

**THE SANDLOT KIDS**

Written by

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**A FADED KODACHROME PHOTO**

Of the 9 best (11-year-old) buddies that ever lived. On a makeshift baseball diamond - a sandlot... circa 1962:

SCOTTY SMALLS, studious-looking; ALAN "YEAH-YEAH" McCLENNAN, little, hyper; HAMILTON "HAM" PORTER, tubby with a huge

smile;

KENNY DeNUNEZ, handsome bean pole; TOMMY "REPEAT" TIMMONS

and

his brother TIMMY; BERTRAM GROVER WEEKS, wearing inch- thick horn rims; JEFF "SQUINTS" PALLEDOROUS, a transistor radio plug wedged in his ear; and BENNY RODRIGUEZ, leaning on Scotty's shoulder, sporting the world's all-time hottest sneakers... P.F. Flyers.

One palm up, together like the 9 musketeers they're holding forward a baseball... with a mysterious smudge.

**NARRATOR**

Everyone's got that one summer when they were a kid... a summer so perfect, that it stays with them forever. It stays caught in time, like Camelot. pause That summer is like a book with a million blank pages that you get to fill with the greatest story you could ever dream up.

**(BEAT)**

This is a story about a legend. And for us, that summer was the one when the legend got made.

WE CLOSE IN TIGHT on the black smudge, which becomes:

**A SERIES OF B&W PHOTOS & STOCK FOOTAGE**

GEORGE WASHINGTON crossing the Delaware. DANIEL BOONE in

frontier buckskins. ABE LINCOLN giving the Gettysburg address.

FREDERICK DOUGLAS orating from a podium. SITTING BULL in his splendor. THE WRIGHT BROTHERS at Kitty Hawk - this photo blends to news reel stock footage of the actual launch. The following also blend to stock: JOE LOUIS clobbering MAX SCHMELLING. JESSE OWENS in the '32 olympics. ALBERT EINSTEIN scrawling on a chalkboard. CHARLES LINDBERG and his Spirit of St. Louis land in Paris. As the waiting throngs cheer

**WILDLY:**

**NARRATOR (CONT'D)**

Everybody sometime in their life has met a real live hero.

**(MORE)**

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**NARRATOR (CONT'D)**

They're not exactly a dime a dozen, but there's plenty of people who've done real great things. But hardly anyone has ever met a certified Legend, because most of them are dead before they get voted one.

MACARTHUR CHUCK YEAGER in the X-1 breaking the sound barrier.

stepping ashore, pipe clenched. JIM THORPE playing football. ELVIS PRESELY on stage in hep-cat duds. NEIL ARMSTRONG

setting foot on the moon.

**NARRATOR (CONT'D)**

So, to actually be there at the moment one gets made... well, forget about it. It never happens. Almost never... To understand how it all got started, you have to go back...

WE PULL BACK FROM THE MOON - like a baseball in the sky.

**NARRATOR (CONT'D)**

...to the all-time, hands down, complete and undisputed Legend that ever lived.

A BASEBALL in someone's hand. WE PULL BACK FROM IT.

**NARRATOR (CONT'D)**

In any language, in any country, in any world. The Sultan of Swat. The King of Clout. The Great Bambino. You have to go back to...

BABE RUTH is holding the baseball.

**NARRATOR (CONT'D)**

...The Babe.

**(BEAT)**

There's never been anyone greater than The Babe. And when he called his famous full count homerun in the 1932 world series, he made sure he'd live forever.

**THE BABE**

hits a homerun. Settles into his signature, locomotive basepath chug.

**NARRATOR (CONT'D)**

And it's a good thing he became immortal, because without him, what happened that summer, absolutely never

**(MORE)**

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**NARRATOR (CONT'D)**

would've happened. Weird thing was, before I moved to the neighborhood, I had no idea who he was. And he played a game I knew nothing about.

**SLO-MO - THE BABE'S CLEATS**

send up chalky dust at each STEP. His foot hits home plate - taking us 30 years into the future. The Babe's antiquated leather cleat becomes...

**EXT. DODGER STADIUM - 1962 - DAY - STOCK**

...the cleat of basepath speedster MAURY WILLS.

**NARRATOR**

Fourteen years later, after The Babe was gone, there was another guy who had something to do with the legend getting made too. A guy who set a record that summer that was so awesome, some people still don't believe it.

**WILLS TAKES OFF, STEALING 3RD**

so fast that no one knows he's gone. The Pitcher fires to rd. The 3rd BASEMAN gloves the dirt. The UMPIRE wings the air.

**UMPIRE**

Safe!

WILLS' CLEAT becomes

THE P.F. FLYER SNEAKER of...

**EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - PLAYGROUND - 1962 - DAY**

...BENNY RODRIGUEZ, as he steps up to the plate.

**THE PITCHER**

fires.

**BENNY**

cranks one deep to right. He tears around the bases like lightning (this kid is real fast). He rounds 3rd. The ball comes in home - cutting him off. He's caught in a pickle.

**FROM**

**4**

**BEHIND THE CHAIN-LINK BACKSTOP**

YEAH-YEAH, HAM, DeNUNEZ, REPEAT, TIMMY, BERTRAM and SQUINTS come unglued and crowd the basepath.

**HAM**

**PICKLE!**

**BENNY**

pickles the CATCHER and 3RD BASEMAN. He feints n' rubba-legs

them out of position. He sprints for home. Safe! Just as he crosses home plate

**SQUINTS**

pulls his transistor radio ear plug out.

**SQUINTS**

Thirty-one! Maury Wills just stole number thirty-one!

**THE ON-FIELD TEAM**

throws their gloves 9 different ways in disgust.

**OTHER TEAM**

**(ABOUT BENNY)**

Crap! Can't beat that guy! Ya dufuses, why'd ya get him in a pickle for?! Ya know he's the damn pickle king! Rubba legs for sure! Truly rubba legs.

**BENNY JOINS THE GANG**

'zooka

They imitate the big leaguers; skinning five, spittin' chaw-juice. Yeah-Yeah hands Benny his glove. Squints jots the stats in his pee-chee folder.

**SQUINTS**

Game over. Sixteen zip. Murderers' Row remains undefeated.

**OPPONENT**

Hey! We never got our ups!

The lunch bell RINGS. The gang heads across the playground back to the bungalows.

**OPPONENT (CONT'D)**

All your moms wear boxers!

Without looking back, eight "birds" hit the air. Nervous,

**NEW- KID**

has been watching nearby.

**EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - DRINKING FOUNTAIN - DAY**

Just as Ham, Squints and Benny go for the 3 spigots, Yeah-Yeah taps each rapidfire:

**YEAH-YEAH**

Milk-milk-pee.

**HAM**

Great, I'm dyin' a thirst and you pee me out!

**BENNY**

Ham, it ain't really.

**HAM**

Then switch with me.

**BENNY**

Do I look stupid?

Everyone drinks from the 2 "un-cursed" spigots. Ham last. As they turn to leave, Scotty goes for the fountain. The guys hang - waiting for doom. Scotty drinks from the pee spigot! The guys GAG and FAUX-BARF. Scotty has no idea why they're laughing at him.

**NARRATOR**

I moved to the neighborhood about a month before school let out. I was from another state, and didn't have a single friend in a thousand miles.

**INT. CLASSROOM - DAY**

STUDENTS Benny, Ham, Scotty (sitting by himself) and the other are clock watching. The BELL RINGS. Summer vacation! The classroom empties... papers circle to the floor from 35 departing cyclones.

**INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - HALLWAYS / ENTRANCE - DAY**

of Streams of excited KIDS spill into the corridors - a river scrambling tennis shoes and clashing lunch boxes at the entrance gate.

**SCOTTY'S**

caught in the mayhem.

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**HE SPIES**

the 8 guys forging ahead. He follows them.

**NARRATOR**

It was a lousy way to end up the 5th grade, 'cause I had zip time to make friends before summer. And that's about where it all started...

**EXT. OLD REDWOOD FENCE - FOILAGE - DAY**

books

Scotty sneaks close around some dense bushes, clutching and "John Glenn - Freedom 7" lunchbox. He steps through the barrier (a secret doorway in the fence) onto the distant  
**OUTFIELD OF**

**EXT. THE SANDLOT - DAY**

The gang's homemade baseball diamond. They're:

**CLEANING THE BLEACHERS**

with broken brooms.

**RAKING THE INFIELD**

with halves of tools.

**LAYING NEW CHALK LINES**

with a holed box of detergent powder.

**CLEARING THE OUTFIELD**

of leaves, trash and sticks.

**RE-ERECTING A PIECE OF RAGGED PLYWOOD**

in left field - painted green and lettered "The Green Monster."

**SCOTTY**

maintains cover and

**PERUSES THE LAYOUT**

a row of houses, whose backyards are all chain link fenced. The fencing is trimmed individually in wood, bamboo etc... One has the world's coolest treehouse. Next to it... is the

panels  
last house. This owner has cordoned his backyard - tall of that green "tropical-look" privacy fiberglass lashed to the fence.

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**SCOTTY**

remains undercover, but he's bustin' to join in.

**THE GANG**

never notices him. As they work:

**HAM**

Fifth grade's history, man. A hundred days, man. A Hundred days of baseball. All Day, everyday, as much as we can. That's the best.

**TIMMY**

We got all summer.

**REPEAT**

We got all summer.

**BENNY**

Let's play.

**YEAH-YEAH**

Yeah-Yeah... let's play.

The guys round up in the infield. As they play catch, they spread farther and farther apart... until they've each taken up the position they most like to play. They fit the paltry little diamond; scrappy, happy kids.

**EXT. THE BLOCK - DUSK**

Tract homes - everybody's got a different thing going in the front yard. The guys (sans Timmons') split up toward their homes - slappin' gloves, "so-longing" for the night.

**NARRATOR**

Everyone but the Timmons twins lived on my new block.

**FROM HIS DRIVEWAY**

Scotty, shuttling moving boxes to his garage, watches them go.

**NARRATOR (CONT'D)**

They lived in a house by the sandlot and had the world's greatest tree house, because their dad was a contractor.

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**FROM BENNY'S PORCH**

Benny is the last to go in. He sees Scotty watching. So, he nods... just a little.

**THE BLOCK**

clears to empty. The street lamps arc on, drawing soft white circles on the sidewalks. FROM THIS HEIGHT, they look like baseballs dotting the neighborhood.

**NARRATOR (CONT'D)**

Even before I knew any of them I envied that tree house...

**INT. BENNY'S ROOM - NIGHT**

A shrine to the pastime. Pennants, magazine pictures, game programs, baseball cards, a whole section of Maury Wills, radiating from a picture of Wills caught in a pickle.

**NARRATOR**

...later, it would become second only to Cape Canaveral as a command post

for history.

**(BEAT)**

When I moved in that summer, I'd never played baseball, but it wasn't too tough figuring out who these guys' heroes were. So, after a week of watching... I figured baseball seemed like the best way to get in with them.

**BENNY'S**

in bed, oiling his glove, staring out his window at Scotty's house. Taped to his footboard is the most important picture of all... a picture of The Babe.

**INT. SCOTTY'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Erector  
table,  
Jr. Chemistry set. Heath Kit gadgets. An unbelievable Set contraption with little motors and stuff. An autographed picture of Mr. Wizard. Scotty's pj'd at his erector set bothered and unhappy. This stuff is too damn easy for him. He whips on a last bolt and connects the itty-bitty motor.

**SWITCHES ON**

**THE CONTRAPTION**

a tiny scoopelvator snatches up a white marble. Drops it on a roller coaster track. The marble whips around corners and

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loop-da-loops... lands in a mini-catapult. Another motor draws it back via a winding string. Boy Scout camping-knife scissors ratchet in - snip the string - the catapult fires.

**THE MARBLE**

leaps a little green fence and WONK! Ouuuhhh! beans

**HIS MOTHER (HAVING JUST COME IN)**

right in the forehead.

**BEDROOM**

Scotty winces at the shot.

**SCOTTY**

Sorry, Mom.

**MOM**

I thought we agreed we'd take this apart... and not spend so much time in here.

**SCOTTY**

**(FEELING LOW)**

I know - but it's just nighttime.

**MOM**

Scotty, have you made any friends yet?

**SCOTTY**

No.

**MOM**

Why not, honey?

**SCOTTY**

'Cause I'm still "new."

**MOM**

Honey, I don't want you sitting in here all summer fiddling with this stuff, like you did last summer... and the one before that.

**(BEAT)**

Scotty, look at me. I know you're smart, and I'm proud of you. But you have to get outside, you have to... play.

She sits across from him, trying to get through.

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**MOM (CONT'D)**

I want you to get out in the fresh air and make friends. Run around and scrape your knees. Get dirty. Climb trees

and hop fences. Get in trouble for crying out loud.

**(BEAT)**

Not too much, but some. You have my permission. Now how many mothers do you think say that to their sons?

**SCOTTY**

None mothers I guess.

**MOM**

I want you to make friends this summer, Scotty. Lots of them.

**SCOTTY**

I know, but I don't - I'm no good at anything. Face it, Mom, I'm just an

**EGGHEAD -**

**MOM**

- and you'll always be just an egghead with an attitude like that. So promise me, alright?

**SCOTTY**

'Kay.

**MOM**

Maybe tomorrow you'll make some friends.

**SCOTTY**

Yeah, maybe tomorrow.

**(BEAT)**

Mom? Do you think Bill - I mean Dad - will teach me to play catch?

**MOM**

Are you kidding, he'd love it, you know what an athlete he was in high school.

**(ALTERNATE LINE)**

You know what a pitcher he was in high college.

**INT. SCOTTY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT**

Scotty slurps a glass of chocolate Quick. Rinses the glass too carefully. Gathers courage for something. Breathes deep

starts across the house.

**INT. SCOTTY'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT**

Scotty peeks through a slightly open door. BILL moves around inside, unpacking boxes. Scotty reaches to knock. Stops. Almost walks away. Then musters the gumption. KNOCKS.

**BILL (O.S.)**

Yeah...

Scotty takes a few cautious steps into...

**INT. BILL'S DEN - NIGHT**

...a trophy room. Ribbons, plaques, trophies. Bill must've been some athlete; but he limps now. Scotty lingers... gathering more courage.

**NARRATOR**

My real dad died when I was just a little kid. My mom married Bill a year before we moved to the neighborhood.

**(BEAT)**

At the time, he and I were still getting used to each other.

**SCOTTY**

Um, Dad - sorry, I mean Bill, remember you promised you'd teach me to play catch?

**BILL**

Um hum...

He dusts a batting trophy.

**SCOTTY**

Well, could you teach me?

**BILL**

Sure.

He places a pitching plaque. Scotty waits awkwardly. Waits for more words. They don't come.

**SCOTTY**

Okay. Great. Thanks.

**BILL**

Um hum.

pedestal  
Scotty leaves, bringing the door with him on his way out.  
Through the cracked portal he sees Bill set a silver  
on the main shelf. On this he sets a baseball...

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just a baseball.

**INT. SCOTTY'S ROOM - THE NEXT MORNING**

Scotty wakes up. Checks his (Theme) clock. 8:30. He bolts out of bed. Dashes through the house to the front door. Throws it open and runs down to...

**EXT. SCOTTY'S HOUSE - DAY**

...the sidewalk. Fan sprinklers water all the lawns. Way far down the block

**HE GLIMPSES**

scrambling  
Ham, at the HELMS BAKERY TRUCK, buying a donut, then around the far corner.

**HAM**

Hey-hey, come on! Wait up - wait up!

**SCOTTY**

panics. Runs back inside and...

**INT. SCOTTY'S ROOM - DAY**

...strips off his cowboy pj's. Redresses. Digs through his

**CLOSET**

Grandma!"  
finding a vinyl, "toy" baseball glove. It's still in the package, with a note attached: "To Scotty Boy - Love,

It's all he's got. He shovels through a pair of Mickey Mouse ears - a cowboy hat - finds the closest thing he's got to a baseball cap... a long, duck-billed fishing cap with a big embroidered trout.

**EXT. ENROUTE TO THE SANDLOT - DAY**

Scotty runs by (soon familiar places):

**A 5 & DIME**

**A BOYS CLUB**

**A LITTLE LEAGUE FIELD,**

where he slows momentarily, envious of the crisply uniformed kids... wow. Moving on down

**EXT. THE BLOCK OF SANDLOT COMMON HOUSES - DAY**

whose backyards we already know. Scotty flat out stops at

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**THE HOUSE**

with the fiberglass panels out back. Scary place.

**EXT. THE SANDLOT - DAY**

emerging  
Scotty slips quietly through the secret fence doorway,

**IN**

**DEEP LEFT FIELD**

sandlot  
where he hugs the perimeter, moving slowly toward the  
common houses. Winded, Scotty finds

**THE GANG'S**

already playing "over the line."

**NARRATOR**

They never kept score. They never chose sides. They never even really stopped playing the game... it just went on forever. Everyday they picked up right where they left off the day before. It was an endless "dream game."

**(BEAT)**

There was only 8 of them, so they didn't have a whole team. It didn't matter though... Benny was so good he took everyone's position when it was there ups.

**(BEAT)**

I didn't know any of that then... I just knew they were having the time of their lives and I wanted to be a part of it.

**SCOTTY**

watches and listens (as he goes) to the SHARP, satisfying sound of the hardball, SNAPPING CLEANLY in the oily leather of their gloves.

**HE LOOKS AT**

his own toy glove... how embarrassing.

**SCOTTY**

continues around the perimeter, trying to be seen and become invisible. He goes unwittingly CLOSER TO those green fiberglass panels.

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**DENUNEZ**

winds up and pitches to

**BENNY**

who connects big. CRACK!

**SCOTTY'S**

come too close to the green fence. Something has overcome him... fear! He stares with serious woollies at

**A HOLE IN THE FIBERGLASS**

and sees only dust rising in time with some great, SOUNDS OF EXHALATION. And then, before he can draw any conclusions... disaster.

**GANG (O.S.)**

Hey! Look out!

**SCOTTY**

whips a look up and sees

**THE FLY BALL**

coming right at him.

**SCOTTY**

tracks it, frozen stiff. Scared shitless. At the past possible moment, he throws his arms over his face and ducks... social suicide.

**THE BALL**

beans him at the glove covering his noggin.

**SCOTTY**

hits his butt. The ball rolls a bit. Comes to an "I-dare-you" stop: right up against the diseased fiberglass panels of that preternatural fence. Scotty pulls his arms away from his face.

**THE GANG**

LAUGHS uproariously.

**TIMMY**

Nice catch!

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**REPEAT**

Nice catch!

**HAM**

Hey! Throw the ball back!

**YEAH-YEAH**

Yeah-yeah, hurry up!

**BERTRAM**

We gotta a game here, man!

**SCOTTY**

moves for the ball. As he goes, he sweats:

**SCOTTY**

'Kay, I'll get it!

**(TO HIMSELF)**

Don't be a goofus - don't be a goofus -  
don't be a goofus.

He reaches the fence and the ball and stops. It's hard to  
move. The force emanating from the backyard has got him:

**DUST THROUGH THE HOLE IN THE FIBERGLASS**

keeps perfect time with the monster-breathing.

**AN OLENADER BUSH**

moves. It scares the living kapok out of

**SCOTTY**

who snatches up the ball and back-pedals 10 feet.

**SQUINTS**

**WE'RE WAITING...**

He throws back the ball. And his chances of getting in with  
these guys are over. Because Scotty... throws like a girl!

**THE BALL**

droops forward in the air. Lands 6 feet from him. Rolls  
slowly up to the gang, finally coming to a dainty stop at  
DeNunez' feet.

**THE GANG**

looks from the ball to Scotty... they CRACK UP!

**SCOTTY**

walks away... crying.

**SCOTTY**  
**(TO HIMSELF)**

My life is over.

**BENNY**

is the only one that isn't laughing. He stares the others down.

**DENUNEZ**

Come on, Benny-man, didn't you see that throw?

He imitates it, "flipping" his glove to Ham. The gang BUSTS UP again.

**HAM**  
**(TRULY STUNNED)**

That kid's got the gaw'damn panty-waistiest arm I ever saw in my whole life.

**SQUINTS**

I seen a guy once that threw like that. I mean not that bad, but at least so bad that he hadda move in the fourth grade 'cause they nicknamed him "Bloomers."

Benny's look stifles the bunch.

**BENNY**

I bet not one of you knows how The Babe got his nickname.

**HAM**

Easy, 'cause of the way he looked like a little kid face.

**BERTRAM**

Bull, it's just 'cause he liked kids and stuff.

**SQUINTS**

Wrong. The Babe was called The Babe, because he was like the child of Yankee Stadium.

**BENNY**

I knew it. You're all full of crap. George Herman Ruth got his nickname because his mom died when he was just a little kid, and he had to go live in an orphanage.

Silence. None of the other guys has heard this before.

**BENNY (CONT'D)**

Nobody liked him there. The bigger guys picked on him all the time. And when they messed with him he couldn't fight back, 'cause he was just... like scared. So when they messed with him, he cried about it.

**(BEAT)**

He cried... so they called him The Babe.

This hits home real good.

**BENNY (CONT'D)**

How ya think that kid just felt?

Benny exits the sandlot, leaving the others with a lesson learned.

**NARRATOR**

Everyone knew Benny was different. Nobody ever voted or anything, but he was the leader.

**EXT. THE BLOCK - DUSK**

As Benny goes into his house, the others round the corner far behind him.

**THE MOON**

is up. Full. Like a big baseball.

**NARRATOR**

Even though he seemed like a regular guy, he wasn't. Benny was special, and he was loyal.

**(BEAT)**

When they'd all tried out for youth league, they'd all made it. But when they found out they'd have to play on different teams, Benny told 'em that if they couldn't play together, they shouldn't play at all. So, they stayed together.

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**EXT./INT. BENNY'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Benny's at the window, clutching a baseball, staring over at Scotty's house.

**NARRATOR**

So, the only person that ever felt sorry for me 'cause I was such a weenie was Benjamin Franklin Rodriguez.

**(BEAT)**

Even though neither of us knew it at the time, we were connected. Like I had been born for just that one moment, when I would perform the world's all-time boner, and Benny would bail me out.

**(BEAT)**

Connected as friends... born to meet for just that one moment.

We DRIFT OFF Benny to his PICTURE OF MAURY WILLS in a pickle.

**INT. SCOTTY'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - DAY**

A PICTURE OF MAURY WILLS on a Post Super Sugar Crisp box.

**BILL & SCOTTY**

at the table. Bill sifting through mounds of paperwork.  
Scotty eating breakfast. Scotty's spoon CLANGS one too many times. Bill looks up at him.

**SCOTTY**

Sorry...

Scotty picks up his bowl and cereal, goes into

**INT. SCOTTY'S HOUSE - THE KITCHEN - DAY**

where his mom is making coffee.

**MOM**  
**(QUIETLY)**

Well?...

**SCOTTY**

He's too busy, Mom.

**MOM**  
**(ENCOURAGING)**

Go back in there and ask. He'll take the time. Go on.

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**INT. SCOTTY'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - DAY**

agonizing  
Scotty comes back in. Stops mutely near Bill. Long, seconds pass. Finally:

**SCOTTY**

Um, Da -

Quick look toward the kitchen, then:

**SCOTTY (CONT'D)**

(so Mom won't hear)

- I mean, Bill. Could we... I mean could you, like you said - teach me to catch today?

**BILL**

Um, yeah, but later, okay? I gotta get this done.

It ain't much, but it's something.

**SCOTTY**

Okay, thanks.

Mom comes in behind Scotty.

**MOM**

Bill, can't you take a break and teach him now?

**SCOTTY**

Mom, it's okay -

**(NOBODY'S LISTENING)**

**BILL**

Honey, I said I would and I will. I'm just under the gun here, ya know?

**SCOTTY**

Mom, really -

**MOM**

- How long could it take? You can't spare a half hour to show him?

Bill drops his pen. Checks his watch. A lost battle here.

**BILL**

**(ANNOYED)**

Fine. Alright. I'll get my glove. Come on.

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Bill exits past them. Scotty's been "Mom-embarrassed." She looks at him:

**MOM**

**(CLUELESS)**

There. See. Told you so.

Scotty shuffles out back, shaking his head.

**EXT. SCOTTY'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY**

Bill slides his hand into his glove. He warms up the cradle, POPPING the "hardball" into the palm.

**SCOTTY**

stands ready to "learn" on the other side of the yard. Appropriately pitiful in "trout" cap and toy glove.

**BACKYARD**

**BILL**

Keep your eye on the ball. Put the

glove up where it goes. Okay?

**SCOTTY**

Yeah, okay, I think so.

Bill throws one to Scotty. The toy glove goes up to the right.

The ball sails by to the left.

**SCOTTY (CONT'D)**

Darn. Sorry.

Bill's a little amazed at that one. He checks his watch.

**BILL**

That's alright, just throw it back.

Scotty eagerly retrieves it. Turns to throw - deja vu - he runs over, hands Bill the ball.

**SCOTTY**

Here.

He runs back across the yard. Turns 'round again. Holds his glove up stiffly.

**SCOTTY (CONT'D)**

Okay. I'm ready.

Bill cannot believe this. Checks his watch again.

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**BILL**

Keep your eye on the ball. Put the glove up where the ball goes.

He throws again. The ball bounces off the toy glove - breaks the webbing.

**SCOTTY**

Darn. My glove got -

**BILL**

- not bad. Right side at least. Now, just throw it back this time.

**SCOTTY**

But my glove -

Bill's looking at his watch again. Scotty fetches the ball - gulps - "flips" it back.

**BILL**  
**(DISBELIEF)**

Oh, my God.

**EXT. THE BLOCK - SCOTTY'S HOUSE - DAY**

Benny comes out of his house. From the sidewalk

**BENNY'S POV**

up the side of Scotty's house into the backyard. He can see Scotty. Only Scotty. Standing there game as hell, trying to catch balls that seem to be coming too fast. The ball comes. Scotty ducks. The ball hits the block wall behind him, caroming back toward where we assume Bill is throwing from.

**BENNY'S**

drawing the wrong conclusion.

**EXT. SCOTTY'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY**

Scotty's still game. Bill's at ropes end. Check his watch again.

**BILL**

Alright, Scott, listen, this one's gonna come right at you, easy, okay?

**SCOTTY**

'Kay.

**22**

**BILL**

Just keep your eye on the ball and put your glove up. You'll catch it.

**SCOTTY**

Okay.

**BILL**

throws.

**THE BALL**

comes slowly forward.

**SCOTTY**

sticks his glove up.

**SCOTTY'S EYES**

widen.

**THE BALL**

hits dead center glove. Rips the "toy" webbing. Flies  
through

**AND CLOUTS**

**SCOTTY**

right in the eye.

**BILL**

**BILL**

Oh my -

**EXT. THE BLOCK - SCOTTY'S HOUSE - DAY**

**BENNY**

- God, whadda jerk!

**INT. SCOTTY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY**

Scotty's mom comes unglued.

**MOM**

Bill! What happened?!

**BILL**

Well, he -

**SCOTTY**  
**(PRIDE'S SAKE)**

- just took my eye off the ball, Mom.

Scotty's mom pulls his hand away from his eye. Great shiner. Bill grabs a steak from the fridge, FLOPS it over Scotty's eye.

**BILL**

There. Keep that on for an hour.  
It'll still be black, but it won't  
swell.

**(BEAT)**

Sorry. We'll try again soon.

**EXT. SCOTTY'S HOUSE - DAY**

Scotty emerges. Sits on the porch. Pitiful and forlorn. Chin in his hands, he looks across the street. He starts. His hand moves to cover his black eye... but he thinks the better of it.

**BENNY'S**

raises  
on the curb across the street. A moment goes by. Benny  
a hand.

**SCOTTY**

slowly waves back.

**BOTH**

Benny comes over to Scotty's sidewalk.

**BENNY**

Gonna go play some ball. Need a extra  
guy. Wanna go?

**SCOTTY**

Naw. Thanks.

**BENNY**

Why not? Doncha like baseball?

**SCOTTY**

Oh. Yeah. But, ah...

**BENNY**

But what?

Scotty searches for a quick way out of this. Gets it:

**24**

**SCOTTY**

But my glove's busted. So, ya know, I  
can't go. Thanks, though.

Benny reaches behind his back. Takes something out of his  
jeans - like he's going for a gun. Smiles a little.

**BENNY**

That's okay.

He offers it to Scotty... a "real" glove.

**BENNY (CONT'D)**

I got a extra one.

Scotty SHOUTS over his shoulder:

**SCOTTY**

Mom! I'm gonna go play some ball!

As they move away down the block.

**SCOTTY (CONT'D)**

Thanks. Cool glove.

**BENNY**

Yeah. Cool shiner. We gotta stop by  
the 5 & 10 first. Need a new ball.  
And chaw and stuff, ya know?

**SCOTTY**

Yeah.

**BENNY**

You dip chaw?

**SCOTTY**

**(COMPLETELY CLUELESS)**

Sure. A'course.

**EXT. FIVE & DIME - DAY**

Benny & Scotty go inside.

**INT. FIVE & DIME - DAY**

Benny grabs a new baseball on the stride, and handful of bazooka from a jar on the soda fountain counter. He leaves the money and exits. Scotty follows.

25

**EXT. REAR OF FIVE & DIME - DAY**

Benny and Scotty come upon the gang (all their mouths are full a' bazooka) as Ham's chompin' on a candy cigar doing a

**BABE IMITATION:**

**HAM**

Hey! Check me out! I'm the Great Bambino!

The gang laughs.

**SCOTTY**

**(OVER EAGER)**

Who's that?

The gang stifles. They're none-to-pleased. Ham sees why. The new kid... "flipper." Eight pairs of eyes burn holes in his little soul.

**HAM**

What?...

**(BEYOND HIM)**

What did he say?

**BERTRAM**

Were you born in a barn, man?

**YEAH-YEAH**

Yeah-yeah, what planet are you from?

**SQUINTS**

You never heard of The Sultan of Swat?!

**DENUNEZ**

The Titan of Terror!

**TIMMY**

The Colossus of Clout!

**REPEAT**

The Colossus of Clout!

**BENNY**

(even he's amazed)  
The King of Krash!

**NARRATOR**

I had no idea who they were talking about. But there was no way I could let them know that... so, I lied.

**26**

**SCOTTY**

Oh! The Great Bambino! Of course. I thought you said The Great Bambi.

**HAM**

**(SHIVERING)**

That wimpy deer?

**SCOTTY**

Ah, yeah - I guess. Sorry.

The gang goes SILENT. They spit - they're tough. Scotty dribbles - he's wimpy.

**BENNY**

**(W/MOUTHFUL)**

So, Scott, this is Ken DeNunez; Alan McClennan, we call him Yeah-Yeah; Hamilton Porter, we call him Ham; Tommy and Timmy Timmons, Bertram Grover Weeks, and Mike "Squints" Palledorus.

**(TO GANG)**

He's Scott Smalls.

**SCOTTY**

Hi.

The gang just stares.

**BENNY**

He's gonna play with us. He makes nine. Now we got a team.

**EXT. SANDLOT - DAY**

The pack follows Benny onto the diamond. Scotty trails after them.

**BERTRAM**

Why'd you bring him for, Benny?

**BENNY**

'Cause there's eight of us, and he makes nine.

**BERTRAM**

Yeah, so would my sister, but I didn't bring her!

**BENNY**

With nine Guys we got a whole team.

27

**HAM**

No, with Elswenger we had a whole team, and Elswenger could throw!

**DENUNEZ**

He ain't game, Benny. He can't throw for nothin'.

Scotty drifts off by himself. He can hear what's exchanged.

**TIMMY**

Benny, you already play all the empty positions since Elswenger moved to Arizona.

**BENNY**

And now I get to rotate 8 positions instead of 7. I need the practice.

**SQUINTS**

No you don't. It's stupid, Benny. The kid's an L-7 weenie.

**YEAH-YEAH**

Yeah-yeah, Oscar Mayer even.

**BENNY**

Oh yeah, Squints, and you're Willie

freakin' Mays. You catch like a dork - anybody ever bust your chops about that?

**SQUINTS**  
**(PALTRY EXCUSE)**

No, but I'm - ya know, I'm -

**BENNY**

- and you run like a duck, Yeah- Yeah.

**YEAH-YEAH**  
**(IT'S TRUE)**

'Kay-'kay... But I'm -

**BENNY**

- part-a the game.

**SQUINTS**  
**(DEFENSIVE)**

Right.

**YEAH-YEAH**

Yeah-yeah.

28

**BENNY**

How come he don't get to be?

Nobody's got an answer for that one. Base up you blockheads.)

**THE GANG**

hits the field. Their suspicious glares aren't lost on

**SCOTTY**

standing off by himself, kinda lost. Benny comes over.

**BENNY (CONT'D)**

You take right field, Smalls.

**SCOTTY**  
**(EAGER)**

Right. Okay. Ah... where exactly is that?

**BENNY**  
**(SURPRISED)**

Uh, over there.

Scotty runs "over there" anxiously.

**BENNY**

takes home plate worried: "Maybe the kid is a weenie."

**INFIELD**

DeNunez at the mound. Benny's up.

**BENNY (CONT'D)**

Get two.

Repeat at 3rd, stabs it effortlessly and fires to 2nd. Timmy snatches it down and drag-tags the invisible base runner, then fires to Bertram at 1st. SNAP! Outta there. Bertram throws back to DeNunez. Benny's ready:

**BENNY (CONT'D)**

Smalls! Get one!

**CRACK! THE BALL**

arcs up... comes down right at

**SCOTTY**

who raises the glove, and skippers around, as if he were tracking a falling leaf. The ball lands 5 feet behind him.

**29**

**THE GANG**

shakes its collective head, exasperated.

**SCOTTY**

runs to the ball, is about to throw... runs it in to DeNunez instead.

**SCOTTY**

Here. Sorry, sorry.

**THE GANG**

is stunned.

**SCOTTY**

runs back to right field. Ready again - a game kid.

**BENNY**

trots out after him.

**BENNY**

Hey, you can throw it ya know.

**SCOTTY**

No, I can't... I don't know how.

**(LUMPY THROAT)**

Um, thanks for taking me here... but  
I think better go.

Scotty turns to leave. Benny grabs his arm.

**BENNY**

You think too much. I bet you get  
straight A's and shit, huh?

**SCOTTY**

No, I got a B once. Actually it was  
an A minus.

**(QUICK)**

But it shoulda been a B.

**BENNY**

This is baseball, you're not supposed  
to think, you're just supposed to play.

**(BEAT)**

You ever have a paper route?

**SCOTTY**

Uh, I helped a guy one time.

**BENNY**

Throw it like you chuck a paper. When your arm gets here... just let go of it.

**(PAUSE)**

Just let go.

Scotty nods. Benny starts back.

**SCOTTY**

Wait - how do I catch it?

**BENNY**

Don't worry. Just stand there and stick your glove in the air. I'll take care of it.

**HOME PLATE**

Benny mentally calculates the distance. Puts a little rub on the ball. Flips it into the air...

**BENNY (CONT'D)**

Smalls, get one!

...and swings through deliberately. CRACK!

**SCOTTY**

sees it coming. Stands there stiffly. Sticks his glove up, closes his eyes.

**SCOTTY**

Please, catch it. Please, catch it.  
Please, ca -

SNAP! His glove swings down. He opens his eyes. Looks into his glove. The ball is there. He takes it out and chucks the ball like a folded paper.

**BERTRAM**

catches it good and solid at 1st.

**BERTRAM**

Okay! Hey, let's play ball!

**SCOTTY**

loosens up. From home plate

**BENNY**

gives him a "Thumbs Up." The significance of this is only outweighed by his sudden fear, when...

**SCOTTY**

glimpses something.

**SCOTTY'S POV**

of some great, lumbering thing moving past a crack in those green fiberglass panels.

**EXT. THE BLOCK - DUSK**

In good spirits, the guys break off to their houses.

**SCOTTY & BENNY**

split up in the middle of the street between their homes.

**SCOTTY**

Thanks.

Already at his door, Benny just raises his glove in answer.

**SCOTTY (CONT'D)**

Wait, here - your glove.

**BENNY**

Keep it.

**INT. SCOTTY'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Scotty opens a new writing tablet, and titles the page: "Baseball Stuff to Remember." He writes: "1. The Great Bambino?" He hasn't got a clue.

**EXT. VACANT LOT - DAY**

Benny coaches Scotty. Correct batting stance and swing.

Benny

thumb-flicks bottle caps at Scotty from a coffee can full. They're tough to hit. But soon Scotty's tagging every one of them.

**THE SUN SETS.**

**EXT. SANDLOT - DAY**

DeNunez fires - fastball. CRUNCH!

32

**SCOTTY**

tags it. The ball sails over

**SQUINTS'**

Head in center. From left field

**BENNY**

gives Scotty another "Thumbs Up." The kid's in.

**EXT. SANDLOT - DAY - LATER**

Squints arrives with a box of baseball cards.

**NARRATOR**

Everyday, first thing, we'd all pick a card from what we called "The Dugout."

Squints shakes it up. Everybody picks one.

**NARRATOR (CONT'D)**

It was just a shoe box, but whoever we picked, we got to be when it was our ups. One day, when Ham took his pick a little too seriously, the guys let me in on the world's most terrifying secret...

**BENNY**

Bingo! Maury Wills!

**SCOTTY**

Mickey Mou - ah, Mantle.

**YEAH-YEAH**

Say hey, Willie Mays.

**DENUNEZ**

Stan Musial.

**TIMMY**

Lou Brock.

**REPEAT**

Lou Brock - I mean, Luis Aparicio.

**BERTRAM**

Frank Robinson.

**SQUINTS**

Oh... Bob Uecker.

**33**

**HAM**

Hank Aaron. I'm up.

**EXT. SANDLOT - DAY - MINUTES LATER**

The gang "peppers"

**HAM**

(at home plate) mercilessly.

**DENUNEZ**

pitches - strike. Pitches again - strike. Delivers and

**HAM**

takes a Ruthian cut at it. CONNECTS to deep right.

**SCOTTY**

tracks it.

**THE BALL**

comes down.

**SCOTTY**

runs beneath it - glove up.

**THE BALL**

drops into a backyard. The one with the green fiberglass panels.

**SCOTTY**

stops short. Looks back to

**THE GANG**

who're already packing up in slumped dejection.

**SCOTTY**

makes a decision. Swallows against fear of the fence. He takes one step toward that fence.

**SCOTTY**

Wait a sec, I'll get it!

34

**THE GANG**

comes unglued.

**GANG**

**NOOOOOOOOOO! STOPPPPPP!**

the They rush over - grab Scotty - pull him back 10 feet into "Fear-Free" zone.

**SQUINTS**

Holy crap, you coulda been killed!

**YEAH-YEAH**

Yeah-yeah - truly! Whadda you doin'?!

**SCOTTY**

Well, you were all leavin', so I thought I'd just -

**SQUINTS**

- if you were thinkin' you wouldn't a thought that!

**BENNY**

You can't go back there, Smalls.

**SCOTTY**

Then how do we get the ball?

**TIMMY**

We don't.

**REPEAT**

We don't.

**BERTRAM**

It's gone.

**HAM**

Forever even.

**DENUNEZ**

Forget it, it's a memory.

**BENNY**

Game's over. We'll get a new one tomorrow. Just forget it. We'll never see it again.

**SCOTTY**

Why not?

35

**GANG**

**(HUSHED)**

The Beast.

Scotty stares at them; all heads hung.

**BENNY**

Go over there, real slow, and be quiet. Don't touch the fence, just peek through that hole in the green stuff... go on.

As Scotty goes forward, the gang steps back.

**SCOTTY**

draws his eye close to the hole in the fence. WE SEE

**EXT. MR. MERTLE'S BACKYARD - DAY**

craters  
A LIMITED VIEW of 3 feet square. WE SEE nothing but the ball... in the small crater it's made in the dirt. There are oddly similar craters in the immediate vicinity. Those are empty.

**A MAMMOTH, HAIRY PAW**

comes down from out of nowhere. As it CLEARS FRAME, the baseball is gone. Only the crater remains.

**EXT. SANDLOT - DAY**

Scotty snaps his head away from the hole - runs over to

**THE GANG:**

**SCOTTY**

Something got the ball!

**(UNNERVED)**

What was that thing?!

Considered looks are exchanged, then, in unison:

**GANG**

Campout.

**EXT. TIMMONS' BACKYARD - NIGHT**

Aglow. (NOTE: Same as Sc. 80)

**INT. TREE HOUSE - NIGHT**

A Boy Scout lantern. Professionally built structure. The gang's got sleeping bags. They're roasting marshmallows over a Cub Scout camping stove.

36

Ham's brought personal s'mores supplies.

**HAM**

Wanna s'more?

**SCOTTY**

Some more of what?

**HAM**

No. You wanna s'more?

**SCOTTY**

I haven't had anything yet, so how can I have any more of nothing?

**HAM**

You kill me Smalls. Look, these are s'mores stuff. Pay attention:

**(CONCOCTING)**

First you take the graham - you put the chocolate on the graham, Hershey's of course - you hold the chocolate on the graham while you roast the mallow-

He does. The mallow flames to life.

**HAM (CONT'D)**

-then when the mallow's flamin', ya stuff it on the chocolate and cover it with the other end.

**(BEAT)**

Then, you scarf.

Ham does. The junk squirts half way down his shirt.

**HAM (CONT'D)**

**(BARELY INTELLIGIBLE)**

Kinda messy... Good though.

Squints turns the lantern down low...

**SQUINTS**

Alright, listen up.

**(TO SCOTTY)**

First time DeNunez heard this story he

**FAINTED -**

**DENUNEZ**

- Bull, Squints!

**BENNY**

You did, man.

DeNunez shuts up. It's true.

**SQUINTS**

When Yeah-Yeah heard it he peed his pants.

**YEAH-YEAH**

Shut up, Squints - did not!

**HAM**

You did, man.

**SQUINTS**

And when The Ham heard it he barfed up two bags of marshmallows.

**HAM**

Liar! It was only one.

**SQUINTS**

So stay away from the door... you might fall out. And don't sit on your sleeping bag... you could shit your pants.

**(SOLEMN)**

Now, quiet...

Absolute silence. Kid-reverence equals fright.

**SQUINTS (CONT'D)**

The legend of The Beast goes back a long time... before any of us could pick up a baseball. Back to a place called Mertle's Acres.

**DREAMY DISSOLVE TO:**

**THE STORY OF THE BEAST:**

**EXT. "MERTLE'S ACRES" - DAY**

A legendary place... benefitting from years of kid-embellishment: a gothic, scrapyard fortress oddly designed

to

keep something in not out.

**SQUINTS (V.O.)**

The Beast belongs to Mr. Mertle, the guy that used to own Mertle's Acres

Junkyard. And nobody's ever seen him since the day it happened...

**INT. MERTLE'S ACRES - DAY**

Blurbling pockets of super-heated muck.

38

**BURNED-OUT SHELLS**

of twisted vehicles - strewn carcasses. A battlefield.

**OLD APPLIANCES**

that form tortured faces in the shadowy recesses.

**SQUINTS (V.O.)**

Mertle's Acres was a bitchin' place, that had everything you could ever imagine.

**OTHER STUFF**

like savaged shopping carts. A school bus graveyard. Scrap motorbikes. Cargo ship buoy balls. The gutted shell of a fighter plane.

**SQUINTS (V.O.) (CONT'D)**

And the stuff was worth a fortune. So, one day Mr. Mertle got him this new pup from the pound. They were glad to get rid of him, on account of while he'd been there, he'd killed three dogs bigger than he was.

**(BEAT)**

That was exactly what Mr. Mertle figured he needed to protect his junkyard, 'cause people kept stealing stuff at night, when he wasn't around.

**WE DRIFT THROUGH**

a maze of dark, grimy junk-passageways.

**SQUINTS (V.O.) (CONT'D)**

So he bought The Beast, and set him  
loose in Mertle's Acres.

**SOMETHING LOPES BY**

at the end of a passage. (NOTE: We never fully see The  
Beast.)

**SQUINTS (V.O.) (CONT'D)**

The Beast was still just a pup of six  
months, but he already weighed a 150  
pounds... and he kept gettin' bigger.

**A TRASH BAG**

full of meat hits the ground - disappears. SLIFFTHT! It  
spits back INTO FRAME... empty and tattered.

39

**SQUINTS (V.O.) (CONT'D)**

He threw The Beast a trash bag full of  
meat every night, and just left him  
alone. All alone in the whole place  
by himself... to grow.

**AN EYEBALL**

among a pile of broken headlights. As big as the headlights.

**FLEETING GLIMPSES OF MORE STUFF**

like Mannequins, with bite-chunks missing. Plastic  
flamingoes,  
brutally mangled. A decapitated "lawn jockey." A plastic  
cow, legs gnawed off. And BREATHING... amongst the  
artificial  
"life" forms.

**A GARGANTUAN FOOTPRINT**

in the center of an old truck tire.

**THE BEAST'S SHOULDERS**

moving powerfully - as tall as a burned-out VW.

**SQUINTS (V.O.) (CONT'D)**

And so, in a few months, the pup grew into The Beast. And he grew big as a car. And he grew mean, 'cause nobody liked him, and he didn't like nobody either.

**(BEAT)**

And so he only had one thing on his mind... to kill.

**INT. MERTLE'S ACRES - NIGHT**

TWO THIEVES in ski-masks. Suddenly, a HEATED WIND strips their masks. Two elephantine feet come down on their faces. They SCREAM.

**SQUINTS (V.O.)**

And he did. And he liked it.

**ANOTHER THIEF**

suddenly enveloped by a shadow. He's dragged into darkness...  
he SCREAMS.

**TWO OTHER THIEVES**

load their van and take off. They skid. CRUNCH! The van caves in. The Thieves are dragged out, BLATHERING in horror.

40

**FROM HIGH ABOVE MERTLE'S ACRES**

The Beast moves like a murderous phantom. WE HEAR ROARING, and primordial bloodlust.

**VARIOUS OTHER THEIVES**

are tossed hither and yon... mixed in with fake flamingoes, and a flying plastic cow.

**EXT. MERTLE'S ACRES - DAY**

Police cars. DETECTIVES speak with MR. MERTLE; his shoulders slumped, his eyes moist. They show him file photos of  
(THEIVES

in ski masks.)

**SQUINTS (V.O.)**

The Beast was the most perfect junkyard dog that ever lived... a true killing machine.

**(BEAT)**

After awhile, the police started getting phone calls from people, reporting all the missing thieves. The ones The Beast had killed... it added up to about 37 guys.

Mr. Mertle solemnly heads inside the junkyard.

**SQUINTS (V.O.) (CONT'D)**

But they never found a single body... not one. Some people say they all got away, and were just so scared that they ended up in insane asylums and stuff.

**(BEAT)**

But we know what really happened.

Mr. Mertle emerges from the junkyard. Cops take cover behind their cars. Guns are leveled toward Mr. Mertle and what follows him at the end of a rusty tow chain.

**SQUINTS (V.O.) (CONT'D)**

The Beast... ate them.

**(BEAT)**

He ate them bones and all.

**EXT. THE BLOCK OF SANDLOT COMMON HOUSES - DAY**

PEOPLE slam their windows - draw their curtains. LITTLE KIDS are snatched up by PARENTS, who run inside and lock their doors.

**MR. MERTLE**

leads the The Beast on a huge chain. (NOTE: We only see bits of The Beast.)

**SQUINTS (V.O.)**

The Beast was good at his guarddog job. Too good. So the cops said he had to be retired. But he didn't have to be killed or nothin', on account of there was no evidence... no bones... no teeth for dental records.

**EXT. MR. MERTLE'S BACKYARD - DAY**

The green fiberglass panels are brand new here in the past.

**SQUINTS (V.O.)**

The police told Mr. Mertle that if wanted to keep The Beast, he hadda lock him in his backyard, so he could never get out.

**A CRANE**

lowers a giant bathtub into the backyard. FIREMEN fill it with water.

**SQUINTS (V.O.) (CONT'D)**

And that he hadda chain him up, so's in case he tried to get out to eat children and stuff, he couldn't.

**CONSTRUCTION WORKERS**

sink an I-Beam girder. Cement fills the chasm.

**MR. MERTLE**

contracts a huge lean-to from old bullet-holed, tin-ad signs.

**A WELDER**

Braises chain to the girder.

**MR. MERTLE**

"collars" The Beast with the other end.

**THE BEAST**

disappears beneath the lean-to. DUST EXPLODES from underneath as he lies down.

**SQUINTS (V.O.) (CONT'D)**

Mr. Mertle asked the cops how long he had to keep his pup chained up like a slave.

**EXT. MR. MERTLE'S FRONT PORCH - DAY**

A POLICEMAN "mouths" the word, "F-O-R-E-V-E-R."

**SQUINTS (V.O.)**

They said... until forever.

**DREAMY DISSOLVE TO:**

**INT. TREE HOUSE - NIGHT**

'mallows Ham drools mallow goop. His hands are fisted tight...  
squirt out twixt his clenched fingers.

**REPEAT & TIMMY**

have their pillows 'round their heads like bonnets.

**DENUNEZ & YEAH-YEAH**

stare and shake.

**BERTRAM'S**

eyes are shut tight, his bottom lip shudders.

**BENNY**

gulps.

**SCOTTY'S**

sitting shattered. He checks his pants to see if he's peed them. His mallow's a briquette. It SPUTTERS and flames out.

**SQUINTS**

is proud of his story prowess.

**SQUINTS**

And so... The Beast sits there under that lean-to, dreaming about the time when he can break the chain and get out... dreaming of the time when he can chase and kill again.

43

**THE GANG**

**BERTRAM**

See, man. That's why you can't go over there. Nobody ever has. Nobody ever will.

**HAM**

One kid did, but nobody ever seen him again.

**DENUNEZ**

That ain't true -

**HAM**

- yeah it is! He got eaten!

**YEAH-YEAH**

Yeah-yeah - that kid who went to get his kite... what was his name?

**DENUNEZ**

"Boogers" Fleming?

**TIMMY**

No. It was that guy with the warts on his face.

**REPEAT**

Davy "The Toad."

**TIMMY**

That's what I said.

Solemnity spreads among them. Kid-reverence.

**SQUINTS**

Davy "The Toad" Stodenrous.

**BERTRAM**

Yeah, The Toad...

**YEAH-YEAH**

Yeah-yeah, poor Toad.

**SCOTTY  
(WEAK)**

Nuh-uh... none of that's true. You  
guys are just -

**SQUINTS**

- oh, yeah?... Come here. Stick your  
head out the window and look down.

**44**

Scotty goes slowly... He sticks his head out guillotinely,  
through the small square opening.

**EXT. TREE HOUSE - NIGHT**

Scotty's head comes out turtle-like. The tree house  
overhangs  
the common wall.

**HE LOOKS DOWN INTO**

Mr. Mertle's backyard and SEES an old footed bathtub filled  
with murky water. A steel pole, cemented into the center of  
the yard. A tow chain, snaking away from the pole and  
vanishing under the lean-to. Dust rises and falls from  
'neath  
the lean-to.

**SCOTTY**

hears the ORGANIC EXHAUST that accompanies the dust...  
rising  
and falling... in POWERFUL EXHALATIONS.

**INT. TREE HOUSE - NIGHT**

Scotty pulls his head back, scared shitless.

**SCOTTY  
(HUSHED)**

He's down there!

**SQUINTS**

You bet he is.

**HAM**

Whatever goes over that fence... stays there.

**SQUINTS**

It becomes the property of The Beast... Forever.

**EXT. TREE HOUSE - NIGHT**

(NOTE: Same as Sc. 54) FROM THE SANDLOT... a FULL MOON hangs ominously over the tree house; a glowing little box of  
debate  
in the scary night.

**NARRATOR**

I learned that more than a 150 baseballs had gone over that fence... and not one of them was ever seen again. Even when some brave kid worked up enough courage to peek over the fence.

**(MORE)**

45

**NARRATOR (CONT'D)**

**(BEAT)**

Because, when they went over, they vanished.

**(BEAT)**

I knew it was true, because when I looked down in there, I didn't see a single... solitary... one.

**EXT. FIVE & DIME - MORNING**

Squints and Yeah-Yeah come out of the store in a big hurry, with a new baseball in a box. They stop momentarily - open it and chuck the box. Yeah-Yeah rams his mouth full of  
'zooka

**WHILE**

**SQUINTS**

spits into his palm and rubs the ball to get the shine off. His eyes go suddenly wide and he stares, and oggles, and

gawks:

**SLO-MO - A BEAUTIFUL BLONDE GIRL**

about 19-years-old walks by into the store. She smiles at Squints.

**SQUINTS**

can only manage a totally embarrassing goofy grin.

**EXT. THE SANDLOT - MORNING**

The guys are waiting anxiously as Yeah-Yeah and Squints run over. Yeah-Yeah tosses Benny the ball. He rubs it up. Passes it along. They all take a turn.

**BENNY**

What took you so long?! We been here forever already!

**YEAH-YEAH**

Squints was pervin' a dish.

**SQUINTS**

Shut up, I wasn't!

**YEAH-YEAH**

Yeah-Yeah you were! Yer tongue was hangin' outta yer head and you was swoonin'!

**(SWOONIN')**

Oh-oh Wendy Peffercorn my darling lover girl...

**46**

Squints goes for Yeah-Yeah. Ham holds him back.

**SQUINTS**

Hold me back! Hold me back!

**HAM**

I am holdin' you back Squints.

**SQUINTS**

Oh, yeah. Well, lemme go then.

**(CALMS)**

**DENUNEZ**

So, where'd you get the money this time Yeah-Yeah?

**YEAH-YEAH**

Oh, yeah-yeah! It was great! So I went around pretended like I was selling perscriptions to magazines. And the people asked if they should pay me now. So I said yeah-yeah, pay me now! And they did!

The guys are astonished.

**HAM**

Sonavabitch!

**YEAH-YEAH**

What-what?! I'll take it back. I know it was crappy, but I didn't have no money, I -

**BENNY**

- naw, don't, man. He's just mad he didn't think of it.

**HAM**

Yeah, you know how many lawns I hadda mow when it was my turn?! Geez. Let's play.

**THE SUN**

crests the sandlot... it's gonna be a hot one.

**EXT. SANDLOT - LATER**

A real hot one. Ham sweats uncontrollably. His lunch bag drips PB&J.

**DENUNEZ**

spits a 'zooka sploink that SIZZLES when it hits.

**THE GANG**

simultaneously heads for the bleachers. Everybody but Benny.

**FINALLY:**

**HAM**

I can't take it no more, Benny. I'm  
bakin' like a toasted cheeser!

**TIMMY**

It's hotter than the fires of hell.

**REPEAT**

It's hotter than a fish in a fryin'  
pan.

The brothers "look" at each other on the miscue.

**BENNY**

Come on, don't be wimpy.

**SQUINTS**

Face it, Benny. It's not a fit day  
out for man nor beast. We gotta call  
it for the day.

**BENNY**

Vote then. Everyone that wants to be  
a can't-hack-it panty waist, and wear  
their momma's bra, raise your hand.

They all raise their hands. Grinning.

**BENNY (CONT'D)**

Fine. Be like that. So what're we  
gonna do then?

They look at each other, as if Benny's gone quite mad...

it's

**SO OBVIOUS:**

**GANG**

Scam Pool Honeys!

**EXT. PUBLIC POOL - DAY**

TEENAGE POOL HONEYS arranged particularly on their beach

towels

along the deck, soak up the rays in their polka-dot bikinis.

**48**

**THE GANG**

rushes out in cut-off shorts, and banzais the shallow end. Ham leaps over the water like a graceful Manatee.

**HAM**

Hamonball!

KERSPLASH! A Ham-tsunami SLOSHES the Coppertone'd bods of

**POOL HONEYS**

They're up and SCREAMING at him.

**NARRATOR**

Benny would've played ball all day and all night... rain shine, tidal wave, whatever, it didn't matter. Baseball was the only thing he cared about and everything else was just a waste of time.

**(BEAT)**

But, of all the things we ever did besides baseball, goin' to the pool was what he tolerated best. Even though none of us had ever seen a Playboy magazine - which we constantly lied about - we figured the pool was the next best thing to being there.

**THE GANG**

dunks each other, play "attack-sub," etc...

**NARRATOR (CONT'D)**

It wasn't the Pool Honeys like we said, 'cause if any one of them had come up to any one of us, we'd of peed our pants.

**(BEAT)**

We went for... the Lifeguard.

**THE LIFEGUARD**

is unbelievable. In fact, it's WENDY PEFFERCORN. She slides Coppertone up and down her legs.

#### **THE GANG**

one by one, stop foolin' around. Chest deep in the shallow end, they're a detached and frozen pocket of leering dopes. The OTHER 80 KIDS in the pool play on around them.

49

#### **SQUINTS**

is suddenly afflicted.

#### **NARRATOR (CONT'D)**

And one day, it became too much for Michael "Squints" Palledorous. And he did the most desperate thing any of us had ever seen.

#### **THE LIFEGUARD**

oils up and down.

#### **THE GANG**

gawks on. (Cool Hand Luke scene):

#### **BENNY**

Oh, man...

#### **YEAH-YEAH**

Yeah-yeah, too cruel.

#### **TIMMY**

She don't know what she's doing.

#### **REPEAT**

She don't know what she's doing.

#### **BENNY**

Yeah she does. She knows exactly what she's doing.

#### **SQUINTS**

I've swum here every summer of my adult  
life... and every summer there she is.

**(LOSING IT)**

Lotioning... oiling... smiling.

**(TEETH CLENCHED)**

I - can't - take - this - no - more!

**THE GANG WATCHES AS SQUINTS**

really pushes through the water, pulls himself out, and walks  
fast to the diving board (taking off his glasses to impress  
her as he passes.)

**SCOTTY**

What's wrong with him?

50

**YEAH-YEAH**

**(WORRIED)**

Don't-know, but that's the deep end,  
and Squints can't swim!

**SQUINTS**

walks the plank to the end. Looks wantingly toward

**THE LIFEGUARD**

who smiles back at him.

**SQUINTS**

holds his nose. Takes the deep leap. Hits the water and...

**UNDERWATER**

...sinks like a stone. Squints grins as he founders.

**THE GANG**

lines the edge of the deep section.

**BERTRAM**

Squints!

**HAM**

Oh my God! He's drowning!

**THE LIFEGUARD**

to the rescue. Seconds pass... she surfaces and lays a limp

**SQUINTS**

**ON THE DECK**

Everybody at the pool gathers 'round. The Lifeguard lays Squints flat. She administers mouth-to-mouth.

The gang watches on tense as hell.

Squints peeks at them through a secretly opened eye. As the Lifeguard is "saving" his sneaky life, Squints can no longer restrain himself, he grabs her - gives her a sloppy SMOOCH! She tears away. Stands up over his wimpy little form:

**LIFEGUARD**

You little pervert!

She grabs Squints by the scruff of the neck. Run-walks him toward the exit, and...

**51**

**EXT. PUBLIC POOL - DAY**

...chucks his boney butt into the hedges. The guys scramble out, dragging their clothes after them. They help Squints up.

**HAM**

Did you plan that?!

**SQUINTS**

A'course I did. Been plannin' it for years.

They let Squints walk out front:

**NARRATOR**

Michael "Squints" Palledorous walked a little taller that day. And we had to tip our hats to him. He was lucky she hadn't beat the crap out of him. We wouldn't have blamed her. What he'd done was sneaky, rotten and low.

**(BEAT)**

And cool.

**(BEAT)**

Not another one among us would've ever, even for a million dollars, had the guts to put the move on the Lifeguard. He did. He had kissed a woman. And he kissed her long and good.

**(BEAT)**

We got banned from the pool forever that day... but every time we walked by after that, the Lifeguard looked down from her watchtower, right over at Squints... and smiled.

**INT. SCOTTY'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Scotty pours over his "Baseball Stuff To Remember" list: 2. Maury Wills, 3. Mickey Mantle, 4. Willie Mays, 5. Hank

Aaron,

6. Stan Musial, 7. Lou Brock, 8. Luis Aparicio, 9. Brooks Robinson, 10. Frank Robinson, 11. Bob Uecker. Right Field is near the green fence. Left Field is in the left. Double play gets two outs. Triple play is impossible. Single is good. Double is better. Home run is best. And, ominously, "Don't get in a pickle or you're dead!" And one entry that's double question marked: 1. The Great Bambino??

**EXT. SANDLOT - SUNSET**

The Guys play in magic hour. CRACK!

52

**BENNY**

jolts a high fly to

**SCOTTY**

in right field. No problem now. He backpedals, judging.

**CLOSER TO**

**MR. MERTLE'S FENCE**

then, SNATCH! Scotty makes a clean catch.

**BENNY**

gives Scotty "Thumbs Up." Just as

**SCOTTY'S**

gonna throw the ball back, he shivers, noticing that the sun has fallen to a precise declination; its rays focused behind the glowing green fiberglass of

**MR. MERTLE'S FENCE**

against which a hulking black form rises in the backyard... blocking out the sun against the panels. A gargantuan shadow.

**THE SUN GOES DOWN**

The shadow vanishes. TRIBAL DRUMS SOUND far in the distance. The oleander bushes rustle menacingly, like...

**MATCH DISSOLVE TO:**

**EXT. JUNGLE - B&W - NIGHT - (ORIGINAL "KING KONG,"  
1932 - STOCK)**

...a wall of tropical foliage. Frightening. Primordial.  
(NOTE: the scene with NATIVES atop the wall when Kong grabs Fay Wray.)

**INT. BOYS CLUB AUDITORIUM - NIGHT**

ON THE PROJECTOR SCREEN King Kong rips through the jungle.

**THE GANG'S**

here with 100 OTHER BOYS at the afternoon show.

**EXT. BOYS CLUB AUDITORIUM - NIGHT**

The gang gathers. Ham bursts out behind the gang as Kong!

**HAM**

Eee! Eee! Eee! Oh! Oh! Oh!

The guys SCREAM - spin to face the Ham. He BUSTS UP.

**HAM (CONT'D)**

Hey, check me out! I'm the mighty  
King Kong!

**(DODGING BLOWS)**

Hey! C'mon! It was a joke, ya dopes!  
Do I look like a monkey?!

**A GROUP**

Matching  
of other kids comes out behind them. LITTLE LEAGUERS.  
caps and shirts. The gang straightens up.

**LEAGUER PUNK 1**

Yeah. Ya smell like one too. Hey  
guys, it's the sandlot babies!

**LEAGUER PUNK 2**

Skin yer knees lately sliding on rocks?!

**HAM**

Shut up, blockhead.

**LEAGUER PUNK 2**

What're you gonna do, Porter, sit on  
me?!

**LEAGUER PUNK 1**

Rodriquez, why do hang around with  
these rejects, man? You could be  
playin' with us on a official American  
Youth League certified big time diamond.  
You'd make the Allstar team easy.

**BENNY**

Play us and you'll find out why,  
Phillips.

**LEAGUER PUNK 1**

Forget it, we play real ball, not with  
toy bats and sneakers!

The punks head off, LAUGHING as they go. Benny glares at  
them.

**SQUINTS**

Benny, man, are we gonna let 'em get  
away with that?!

**BENNY**

Yeah. For now. Let's go.

**EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD SIDEWALK - NIGHT**

The guys 'round a corner and continue on. They fall serious.

**SCOTTY**

You think he really died in the end?

**BENNY**

Who?

**SCOTTY**

King Kong...

**SQUINTS**

Not possible. He's so big that fallin' off the Empire State's just like us fallin' off a roof... he's alive.

**SCOTTY**

So whadda you think happened to him?

Heads are scratched. Chins are rubbed. Thoughts are thunk.

**TIMMY**

Most likely.

**SCOTTY**

Hey, guys? Has anyone ever really seen The Beast?

**THE GANG STOPS**

except Scotty, he goes forward - turns back.

**SQUINTS**

Look, Smalls. You ever seen King Kong for real? In person, I mean?

**SCOTTY**

No. But -

**SQUINTS**

- well, he's real right?

**SCOTTY**

Yeah, a'course.

**SQUINTS**

And he's still out there somewhere  
right?

55

**SCOTTY**

Yeah.

**SQUINTS**

See, there's just somethings that are.  
Ya know, stuff that it's better not to  
talk about... 'cause thinkin' about it  
just makes it worse.

**(BEAT)**

Nobody has to see The Beast to know  
he's there.

**SCOTTY**

**(HORRIFIED THOUGHT)**

You don't think that The Beast is  
really...

Motionless silence. No one's ever considered this. They  
suddenly realize where they are:

**EXT. MR. MERTLE'S HOUSE - DAY**

Denial kicks in as they carry on:

**GANG**

King Kong? Naw! God is that stupid!  
No stinkin' way! Oh boy, had me feelin'  
like a douf there for a minute! Whew,  
what a relief!

**EXT. THE SANDLOT ALLEYWAY - NIGHT**

FROM THIS HEIGHT WE SEE them round the corner, and carry on  
past the sandlot. Little debating specks, far away from us,  
and the cares of the world.

**HAM**

Hey, who d'ya think'd win in a fight,  
King Kong or Godzilla?

**GANG**

Godzilla. King Kong. 'Zilla! Kong!  
'ZILLA! KONG!

**YEAH-YEAH**

Yeah-yeah, wait a sec, maybe they'll  
do a movie someday and we'll find out.

**GANG**

Yeah. That would be cool. I'd see  
that. Kong would kick his ass. No  
way, 'Zilla's got that fire breath  
stuff, he'd fry the monkey!

56

**EXT. DODGER STADIUM - ESTABLISHING - 1962 - DAY**

The gang heads toward hallowed halls.

**INT. DODGER STADIUM - TUNNEL - DAY**

Footsteps echo as the gang walks along, alone, in awe.

**EXT. DODGER STADIUM - INFIELD - DAY**

The '62 DODGERS (and our gang's Home Team) are taking  
batting  
practice.

**THE GANG**

and a bunch of kids at the infield railing. Autograph  
signing.  
Benny sticks his glove through the crowd up to a certain  
player.

**NARRATOR**

Besides The Great Bambino, who I still  
had no clue about, Benny had one living  
hero.

**MAURY WILLS**

autographs Benny's glove. Hands it back to...

**INT. BENNY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY**

...Benny who's suddenly here watching a baseball game. The gang's with him.

**YEAH-YEAH**

Yeah-yeah, here he comes. He's gonna steal second.

**BENNY**

Naw he ain't, not yet.

**TELEVISION - STOCK '62 DODGER GAME**

Maury Wills on 1st. Taunting the pitcher. Big lead off.

**NARRATOR**

A guy that would break the stolen bases record that year that had stood for as many years as there were baseball's lost to The Beast.

**THE GANG**

can't wait for Wills to go.

57

**GANG**

He's gonna go, Benny. Here he goes, man. Right now, watch, watch. There, there!

**BENNY**

leans forward seriously.

**BENNY**

No... not yet.

**TELEVISION - STOCK '62 DODGER GAME**

Maury Wills gets ready to steal.

**NARRATOR**

Maury Wills became a hero for what he

did.

**BENNY**

watches intently.

**BENNY**

He's... gonna... go... riiiiight...  
now.

**TELEVISION - STOCK '62 DODGER GAME**

Maury Wills steals second.

**BENNY**

smiles to himself.

**GANG**

**(CLUELESS)**

How'd you know that? How'd you guess?  
How'd ya know?

**NARRATOR**

Benny... would become a Legend.

**INT. SCOTTY'S HOUSE - DUSK**

party  
Scotty opens the front door, BENNY'S THERE. 4th of July  
inside. All ADULTS.

**BENNY**

**(URGENT)**

Get your glove, c'mon.

**58**

**SCOTTY**

What's the big deal?

**BENNY**

Nightgame!

**EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD HORIZON - DUSK**

The sun is setting.

**EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET ON WAY TO SANDLOT - DUSK**

**THE GANG**

hurries along with their ball gear, through a Block party of  
bubble-topped BBQ's attended by APRONED DADS grillin' dogs  
n'  
burgers.

**KIDS**

clutching "Red Devil" fireworks, timing the sinking sun.

**MOMS**

pouring iced tea.

**HAM**

pilfers dog makin's from various Q's. Concocts a two-fisted  
doglog! He catches up to

**THE GANG**

marching away into the SETTING SUN.

**A LONG LINE OF FIREWORKS**

in the street.

**MATCH HEADS**

are lit.

**YELLOW MATCH FLAMES**

The SAME SIZE IN FRAME as our guys at the end of the block,  
are set to fuses.

**DADS AND KIDS**

rush for the curbs... and

59

**THE FIRECONES FLOW INTO THE SKY**

in kaleidoscopic columns of star-hot colors.

**MATCH DISSOLVE TO:**

**EXT. SANDLOT - NIGHT**

BURSTING FIREWORKS IN THE SKY down from which WE TILT TO

**THE GANG**

playing hard beneath them. Snap throws. Basket catches. Snatching grounders.

**NARRATOR**

There was only one nightgame a year. On the Fourth of July, the whole sky would brighten up with fireworks, giving us just enough light for a game.

**(BEAT)**

We played better then too. Because I guess, we all felt like Big Leaguers under the lights at some great stadium.

**(BEAT)**

Benny felt like that all the time.

**BENNY**

Knocks dirt from his p.f. flyers. Twirls the bat. Cocks it back. Coils up 'round his back leg.

**DENUNEZ**

delivers. Fastball.

**CRUNCH!**

Ash meets cowhide.

**FIREWORKS EXPLODE**

high above them.

**THE GANG**

stops play and marvels up at the colors.

**SCOTTY'S**

a little kid with a too-big mitt and floppy cap, goggling up at the fireworks. The ball lands by him. He retrieves it. Is about to throw - stops.

**EVERYONE'S**

staring at Benny up at

**HOME PLATE**

bat slung second-naturedly over his shoulder... a real ball player.

**NARRATOR (CONT'D)**

We all knew Benny was different. We knew that he was gonna go on to bigger and better games.

**(BEAT)**

Because everytime we stopped to watch the sky that night like regular kids, Benny was there to call us back.

**DENUNEZ**

pitches.

**BENNY**

cranks one to kingdom come.

**NARRATOR (CONT'D)**

For him, baseball wasn't just a game. For Benjamin Franklin Rodriguez...

**A FINAL FIREWORK EXPLODES**

in a beautiful burst above them.

**NARRATOR (CONT'D)**

...baseball was life.

**MATCH DISSOLVE TO:**

**EXT. THE SANDLOT - DAY**

The gang is still in the same positions. As if having never left.

**HAM**

fires to 3rd from home.

**INFIELD**

Ham and Repeat catch Benny in a pickle. Benny feints, dodges and rubba-legs them. He crosses home easily.

**61**

**TIMMY**

Truly rubba legs.

**REPEAT**

Truly rubba legs.

**THE LITTLE LEAGUERS**

show up on their bikes.

**LEAGUER PUNK 2**

It's easy when you play with rejects and fat kids, Rodriquez.

**BENNY**

marches over. The gang follows.

**BENNY**

What'id you say, crapface?

**LEAGUER PUNK 1**

He said, they shouldn't be allowed to even touch a baseball. They're an insult to the game.

That did it! Ham rushes the punk. The gang holds him back.

**HAM**

Come on! We'll take you on right here, right now! Come on! Right now!

**LEAGUER PUNK 1**

We play on a real diamond, Porter. And you ain't good enough to lick the dirt off our cleats.

**HAM**

Watch yer mouth, jerk!

**LEAGUER PUNK 1**

Shut up, dipshit!

**HAM**

Asshole!

**LEAGUER PUNK 1**

Scab eater!

**HAM**

Butt sniffer!

**LEAGUER PUNK 1**

Pus licker!

**62**

**HAM**

Fart smeller!

**LEAGUER PUNK 1**

Dog crap for breakfast eatin' geek!

**HAM**

You mix yer Wheaties with your momma's  
toe jam!

**LEAGUER PUNK 1**

You bob for apples in your toilet, and  
you like it!

The teams GASP. Then:

**HAM**

**YOU PLAY BALL LIKE A GIRL!**

THUNDERING SILENCE. The ultimate baseball insult.

**LEAGUER PUNK 1**

What did you say?

**HAM**

You heard me.

**LEAGUER PUNK 1**

Tomorrow. Sun-up. At our field. Be there, buffalo-butt breath.

**HAM**

Count on it, pee drinkin' craphead.

**EXT. LITTLE LEAGUE FIELD - DAWN**

Ham raises his catcher's mask:

**HAM**

**PLAAAAAAY BALLLLLLLLL!**

**DENUNEZ**

**STRIKES OUT**

**BATTER 1**

Whif. Whif. Whif.

**BATTER 2**

**GROUNDS TO**

**63**

**YEAH-YEAH**

at short. He stabs it. Fires to

**FIRST BASE**

outta there.

**BATTER 3**

hits a lazy fly ball to

**RIGHT CENTER FIELD**

where Scotty and Bertram run for it - watching the ball, not

**EACH OTHER:**

**SCOTTY/BERTRAM**

I got it. I got it.

They stop - the ball drops between them.

**SCOTTY/BERTRAM (CONT'D)**

I thought you had it.

**BATTER 3**

rounds 2nd base.

**BENNY**

Somebody get it!

**SCOTTY**

picks it up and fires for home for all he's worth.

**BATTER 3**

rounds 3rd.

**THE BALL**

rockets toward Home.

**BATTER 3**

slides in a cloud of dust.

**THE BALL**

**BLASTS INTO**

**64**

**HAM'S MITT**

and Ham drags the baseline.

**THE DUST CLEARS**

Ham's got him tagged. Ham goes Jackie Gleasonaic:

**HAM**

You - are - out - of - here! Out!  
Gone! Dead! To the moon! Roger,  
Wilco, Over and OUT!

Ham abruptly stops Cramdoning because

**EVERYBODY'S LOOKING**

at him.

**HAM (CONT'D)**

Ah, you're out.

**DISSOLVE TO:**

**EXT. LITTLE LEAGUE FIELD - DAY**

Benny's at bat. BANG! Single to left. Throw to 1st - too late. Throw to 2nd - too late. Throw to 3rd - he's on his way home. Throw to home - safe!

**THE LEAGUERS**

gawk; an inside the park home run.

**BENNY**

**(TO CATCHER)**

That's one. Get used to it.

**HIGH ABOVE FIELD, A SERIES OF ECU'S OF**

the gang belting shot after shot. Rounding base after base. Crossing home.

**EXT. VACANT LOT - DAY**

(Bob B. Soxx & The Blue Jeans "Zip-A-Dee-Do-Dah" scene.) The guys strut along, air-batting, mime-catching. Benny RIPS a momentous victory slide.

**EXT. CARNIVAL - NIGHT**

The gang comes down the midway and stops at a ticket booth for a ride we don't yet see. As they buy their tickets:

**65**

**BENNY**

Crack! Boom! Outta here! You see the looks on their faces? Did ya? It was like, "Duh... so that's how you

play baseball."

**BERTRAM**

Crap! I almost forgot. Chaw!

He holds up a pouch of chewin' 'baccy.

**THE GANG**

gathers 'round.

**BERTRAM (CONT'D)**

I was savin' it for a good time.

**SCOTTY**

What is it?

**HAM**

Geez, Smalls... I s'pose you don't who  
The Babe is either. It's chaw. Plug.  
Wad. Chewing Tobacco!

Bertram passes it around. Everybody sniffs.

**SCOTTY**

Whadda you do with it?

**HAM**

You're killin' me, Smalls. You chew  
it, of course.

**DENUNEZ**

All the pros do.

**YEAH-YEAH**

Yeah-yeah, gives ya tons of energy.

**TIMMY**

Let's dip.

**REPEAT**

Let's dip.

Bertram pinches a too-huge wad. Stuffs it in his mouth. The  
bag goes around. All cud up.

**BENNY**

Smooth.

**HAM**

Juicy.

**SQUINTS**

Tangy.

**SCOTTY**

Kinda tastes like an ashtray smells.

**DENUNEZ**

Supposed to.

**SQUINTS**

Let's ride.

The gang gets on the ride: THE ANTI-GRAV!

**EXT. CARNIVAL - ABOARD ANTI-GRAV - NIGHT**

brown

As they ride, and spin round and round and round... the  
glop falls from their mouths. They all watch

**BERTRAM**

who turns salmon... yellow... green. Then, presumably

**EXT. ANTI-GRAV - NIGHT**

yawns breakfast, lunch, and dinner like a firehose. At least  
that's what WE HEAR as the ride spins vertical - that, and a  
host of blood curdling SCREAMS from vom-victims. As the

**RIDERS DISEMBARK**

**A BARF CHAIN REACTION**

ensues. They all running SCREAMING from the ride and lose  
it.

**EXT. THE SANDLOT ALLEYWAY - NIGHT**

The gang wobbles, MOANING as they go. Ham is strangely  
unaffected he unpockets a fistful of some disgusting glorp:

The guys lose it. WE DRIFT off them and their predicament to

**THE HOLE**

in the green fiberglass fence. An EYEBALL - big, bloodshot and amused. GUTTURAL PANTING... The Beast is LAUGHING at them.

67

**EXT. SCOTTY'S HOUSE - DAY**

Scotty's cod belly white and jelly fish limp, from a long bout of the chuckies.

Bill tosses his luggage in the car trunk. Scotty's mom leans out the driver's window.

**MOM**

I'll be back in an hour, Scotty, I'm taking Dad to the airport.

**SCOTTY**

**(STILL WOozy)**

'Kay. Where you goin'?

**BILL**

Chicago, on business for a week. Listen, Scott, while I'm gone, you're the man of the house. Understand?

**SCOTTY**

Yeah, I guess so.

**BILL**

We'll take another stab at catch when I get back, okay? So, take care of things while I'm gone. I'm counting on you.

He offers his hand to Scotty. They shake.

**SCOTTY**

**(PERKING UP)**

Okay. I will.

**EXT. FIVE & DIME - DAY**

The gang comes out with a new boxed baseball. Each has a pack of Topps. A bag of Bazooka.

**NARRATOR**

Once we got over trying to be big shots,

we just stuck to what we could handle,  
and swore off the hard stuff forever.  
When we finally got back together for  
some baseball, something amazing  
happened.

**(BEAT)**

It was an omen... one that was meant  
just for Benjamin Franklin Rodriguez.

**68**

**EXT. THE SANDLOT - DAY**

They tear open their packs of baseball cards. First things  
first - they eat the gum sticks. Then, shuffle through the  
cards looking for gold.

**SQUINTS**

Whad'ya get, Ham?

**HAM**

A Mickey Mantle and 7 guys I never  
heard of. How 'bout you?

**SQUINTS**

A Brooks Robinson and a Koufax. Pretty  
good.

**BERTRAM**

I got junk.

**DENUNEZ**

One Drysdale, a bunch a duds.

**YEAH-YEAH**

Yeah-yeah, me too. Four bombs, but  
one Whitey Ford.

**SQUINTS**

Benny, whad -

The guys notice

**BENNY**

staring down at the cards in his hands. He slowly shuffles  
them top to bottom... top to bottom.

**THE GANG**

moves over, concerned.

**HAM**

Hey, Benny, whatsa matter?

**BERTRAM**

You okay, man?

Benny slowly raises his eyes. Slowly holds the cards out to Squints, who takes them cautiously. Squints shuffles them forwards and backwards. He passes the eight cards amongst them all.

**SQUINTS**

Oh, my God...

**69**

**TIMMY**

Imfuckingpossible.  
(ALTERNATE LINE, same  
**BELOW**)  
Unstinkinbelievable!

**REPEAT**

Imfuckingpossible. Don't tell mom I  
said that tim.

**TIMMY**

I won't.

**HAM**

This can't happen... can it?

**BERTRAM**

It just did.

**YEAH-YEAH**

Yeah-yeah, it's an omen.

Squints hands the cards back to the Benny, who takes home plate alone.

**EIGHT IDENTICAL MAURY WILLS CARDS**

**THE GANG**

can only stare at him. Suddenly, Squints clutches his ear

**PLUG:**

**SQUINTS**

Oh geez... Oh geez. I - I don't believe it. Maury Wills just stole 80 bases!

The guys are boggled.

**BENNY**

picks up a bat.

**BENNY**

We gotta play. I gotta play right now, guys. Right now.

**THE GANG**

obeys. They hurry into the field. As they go:

**SCOTTY**

What's it mean?

70

**SQUINTS**

It's a miracle, Smalls. A damn miracle.

**NARRATOR**

We all expected something to happen right then... during that game. What we had just witnessed was bordering on the supernatural... we knew that greater hands than ours were at work.

**(BEAT)**

And it happened alright.

**(BEAT)**

It happened right in front of our noses... and we didn't even know it.

**DENUNEZ**

delivers.

**CRACK!**

Magic dust EXPLODES from Benny's bat. The red lacing BURSTS!

**THE BASEBALL**

dermis flays. The string-wound innards fly into

**YEAH-YEAH'S GLOVE**

in left field. The cowhide "figure 8's" lay there in

**THE INFIELD**

like huge swatted moths. The guys gather 'round.

**BERTRAM**

Bitchin'.

**BENNY**

Naw, it ain't.

**SQUINTS**

C'mon, Benny, maybe two, three guys in history have ever busted the guts out of a ball. That's what the omen was.

**GANG**

Truly. Sure. Absolutely. Yeah-yeah, Benny. It must be so.

**BENNY**

All's it means is that we can't play no more. It's only noon, and I just blew the whole day for us.

**71**

**DENUNEZ**

No, you didn't. It's the most amazing thing I ever seen.

**BENNY**

Anybody got any money?

**(NO ANSWER)**

Then it ain't okay, 'cause now we can't play no more.

**SCOTTY**

Yeah, we can.

**BENNY**

What, you got 98 extra cents just layin'  
around at home, Smalls?

**SCOTTY**

No, but I got a ball.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. BILL'S DEN - DAY**

A BASEBALL on a silver pedestal (Bill's baseball). Scotty's  
HAND ENTERS FRAME. His indecisive FINGERS almost touch the  
ball... then, SNATCH!

**EXT. THE SANDLOT - DAY**

Scotty dashes across the schoolyard.

**SCOTTY**

(out of breath)  
I got it! Let's play!

He tosses the ball to

**BENNY**

who catches it.

**BENNY**

Bitchin'. Your ball, your ups.

Benny hands Scotty the bat, heads to right field, leaving

**SCOTTY**

alone at home plate with Ham (the catcher).

**BENNY**

tosses DeNunez the ball on his way by.

**72**

**DENUNEZ**

almost misses it. He rounds up, throws to

**BERTRAM**

at 1st. Bertram throws to

**TIMMY**

at 2nd. Timmy almost drops it. There's a smudge on the ball. Timmy tosses to

**REPEAT**

at 3rd. Repeat fires to

**YEAH-YEAH**

in left. The ball caroms off Yeah-Yeah's glove, comes down fast! Yeah-Yeah barehands it. Safe. He launches to

**SQUINTS**

in center. It's gonna be short! Squints sprints - Willy Mays basket catch. He throws to DeNunez.

**SCOTTY**

digs in.

**HAM**

Batter up!

**DENUNEZ**

fires. Scotty swings - WHIFF. Again - whif. Once more...

BOOM! Goodnight, Irene! Scotty drops the bat. Trots for first base in "home run" fashion.

**BENNY**

backpeddles.

**SCOTTY**

watches him, slowing, worrying.

**THE BALL**

drops over the green fiberglass fence.

**SCOTTY**

stops dead in the base path.

**THE GANG**

**CHEERS:**

**TIMMY**

Nice crank, Smalls.

**DENUNEZ**

Decent cut.

**BENNY**

It's outta here! Who's got the big  
bat now, boys!

**GANG**

Smalls. Smalls. Smalls. Smalls.

**SCOTTY**

is drawn to the fence with mounting terror.

**THE GANG**

starts over.

**HAM**

What the hell's he doing?

**BERTRAM**

Maybe the shock of his first homer was  
just too much for him.

**AT THE GREEN FIBERGLASS FENCE**

Scotty runs right up to it - clutches desperately. Panting.  
Trembling. The guys arrive. Scotty turns back to them... he  
has aged 25 years.

**SCOTTY**

We gotta get that ball back.

**HAM**

Right! Good one, Smalls.

**SQUINTS**

Sure. We'll just hop over and say, excuse me Mr. Beast sir, could we have our ball back, oh, and please don't kill us while we're here!

**74**

**BENNY**

It was a great shot, but forget about it... game's over. We'll get another ball.

**SCOTTY**

You don't understand!

**BENNY**

Sure we do. You feel bad 'cause you belted a homer, and now we can't play no more.

**SCOTTY**

No! You don't understand! THAT WASN'T **MY BALL!**

**THE GANG'S POV**

of something moving in the backyard. Just a rippling shadow and trailing dust accompanying it over the fence top.

**THE GANG'S**

eyes go to Scotty.

**SQUINTS**

Whadda you mean it wasn't your ball?

**SCOTTY**

It's my stepdad's. I stole it from his trophy room. It was a present or soemthing - somebody gave it to him. We have to get it back. He's gonna kill me!

**SQUINTS**

Smalls... listen to me. This is a matter of life and death.

**(THINKS)**

Where did your old man get that ball?

**SCOTTY**

I dunno... I think some lady gave it to him.

**SQUINTS**

Some lady?...

**SCOTTY**

Yeah, she even signed her name on it.

**(THE END)**

Some lady named Ruth... Baby Ruth.

75

**EYEBALLS**

pop from their sockets.

**GANG**

**BAAAAYYBE RUUUUUTH?!**

**THE GANG**

sprints for the fence. Scramble up it. Just their eyes peer over the top.

**WHAT THEY SEE**

a baseball in a little impact crater. A ball that has most clearly been autographed by... BABE RUTH.

A long, hideous forelimb thrusts from 'neath the lean-to. A massive paw-thing comes down on the ball. Drags it slowly away... leaving a baseball-deep furrow in the dirt. The

CANINE "LAUGHTER" comes again...

**THE GANG**

drops from the fence - turn to face Scotty.

**DENUNEZ**

The Beast got it.

**TIMMY**

You're dead as a doornail, Smalls.

**REPEAT**

You're dead as a doornail, Smalls.

**TIMMY**

Nice knowing you.

**REPEAT**

Nice knowing -

**TIMMY**

- shut up, Tommy.

**(STUNNED)**

Smalls, you mean to tell me you went home and swiped a ball that was signed by Babe Ruth, and brought it out here and actually played with it?

**REPEAT**

And actually played with it?!

76

**SCOTTY**

Yeah, but I was gonna put it back.

**SQUINTS**

But it was signed by Babe Ruth!

**SCOTTY**

Well, who is she?!

**HAM**

What?! What?!

**(OVERCOME)**

What did he say?!

**DENUNEZ**

The Sultan of Swat!

**BERTRAM**

The King of Krash!

**REPEAT/TIMMY**

The Colossus of Clout!

**GANG**

**BABE RUTH!**

**HAM**

(for good measure)  
The Great Bambino!

**SCOTTY**

(that did it)  
**OH, MY GOD! THAT'S THE SAME GUY?!**

**BENNY**

Yeah. Smalls, Babe Ruth is the greatest baseball player that ever lived. People say he was less than a God, but more than a man. Ya know... like Hercules or somethin'.

**(BEAT)**

The ball that you just aced to The Beast is worth... well, more than your whole life.

Scotty falls to his knees. Grabs his stomach.

**SCOTTY**

I don't feel so good.

They all step back, expecting the worst. Then, they fan him with their baseball caps.

77

**SCOTTY (CONT'D)**

**(HEARTFELT)**

We gotta get that ball back.

**BENNY**

When does your old man get home from work?

**SCOTTY**

He's gone on business for a week.

**BENNY**

Okay, we need 98 cents. So, everybody spread out and find some soda bottles and cash 'em in. We need a new baseball.

**CUT TO:**

**A BRAND NEW BASEBALL**

Benny's hand signs B A B E R U T H across the leather in ridiculous chicken scrawl.

**EXT. FIVE & DIME - DAY**

Forgery in progress. Benny does the honors.

**DENUNEZ**

I dunno, Benny-man.

**YEAH-YEAH**

Yeah-yeah, it's pretty crappy.

**SQUINTS**

He ain't gonna buy that, Benny. It doesn't look anything like the Babe's signature.

**BENNY**

It doesn't matter what it looks like. His mom's never gonna know the difference. This'll just buy us some time, ya dorks.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. BILL'S DEN - DAY**

Scotty's HAND ENTERS FRAME. Little anxious FINGERS wrapped around the phony "Babe Ruth" baseball. The second the ball is back on its pedestal:

Scotty?

**DEN**

Scotty whips 'round like he's been slapped by a wet mackerel  
Mom's in the doorway.

**SCOTTY**

Huh?!

**MOM**

Honey, what are you doing in here?

**SCOTTY**

Ah... just looking at Bill's - I mean  
Dad's baseball.

Scotty hurries away from the "autographed" ball.

**MOM**

You know he doesn't like you touching  
his things.

**SCOTTY**

Yeah, I know. Sorry, Mom.

**MOM**

Has he ever told you about that ball?

**SCOTTY**

Uh - no, not really, I don't think so -  
no, he hasn't at all - I don't know  
\_anything\_ about it.

**MOM**

It's signed by Babe Ruth...

Sweet mother of - Mom knows! Scotty may collapse.

**MOM (CONT'D)**

...the greatest baseball player that  
ever lived.

**SCOTTY**

Um... really?

**MOM**

It sure is. Dad's father gave it to  
him. Maybe someday, he'll give it to  
you.

**SCOTTY**  
**(DAZED)**

Uh... neat.

**NARRATOR**

It was salt in an open wound. Even my own mom, who was only a grown-up girl, knew who Babe Ruth was.

**INT. TREE HOUSE - DAY**

The gang's all here. Big plans. War conference.

**SCOTTY**

So, how do we get it back?

**SQUINTS**

I have no idea.

**NARRATOR**

I was dead meat. I knew it. They knew it. We had thought that those cards Benny had gotten meant that something great was going to happen. Now I figured that they'd just meant my life was over.

**SCOTTY**

Can't we just hop the fence and get it?

**HAM**

Remember Davy Stodenrous.

**TIMMY/REPEAT**

Poor Toad.

**SCOTTY**

Oh, yeah. I forgot.

**(A THOUGHT)**

Hey? Why don't we just go over there and knock on the door, and ask Mr. Mertle to get it for us?

Everyone looks at Scotty - the kid just sprouted a dunce

cap.

**SQUINTS**

Are you outta your mind?! Mr. Mertle is the meanest old man that ever lived! He's the one that sicked The Beast on The Toad!

**(BEAT)**

That's not an option, Smalls. Forget about it.

**80**

**SCOTTY**

Oh. Okay. I will.

Silent moments... not a single blinking idea between them. Then, suddenly:

**SQUINTS**

We need to assess the situation!

**GANG**

(better than nothing)  
Of course! Right! Good one, Squints!  
Access (sic) the situation! Okay!

**BERTRAM**

Um, Squints? How do we do that?

**SQUINTS**

First we survey the enemy's environment, then we make note of the surrounding terrain.

**HAM**

What?...

**SQUINTS  
(COPPING)**

I heard that on "Combat." Let's just look out the window.

**EXT. TREE HOUSE - DAY**

The gang pokes their heads-only through the window. They look down into:

**EXT. THE BADLANDS (MR. MERTLE'S BACKYARD) - DAY**

The house is a godforsaken stucco'd corpse.

#### **THE YARD**

is the final resting place for: melted frisbees, withered  
kickballs, skeletons of heat-crumbled paper kites, an  
airforce  
of exposure-splintered balsa wood gliders, and a fleet of  
model rockets - their drag-chutes turning to dust. And  
hundreds of little empty craters - that used to cradle  
baseballs.

#### **THE RUSTY TOW CHAIN**

snakes through the dirt - buried then exposed. It terminates  
'NEATH

81

#### **THE LEAN-TO**

from under which rises hazy twirls of dust. The dust is kept  
from ever settling by some enormous ORGANIC EXHAUST.

#### **A GIANT PAW-THING**

emerges from under the lean-to, pushing the Babe Ruth  
autographed cowhide into full view - "I dare you..."

#### **INT. TREE HOUSE - DAY**

The guys jerk their heads back inside.

**TIMMY**

He's darin' us!

**REPEAT**

He's darin' us!

**DENUNEZ**

He's waitin' for us, man. Just like  
he did with The Toad.

**GANG**

**(REVERENT)**

Poor Toad.

**HAM**

We're on his territory now.

**BERTRAM**

Think he's pissed?

**BENNY**

Is Doby Gillis a dork? Anybody got any bright ideas?

**THE BIG MONTAGE STARTS WITH:**

A tree house debate. Much shouting. Much disagreement. Many hands miming mechanical contraptions.

**NARRATOR**

We had absolutely no idea what the hell we were gonna do. So things started primitively.

**EXT. THE SANDLOT - MR. MERTLE'S FENCE - DAY**

The gang hurries out from the Timmons' yard carrying a broom stick. They wriggle it under the fiberglass fence. Squints peers through the peep hole motioning directions to Ham. Suddenly - SNAP! Ham pulls the stick back. 'Tis toothpick'd.

82

**EXT. TIMMONS' BACKYARD - DAY**

The guys fell the clothes line pole with a hack saw. 6 feet of inch thick pipe. They heft it up - go out to

**EXT. THE SANDLOT - MR. MERTLE'S FENCE - DAY**

and shove the pipe under the green fiberglass. HORRIBLE

SOUNDS

ERUPT from the Badlands. Dust mushrooms over the fence. The pipe draws under in FEROCIOUS JERKS. Gone. Moments. The pole sails back over the fence - bounces on the asphalt with ANGRY CLANGS. 'Tis pretzel'd.

**INT. TREE HOUSE - DAY**

Bertram arrives. Hands "it" over. How embarrassing:

**BERTRAM**

It ain't mine. I told you, it's my  
little sister's!

A Cootie Toy. They

**ASSEMBLE THE INSECT**

putting a hunk of chewed 'zooka on each Cootie foot. Attach  
it to a plastic parachute - ah-ha! Genius. An airborne  
assault!

**EXT. THE SANDLOT - MR. MERTLE'S FENCE - DAY**

Squints indicates "go."

**INT./EXT. TREE HOUSE - THE BADLANDS - DAY**

**THE GANG**

**DRIFTS THE**

**COOTIE N' CHUTE**

out the tree house window. It floats silently toward the  
baseball. The Cootie lands right on the Babe Ruth. The gum  
sticks.

**THE GANG**

hauls it in.

**THE BALL**

slowly rises. Suddenly

83

**THE BEAST'S JAWS**

erupt from 'neath the lean-to and CHOMP the Cootie whole.  
The string snaps.

**THE GANG**

pulls up the frayed end.

**INT. TREE HOUSE - NIGHT**

Now a War Room. Map of the Badlands: crazed trajectories, distances to The Beast, etc. Coffee can PBX system.

Cardboard

periscope. X's on a calendar counting down "Bill's Return."  
The new retrieval system:

**THREE EUREKA CANISTER VACS**

all connected. Ham's catcher's mask bolted to the end pipe for ball securing.

**EXT. TREE HOUSE - OVER THE BADLANDS - NIGHT**

Toy flashlights and BSOA lanterns hang from the structure, semi-illuminating the Badlands.

**OUT THE WINDOW**

goes the vacuumtraption, 30 feet of wobbly pipe.

**EXT. THE SANDLOT - MR. MERTLE'S FENCE - NIGHT**

Squints directs the operation, looking

**THROUGH THE CARDBOARD PERISCOPE**

WE SEE the vacupipe-mask... 12 inches from the baseball.

**SQUINTS (O.S.)**

(coffee can muffled)

A-okay. Roger, affirmative. Initiate retrieval suction.

**INT. TREE HOUSE - DAY**

They throw eureka switch one. WEOHH!

**EXT. THE BADLANDS - NIGHT**

The baseball moves itty-bittily.

**INT. TREE HOUSE - NIGHT**

They throw eureka switch two. WEEOOOHHH!

**EXT. BADLANDS - NIGHT**

THE BASEBALL moves a lot!

**INT. TREE HOUSE - NIGHT**

They throw eureka switch three! RRRWEEEEOOOHHH!

**EXT. THE BADLANDS - NIGHT**

The baseball leaps from the ground - sticks in the catcher's mask collection basket.

**EXT. THE SANDLOT - MR. MERTLE'S FENCE - NIGHT**

**SQUINTS (O.S.)**

We have suction! Pull it up! PULL IT UP!

**INT. TREE HOUSE - NIGHT**

The gang reels it in. Suddenly, the whole apparatus JOLTS.

**EXT. THE BADLANDS - NIGHT**

A great beef-paw yanks the end pipe under the tree.

**STEEL TEETH**

pinch the metal tube shut.

**INT./EXT. TREE HOUSE - NIGHT**

The vacuums build pressure fast. WHINE crazily.

**THE GANG**

leaps from tree house.

**SQUINTS**

lingers in the trap doorway a second too long:

**EXT. TREEHOUSE - NIGHT**

over  
The gang (minus Squints) is face down in the dirt - arms  
heads. The vacuums explode. Foggy clouds of dust pour out  
of the treehouse. Squints appears. He's battleship grey.  
Takes his glasses off. Only his eyes show white.

**SQUINTS**

We've been going about this all wrong.

I blame myself. We need total surprise.

**(MORE)**

85

**SQUINTS (CONT'D)**

Therefore, we tunnel. The Beast will never expect it.

**EXT. TIMMONS' BACKYARD - DAY**

The guys all wield a shovel, and have flashlights taped to their baseball caps like coal miners.

**INT. UNDERGROUND TUNNEL - DAY (DARK)**

Flashlight beam at the fore, Scotty crawls with a safety rope through 'round his waist. He pokes the cardboard periscope up through the dirt.

**THROUGH THE PERISCOPE**

the Badlands from ULTRA LOW ground level. WE SCAN 360 degrees.

Suddenly, the scan stops. The name B A B E R U T H, FILLS the periscope's lens.

**EXT. THE BADLANDS - DAY**

Scotty's hand feels for the Babe Ruth. He grabs it. It's slimey.

**SCOTTY (O.S.)**

**(SUBTERRANEAN)**

I got it! I got it!

The ball SQUIRTS out of his fingers.

**THE BALL ROLLS**

beneath the lean-to. It hits

**THE BEAST**

in the nose. With a SEISMIC ROAR The Beast leaps out. WE DON'T SEE MUCH. He's too big. We're too close.

**EXT. TREE HOUSE - DAY**

Yeah-Yeah SHOUTS to Ham at the tunnel entrance.

**YEAH-YEAH**

It's huge - oh, my God! It's huge -  
pull him out! It's huge! PULL HIM  
OUT!

**EXT. BADLANDS - DAY**

THE BEAST'S JAWS dive toward Scotty's hand. They get within  
an inch of Scotty's hand, and his fingers vanish - THWOOOP!

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**EXT. TIMMONS' BACKYARD - DAY**

The gang pulls Scotty out of the hole. Yeah-Yeah is  
unconscious on the grass. The guys turn a hose on him. He  
comes 'round SCREAMING:

**YEAH-YEAH**

It's huge - pull him out! Oh God,  
it's like a dinosaur! Wh - Wh - Where  
am I?!

**SQUINTS**

Yeah-Yeah! Get hold of yourself! What'd  
you see?!

**YEAH-YEAH**

(accelerating to lunacy)  
Oh-oh, it was like hugeness and darkness  
and like the world was ending and the  
devil came up through the ground and  
the - and the - and the -

**HAM**

- somebody slap him quick! We're losin'  
him!

WHAP-WHAP! Squints administers. Yeah-Yeah snaps out of it.

**YEAH-YEAH**

Thanks. I needed that.

**EXT. TIMMONS' BACKYARD - DAY**

Construction completes. A kid crane. A tricycle, block 'n tackle, fishing-pole n' body harness. In a line, the guys step on and off a scale. Everybody stares at Yeah-Yeah.

**YEAH-YEAH**

Yeah-yeah, I know - I'm lightest. But I ain't goin' over there! NO WAY!

All eyes to the ground.

**BENNY**

Sorry, Smalls. It was a good idea anyway.

**DENUNEZ**

Yeah, tough luck, Smalls.

**HAM**

It won't be that bad, Smalls. Your dad'll probably only shoot you or something.

**87**

**YEAH-YEAH**

Hey-hey, don't blame me! I didn't hit the ball over there, man!

Silence. Yeah-Yeah considers.

**YEAH-YEAH (CONT'D)**

Yeah-yeah, okay. But if I say pull me up, you guys better PULL ME UP!

Benny takes Yeah-Yeah aside. Hands him all over Ham's catcher's gear.

**BENNY**

Here. Put these on.

**YEAH-YEAH**

Wha -? Why? Whadda I need All this stuff for Benny? I mean, why a mask and a gonad Protector?

**BENNY**

Oh, ah, nuthin', ya know, just For, ah... Altitude leveling

And stuff. Put it on.

Benny hurries off as Timmy and Repeat approach with a frightening looking harness assembly. Yeah-Yeah backs away:

**TIMMY**

Don't worry. We're professionals.

**REPEAT**

Our Dad's a contractor.

**EXT./INT. OVER THE BADLANDS - INSIDE THE TREE HOUSE - DAY**

**HAM'S**

strapped in at the tricycle winch.

**YEAH-YEAH'S**

dangling over the lean-to.

**YEAH-YEAH**

(into can phone)

Okay-okay, I'm right over it. Let me  
down - slow!

**HAM**

lets go. Oops. WHIZZZZ!

**88**

**YEAH-YEAH**

plummets.

**YEAH-YEAH (CONT'D)**

Ahhhh! Stop! STOP!

**HAM**

back-cranks.

**YEAH-YEAH**

comes to a twirling halt four feet off the ground.

**YEAH-YEAH'S POV**

into the lean-to. Blackness and dust.

**YEAH-YEAH (CONT'D)**

'Kay-'kay, tip me, hurry up. I'm  
gettin' the woollies.

Yeah-Yeah reaches... Gets it!

**YEAH-YEAH (CONT'D)**

Okay get me outta here!

**HAM**

struggles.

**HAM**

**HELP! I'M LOSIN' HIM!**

**YEAH-YEAH**

looks down from the guys on the tree house - back to level -  
"4 foot" eye-level with: THE BEAST'S MOUTH!

**YEAH-YEAH**

**(QUAKING)**

H - h - help! Help! HELP-HELP- HELP!

**(TRYING ANYTHING)**

Hail Mary Father who art star light  
twinkle twinkle hey diddle diddle -

**INSIDE THE TREE HOUSE**

hands crank the trike wheel. Yeah-Yeah's to window level in  
seconds. He's got the ball!

**89**

**THE BEAST'S JAWS**

leap into view.

**THE TOW CHAIN**

goes taut. The jaws abruptly disappear.

**EXT. THE BADLANDS - DAY**

The Beast's shadowy form RUSTLES contentedly under the lean-to. Yeah-Yeah dropped the ball.

**EXT. TIMMONS' BACKYARD - DAY**

Yeah-Yeah's shattered. Balling. The guys sniff. Oh no, bad news. He shoves them away:

**YEAH-YEAH**

Yeah-yeah, I did it! SO WHAT?! You jerks, I told you to pull me back faster!  
(starin' them down)  
You - you penises.

Yeah-Yeah waddles away. The guys rush to hold the fence door up for him. He goes through stiff-legged (can't bend over).

**EXT. THE SANDLOT - DAY**

Yeah-Yeah heads across the field... waddle-waddle.

**NARRATOR**

Yeah-Yeah grew two feet in our eyes after that. There was no stinkin' way any of us would've showed back up, if we'd loaded our drawers.

**(BEAT)**

Yeah-Yeah did. He showed back up and got right to work, like nothing ever happened.

**MATCH DISSOLVE TO:**

**EXT. THE SANDLOT/TREEHOUSE - MORNING**

(LOCK OFF. Same as Sc. 157) - Yeah-Yeah returns across the sandlot and goes up into the treehouse.

**INT. TREE HOUSE - DAY**

158

According to the calendar - 1 day till Bill's back. Scotty's got the conch.

**SCOTTY**

I think I know how to get it.  
(they're all ears)  
Anybody got an Erector Set?

Eyes dart. Brows feint.

**SQUINTS**

That thing with the nuts and bolts and  
tiny wrenches that you can build junk  
out of?

**SCOTTY**

Exactly.

**SQUINTS**

Never heard of it.

**HAM**

I used to have one when I was like I  
dunno, a little kid.

**GANG**

**(LIARS)**

Might have some pieces. Gee, I don't  
think so. I'd have to look. Maybe in  
the attic. Not in our room though.

**INT. TREE HOUSE - DAY - 20 MINUTES LATER**

The guys re-arrive. Each holding huge arm loads of Erector  
Set stuff.

**GANG (CONT'D)**

Guess I had more than I thought. Forgot  
my grandma got me some for my birthday.  
It's my little brother's.

Scotty's brought his "Set." A footlocker full of neatly  
arranged pieces. Nut and bolt compartments. Electric motor  
sections.

**BERTRAM**

Bitchin'.

**SCOTTY**

I really like Erector Set.

**GANG**

**(ATTITUDINAL 360'S)**

Me too. I was just thinkin' the same  
thing. Couldn't agree more, Smalls.

I play with mine all the time.

91

**SCOTTY**

Let's get to work. Here's the plans -

FURLSNAP! Holy cow! Scotty unfolds them - amazing crayola blueprints drawn on taped-together grocery bags.

**INT./EXT. TREE HOUSE - DAY**

The guys swarm the tree house. Scotty supervises from the backyard, wearing a plastic hardhat. They build. Scotty hooks up electric motors. Throws one toggle, and...

**EXT. TREE HOUSE - DAY**

...it comes to life. A 35 foot hollow erector-beam and electric catapult-car assembly. They tilt-n'-tip it over the fence. Scotty pilots the little car from the treehouse deck.

**EXT. THE SANDLOT - DAY**

Benny's got his glove - waiting.

**EXT. TREE HOUSE - TIMMON'S BACKYARD - THE SANDLOT - THE BADLANDS - DAY**

Scotty on controls. Squints on periscope, with Bertram on the Yuban-comm for him. Others at support points.

THE CAR drives down.

THE BEAST strirs.

THE CAR rolls out the end.

THE CATAPULT BUCKET scoops the ball.

**SQUINTS  
(CLEANLY)**

Fire!

**GIANT SLEEPY EYEBALLS**

roll open. A THUNDERROAR!

**SCOTTY**

flips the toggle.

**THE "RAT-TRAP" CATAPULT**

fires.

92

**THE BASEBALL**

is airborne.

**BENNY**

runs for it.

**BENNY**

I got it! I got it!

**THE AIRBORNE BEAST**

blocks out the sun. CLUNCHEENK! The Beast's FRONT TEETH  
SNATCH the Babe Ruth ball delicately out of the air.

**THE UNSEEN BEAST**

crash lands beyond the fiberglass paneling, right on top of  
**THE**

**ERECTOR CONTRAPTION**

wrenching it viciously.

**THE STRUCTURE**

comes tumbling down - bending into flimsy knots as it  
CRASHES!

**EXT. TIMMONS' BACKYARD - DAY**

Scotty stands alone on the tree house roof... staring down  
into the Badlands. A little, wrecked shell of a kid, who is  
now dead meat. The guys look up at him sorrowfully.

**NARRATOR**

My life was over. Just as Bill had finally warmed up to me, and asked me to be the man of the house, I had to knock a priceless chunk of history into the clutches of a monster. Great.

**END THE BIG MONTAGE.**

**EXT. THE BLOCK - DUSK**

The gang, minus Timmy and Repeat, shuffle along home without a word exchanged.

**FROM HIS PORCH**

the  
Benny watches a dejected Scotty slowly head inside across street.

93

**INT. SCOTTY'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Scotty stares up at the ceiling in oceans of worry.

**INT. BENNY'S ROOM - NIGHT**

The room is dark. Benny's in bed. He clicks on a "baseball-bat" flashlight. Shines the beam toward his footboard... illuminating the photo of The Babe.

**BENNY**

We can't get it back, Babe.

**(BEAT)**

I'm sorry.

LIGHT  
Suddenly, a RACKET from inside Benny's closet. A bright GOES ON in there. Then, smoke comes out.

Hasn't  
Benny jumps up on his bed - flattens against the wall.  
done this in years:

**BENNY (CONT'D)**

M - M - Mom?...

The closet door CREAKS open... by itself. Everything inside is oddly devoid of color.

**BENNY (CONT'D)**

Who's there?!

BABE RUTH steps out of the closet. He exists in the only way any kid from 1962 has ever seen him: BLACK & WHITE.

**THE BABE**

Now don't go peeing your pants or nuthin', I'm just here to give ya a hand.

The Great Bambino PUFFS on a massive stogie... the source of all the smoke.

**BENNY**

B - B - But, you're...

**THE BABE**

...dead? Legends never die, kid.

Benny comes off the wall. The enormous Ruth towers over him.

**BENNY**

You're really him. You're The Babe. The Sultan of Swat. The King -

94

**THE BABE**

- of Krash and a hundred other dopey names. Forget about that, we ain't got much time. I'm here 'cause you're in some kinda pickle, right?

**BENNY**

Yeah.

**THE BABE**

A baseball with my John Hancock on it went over a fence, and you can't get it back. Right?

**BENNY**

Yeah, right.

**THE BABE**

(clear and simple)  
Then just hop over there and get it.  
There ya go. Problem solved.  
(tips his cap)  
See ya, kid.

The Babe turns to go back to wherever he came from. Benny grabs his arm - shocked that he actually feels something "real."

**BENNY**

Wait! I can't.

**THE BABE**

Can't what?

**BENNY**

Go into that backyard.

**THE BABE**

Why not?

**BENNY**

There's a Beast back there.

**THE BABE**

What kind?

**BENNY**

A giant gorilla-dog-thing that ate one kid already.

**THE BABE**

Is that a fact? Listen to me, kid.

**(MORE)**

**95**

**THE BABE (CONT'D)**

Everybody gets one chance to do something great. Most people either never take the chance 'cause they're too scared, or they don't recognize it when it spits on their shoes.

**(BEAT)**

This is your "big chance," and ya shouldn't let it go by.

**(PAUSE)**

Remember those cards you got the other day?

**BENNY**

Sure, yeah, five Maury Wills all in the same pack.

**THE BABE**

What're the odds on that?

**BENNY**

About a zillion to one.

**THE BABE**

More even. Someone's tellin' you somethin', kid. And if I was you... I'd listen.

**BENNY**

Yeah, but what?

**THE BABE**

You're the one with the rubba legs. Figure it out.

**(BEAT)**

You gotta do what your heart tells you, else you'll spend the rest of your life wishin' you had.

**BENNY**

You mean, I should hop that fence - and pickle with THE BEAST?!

**THE BABE**

Lemme tell you something... you remember that called shot homer I hit?

**BENNY**

Sure, the greatest most famous and legendary home run of all time.

**THE BABE**

Yeah, right, well said.

**(MORE)**

**THE BABE (CONT'D)**

**(BEAT)**

Well, you think I knew I was gonna  
swat that?

**BENNY**

Sure ya did, Babe.

**THE BABE**

Not a chance. Matter of fact, all the  
way down to first I kept sayin' to  
myself, "you lucky bum."

**(BEAT)**

Think about that, kid. I'll see ya  
later.

The Babe disappears back into the closet, then:

**THE BABE'S VOICE**

Remember, kid. There's heroes and  
there's Legends. Heroes get  
remembered... but Legends never die.

**(BEAT)**

Follow your heart, kid, and you'll  
never go wrong.

A RACKET in the closet matching:

**INT. SCOTTY'S ROOM - DAY**

KNUCKLES on glass. Scotty hurries sleepy-eyed to the window  
and opens it. Benny stands outside, holding a shoe box.

**BENNY**

**(WITH PURPOSE)**

I had a dream. Get dressed. We're  
goin' to the sandlot.

**EXT. THE SANDLOT - DAY**

The guys march toward the rising sun - across the sandlot  
behind Benny. Toward destiny.

**THE GREEN FIBERGLASS FENCE**

They stop here. Benny steps forward. He opens the shoe box.  
Laces on brand new P.F. Flyers. Moves for the fence. Scotty  
grabs his arm.

**SCOTTY**

Benny - wait. It's okay, it was my  
fault. I'll just take whatever I get.

You don't have to do this.

97

A look in Benny's eyes. Kismet.

**BENNY**  
**(PREDESTINED)**

Yeah I do, Smalls. I have to.

Benny turns from him - swallows hard. Swings himself onto  
**THE**

**TOP OF THE FENCE**

and balances - deciding.

**THE BABE'S VOICE**  
(in Benny's head)  
...Follow your heart, kid, and you'll  
never go wrong.

Benny turns back one last time. Gives Scotty "Thumbs Up."  
With a pearl diver's breath - he plunges into...

**EXT. BADLANDS - DAY**

...here. He stands fixed, staring hard 'neath the lean-to.

**DUST RISES**

from thereunder. ORGANIC EXHAUST. The LAZY CLINKS of heavy  
chain links... The Beast is rising to its feet.

**IT MATERIALIZES**

bulking  
piece by piece: fore feet the size of a catcher's mitt,  
head and shoulders, hulking flank and haunches.

**BENNY'S**

mouth hangs open. He's frozen, staring at

**THE BEAST**

and it's worse than Squints recounted... because it's real.

This is the biggest dog that ever lived! 300 lbs. 4 1/2 feet tall. And ugly. This was a bad idea. The Beast lingers 8 feet away with slack in the chain.

THWOOOP! It spits something out, which rolls in the dirt...  
**STOPS EXACTLY**

**BETWEEN THEM**

A goo-slobbered ball. Dirty Beast-foam drips off, revealing the smeared signature, B A B E R U T H. "G'head kid, I dare you!"

98

**A PICKLE**

Benny measures The Beast. Times its ballooning chest.

The Beast's eyes glue to Benny. Flopping, hot-water-bottle tongue PANTS. Licks chops. Leather'd nose twitches -  
smelling  
for movement.

**THE TOE**

of Benny's P.F. Flyer digs into the cracked earth.

**CLINK**

the Beast leans forward - one chain link lifts from the  
ground.

**SHTHUFT!**

Benny spits, blowing his tanks.

**THE BEAST**

bristles.

**BENNY'S EYES**

widen, focusing.

**WAR BREAKS OUT!**

Benny goes for the ball.

**THE BEAST'S**

knotted muscles quaver and UNCOIL.

**BENNY'S**

P.F. Flyers leave behind tiny dust roosters.

**THE BEAST'S**

claws dig deep furrows. FOG BANKS of dust spread out behind it. Forelegs gallop at flared, over-anxious angles.

**BENNY**

leaves scrambling footprints. He slides - grabs the ball - "Pops-Up" Maury Wills fashion - heads back for the fence. The ball slips from Benny's fingers. Re-grabs it - shoves the ball in his teeth, freeing his hands for the leap up the fence.

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**THE BEAST**

gains. SHNAPP! Jaws SHUT like a tripped bear trap.

**BENNY**

springs off the ground. He's on the fence.

**THE BEAST**

reaches chain's end - it goes taught. Breaks! The two foot length still attached to The Beast's neck bullwhips - the chain catches Benny in the butt.

**BENNY**

**YOWWWW!**

He vaults over the fence.

**EXT. SANDLOT - DAY**

The gang looks up. A great shadow envelopes them.

**THE BEAST IS LOOSE!**

The guys turn to stone. Benny takes off.

**BENNY**

**OOOOH SSSSHIT!**

The Beast tears by the guys after Benny. The two vanish out of the sandlot.

**SCOTTY**

What're we waitin' for?! Let's go  
after 'em!

**EXT. SIDEWALK - NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY**

Benny runs. The Beast is gaining. In its wake: dichondra lawns RIPPED to shreds. Scotty and the guys make tracks a block behind.

**EXT. FIVE & DIME - DAY**

On display: Pinwheels, Mailbox Propellers and Puddle-  
Jumpers.

Benny flies by. The Beast follows. As they pass, contact: the whirly-gigs take off!

**INT. CAR - TRAVELING - DAY**

A MOTHER drives. In the passenger seat, her TODDLER fingers a "scooter-pie" in marshmallowy strings.

**100**

**TODDLER**  
**(BEAMING)**

Mommy, mommy - wook! Ah, ah - goggy!

**(BEAT)**

Big goggy.

The Mother looks out the passenger window.

**ON THE SIDEWALK**

Benny and The Beast run even. Then pull ahead.

**EXT. "SNELGROVE'S" ICE CREAM - DAY**

Gag per storyboards - t.b.d.

**EXT. ALLEYWAY - DAY**

Benny's cookin'. The Beast follows - TRASHCANS SCATTER like bowling pins.

garbage  
Scotty and the guys follow. All slow to check out the bins... so many crushed beer cans.

Benny darts in the rear entrance to a "random" building. The Beast tears after him - KNOCKING the door off its hinges.

**INT. BOYS CLUB AUDITORIUM - DAY**

ON THE MOVIE SCREEN Kong does battle with T Rex.

**BENNY**

under  
comes sliding AT US across the waxed stage floor - from the movie screen. He slides off the stage - into midair - lands on his feet. Splits up the aisle between the rows of folding chairs and blasts out the door.

**KIDS' HEADS**

turn to watch him. KONG ROARS! They look back at

**THE MOVIE SCREEN**

where, just as Kong proclaims himself king over the dead T Rex,

**THE BEAST**

Leaps through the center of the silver screen - leaves a 6 foot hole - lands 20 feet down the aisle - CRASHES through the doors and disappears.

Moments pass. Our guys follow.

**101**

**EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY**

Hot-rubber SQUEAKS from Benny's P.F. Flyers. The Beast's

claws leave jagged scars in the concrete.

**CATS HISS**

in terror and faint.

**EXT. PUBLIC POOL DECK - DAY**

POOL HONEYS lounge, all bedecked with rock-hard, Annette Funicello hairdo's.

Benny blasts out of the pool building, "tire stepping" over the Honeys. They're up and RANTING at him. Until, The Beast comes...

control ...sliding across the water-slippery deck like an out-of-anvil. He "bowling pins" the Pool Honeys. The Honeys HIT **THE WATER.**

- Benny cuts back through the pool building. The Beast follows parting our guys and the other Kids.

**EXT. LITTLE LEAGUE FIELD - DAY**

Game in progress. From outta nowhere, Benny jams across the diamond. The game stops... EVERYONE gapes at:

Some huge dog-beast charging after a kid.

**EXT. CITY PARK - PICNIC AREA - DAY**

Big banner: "FOUNDER'S DAY!" Perfectly arranged picnic blankets covered with wonderful spreads of goodies.

**BENNY**

zips under the banner - runs through - grabs a Coke like a long distance runner.

**THE BEAST**

rages after him, through:

**A DEADEND! MIDWAY**

booth of neatly arranged display booths. (This is pie n' cake gag per storyboards - allow 2 pages.)

**EXT. TOWN SQUARE - NEARBY - DAY**

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Founder's Day parade (et al).

**BENNY**

rips into the square. He rubba-leg zigzags, nimbly avoiding everything and everyone.

**THE BEAST**

CHILDREN Is a runaway freight train. He PLOWS through CLOWNS.  
are snatched from the dog's path by terrified parents. The Beast tears through the concession stands:

**VATS & DISPENSERS**

EXPLODE! The VOLUNTEERS dash out SCREAMING - "tar n' featherd"  
with baked beans and potato chips.

**BENNY**

zips through the MARCHING BAND - ducking trombone slides - leaping glockenspiels.

**THE BEAST**

ain't so graceful. He "barn-doors" the band. CRASH! An instrument tangled heap.

**THE ONLOOKERS**

pour into the street, knocking the MAYOR from his convertible,  
and the FOUNDER'S DAY QUEEN from her float.

**FROM THIS HEIGHT**

this all looks like the end of a "Dr. Suess" book!

**SCOTTY AND THE GANG**

search through the confusion. \_They've lost Benny\_  
Suddenly,  
doubling back on them

**BENNY**

**SHOOTS BY:**

**BENNY**

Sandlot!

Benny's gone. Seconds later - The Beast follows.

**SQUINTS**

This way! Shortcut!

**103**

**THE GANG**

forges through the disaster.

**EXT. THE SANDLOT - MR. MERTLE'S FENCE - DAY**

The gang's GASPING for BREATH. And then, unbelievably

**BENNY & THE BEAST**

Are coming right at them! They race across the sandlot.  
Kill- anxious beast-drool splashes the seat of Benny's  
pants.

**THE BEAST'S**

muscles flex.

**BENNY**

just runs. He runs as if a big dog was chasing him. He  
lurches a step - RIP! A pants pocket flaps from an incisor.

**BENNY**

**LOOK OUT!**

He lays down the world's all-time most perfect SLIDE. He  
careens toward the bottom of

**MR. MERTLE'S FENCE**

hits it and, defying gravity, RUNS STRAIGHT UP THE GREEN  
**FIBERGLASS PANELS!**

**BENNY**

jets upward, leaving smashed green fiberglass footsteps -  
standing out from the fence 90 degrees - the Donald O'Connor  
"Singin' In The Rain" trick!

**THE BEAST**

sucks air - ROARS - EXPLODES from the ground - soars, gaping  
maw first, right for

**BENNY**

who pushes off the top of the fence.

**THE BEAST**

GNASHES up at Benny's heels - misses by an inch. He plummets  
toward the Badlands. Then, the unspeakable happens,

**104**

**BENNY**

**DROPS**

**THE BABE RUTH AUTOGRAPH**

and comes tumbling down after the ball.

**BENNY (CONT'D)**

Oh noooooo!

**EXT. THE BADLANDS - DAY**

Benny HITS the dirt with a gut twisting THUD! Dust  
everywhere.

**EXT. THE SANDLOT - DAY**

The gang climbs the fence. They look down into

**EXT. THE BADLANDS - DAY**

where, when the dust clears, they see

**BENNY**

holding the Babe Ruth Autograph up high like a trophy.

**BENNY**

**I GOT IT!**

**THE GANG**

hops down and races over. Suddenly, from the

**FENCETOP**

His shirt snagged:

**SCOTTY**

Help him! I'm stuck! I'm stuck! Help  
him!

**THE BEAST**

is hanging from the fence. His chain has caught. He  
struggles -  
choking to death - right below Scotty.

**THE GANG**

petrifies where they stand.

**105**

**SCOTTY**

tears his shirt loose. Scrambles to where The Beast hangs.  
Tries to lift the tow chain free - too heavy! He'll die in  
seconds.

**SCOTTY**

Pick him up! Scoot him up so I can  
let him off!

**(DESPERATE)**

**COME ON!**

**NOBODY**

moves. They wanna but they can't!

**SCOTTY**

goes for broke. He reaches out and puts his hand on The Beast's head.

**SCOTTY (CONT'D)  
(CONTACT)**

Easy. Easy, boy.

**THE BEAST**

whimpers. Scotty balances atop the fence. Grabs the tow chain. Lifts with all his might... his fingers bleed. The Beast goes limp. An inch. That did it! The beast falls.

**SCOTTY**

goes with him - 8 feet to the dirt. The FENCE COMES DOWN - breaking the barrier to the sandlot. He lands on the ground

**NOSE TO NOSE**

with The Beast.

**SCOTTY**

leaps to his feet.

**THE BEAST**

rises with him.

**SCOTTY**

freezes solid.

**106**

**THE GANG**

watches in horror.

**THE BEAST**

scans them instinctively - He might kill them all where they stand.

**SCOTTY'S**

about to load up his fruit o' da looms.

**THE BEAST**

sticks his mammoth head right in Scotty's face. SNIFFS.

That's

it! The kid is lunch! His jowls part - hot BEAST-BREATH BLOWS Scotty's hair back.

**SCOTTY**

closes his eyes.

**THE GANG**

SLAP their hands to their eyesockets.

**THE BEAST**

leans closer. Mouth opens. Cold-leather nose presses against Scotty's forehead. Then... He licks Scotty's face.

**SCOTTY**

wipes away the Beast slob. He doesn't even have to kneel down to read the name on The Beast's "doggy tag." It says...

...Hercules.

This time Scotty gives Benny "Thumbs Up."

**UNDER THE LEAN-TO**

Hercules digs, then stands away.

**THE GANG**

steps closer. Look into the hole. Their faces light up with wonder. In

**THE HOLE**

Are 150 baseballs.

**THE GANG'S BLOWN AWAY**

**BENNY**

We can play forever now.

**SCOTTY**

takes The Beast by the collar. He and Benny go to

**MR. MERTLE'S BACK DOOR**

Scotty KNOCKS. MR. MERTLE answers the door. An old man with dark glasses. He comes out on the porch.

**MR. MERTLE**

Hello?...

**SCOTTY**

Um, we brought your dog home.

**MR. MERTLE**

Hercules? How'd he get out?

**SCOTTY**

Well, sir... um, we kind of, well, what happened was -

**BENNY**

- we hit a baseball into your yard. Then we tried to get it and -

**MR. MERTLE**

- why didn't you just come to the door... I'd have gotten it for you.

Squints, Yeah-Yeah, Ham, DeNunez, Repeat, Timmy and Bertram faint.

**MR. MERTLE (CONT'D)**

Well, thanks for bringin' him back.

**(BEAT)**

Why don't you boys come in... we can talk about baseball.

**INT. MR. MERTLE'S HOUSE - DAY**

Fairly spartan, except for one room, where it seems that Mr.

Mertle spends most of his time. He leads Benny and Scotty  
**INTO**

**THE BASEBALL ROOM**

Mr. Mertle sits at a table. Benny and Scotty stare at the  
tabletop.

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and It holds a scale model Baseball Diamond: green felt field  
little bases, outfield wall and miniature player figures. A  
picture on the wall of Mr. Mertle and Babe Ruth.

**SCOTTY**

You knew Babe Ruth?

**MR. MERTLE**

Yeah. And he knew me too.

**(BEAT)**

They never let us play together, but  
we were friends. Good friends. He was  
almost as great a hitter as I was.  
But, he'd of told you he was better.

second The picture is signed: "To Thelonius Johnson Mertle, the  
greatest slugger I ever saw... Babe Ruth."

A baseball game on the RADIO. As each play is CALLED, Mr.  
Mertle's hands deftly put his tiny players in the correct  
positions. Mr. Mertle is blind.

**MR. MERTLE (CONT'D)**

**(HOLDING BALL)**

This the one that went over my fence?

**BENNY**

Yeah.

Mr. Mertle brushes his fingers over the leather.

**MR. MERTLE**

This is an old ball, boys. Really  
old.

**(BEAT)**

Hercules gave it a good chewing, didn't

he?

**SCOTTY**  
**(WEAK)**

Yes, sir.

**MR. MERTLE**

You sound upset, son - what's wrong?

**SCOTTY**

Well, you see... that ball belongs to my stepdad... and, uh - it was signed by Babe Ruth.

Mr. Mertle shakes his head... hands the ball to Scotty.

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**MR. MERTLE**

Hmm. Well, I'm sure your dad will understand.

**SCOTTY**

I don't think so.

On the RADIO, Wills steals second.

**MR. MERTLE**

**(TO BENNY)**

Son, move Maury Wills to second base for me, will ya?

Benny moves the little figure to second base.

**MR. MERTLE (CONT'D)**

If he steals third that'll be number 100.

**(TO SCOTTY)**

Helluva pickle you're in, boy.

**SCOTTY**

Yes, sir...

Mr. Mertle retrieves something from a glass case. A baseball.

**MR. MERTLE**

I'll make you a deal. If you boys

come over once a week and talk baseball with me, I'll trade you balls.

**BENNY**

Well, that's really nice of you... but this ball really is signed by The Babe.

**MR. MERTLE**

**(CHUCKLES)**

This one really is too... and all the rest of the '27 Yankees.

He hands his baseball to Scotty... Benny stares at it in disbelief.

**BENNY**

Oh my God - Murderers' Row.

As they ogle the ball:

**BENNY (CONT'D)**

**(AWED)**

Lou Gehrig...

110

**SCOTTY**

Babe Ruth.

**MR. MERTLE**

**(SMILING)**

They're all there.

Scotty hands Mr. Mertle the chewed up Babe Ruth ball. Shakes his hand.

**SCOTTY**

Deal.

On the RADIO, Maury Wills steals 3rd for his 100th stolen base. Scotty notices the wall clock:

**EXT. SCOTTY'S HOUSE - DAY**

Mom's car is in the driveway. Scotty goes up the walkway slowly. Benny just behind him. The gang lingers at the

sidewalk. Scotty sets one foot on the

**PORCH**

and Bill comes out. He looks none-too-pleased. He towers over Scotty. The gang hangs their heads.

**BILL**

This better be good.

Benny unpockets a little felt bag. Hands it to Scotty. He holds the bag up to a perplexed Bill, who opens it. He looks from Scotty to Benny and back again. Then...

...stares down at the "Murderers' Row" ball.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. SCOTTY'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY**

A BASEBALL sailing through the air. SMACK! it's caught in a brand new glove. Scotty's new glove. Scotty snap throws the ball back to Bill. He and Scotty are having a great game of catch.

**NARRATOR**

It was weird that Benny said Babe Ruth was like the Hercules of baseball, and then The Beast's name turned out to be Hercules.

**(BEAT)**

It was also strange that Mr. Mertle had a Murderers' Row ball to replace the one signed by The Babe.

**111**

Bill and Scotty smile as they fire the cowhide back and forth.

**NARRATOR (CONT'D)**

Some people might say that it was all a coincidence... but looking back at it now, it seems like everything was connected, just like me and Benny.

**(BEAT)**

It was like we were a part of the same myth as The Babe... the Myth of

Baseball.

Scotty's mom sticks her head out the back door. She smiles, watching her "two boys" toss the ball around.

**MOM**

Guys, supper's ready.

**DAD**

**(FORMERLY BILL)**

Give us another ten minutes. I'm helpin' my boy break in his new glove.

**INT. MR. MERTLE'S BASEBALL ROOM - DAY**

Mr. Mertle sits contentedly behind his little "diamond." The RADIO ANNOUNCER calls Maury Wills' 104th steal of 1962.

**MR. MERTLE'S DIAMOND**

HIS HAND moves a wooden figure from 1st to 2nd. This tactile "playing field" becomes...

**EXT. THE SANDLOT - DAY**

...this one, where the guys are playing ball. There's a new addition to their team. A mascot. A big mascot.

**HERCULES**

in a t-shirt and cap.

**THE GUYS**

all play as if, somehow, this may be the last time they ever get to be a team. As they play, they're "sponged" from the PICTURE in this order: Yeah-Yeah, Repeat and Timmy, Ham, DeNunez, Bertram, Squints, Hercules, Scotty, Benny.

**NARRATOR**

That was the last summer that we all got to play together.

**(MORE)**

**112**

**NARRATOR (CONT'D)**

But it would stay with us forever.  
(as they all dissolve:)  
Yeah-Yeah's parents shipped him off to  
military school. Timmy and Tommy grew  
up to build skyscrapers. Ham went to  
college and became a pediatrician.  
DeNunez played triple A ball and never  
got to the majors. Bertram got really  
into the sixities and no one ever saw  
him again. Squints grew up and married  
Wendy Peffercorn; they bought the Five  
& Dime and they still own it to this  
day. Hercules lived to be 199 years  
old... in human years.

Everyone but Benny has vanished from the Sandlot.

**NARRATOR (CONT'D)**

After Benny pickled the Beast, his  
reputation spread all over town. From  
then on he was known as Benny "The  
Juet" Rodriguez.

**BENNY'S P.F. FLYER**

comes down on home plate and vanishes, leaving

**THE SANDLOT**

empty.

**NARRATOR (CONT'D)**

The nickname stuck with him the rest  
of his life.

**EXT. CHAVEZ RAVINE - PRESENT - DAY**

Dodger stadium. A ROAR goes up inside the ballpark.

**ANNOUNCER (V.O.)**

**(FAMILIAR)**

That's a triple, and that'll put the  
winning run on third, with two out in  
the bottom of the ninth. What a shot!

**EXT. DODGER STADIUM - INFIELD - DAY**

From the dugout, TOMMY LASORDA calls for a pinch runner. A  
PLAYER comes out of the dugout, stripping off his warm-up  
jacket.

**ANNOUNCER (V.O.)**

Lasorda's sending in a pinch runner -  
and it'll be...

**(DRAMATIC PAUSE)**

I don't believe it! Lasorda's calling  
up the "Old Man" to pinch-run in the  
biggest clutch situation this season!  
They say the veteran's lost a step or  
two. But if I were you, I'd get ready  
for some fireworks.

**THE CROWD**

takes  
is on its feet as 40-year-old BENNY "THE JET" RODRIGUEZ  
over third base from the PLAYER already there. They shake  
hands on the exchange. The 3rd base COACH walks over to The  
Jet. Pats him on the back.

**COACH**

**(GRINNING)**

Give 'em hell, Jet.

**THE JET**

I'll do my best, Maury.

The Coach moves into the coaching box... turning his back to  
us. Emblazoned across his jersey, is the name W I L L S.

**THE PITCHER**

takes the signal.

**THE JET**

leads off 3rd base - ten steps! The Pitcher fires to 3rd.  
The Jet hand tags.

**THE PITCHER**

settles.

**THE JET**

leads off. Eleven steps.

**THE PITCHER**

fires to 3rd again. The Jet gets back.

**THE JET**

leads off again. Twelve steps. The pitch - strike. The CATCHER tosses it back. Just then...

**114**

...The Jet moves. So fast that no one knows he's gone till it's too damn late. The Pitcher awkwardly throws home. The Catcher wipes the baseline. Too late...

...the dust clears. The UMPIRE eagle-wings the air.

**UMPIRE**

**SAFE! SAFE! SAFE!**

The tag missed by two feet. It's all over. The Crowd jumps to its feet. The Dodger dugout is all over The Jet.

**ANNOUNCER (V.O.)**

The Dodgers win the pennant! The  
Dodgers win the pennant!

The Jet breaks through his adoring teammates just long  
enough  
to give "Thumbs Up" to...

**ANNOUNCER (V.O.) (CONT'D)**

I don't believe it, the Old Man stole  
home! The Old Man -

**INT. ANNOUNCER'S BOX - DAY**

...39-year-old SCOTT SMALLS - The Announcer - who returns  
"Thumbs Up."

**SCOTT**

(after a pause)  
The Jet stole home! The Jet stole  
home!!

**EXT. DODGER STADIUM - INFIELD - DAY**

The Jet signs autographs for swarming KIDS. As the CROWD'S

CHEERING CONTINUES and ECHOES into the past, we

**CUT TO:**

**A FADED KODACHROME PHOTO**

of the 9 best (11-year-old) buddies that ever lived. On a  
makeshit baseball diamond - a sandlot... circa 1962. They're  
all holding something forward - displaying - one palm up,  
hand beneath another - together like the nine musketeers:

A baseball. A baseball with a familiar smudge.

**END TITLES.**

**FADE OUT.**

**THE END**