ALONE -- Crash stops in front
window and takes his batting stroke, studying the

AND HE KEEPS WALKING INTO:

CUT TO:

EXT/INT. CHEAP BAR IN DOWNTOWN DURHAM -- NIGHT

CRASH DRINKING ALONE at the end of a bar.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREETS OF DURHAM -- NIGHT

the
street signs. He CHANGES DIRECTION, walks on.
CRASH WANDERS ALONG into the residential neighborhoods.
HE STARTS ACROSS A QUIET INTERSECTION Stops. Looks at

CUT TO:

EXT. ANNIE'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

if
the
she was expecting him. At first, silence. Then:
The windows glow. After midnight.
CRASH STARES AT THE HOUSE -- Hesitates, then walks up
porch stairs. Knocks at the door. Moments later:
ANNIE OPENS THE DOOR -- She looks beautiful. Almost as

CRASH

I got released.

ANNIE

I heard already.

SHE OPENS THE DOOR -- Crash enters Annie's house.

CUT TO:

INT. ANNIE'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

ANNIE PUTS ON her favorite Piaf record.

ANNIE POURS A DRINK for both of them.

CRASH PUTS A HAND ON HER HIP -- Annie closes her eyes,
a
A
tiny gasp. He kisses her forehead. She kisses his neck.
A
tiny smile from Crash. The same from Annie.

SHE KISSES HIM on the corner of his mouth. Her hand
finds
his
the back of his head and she runs her fingers through
hair.

CRASH RESPONDS -- They kiss slowly, deeply. As --
HIS HAND ON HER HIP PULLS UP HER SKIRT -- By degrees,
the
exposing
holds
the beloved BLACK GARTER SNAPS -- Crash's hand expertly
up the skirt and effortlessly UNSNAPS THE GARTER with a
minimum of effort.

FLICK, FLICK, FLICK -- The garter snaps are free.

ANNIE

Oh my...

DISSOLVE TO:

THE BEDROOM -- Crash carries Annie to the bed.

DISSOLVE TO:

ANNIE'S FOOT KICKS OVER A LAMP onto the floor.

DISSOLVE TO:

unbuttons
with the

ANNIE'S BLOUSE FRONT -- Flick, flick, flick. Crash
it with one hand in seconds. Even Annie is startled
speed and ease of Crash's hand.

DISSOLVE TO:

HER HAND SLIDES UNDER THE WAISTBAND of his underwear

DISSOLVE TO:

HIS HAND SLIDES UP UNDER HER panties.

DISSOLVE TO:

clothes
control to

A FULL EMBRACE ON THE EDGE OF THE BED -- Remnants of
cover parts of their bodies. They tumble out of
the floor.

DISSOLVE TO:

antique,

ANNIE'S HAND GRABS ONTO A DRESSER LEG -- A carved oak
her hand holds on tight and shakes the dresser.

DISSOLVE TO:

and

THE DRESSER TOP SHAKES -- Makeup bottles and pictures
dozens of Annie's special things rattle and fall

DISSOLVE TO:

they

ANNIE'S HEAD RESTS ON CRASH'S STOMACH -- Post coital,

lie on the floor blissfully as Piaf finishes.

DISSOLVE TO:

ANNIE CHANGES THE RECORD to Hank Williams.

DISSOLVE TO:

THE KITCHEN -- ANNIE AND CRASH eat an after mid after
sex
one of
snack. Crash eats a bowl of Wheaties. They each wear
her robes.

DISSOLVE TO:

marijuana
Annie sits, munching a carrot and rolling a joint of
she keeps in a Victorian jewel box.

ANNIE

...so you see in a former lifetime
I'm sure that I was Alexandria, the
Czarette of Russia? What do you think?

CRASH

How come in former lifetimes,
everybody was someone famous?
(beat)
How come nobody ever says they were
Joe Schmo?

ANNIE

It doesn't work like that.
(stares at him)
God, you're gorgeous. Want to dance?

THEY KISS AGAIN -- And fall gradually onto the table
top.

DISSOLVE TO:

ANNIE SITS ON TOP OF CRASH lying on the kitchen table.
He stretches out a leg and:
KICKS THE BOWL OF CEREAL to the floor. It smashes --
ceramics,

milk, cereal go everywhere. As:

THEY START MAKING LOVE AGAIN in the glaring kitchen
light.

DISSOLVE TO:

CRASH AND ANNIE DANCE in her living room.

DISSOLVE TO:

THE BEDROOM -- Crash is handcuffed to the bed. He seems perfectly happy as Annie reads Walt Whitman.

ANNIE

...mouth, tongue, lips, teeth, roof
of the mouth, jaws, and the jaw
hinges...

DISSOLVE TO:

ANNIE HANDCUFFED TO THE BED -- Crash reads.

CRASH

...wrist and wrist joints, hand,
palm, knuckles, thumb, fore-finger,
finger-joints, finger-nail...

DISSOLVE TO:

CRASH AT ANNIE'S RECORD COLLECTION -- He thumbs through
it quickly, puts on a new record.

The Dominoes sing "Sixty Minute Man". And...

DISSOLVE TO:

THE BATHROOM -- Candlelight around the bathtub. All we
can make out is two heads, two bodies, sloshing wildly In
the dim glow. Water splashes, dowses some candles.

DISSOLVE TO:

Thomas
under
reading.

CRASH AND ANNIE IN BED READING -- Each with a copy of a
Pynchon novel. Crash tosses it aside. And disappears
the sheets, playing with her as she struggles to keep
reading.
She puts down the book.

DISSOLVE TO:

resist,
kisses

ANNIE APPLYING EYE MAKEUP TO CRASH -- Who doesn't
seems even amused. He kisses her deeply, slowly. She
him back. They fall onto the bed.

DISSOLVE TO:

and
across
angle.
underwear
of
bit,

P.O.V. OUT THE KITCHEN WINDOW -- Dawn. A bird chirps.
And we hear a record skipping, repeating endlessly.

PAN ACROSS THE KITCHEN -- Overturned chairs, spilled
broken cereal bowls, liquor bottles.

PAN ACROSS THE BEDROOM -- A disaster. Clothes scattered
the floor, overturned lamps, the bed lies at a cockeyed
Annie and Crash lie face down -- asleep, utterly spent.

CRASH WAKES UP SLOWLY -- Reaches up and pulls his
off of a lampshade, pulls them on, and gets slowly out
bed. He staggers across the bedroom floor, stumbling a
into:

cushions,

THE LIVING ROOM -- He stumbles across the trashed room.
Record album covers, more liquor bottles, pillows,
pictures hanging crookedly on the wall.

breathes
and

CRASH TAKES THE SKIPPING RECORD off the player and
a sigh of relief. He sees his pants lying on the floor
pulls them on.

a
CRASH OPENS A DRAWER -- Pulls out a piece of paper and
pencil. He starts writing...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE BEDROOM -- LATER

Reaches
gone.
Sun streams in. Annie opens her eyes. Rubs them.
over for Crash. Her hand hits a note. She whirls. He's
Only a note.

SHE SITS UP WITH A START and reads the note.

ANNIE (V.O.)

Crash said he had to get an early
start to drive to Asheville in the
South Atlantic League where he heard
they might need a catcher to finish
out the season...

ZOOM IN EXTREME CLOSE UP OF NOTE -- "Love, Crash".

CUT TO:

EXT. GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS -- DAY

CRASH IN HIS CAR heading for Asheville.

CUT TO:

EXT. ASHEVILLE BASEBALL PARK -- DAY

for
work.
CRASH KNOCKING ON THE BASEBALL OFFICE DOOR -- Looking

CUT TO:

INT. ASHEVILLE LOCKER ROOM -- DAY

CRASH UNLOADING HIS GEAR into yet another locker.

CUT TO:

INT. ANNIE'S KITCHEN -- DAY

and
ANNIE SCRUBBING HER KITCHEN FLOOR -- Down on her hands
knees, picking up the broken cereal bowl.

ANNIE (V.O.)

The house smelled like sex for days.
It was wonderful. The only real
cleaning I did was on the kitchen
floor 'cause who likes to walk on
spilt cereal?

cleaning.
SHE FINDS A BIT OF A JOINT on the floor as she's
lights
She picks it up, sits on the floor under the table, and
the tiny joint.

ANNIE (V.O.)

The funny thing is, I stopped worrying
about Nuke. Somehow I knew nothing
would stop him. Crash was right --
Nuke had a gift.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. INSIDE A MAJOR LEAGUE STADIUM (ATLANTA) -- DAY

stadium.
NUKE IN STREET CLOTHES IN THE DUGOUT of an empty
a
50,000 seats. Slick. Awesome. He's being interviewed by
stuck
BIG LEAGUE REPORTER, who has a small tape deck and has
mike in Nuke's face.

NUKE

(like a big leaguer)
Y'know, I'm just happy to be here
and hope I can help the ballclub. I
just want to give it my best shot
and good Lord willing, things'll
work out... gotta play 'em one day
at a time, Y'know...

knowingly
THE BIG LEAGUE REPORTER nods attentively as Nuke
delivers the clichés like a veteran.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ASHEVILLE STADIUM -- DAY

In sharpest contrast to the Big League stadium, a rickety old wooden grandstand, carved into the pine covered hillside.

CRASH STEPS TO THE PLATE -- In a uniform we've never seen him in, of course. The Asheville Tourists. He picks up some dirt, rubs it on his hands. He's as intense as ever. Still playing for keeps.

CRASH

(at the plate)

C'mon, Meat, throw me that weak ass shit -- c'mon, bring the heat, bring it, bring it...

CRASH'S P.O.V. -- SLO-MO AS THE PITCHER WINDS AND delivers a fastball right down the pipe.

CUT TO:

INT. ANNIE'S BEDROOM -- AFTERNOON

ANNIE LIES IN BED READING -- She suddenly jerks up.

ANNIE (V.O.)

I was reading in bed when Crash hit his 247th home run. I knew the moment it happened...

CUT TO:

EXT. ASHEVILLE STADIUM -- DAY

CRASH UNLOADS A MONSTROUS HOME RUN deep into the trees. He stands at home plate watching it... like Reggie or the Babe.

And doesn't move. For several seconds he indulges himself

uncharacteristically -- until...

THE OPPOSING CATCHER SHOVES HIM toward first.

CATCHER

Get your ass in gear...

heads
moment,
CRASH SMILES and takes the home run trot slowly. As he
toward first, HE RAISES A CLINCHED FIST for a brief
a tiny gesture of triumph. And then, routinely, he just
circles the bases.

bases.
A HUNDRED FANS APPLAUD ROUTINELY as he circles the

CUT TO:

INT. ANNIE'S LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

candles,
SHE LIGHTS A CANDLE for the home run. Above the
displayed in the shrine, are her RED PANTIES.

ANNIE (V.O.)

I lit a candle for Crash's dinger...
and tried to root the Durham Bulls
home to a pennant.

CUT TO:

EXT. DURHAM STADIUM -- DAY

place in
Tantric
ANNIE AND JACKSON OPEN AN UMBRELLA in her familiar
the stadium. Umbrellas go up all around, as:
THE RAINS COME -- The players huddle-in the dugouts.
IN THE DUGOUT Skip and Larry reading copies of "The
Yoga of Sex". And spitting tobacco.

ANNIE (V.O.)

The Kid from Lynchburg wasn't good
enough to hold Crash's jockstrap if
ya ask me, and Nuke's replacement
had a fastball that I coulda hit
(beat)

We had a three game lead with two weeks to go when the rains came.

THE GROUND CREW DRAGS TARPS over the mound and the plate.

ANNIE (V.O.)

It rained and rained and I thought of driving down to Asheville to see Crash but then I thought "No, what you pursue, eludes you". I had to trust Quantum Physics and the Church of Baseball.

(beat)

It ain't always easy being this religious...

ANNIE AND JACKSON POP OPEN THEIR UMBRELLAS and walk out of the ballpark towards home.

CUT TO:

EXT. DURHAM NEIGHBORHOOD -- DAY

ANNIE AND JACKSON UNDER UMBRELLAS -- He turns down one street, she heads toward home.

CUT TO:

EXT. ANNIE'S HOUSE -- DAY

AS SHE APPROACHES -- She stops. Looks up. Crash's beat up car in the driveway.

P.O.V. CRASH SITTING ON THE PORCH SWING Still raining.

CLOSE ON ANNIE -- She hesitates, and smiles.

ANNIE

Oh my...

ANNIE SITS DOWN on the porch owing next to Crash.

ANNIE

What happened?

CRASH

I quit. Hit my dinger and hung 'em up.

A moment of silence over the significance of him quitting.

ANNIE

I'm quitting too. Boys, not baseball.

CRASH

There might be an opening for a manager at Salem next spring.

ANNIE

Salem, Massachusetts? Where all the witches were?

CRASH

Yeah... you a witch?

ANNIE

Not yet. It takes years of practice...

He smiles slightly and takes her hand.

CRASH

You think I could make it to the Show as a manager?

ANNIE

You'd be great, just great...
(rattling quickly)
'Cause you understand non-linear thinking even though it seems like baseball is a linear game 'cause of the lines and the box scores an' all -- but the fact is that there's a spacious-"non-time kind of time" to it...

CRASH

(interrupting)
Annie --

ANNIE

What?

CRASH

I got a lotta time to hear your theories and I wanta hear every damn one of 'em... but right now I'm tired and I don't wanta think about baseball

and I don't wanta think about Quantum
Physics... I don't wanta think about
nothing...

(beat)

I just wanta be.

ANNIE

I can do that, too.

He rises, takes her hand, and they head inside.

And as the rains fall on Durham...

CUT TO:

INT. ANNIE'S HOUSE -- DAY

THE SHRINE GLOWS -- Candles everywhere. Rain pours down
on the windows outside. And...

ANNIE AND CRASH SIT ON THE COUCH together, in silence.

ANNIE

Walt Whitman once said -- "I see
great things in baseball. It's our
game -- the American game

(beat)

He said "it will repair our losses
and be a blessing to us"...

(beat)

You could look it up....

The music -- Dave Frishberg sings "Van Lingle Mungo".

THE END