

The Glove

By

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FADE IN:

"DREAM SEQUENCE"

EXT. BALL FIELD-DAY

A MAN and YOUNG GIRL are having a catch. In the background a group of BOYS are practicing.

YOUNG GIRL
I want to play baseball when I grow up.

MAN
You're a girl. You can't.

YOUNG GIRL
But I'm just as good as those boys.

She sticks her tongue out at the boys.

MAN
Now. But they'll all get stronger, faster and bigger than you.

YOUNG GIRL
I'll just practice more. Get better than them.

MAN
Girls don't play. It's not your place.

YOUNG GIRL
(getting frustrated)
And I'll eat more to get bigger.

MAN
Mary, when you grow up you'll want to look pretty, cook and clean for your husband.

YOUNG GIRL
No, Pop. I want to be a baseball player!

A ground ball takes a bad hop and clips her shoulder. She sinks to one knee. Her father runs over.

MAN
Are you okay?

YOUNG GIRL
(holding back sobs)
Yeah.

MAN
Sure?

YOUNG GIRL
(through sobs)
I only want to be a baseball
player.

She hugs her father and starts crying.

MAN
(to himself)
If only I had a son.

INT. BEDROOM-NIGHT 12 YEARS LATER

MARY and CLYDE BEAUMONT are in bed sleeping. Mary jerks
awake.

MARY
Clyde, Clyde wake up.

CLYDE
What?

MARY
Wake up. Wake up!

CLYDE
I'm up. I'm up. What?

MARY
I had that dream again. You know
the one where I'm having a catch
with my Pop and he wished I was his
son. Didn't he love me? Is that
what it means?

CLYDE
No, he loved you. You know that.

MARY
I know. But that dream, it makes me
feel like I robbed him of his dream
to play ball.

CLYDE
No, he knew he had to give that up
to raise you.

MARY
He really wanted a son.

Clyde rolls on top of Mary.

CLYDE
What it meant was he wanted us to
practice making a boy. So since I'm
up let's practice.

EXT.RIVER-DAY

A barely moving river. Moss reaches from low hanging
branches to drink. Birds swoop in looking for fish meals.

Rounding a bend a faint sawing is heard. Moving further down
stream the sound is louder and louder.

Around another bend logs jostle in a log raft. Up from the
logs a saw mill screeches.

EXT.SAW MILL

CLYDE T.BEAUMONT and JIMMIE HIGGINS push logs into a huge
saw. Both men are sweaty and covered with sawdust.

CLYDE
(shouting)
Damn, it's hot!

JIMMIE
Yeah, since the fourth, I feel like
pig ribs on the grill. Now do you
douse the heat?

CLYDE
Every night we've been taking a dip
before going to bed.

JIMMIE
You and Mary? Skinny dipping?

CLYDE
No, me and the cat! ...Who do you
think?

JIMMIE

Why don't you tell me where. I'd love to join you guys.

CLYDE

I know you would, you perv.

JIMMIE

You know, you got the finest wife in the county and I have an appreciation for the finer things in life...

CLYDE

Sure, sure...but no way.

JIMMIE

...and not only is she fine to the eye, but she's a heck of a ball player.

CLYDE

Yeah. I bet you'd love to see her in the locker room.

JIMMIE

No, really. I know you throw it around with her, but after seeing her play at the picnic, damn, if she was a guy she could have played on our high school team.

CLYDE

She could played as a girl.

JIMMIE

Yeah, best keep her as a girl and we know what they're good for babies and pie and I'm not sure the order. Shame if she was a guy...

Jimmie is becoming distracted and placing his hands very close to the saw.

CLYDE

Hey, pecker head, better keep your eyes on your work or you'll end up like me.

Clyde holds up his right hand. The fore finger is missing.

JIMMIE

Yeah, right. Got yer. Must be because I'm hungry. When is that damn whistle gonna blow?

CLYDE

Or horny.

JIMMIE

Nah, I still got Becky Ann to take of that.

A steam whistle blows.

CLYDE

There you go.

Clyde pushes some buttons shutting off the saw.

JIMMIE

Finally. Damn sawdust was starting to look like grits.

EXT. SIDE OF THE MILL

Several picnic tables are scattered.

A dirt road separates the picnic tables from an open field.

MILL WORKERS are gathering all carrying lunch boxes except Clyde.

Clyde sits opposite Jimmie facing the dirt road. Jimmie opens his lunch box and newspaper.

JIMMIE

Damn Yankees. They picked up another game.

Clyde is reading the paper upside down.

CLYDE

Yeah and Brooklyn is closing in the National League. If this keeps up it will be another all New York World Series. We need a team in the south.

JIMMIE

That ain't gotta happen.

CLYDE
Damn Yankees!

Clyde looks at Jimmie's sandwich.

CLYDE
What do you have for lunch?

JIMMIE
Nothing for you. Looks like your
lunch is gonna be late.

A pickup is tearing up the road to the mill.

Clyde sees it over Jimmie's head.

CLYDE
Don't think so.

The pickup flies into the mill's yard towards the tables, a wooden baseball bat bangs in the pickup's bed. The pickup stops abruptly.

JIMMIE
Damn Clyde! Why don't you get that
bat outta your truck.

CLYDE
You know it comes in handy.

JIMMIE
(knowingly)
Yeah.

Mary Beaumont gets out of the driver's door carrying a picnic basket. She walks to Clyde and Jimmie's table.

JIMMIE
Hello Mary.

Mary ignores Jimmie.

Clyde stands as Mary approaches. Mary plants a syrupy kiss on Clyde and then glances over her shoulder.

MARY
Hi ya, Jimmie.

Jimmie sticks his two fingers down his throat. Mary ignores him.

MARY

Scooch over honey. Let's eat and then we can have a catch. Got something to tell ya.

CLYDE

Yup. What do you got to tell me?

MARY

Later.

They squeeze next to each other.

JIMMIE

(patting the space near him)
You can sit right down here Mary, there's more room.

MARY

Thank you Jimmie, but I'm fine right here.

JIMMIE

Yeah, I see.

MARY

Saw you and Becky Ann in town last Saturday.

JIMMIE

Yeah, so?

Clyde is eating and smirking knowing what is coming.

MARY

Spending a lot of time with that girl.

JIMMIE

(shrugging his shoulders)
No.

MARY

Come on.

JIMMIE

What do you want me to tell you? That I'm spending time with her? Okay, I'm spending time with her.

MARY

No, I want you to tell me when you're gotta get hitched and make her a honest woman.

JIMMIE
Honest woman?

MARY
Shoot Jimmie, everyone knows that's
where your donkey has been getting
all his hay from.

JIMMIE
Never.

MARY
Never?

JIMMIE
That's my answer.

MARY
That's not right.

Mary stands on the seat.

MARY
Hey fellas! Who thinks Jimmie
should get hitched to Becky Ann and
make her an honest women?

All the guys raise their hands. Mary jumps down.

MARY
There you go.

JIMMIE
Great, thanks for the help, now I'm
gotta get a little sleep.

Jimmie leaves the table and heads off towards the cars.

MARY
(to Jimmie)
You're welcome.
(to Clyde)
Let's have that catch.

CLYDE
Sure.

Some guys put their head's on the picnic table, others
meander off to their cars. Some are reading newspapers.

Mary and Clyde load up the lunch remains into the basket and
walk back to the car.

Clyde opens the driver's side door, reaching under the seat, he pulls out two gloves and a ball. He tosses a glove to Mary.

CLYDE

So what do you want to tell me.

MARY

After we have a catch.

Mary and Clyde walk past the pick up into the field in the distance.

At the picnic tables a BLACK JANITOR starts cleaning up the lunch mess.

Clyde and Mary are seen in the background having a catch. After awhile Mary walks to Clyde, they are seen talking, then Mary jumps up into Clyde's arms. They kiss for a long time.

The steam whistle blows. Workers start walking back to the mill. Jimmie walks past Mary and Clyde.

JIMMIE

Work time lovebirds!

Mary and Clyde run past Jimmie to the pick up. Mary gets in. They kiss through the open window.

Jimmie walks by.

CLYDE

Jimmie!

Clyde runs to Jimmie stopping by the picnic tables within a few feet of the black janitor.

JIMMIE

God, are you guys sweet and sticky,
like overdosing on a barrel of
molasses.

CLYDE

I'm gonna be a daddy!

JIMMIE

Holy crap! I guess that big old log
of yours does work.

The black janitor laughs.

JIMMIE

What are you laughing at boy? Just pick up the garbage.

Clyde knocks some garbage towards the janitor.

JIMMIE

Man, a lot of things are changing.

CLYDE

Too many things...too many things. Have to see what we can do about some of them. Later.

Jimmie and Clyde stare down the janitor.

CLYDE

Yeah, later.

JIMMIE

A daddy! Congratulations buddy, it couldn't have happened to a better couple.

EXT. CLYDE BEAUMONT'S YARD-DAY

A tall tree stands in the yard. The yard is more dirt than grass. Spanish moss drips from the tree.

A home made antenna sits in the tree's highest branches its wire snaking its way through the tree ending two feet from the ground.

(OC) A women screams in pain.

A pick up truck is parked adjacent to the tree. Its driver's door is two feet from the dangling antenna wire. Rust frowns the truck's wheel wells.

A baseball bat lies in the pickup's bed.

(OC) A women screams in pain.

INT. CLYDE BEAUMONT'S LIVING ROOM

MARIBEL TREFOIL runs out of a bedroom into a sparsely furnished living room stopping in front of Clyde.

Clyde is standing facing the bedroom.

MARIBEL
 Something's wrong, something's
 wrong!

CLYDE
 What's wrong?

MARIBEL
 (panicky)
 I don't know! Something! It's not
 going right! You have to go...

(OC) A women screams in pain.

Clyde rubs his jaw with his right hand.

CLYDE
 What the hell is wrong?

(OC) A women groans in pain.

MARIBEL
 The baby! I don't know! Something's
 not right. You have to get her to
 the hospital!...Now!

Clyde pushes past Maribel into the bedroom.

Mary lies in bed in labor. Her face and the upper part of
 her gown are drenched in sweat. The bedsheets and the lower
 part of her gown are bloody.

MARY
 Clyde...Clyde

CLYDE
 I'm here baby. I'm here.

Clyde glances at the bloody sheets and gown, rushes to
 Mary's head, bunches up some sheet and wipes her face.

MARY
 Help me Clyde. Help me. It hurts.

Clyde gathers up the sheets and folds them over Mary's body
 and picks her up. Bursting out of the bedroom he hurriedly
 crosses the living room kicking open the screen door and
 busting the door jamb at the top hinge.

EXT. CLYDE BEAUMONT'S YARD

Clyde crosses the yard, racing to the pickup's passenger door.

MARY
(Groaning)

CLYDE
Hang in there baby. Hang in.

Opening the door, Clyde gently places Mary on the bench seat.

MARY
Ow...Ow..ow..Clyde.

Clyde races around the front of the pickup and slides behind the wheel.

MARY
Clyde!

CLYDE
I know baby. I'm getting help.

Clyde turns the ignition, throws the pickup into reverse, and floors it. The car flies out of the yard into the dirt road. Clyde glances at Mary.

ON CLYDE (total fright)

Hitting the dirt road, Clyde jams on the brakes, throws the pickup into first, grinding gears. The car fish tales in the dirt road.

MARY
(screaming)

The pick up roars down the road in a cloud of smoke.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM

A DOCTOR walks into the waiting room.

DOCTOR
Well Clyde you're the daddy of a healthy baby boy.

CLYDE
But...but how is she doing, doc?

DOCTOR
 She lost a lot of blood. She's very
 weak. We're doing all we can for
 her...

CLYDE
 Is she...is she going to be all
 right?

DOCTOR
 We are doing all we can here, she's
 lost a lot of blood and the trauma
 of the birth...

Clyde grabs the doctor by both shoulders.

CLYDE
 Doc?

DOCTOR
 I'm so sorry.

CLYDE
 Can't you do something...anything!

The Doctor barely visibly shakes his head.

DOCTOR
 She's very weak. You should go in
 and see her now.

INT.HOSPITAL ROOM

Mary is in bed.

CLYDE
 Oh baby. Baby, baby.

MARY
 Hold my hand.

Clyde holds Mary's hand.

MARY
 It's a boy.

CLYDE
 I know.

MARY
 Don't think he'll be a shortstop.

CLYDE
Mary...Mary. I...I

MARY
Looks more like a catcher.

Mary coughs and winces.

CLYDE
You need rest. And then you'll be
okay.

MARY
No.

CLYDE
No. No, you'll be fine.

MARY
Promise me...promise me Clyde.

CLYDE
Anything.

MARY
Promise me you'll make our son the
best damn catcher. Promise me.

Mary kisses Clyde's hand.

MARY
Promise?

CLYDE
No not catcher. I promise he'll be
the best shortstop, the shortstop
your Dad wanted and the shortstop
that I cut off. He'll make the big
leagues.

MARY
Promise.

CLYDE
I do.

MARY
Looks like I'm gonna miss the
season.

INT. CLYDE BEAUMONT'S KITCHEN-EVENING-TWO YEARS LATER

Clyde sits at a small kitchen table.

BILLY BEAUMONT sits in high chair. On his tray is a bowl holding lima beans.

Maribel busies herself getting dinner ready.

CLYDE
(to Billy)
Say baseball. Baseball. Come on
base...ball.

BILLY
Blat blat.

CLYDE
That's it. Base...ball

BILLY
Blat..blat.

CLYDE
Good. Baseball. Now throw me a lima
bean.

MARIBEL
Clyde Beaumont. Don't go teaching
that boy to throw food around.
Teaching him bad manners on his
second birthday. That's disgusting.

CLYDE
Say birthday. Birth...day

BILLY
Blat, blat.

CLYDE
That's it. Now throw a lima bean.

Clyde picks out a bean and tosses it back into the bowl.

MARIBEL
You're teaching the boy bad
manners.

CLYDE
(turning to face Maribel)
Oh. it's just one lima bean.

Clyde turns back towards Billy just as Billy heaves the entire bowl of lima beans at Clyde striking on his forehead.

BILLY
Blat, blat.

MARIBEL
(laughing)
Serves you right.

BILLY
(laughing)
Blat, blat.

CLYDE
At least I know he has a good arm.

There is a knocking on a door.

CLYDE
I got it.

Clyde walks towards the front door and sees Jimmie through the screen.

CLYDE
Hi Jimmie. Come on in. We're just having dinner. Want some?

JIMMIE
No, thanks. I can't stay. Can I talk to you a sec?

Jimmie motions for Clyde to come out.

CLYDE
Sure, what's up?

Clyde steps onto the porch.

MARIBEL (O.C)
Clyde, you remember I have my church meeting tonight. Don't you plan on going anywhere.

CLYDE
(to Jimmie)
So what's up?

MARIBEL (O.C)
You hear me Clyde?

CLYDE
(yelling back)
I hear you.

JIMMIE

What's that in your hair?

Clyde picks out a lima bean. He flicks it off the porch.

CLYDE

Lima bean. Billy beaned me with a bowl of them.

JIMMIE

So maybe he'll be a pitcher and not a shortstop after all.

CLYDE

Nah, he's got nice soft hands. A shortstop.

JIMMIE

Of course he has nice soft hands, he's a baby.

CLYDE

A shortstop. What's up?

MARIBEL (O.C)

You better have that screen door closed. You'll let in every skeeter in the county. And when are you going to fix it properly? Been two years.

Clyde closes the door, glancing up at the top hinge.

CLYDE

(yelling back)

Of course it's closed.

JIMMIE

So seems like there was a little incident today.

CLYDE

Incident? What kind?

JIMMIE

A couple of coloreds passed the Trimble twins in their car. Threw up a bunch of dirt on the girls' car and in their hair. They got pretty dirty.

CLYDE
Shoot, I didn't think those twins
could get any dirtier.

JIMMIE
(thinking)
Yeah, but not in that way. That's
not the point.

CLYDE
Right. So?

JIMMIE
Well the boys and me think this is
a situation that requires some
corrective action. You agree?

CLYDE
Sure. But I can't help you tonight.

Clyde hitches his thumb over his shoulder towards the
kitchen.

JIMMIE
Understood, with you being a daddy
and all. The bat still in the
pickup?

CLYDE
Yup.

JIMMIE
We'll just borrow it and make sure,
that car won't be on our roads for
a long while, you know with
replacement parts being so hard to
get in these parts. Didn't want to
do anything without your
permission.

CLYDE
Yeah. You got it.

Jimmie turns to leave, but before he can turn all the ways
around he sees Maribel approaching.

JIMMIE
Evening Miss Maribel.

MARIBEL
Good evening Jimmie Higgins.

MARIBEL

(to Clyde)

You get back in the kitchen, finish feeding your son, finish your dinner and clean up. All this jabbering between you two washer woman gotta make me late for my church meeting.

Jimmie tries to leave.

JIMMIE

Good to see you again Miss Maribel. Clyde.

MARIBEL

Speaking of church, it would do the both of you some good to come. Especially you Jimmie. And bring that hussy Becky Ann with you. The good Lord has his work cut out with you two.

JIMMIE

(as he is leaving)

I wouldn't want to do that to your church. The walls might just crash down. Bye.

MARIBEL

Snot nose.

Clyde and Maribel walk back into the kitchen.

MARIBEL

I know what you boys do. All these changes going on. Some times seems like no one knows what's right.

CLYDE

Yeah. That's why some times we need to correct some things, so our rights are protected. And things won't change for you and Billy and me.

MARIBEL

You boys just be careful. That's all.

EXT. A WEATHERED HOUSE-NIGHT

A cross is burning in the yard.

A group of white men stand around a car. Jimmie Higgins has a bat in his hands.

Higgins starts smashing the car.

A BLACK MAN runs from the house.

BLACK MAN

My car! My car! What are you doing
to my car?

JIMMIE HIGGINS

Boy let this be a lesson. You don't
go passing white women, throwing up
dirt on them. Do you understand
boy?

On the black man. Tears streaming down his fire lit face.

JIMMIE HIGGINS

Boy, do you understand? Because the
next time it won't be your car that
gets beaten.

Jimmie continues beating the car.

EXT. CLYDE BEAUMONT'S YARD-DAY

Clyde, Billy and Maribel are standing under the moss laden tree. In front of them is a small wooden cross planted in the ground. There are five weathered baseballs half buried in front of the cross.

CLYDE

Well, Mary it's the start of
another season. I really miss you,
this time of the year especially. I
miss sitting in the truck listening
to the ball game with your head in
my lap, talking about baseball, our
catches, your laugh, your touch.

Clyde turns around and sees Billy and Maribel walking towards him from the house.

CLYDE

Your aunt, God, she has been such a
big help to me, but now she has to

go help her sister. She's not well.
 So it will be just Billy and me.
 We'll be all right. He's turning
 into a real good little ball player
 just like I promised.

Maribel and Billy come walking up. Billy has a baseball in
 one hand and a trowel in the other.

MARIBEL

(to Clyde)

I hate to leave you two like
 this...

CLYDE

We've been over this a dozen times.
 We'll be all right. Right Billy?

BILLY

We'll be okay. I can take care of
 Pop.

CLYDE

See no worries.

MARIBEL

I'll always worry about you two.
 Billy you keep an eye on your dad.

BILLY

I know just what to do. When I get
 home from school, I'll have a drink
 of milk and do my homework. And
 when I hear the train whistle blow
 I'll know it's 3:30 and Pop will be
 right home. Then we'll play some
 ball so when I get older I can make
 the majors. See?

Maribel bends over to hug and kiss Billy.

MARIBEL

I love you and will miss you and
 see you when I can.

Maribel stands and looks Clyde straight in the eye.

MARIBEL

I won't miss you as much as Billy,
 but I will miss you.

Maribel hugs Clyde.

MARIBEL

You watch that son of yours. You know Mary is watching from above.

Maribel moves Clyde to the side so she can be at the cross.

MARIBEL

And Mary I have cried a hundred years of tears missing you. You were becoming a fine woman and would have been a great mother, but I guess the good Lord needed a pinch hitter and took you off our bench. I know you're on the starting team now, but I still ache.

Maribel stifles back a sob.

MARIBEL

But you got two fine boys down here, they make you proud.

Maribel looks at Clyde and Billy. She looks at Billy for a long time.

MARIBEL

I know you see them every day, keep watching over them.

All three stand in silence.

BILLY

Can I put the ball in now?

CLYDE

Yes.

Billy gets down on his knees and with the trowel digs a hole in the dirt aside one of the other baseballs. He screws the ball in place and pats dirt around it.

BILLY

Mom, every year we put another ball here because Dad told me how much you loved baseball.

Billy turns and looks at Clyde.

BILLY

So every year we'll do this even when I make the majors. I love you Mom.

Billy gets up. They all stand in silence.

A pickup pulls into the yard parking along side Clyde's pickup. Jimmie Higgins gets out. He leans over the bed of Clyde's truck watching.

Billy turns around first.

BILLY
Jimmie!

Billy turns back to Clyde.

BILLY
Can I go?

CLYDE
(softly)
Yes.

Billy runs off towards Jimmie. Maribel turns to look at Jimmie.

MARIBEL
Lordy, I still have some packing to do. Rest in peace Mary.

Maribel leaves and walks back to the house. Clyde is left alone at the grave.

CLYDE
(to the cross)
I will always love you and always miss you.

Clyde kisses his hand and pats the cross. He turns and walks toward Jimmie.

Maribel crosses in front of the trucks.

MARIBEL
(to Jimmie)
Just a bit more time to finish some packing, then I'll be ready.

JIMMIE
Take your time. I gotta talk to Clyde anyway.

JIMMIE
(to Billy)
Do me a favor champ, go help your aunt pack.

BILLY

Do I have to?

JIMMIE

Got a new stack of baseball cards.

Jimmie reaches in his back pocket and pulls out the cards. He waves them in the air over Billy's head.

Billy jumps for them. Jimmie yanks them higher in the air.

JIMMIE

Still in the wrapper with the gum.

BILLY

I'm going!

Billy runs after Maribel. Clyde leans across the pickup bed from Jimmie.

JIMMIE

(motioning towards the cross)

Still rough? Does it get any easier?

CLYDE

No. Maybe harder as Billy grows. Jimmie, he can play. I know he's only six, but he can play and I know Mary would have loved every second of it.

JIMMIE

I know. And if you keep working with him, the promise you made to Mary will come true. Trust me buddy.

CLYDE

I hope so.

JIMMIE

But listen, we don't have much time to talk before I give Maribel her lift.

CLYDE

Thanks by the way.

Clyde reaches into the pick up bed and grabs his bat.

JIMMIE

Yeah. So what are we going to do about this civil rights stuff.

Clyde grabs the bat harder muscles flexing on his forearms.

CLYDE

We have to keep doing what we've been doing. Protecting our rights. Washington got no right telling us how to handle communists. Most of those people coming down here they don't belong in our community. They're agitators, government agents. We have to just take control of things ourselves. They're not our coloreds.

Clyde smacks the bat against the pick up bed.

SUPERIMPOSE "ONE YEAR LATER"

EXT. CLYDE BEAUMONT'S YARD-DAY

Billy is in the yard throwing a baseball against a small backstop. The back stop comes out of the ground perpendicular to the ground then slants back a little at the top.

Billy throws the ball against the perpendicular part. A ground ball comes at him.

BILLY

Here we go fans. It's the last of the ninth in the seven game of the 1957 World Series and the big bad Yankees are down to their last at bat.

And there's a ground ball to Billy Beaumont. He fields it cleanly and throws it to first. One out.

Billy throws the ball against the slanted part of the back stop.

BILLY

There's a high fly ball hit deep to center. Beaumont is on his horse. He's racing back, back and makes the catch. Two outs, one to go.

Billy rears back and throws as hard as he can against the perpendicular part of the back stop. A hard grounder comes back to his left.

Billy moves quickly to his left.

BILLY

A hard smash to the hole. Beaumont ranges over.

The ball takes a bad hop over Billy's head.

BILLY

Oh, a bad hop. They'll have to score that a hit.

The ball rolls through the yard and rolls into the road. Billy turns and jogs after the ball.

A YOUNG BLACK BOY about Billy's age is walking down the road. He sees the ball roll into the road and runs to it. He is about to pick it up.

BILLY

Hey boy! Let that be.

Billy sprints out to the ball and grabs it and pounds it into his glove.

BILLY

Get out of here boy. This ain't no place for you.

The black boy looks at Billy.

BILLY

Git, I said.

The black boy starts walking away. A train whistle blows.

BILLY

Git going, you don't belong here.

The black boy glances back over his shoulder. Clyde's pick up is seen coming down the road. The pick up passes the black boy and pulls into the yard.

The pick up parks near the tree. The wire dangles a couple of feet from the pick up.

Clyde gets out.

BILLY

Hi pop.

CLYDE

Hi champ. (motioning with his head
down the road) Any problems?

BILLY

Nah. I told him to git.

CLYDE

Good.

BILLY

(hesitantly)

Pop, he looked kinda sad.

CLYDE

He just needs to be with his own,
that's all. And stay with them.

Clyde motions toward the pick up.

INT/EXT. PICK UP

CLYDE

Come on, let's see what game we can
pick up.

They walk over to the pick up. Billy gets in the passenger
side door. Clyde walks around to the driver's side, walks to
the tree and grabs the dangling wire and attaches it to the
pick up's antenna.

Clyde gets in the driver's side.

CLYDE

You know this was one of your mom's
and mine favorite things to do.

BILLY

I know Pop.

Clyde turns on the radio.

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

(over static)

The Moultrie Peaches will send up
(static).

CLYDE

Let me see if I can fix that.

Clyde gets out of the pick up and rubs the wire up and down the antenna a few times.

CLYDE

(sticking his head in the open window)

Better?

BILLY

Yeah.

Clyde gets back in.

CLYDE

What did we miss.

BILLY

Just the top of the first.

Clyde reaches into his back pocket pulls out his wallet and two tickets.

CLYDE

Good. Some times when you listen and close your eyes, you can see the game in your mind. It's almost like being there.

Clyde flips the tickets onto Billy's lap.

CLYDE

Not the same as being there, but almost.

BILLY

What's this?

Billy picks up the tickets.

CLYDE

Read them.

BILLY

Moultrie vs. Americus Saturday July 26, 1956. That's tomorrow. We're going?

CLYDE

Tomorrow. Unless you don't want to. I'll take Jimmie.

BILLY
No way! I'm going with you!

Billy excitedly leans over and hugs Clyde.

BILLY
Pop this will be great! A pro game.
Wow! I can't believe it.

CLYDE
Yeah. We'll have to make
sandwiches.

BILLY
Let's start making them now.

CLYDE
Slow down buddy. We can do that in
the morning. Let's just listen to
this game now.

INT. CLYDE BEAUMONT'S KITCHEN-DAY

Billy is in the kitchen with a stack of bread, peanut butter
and jelly.

He is making sandwiches.

Clyde sleepily walks into the kitchen.

BILLY
Hi pop. I'm getting the sandwiches
ready.

CLYDE
(glancing at the clock)
Little early isn't it?

ON CLOCK "6:30."

BILLY
I want to be ready. This is my
first real game. I can't wait. What
time do we leave? Where's my glove?

CLYDE
(groggily)
Did you make coffee?

Billy looks at Clyde as if he has two heads.

INT. CLYDE'S PICK UP

Clyde and Billy are driving down a dirt road. The radio is on.

(VO) RADIO ANNOUNCER
And the Montgomery Bus Boycott
continues into its seven month.

BILLY
What's a boycott?

CLYDE
Find some music. It's what some
coloreds are doing to the bus
people in Alabama. They don't want
to stay where they belong so
they're not riding the bus.

BILLY
Why don't they want to stay where
they belong?

CLYDE
Because they got no sense.

BILLY
Everyone knows they're suppose to
stay where they belong.

The pick up turns a corner. The stadium is right ahead.

BILLY
Wow, it's so big! My first pro
game. When I'm older I'll be a big
leaguer, right pop?

CLYDE
We'll work hard at it. Real hard.

EXT. BALL PARK

Clyde and Billy are at the railing separating the field from
the stands. Players are taking batting practice. Billy and
Clyde are focused on the hitters.

All the players are white. THE BATTER smashes a line drive
over the outfield wall.

BILLY
Wow! Did you see that one. It
hardly look like he swung.

CLYDE

Yeah. Watch. He keeps his weight back. He keeps his hands back, leads with legs, then pow brings his arms through and snaps his wrist.

Billy takes a stance and mimics the hitter timing the batting practice throw.

BILLY

(swinging an imaginary bat)

Pow.

CLYDE

Nice swing.

MANAGER GILLY has ambled up, unseen by Clyde and Billy.

MANAGER GILLY

Yeah, that was a nice swing.

Clyde and Billy turn.

CLYDE

Coach Gilly!

MANAGER GILLY

Clyde Beaumont. It's been a long time.

CLYDE

Since I was in high school. 12 years?

MANAGER GILLY

Seems right. Lost track of the years out in Texas.

Gilly motions to Billy.

MANAGER GILLY

And who is this fine looking ball player?

Clyde turns to Billy and tussles his hair.

CLYDE

This is my son, Billy.

MANAGER GILLY

Nice to meet you Billy.

They shake hands.

MANAGER GILLY

That was a nice looking swing.

BILLY

Thanks.

MANAGER GILLY

Do you know I was your Dad's manager when he was in high school?

Billy looks at Clyde for confirmation. Clyde shakes his head.

MANAGER GILLY

Even when he was a little scrawny freshman I saw how good he would become. Just sorry I missed the last part of his senior year.

BILLY

How come? Did you get fired?

Clyde and Gilly laugh.

CLYDE

No, he didn't get fired. Some team called the St. Louis Cardinals wanted him to run some of their minor league operations in Texas.

MANAGER GILLY

That's right. When the big leagues call, you drop everything and come running.

BILLY

That's what I'm gotta do. Go running when the big leagues call me. Right Pop?

CLYDE

Right.

MANAGER GILLY

Well you have to practice real hard, work real hard and love the game.

BILLY

Yup. That's what my Pop says. And that's what I do.

MANAGER GILLY

Good. Keep it up and we'll see you
in the big leagues one day.

BILLY

Okay.

MANAGER GILLY

And you know what else you need?

Billy looks at Clyde questioningly.

BILLY

What?

MANAGER GILLY

A baseball cap.

Gilly turns towards the dugout.

MANAGER GILLY

Gus!

A HEAD pops out of the dugout.

MANAGER GILLY

Get this ball player a cap.

Gilly motions to Billy.

MANAGER GILLY

Up and over.

Billy hops the rail. Gilly points to Gus.

MANAGER GILLY

Go see Gus. He'll fix you up.

Billy runs off.

BILLY

(yelling back)

Thanks, Coach Gilly.

MANAGER GILLY

And don't step on any lines. Bad
luck.

Billy turns back.

BILLY

(hopping over a line)

I know.

CLYDE

Thanks Coach. So what brings you back to these parts?

MANAGER GILLY

Change. I couldn't work with the Mexicans they were looking to bring in. Coloreds, Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, all over baseball. That's not me, you know that. I had to get back to where I feel comfortable. You know where things feel right.

CLYDE

Yeah. I know how you feel.

MANAGER GILLY

But damn, now I hear they want to integrate this league. Clyde we can't let that happen. You'll help, right?

CLYDE

Sure. You can count on me.

MANAGER GILLY

Figured I could. You and Billy want to watch the game from the bench?

CLYDE

Only if I can help you coach.

MANAGER GILLY

Why not. You were doing it as a freshman. Why change?

Clyde hops the rail. Gilly puts his arm around Clyde. They walk off towards the dugout being careful not to step on any caulk lines.

EXT.FIELD-DAY

Clyde, Billy and Jimmie are in a field. There are woods in the distance.

All three have shotguns in their hands. Jimmie holds two dogs on a leash.

They are dressed to hunt.

CLYDE

Okay Billy. I started hunting quail at 12. You're 12 and a half, you're a little behind where I was but since fall is quail season that's all right.

BILLY

Yeah, let's go!

CLYDE

Whoa, buddy. There's a few things we have to go over before we go out.

BILLY

Yeah, you told me about gun safety.

CLYDE

There are some more things to go over.

BILLY

Pop, I know all about keeping the safety on and pointing the gun at the ground. And you've said I'm a good shot. Let's go.

Clyde looks at Jimmie. Jimmie shakes his head.

CLYDE

Okay. I guess we'll have to show you. Jimmie.

Jimmie hands the leashed dogs to Clyde. Jimmie turns around, unbuckles his pants, drops his pants, bares his butt, and bends over.

His butt has lots of pock marks.

Clyde points to Jimmie's butt.

CLYDE

(to Billy)

Know what that is?

BILLY

Yeah, Jimmie's hairy butt.

Clyde looks at Jimmie's butt.

CLYDE
Yeah, but look closer.

Jimmie hesitates.

BILLY
Er, no.

CLYDE
No look at all the marks.

BILLY
Pop, no.

JIMMIE
Hurry up. My wang is getting cold
and is going turtle.

CLYDE
Okay, pull up your pants.

JIMMIE
Thanks.

BILLY
Yeah, thanks.

Jimmie pulls his pants back up. Clyde gives him back the
leash.

CLYDE
What you saw, all those little
marks. That was buckshot.

BILLY
Wow! Jimmie who shot you in the
ass?

Jimmie looks at Clyde. He nods.

JIMMIE
Becky Ann.

BILLY
Becky Ann? Did it hurt?

JIMMIE
Stung, just a little.

CLYDE
A little? He was hopping around,
cursing up a storm, acting like he
had been shot. Scared all the quail
in the whole county.

JIMMIE

I was shot.

CLYDE

Just with some buckshot.

BILLY

Boy you must have been mad at her.

JIMMIE

I was, but she kinda made up for it.

Clyde and Jimmie exchange knowing looks. Billy looks at them.

CLYDE

Anyway that's why we have to go over some rules before we let the dogs loose.

BILLY

Yeah Pop. I understand. We don't want Jimmie getting shot in his butt again.

INT.CLYDE'S PICKUP-DAY

The pick up is moving down a road. The radio is on.

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O)

Yesterday a crowd estimated at a quarter of a million marched on Washington to listen to Martin Luther King give a speech. He said, "I Have a Dream." In other news the Possum Corner Flag factory announced it will increase it's production of Confederate flags to keep up with the demand. Six new workers will be added.

CLYDE

(perturbed)

Find some music.

BILLY

Pop, why are we going into town? We always meet the guys and play some pick up Saturdays.

CLYDE

(still a little perturbed)
I told you. I got get some things
and need your help.

BILLY

But what kinda things? Are we gotta
be able to practice later? If I'm
gotta make the high school team, I
need to keep practicing.

CLYDE

(relaxing)
Making the team means a lot to you.

BILLY

Yeah. I want to start as a
freshman.

CLYDE

Freshman? Think you can start?

The bat in the pick up bed clanks as the pick up turns.

BILLY

Pop, you know that's my goal, but
just for high school. I just gotta
keep getting better and better,
because I want to make the big
leagues. You think I can make it,
don't you.

CLYDE

Son, with a little luck and a lot
of hard work with the skills you
have, you can be the best ball
player ever to come out of Georgia.

BILLY

Really? You really think so.

CLYDE

You know I think so and I promised
your mom.

The pickup pulls up in front of MGUILTROYS store.

CLYDE

Come on let's go.

BILLY

So are we practicing later?

CLYDE
Sure thing.

INT. MCGUILTROY'S STORE-DAY

OREN MCGUILTROY is sweeping up some grain spilled on the floor.

OREN
(to himself)
Damn. They're so messy.

BILLY
Hey Oren, you coming to practice later?

OREN
Yeah. And wait till you check out my new curve.

BILLY
Curve? Good. We need to show those seniors we can play. A good curve will help.

OREN
Yeah, we'll show them.

CLYDE
Hi ya Oren. See you later for some ball?

OREN
Yes, Mr. Beaumont.

CLYDE
Good deal. See you then. Come on Billy.

Clyde and Billy start walking through the store. They start passing the SPORTING GOODS DEPARTMENT.

BILLY
Pop, can we just take a look?

CLYDE
Yeah, but we have to be quick. What are you looking for?

BILLY
Nothing...really.

CLYDE
Nothing?

BILLY
Well, maybe, I was thinking that maybe, some new cleats. You know my foot is still growing, and the ones I have now are getting tight and...

CLYDE
Whoa!

BILLY
I know they're expensive and we don't have a lot of money, but I thought maybe...

CLYDE
(feigned exasperation)
We can look.

Clyde and Billy walk over to the counter.

NED MCGUILTROY is behind the counter.

NED
Morning boys.

BILLY
Morning Mr. McGuiltroy.

CLYDE
Morning Ned.

NED
So what can I do for you today?

Billy is looking at cleats and sees the price. Clyde has moved down the counter a little away from Billy.

BILLY
Oh...nothing.

NED
Nothing? Come on Billy. I don't see much of you two in here and you don't make a trip for nothing.

BILLY
(glancing down the counter at Clyde)
Oh Pop has to pick up something and needs my help. We just stopped here to look.

NED
Look for what?

BILLY
(almost whispering)
Just looking. Maybe some cleats?

NED
(Whispering)
Oh cleats.

Ned leans over the counter, looking down at Billy's feet. Billy glances at his father who seems preoccupied down the counter.

NED
Looks like a size nine and a half?

BILLY
I take a ten now.

NED
Okay, a ten. Gives you a little wiggle room for your foot to grow more. Let me see what I have in the back.

Clyde ambles back to Billy. Clyde looks down at the cleats. Clyde sees the price and lets out a low whistle.

BILLY
Sorry Pop. I'll tell Mr. McGuiltroy to take the cleats back.

Ned appears from out back.

CLYDE
Ned, cleats?

NED
Cleats? Or a glove?

BILLY
A glove? Wow, Mr. McGuiltroy. That's a Rawlings professional model. That's what the pro's use. That's real expensive.

NED
It is. Go head. Try it on. See how it feels.

Billy looks at his father. He nods his head to go on. Billy slips it on and pounds his fist into the glove's pocket. He raises the glove to his face smelling the new leather.

BILLY
It's kinda stiff.

NED
Yeah. For a glove like this you'd have to oil it and work it a bit. Turn it over. Take a look at the padding on the strap.

Billy turns the glove over. On the strap he sees written in his fathers block printing in all caps "BILLY T. BEAUMONT."

BILLY
Why is my name here?

CLYDE
Happy Birthday!

BILLY
What? My birthday is in April.

CLYDE
Well, that would have been after your freshman year, and you'll need to break it in the next couple weeks for high school. Right Ned?

NED
You sure will.

BILLY
But Pop, I never had a new glove before...and...and this is so expensive.

NED
Don't you like it.

BILLY
(looking at his father)
Yeah, it's great, but Pop?

CLYDE
It's yours. I saved for it. You'll need it for high school.

Clyde pauses, looks around, rubs his face.

CLYDE

And it will help you get the chance to get into the big leagues. Get the chance I never had.

BILLY

Thanks Pop. I'll make you proud and work hard and make the big leagues.

Ned places a baseball and some linseed oil on the counter.

NED

Here Billy work some oil in the glove.

BILLY

Okay.

Ned motions Clyde down the counter.

CLYDE

Thanks for letting me get the glove today. I'll pay the rest as soon as I can get some overtime.

NED

Don't worry. Take your time.

CLYDE

Thanks.

NED

You know, I had to keep that glove out of sight in the back. Couple of colored boys came in awhile back, saw it and wanted to buy it.

CLYDE

With what?

NED

Don't know where they got it from, but they flashed cash. A wad of it.

CLYDE

What's happening? Too many things, all them marching to Washington. That King getting all of them excited with that "I Have a Dream" speech. They're all over the majors, now they're coming in here with lots of cash. That's not right. What about our dreams? Our rights?

NED

What's happening is our folks up in Washington didn't do their job and let that Civil Right's Bill pass.

CLYDE

Yeah the Yankees are shoving it down our throats again.

NED

That's why you, me and the other boys have to make sure everything stays the same down here. You have to lead us Clyde.

CLYDE

(pausing and thinking)

Yeah. You can count on me.

Clyde and Ned shake hands over the counter.

CLYDE

Billy come here and say good-bye.

Billy walks down to the two men continuing to work the glove.

BILLY

See ya Mr. McGuiltroy. Thanks for the glove.

NED

You can thank your pop.

Billy looks at Clyde.

BILLY

Thanks again pop.

NED

And you can thank me by beating the Possum Corner boys in high school.

BILLY

Okay.

Clyde and Billy walk towards the front of the store. Billy still has the glove on. He is looking down at it.

BILLY

This is the best thing that ever happened to me. I'm gotta use this to make me the best shortstop ever

and make the majors. Just wait and see. Just wait and see, I'll make you proud.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL FIELD-FOUR YEARS LATER-DAY

It's the championship game. Billy's team is winning by one run.

ON THE OUTFIELD SCOREBOARD. VISITORS 5, HOME 4. Beyond the scoreboard standing in a tree a YOUNG BLACK BOY watches the game.

The home team is up. The bases are loaded and BRYON GRISSUM is up.

The COACH and the INFIELD PLAYERS are in conference on the mound. The coach is rubbing the ball and talking to Oren, his pitcher.

COACH

Okay boys this is it, bottom of the ninth. We're close.

The coach looks at Oren.

Oren, I know you don't have much left, but you're all I got. Just bear down son, forget that it's Grissum up there and don't be nervous. You got a team behind you. Okay go get them.

The coach flips the ball to Oren, he catches it. The infield players go back to their positions except Billy.

BILLY

Gimme the ball Oren.

Oren opens his glove and Billy takes the ball. He sticks his glove under his armpit and rubs the ball with both hands.

BILLY

I know you got nothing left and you know it and you're as nervous as a fourteen year old left out behind the barn with Cindy Jo.

ON CINDY JO IN THE STANDS.

BILLY

So I'm gotta tell you what to do. Now old Bryon up there is ready to

swing at the first pitch and knock
the crap outta it.

Billy nods to Byron who stands at home with a bat that looks like a toothpick in hands attached to forearms that have no right being on a high school baseball player. His cheek is puffed.

BILLY

And there ain't nothing you got
left that is gotta stop him from
doing that. So you got one chance,
one pitch. You're gotta throw that
curve so it breaks four inches,
knee high off the outside corner.

Byron hawks up a lungee that lands on the center of home plate. It is black.

BILLY

Old Bryon's gotta try to kill it
and if you make the pitch like I
said, he's gotta slaughter it near
me and I'll make the play. Got it?

Billy slams the ball in Oren's glove.

OREN

(nervously)

Yup.

Oren makes the pitch. Byron unleashes a ferocious swing and pulls a vicious line drive towards the third base-shortstop hole.

As soon as the ball was released Billy is moving towards the hole, he takes two more quick steps and leaps to his right, higher and higher, stretching and stretching his glove hand.

The ball looks almost past him, but with one more stretch, the ball smacks into his glove. Pandemonium erupts on the field.

TEAM BENCH

Clyde and Billy sit alone on the team bench. A chain link fence protects the bench from the field.

Billy sits with his glove on his right knee his baseball cap on his left knee.

CLYDE

Billy you played great. Smart and hard. And that last catch, in all the year's I've played and watched baseball, I don't think I can remember a better catch.

BILLY

It's the glove dad. It feels like it's part of me.

CLYDE

The glove, a lot of hard work and talent.

BILLY

Yeah, the talent and glove I got from you.

Clyde tussles Billy's hair.

CLYDE

And your mom.

BILLY

And mom.

Ned McGuiltroy is walking by. He stops on the infield side of the fence.

His white shirt is totally soaked, his neck is sweaty. He pulls a handkerchief from his back pocket and wipes his neck.

NED

That was a barn burner, Billy. A real barn burner. And that last catch...That's why you're "The Glove."

CLYDE

Yeah, I told him I don't think I could remember a better catch...

NED

Don't think? I've watched a lot of games in these parts, even some colored games, and that catch was the best catch ever made in the entire state of Georgia. I say the entire state of Georgia. Ever.

BILLY

Thanks.

NED

It was historic! There's magic in that glove!

CINDY JO walks by and stops.

BILLY JO

Hi, Mr. Beaumont, Mr. McGuiltroy.

NED AND CLYDE

Cindy Jo.

CINDY JO

(to Billy)

Walk me to the gym.

Billy looks at Clyde. Clyde motions "go ahead" nodding his head.

Billy gets up and starts walking away with Cindy Jo.

NED

That's a firecracker.

CLYDE

More like a powder keg.

NED

Yeah, a very dangerous girl. (long pause) Ah, youth.

CLYDE

(shaking his head)

Colored games? What do you mean you've watched some colored games?

NED

Yeah, some of them can play.

CLYDE

Ned, how can you be supporting them?

NED

Supporting? I was just watching.

CLYDE

That's the same.

NED

Nah.

CLYDE

Damn, it's bad enough that they're playing in the majors now. We don't want them playing in our leagues down here. I don't want my son playing with any coloreds.

NED

Clyde, you know that may have to happen.

CLYDE

What?

NED

There were scouts in the stands and they sure were interested in Billy.

CLYDE

Yeah. So?

NED

You know he has the talent. Baseball will take him out of here. It's just a matter of time. And with the teams having coloreds on them, Billy will be playing with them. It's going to happen.

CLYDE

It's not suppose to be like that. What's happening to us? Our lives? We may as well be living in the god damn North.

NED

Times are changing.

CLYDE

We have to stop it! We're not doing enough.

NED

That's another thing I got to talk to you about.

Ned pauses. The two men look at each other.

NED

I wanted to tell you some weeks ago. But after I came back from the hardware association meeting, I had to make some changes.

CLYDE

What changes?

NED

Well... and you understand this is a business decision. I had to start extending credit to coloreds.

CLYDE

What?

NED

I have to. It's strictly business. I have my family to think about. I can't risk my business to a boycott.

Ned pats his stomach.

NED

We all have to eat.

CLYDE

Damn Ned! All this is wrecking our lives. Our kids won't have what we had if this continues.

NED

I don't know that it can be stopped.

CLYDE

No it can, even if I have to do everything alone.

Clyde walks off and gets into his pick up.

INT/EXT. PICK UP

Clyde is driving through town. He is stopped at the main intersection by a NATIONAL GUARDSMAN directing traffic.

A mixed group of YOUNG BLACK AND WHITE protesters march by singing.

(V.O) "We shall overcome, we shall overcome, some day..."

Clyde turns his radio on full volume.

(V.O) "Try to set the night on fire. The time to hesitate is through. No time to wallow in the mire. Try to set the night on fire."

EXT. CLYDE BEAUMONT'S YARD

Clyde's pick up pulls into the yard.

Clyde gets out, slams the door shut, reaches into the pick up bed, and puts a strangle hold on the bat.

He stomps across the yard to his front porch and plopping into a chair.

CLYDE
(agitated)
In my town! Right in front of me!
What the hell...this has to stop!

Maribel comes out of the house. She looks around.

MARIBEL
Someone else here or you just
talking to yourself. Maybe you're
sucking up too much sawdust.

CLYDE
Sorry, I forgot you were cleaning
today.

MARIBEL
You didn't forget to leave a mess.

CLYDE
Yeah, got some things on my mind.
Can I give you a lift back?

MARIBEL
No. I have one coming.

CLYDE
Then how about a cold one while you
wait. We can catch up.

Clyde reaches for the screen door and notices the new hinges.

CLYDE
What happened to the door?

MARIBEL
I had it fixed.

CLYDE
I've fixed it.

MARIBEL
Clyde you fixed it a dozen times
since it was broke. I had it fixed
right, so you won't have to fix it
again.

CLYDE
Who fixed it?

MARIBEL
Horace Greene.

CLYDE
Black Horace?

MARIBEL
Yes. He was looking for some ways
to make some money.

CLYDE
You let a colored fix my house?
Fix, something that I fixed.

MARIBEL
You never fixed it right all these
years and it needed to be done
before it bopped some one on the
head, like me.

CLYDE
But...

MARIBEL
I'm sorry Clyde. It's done.

Clyde goes into the house slamming the screen door behind
him.

INT. CLYDE'S PICK UP-NIGHT

Clyde is driving his pick up. He stops at a free standing
nondescript building.

A sign says "VOTER REGISTRATION."

Clyde stops his pick up and gets out.

EXT. NEAR THE BUILDING

Clyde walks around the entire building pouring a liquid out of a canister.

He lights a match and throws it against the building. The building goes up in flames.

Clyde gets into the pick up and peels out throwing dirt and gravel into the air.

A BLACK MAN comes running out of the woods.

BLACK MAN
(looking at the burning
building and then the speeding
pick up)
Hey! Shit!

NEAR THE BUILDING- DAY

The building is smoldering.

A WHITE SHERIFF is talking to the black man.

SHERIFF
So you say you were here guarding
the building last night.

BLACK MAN
Yes sir.

The sheriff looks back at the building, shaking his head.

SHERIFF
Looks like you didn't do such a
good job. (long pause) Just where
were you when the fire started?

BLACK MAN
I was in the woods taking care of
my business.

SHERIFF
But you say you saw a car speeding
away.

BLACK MAN
Not a car, a pick up.

SHERIFF

Oh, a pick up. Lots of them down here. Get a color?

BLACK MAN

No sir, didn't see a color, but when it was speeding away there was a clanking noise.

SHERIFF

A clanking noise?

The sheriff kicks at some dirt. Some lands on the boots of the black man.

SHERIFF

Probably just some of that good old Georgia clay stuck in a tail pipe causing a back fire. Hear it all the time. Don't have much to go on, but we'll keep a file.

EXT. MINOR LEAGUE BALL FIELD-DAY

MANAGER BRISTOL and INFIELD COACH FOY stand near home plate. Foy has a bat in his hands and stands near a basket of balls. Bristol has a clipboard.

There are FOUR PLAYERS at the shortstop position and FIVE at the second base position.

A CATCHER stands near Foy and a FIRST BASEMAN at first base.

Billy is with the shortstops.

BRISTOL

Okay boys, when I call your name you're up. Coach will hit some grounders and we'll see what you can do. When I yell "DP" let's see how you turn one.

The players nod. Bristol looks down at his clipboard.

A BLACK BALLPLAYER, LEON TURNER runs up to the coach.

LEON

(to Bristol)

Yeah Coach. Just got in. Leon Turner. I'm your second baseman. I'm your man.

Bristol looks up from his clipboard, then at Turner, then at the players near second base.

Turner follows his gaze towards the players.

BRISTOL

There are four other ballplayers who think the same thing. Get your late ass out there with the others and I'll decide who my second baseman is. Is that okay with you? Or should I just tell everyone else to go home now?

LEON

(running out to the field)
Ah, that's no problem coach.

BRISTOL

(to Foy)
One every year. Okay, you know the drill.

As Bristol calls out names Foy hits grounders of varying difficulty. All the players are competent, there are bobbles and some misses on harder chances, but nothing unexpected.

BRISTOL

(to Foy)
I see a lot cheese out there. Swiss cheese, lots of holes.

Foy hits a routine grounder that a infield player botches.

BRISTOL

A lot.

FOY

Same thing every year.

BRISTOL

(looking at clip board) Beaumont!
Turner!

Grounders are hit at both players, they are making the more difficult look routine.

As their time on the field increases the almost impossible are made spectacularly.

BRISTOL

(right when the ball is hit)
DP! Runner coming hard!

The ball is hit into the shortstop hole. Billy races to his left, back hands the ball, slides his foot to stop, pivots, and throws to second.

Leon catches the ball, toe taps the bag, jumps and pivots in one motion and drops his arm to throw to first.

BRISTOL

Attababy! Way to drop your throw.
That's the way to clear the runner.
All you guys see that?

OTHER PLAYERS

(in unison)
Yeah, yes, yeah.

BRISTOL

(to Foy)
Keep hitting to them. Make them
harder and harder.

FOY

I'm running out of real estate.

The next grounder is hit way to Billy's left, unreachable, except he reaches it, pivots and makes a perfect throw to first.

BRISTOL

Anybody make that today?

FOY

Today? I never saw anyone make that
play. Ever. Except maybe Boudreau.

BRISTOL

Maybe Boudreau. Right. We have our
double play combo. Hit one more
right up the middle.

Leon reaches the ball behind second fully stretched. Without taking it out of his glove he instinctively flips it to Billy crossing in front of him.

LEON

(as he is flipping the ball)
Whitey.

Billy bare hands the ball and completes the play throwing to first.

BILLY
 (after the play is finished)
 What did you call me boy?

LEON
 Don't call me boy, Whitey.

BILLY
 Boy, you don't speak to me, unless
 I talk to you first.

LEON
 This isn't the cracker red neck
 south Whitey. Better get use to it.

Leon and Billy begin fighting. The other players gather
 around. The coaches run out to break it up.

BRISTOL
 What the hell is going on? All you
 other guys to the showers! Now!

The other players head off. Bristol and Foy stand between
 the players.

BRISTOL
 Now, tell me, what the hell was
 that all about?

Both players look at Bristol silently.

BRISTOL
 I said what the hell was all this
 about?

LEON
 He called me "boy." I don't stand
 being called that by anyone, let
 alone white trash.

BILLY
 I ain't white trash boy.

LEON
 Don't call...

BRISTOL
 Both of you shut your yaps! Now get
 this straight. There are no colors
 on my baseball team. Whatever crap
 you came here with, get rid of it
 right now. Understand?

Both players stand silently as the Bristol looks at them.

BRISTOL

Both of you have more talent than I've ever seen at this level, but the common sense of a knuckleball.

Bristol taps his temple with his finger. Billy and Clyde are staring at Bristol.

BRISTOL

Your knuckleheads could be the only thing that stops you from getting to the majors.

Billy and Leon steal a glance at each other when they hear the word "majors."

BRISTOL

And it's my job, my ass on the line, to get you to first base. If I see this crap again, I will show you a color I do allow and that's blood red.

Bristol looks at both players for a long time. His fists are clenched.

BRISTOL

And that blood will be coming from your noses when I bust them to drive those knuckleballs out of you. Got it?

Bristol slams his fist into his hand.

BRISTOL

(screaming)

You're ball players and teammates, that's it! Get to the showers!

Leon and Clyde start a slow jog towards the field house.

LEON

(mumbling, almost inaudible)
The majors.

BILLY

Yeah, the majors.

EXT. MINOR LEAGUE BALL STANDS/FIELD-DAY

Clyde and Jimmie are in the stands watching Billy's minor league team.

JIMMIE

Hey this is great that we get to watch Billy practice.

CLYDE

Yeah, all the rain up north washed their field away so they'll be traveling around down south for awhile. Figured a three hour drive was worth it.

JIMMIE

Sure. Does he know we were coming?

CLYDE

No.

JIMMIE

Hey look. There he is at shortstop, just like at home.

Coaches Bristol and Foy are standing near home plate. Foy has a bat in his hand and container of baseballs by his side.

BRISTOL

Okay, live DP practice. Coach will hit, you boys turn them fast and clean.

Runners hang around first base. One leads off. A WHITE BALLPLAYER at second stares towards home plate. Billy checks the runner at first.

BRISTOL

Okay here we go. Go head.

Foy smacks a grounder at Billy. Billy fields it cleanly and looks towards second.

BILLY

(to himself)

Come on, come on, get there, get there.

Billy throws towards second base. The second baseman catches the ball, taps the bag, pivots and is upended by the runner just as he release his throw. The throw bounces to first base. Billy shakes his head.

Foy hits another grounder to Billy. Billy fires it to second, the second baseman catches it, but looks down and stamps his foot around the bag three times before hitting the bag and clearing himself out of the runners way.

BILLY
 (to the second baseman)
 Damn, just fake hitting the bag.
 The ump will give it to you.

Foy hits a grounder to the second baseman. Billy races to cover second base and momentarily stands there as the second baseman makes a casual throw. Billy bare hands the ball and whips a side arm throw to first causing the heavy set runner to slide before reaching the bag.

BILLY
 (to the second baseman)
 Shit, you have to be quicker. Much quicker!

Billy looks at the next runner. Foy hits another grounder to the second baseman. Billy covers second. The second baseman bobbles the ball slightly and throws towards Billy as the runner bears down. The ball and the runner arrive simultaneously. Billy jumps, but is too late; the runner's spike catches his shin and sends Billy tumbling.

BILLY
 Damn! Coach get Turner back in here. I'd rather play with a good colored player than a shitty white one. That jackass is gonna get me killed out here.

BRISTOL
 Okay Turner. Show them how it's done.

Series of shots showing the ballet between shortstop and second baseman.

BRISTOL
 That's how it's done boys.

Billy and Leon look at each other. They nod.

BRISTOL
 Okay. Couple of laps and hit the showers.

The players groan.

BRISTOL
 Make it a couple of couple laps.

On Clyde and Jimmie.

CLYDE
 Should have gave that kid more of a
 chance.

JIMMIE
 He stunk.

CLYDE
 He's white.

JIMMIE
 Still stunk.

Clyde glares disapprovingly at Jimmie.

CLYDE
 I don't like Billy playing with
 that colored boy.

JIMMIE
 Yeah, but together they're as
 smooth as silk.

CLYDE
 Don't like it.

JIMMIE
 But he'll be playing with colored
 ball players when he gets to the
 majors.

CLYDE
 Still don't like it.

EXT. STADIUM PARKING LOT

Billy and Leon walk out the locker room door towards their
 bus. Billy sees his Dad and Jimmie.

BILLY
 (to Leon)
 That's my Dad. I thought he would
 be here.

Billy starts walking towards his Dad. Leon starts following.
 Billy turns around facing Leon.

BILLY
Better not. I'll see you on the
bus.

Leon walks towards the bus, Billy towards his father.

JIMMIE
The Glove! Smooth out there, real
smooth.

BILLY
Thanks Jimmie. Dad what did you
think?

CLYDE
Looks like you were pulling off the
curve a bit during batting
practice.

BILLY
Yeah. Been working on it. Kids down
here got real hooks. Not a nickel
curve like Oren's. But what about
the DP drill?

JIMMIE
Thing of beauty. You and that black
kid.

Clyde glares at Jimmie.

CLYDE
Yeah. You worked good together. But
a colored second baseman. Don't
care for it.

BILLY
But he's just a ball player to me.
A pretty good one.

SUPERIMPOSE: "FIVE MONTHS LATER"

INT. BRISTOL'S OFFICE-DAY

There is a knock on his door.

BRISTOL
Come in.

Leon and Billy walk in. They are still in their sweaty,
dirty uniforms.

BRISTOL
(motioning to a couple of
chairs)
Sit down boys.

They both sit. Billy lays his glove over his right knee.

BRISTOL
Pretty hard to separate you from
that glove, huh Beaumont?

BILLY
Well sir, my Pop...

LEON
Shoot coach. If that was a woman,
we'd have a bunch of little gloves
running round. Save the club some
money.

The coach laughs, Billy smirks slightly.

BILLY
Like I was saying, my Pop worked
hard and saved for this. So it's
real special.

BRISTOL
That's good. You take care of it. I
can see it's special, maybe even
some magic in it. Treat it good.

BRISTOL
(nodding at Leon)
And how did you get so special?

LEON
Coach I'm just a natural.

BRISTOL
Natural?

LEON
Naturally fast like the gazelle,
naturally shifty like a cheetah,
naturally strong like the
gorilla...

BRISTOL
So you're an animal.

LEON

No NOT an animal, don't you see
coach, all us brothers had to be
one step better than the animals or
else we all would be snacks.

Billy is starting to laugh. Bristol looks at Billy and then
Leon and knowingly smiles.

BRISTOL

Okay Turner, didn't know I had a
comic on the team...

LEON

(interrupting Bristol)
Seriously, coach, I want it more
then anything else and will do
anything to get it.

BRISTOL

The majors?

LEON

Damn right.

Leon gestures towards Billy.

LEON

The both of us.

BRISTOL

That'll come. If there were ever
two can't miss prospects, its you
two. They know all about you two at
the big club.

Leon and Billy look at each other smiling.

BRISTOL

But there is something else I need
to talk over with you two.

Bristol leans over his desk, folding his hands together,
pointing at each player with his index fingers.

BRISTOL

The organization knows you both got
low numbers in the draft. Now you
can roll with those numbers. Maybe
you go, maybe you don't. But if you
go, we lost you.

LEON

Yeah if we don't go?

BILLY

Yeah if we don't get called, what happens.

BRISTOL

If you don't get called, then you continue with us and in two, three, maybe four years at the most you're in the big leagues.

LEON

So it's a crap shoot.

BRISTOL

Well there is one other thing...

LEON

Yeah we can go to Canada and practice with snowballs.

Bristol throws a "this is serious" dart at Leon.

BRISTOL

No, not Canada. The organization can pull some strings and if you enlist, it's a two year commitment, then...

LEON

Two years? Two years, I want to be in the big leagues in two years.

BILLY

Me too.

Bristol unfolds his hands and opens his palms gesturing the players to slow down.

BRISTOL

Slow down fellas. Slow down. Listen, I can't guarantee in two years you would be in the big leagues. Like I said it might take a little more time.

LEON

So?

BRISTOL

So, the organization can pull some strings and get you into a special Army unit. A special unit that plays ball.

Leon and Billy look at each other confused.

BRISTOL

If you enlist, your job would be to play ball against teams at Army bases. Mostly in the US, but maybe Germany and Japan. Decent competition, as good as here maybe a step up.

LEON

So we would be Army ball players?

BRISTOL

Pretty much. And the front office guarantees that after your two years are done, you go right into triple A with a shot at the big club.

BILLY

Two years?

LEON

So two years and the big leagues.

BRISTOL

A real shot at it. What do you think?

Bristol looks at both players. They look at each other.

Billy is fingering his glove.

BILLY

I gotta talk to my Pop.

LEON

Yeah, when do you need to know?

BRISTOL

Saturday before the team dinner.

EXT.US ARMY BASE BALL FIELD-DAY

PLAYERS are scattered about the field warming up. Leon, Billy and some other INFIELDBERS are playing pepper. Leon is the only black player.

As they play pepper, they're hot dogging and singing, "We're in the Army now."

CAPTAIN BEN WILKES walks up to them.

WILKES

All right you clowns, knock it off.

The men continue to play pepper singing a little more softly.

WILKES

(sternly)

I said knock it off. You're soldiers first, then ball players. Am I clear?

ALL

(shouting)

Yes sir.

WILKES

Good. Now listen, as soldiers you guys stink and would scare the hell out of me if I had to do any fighting with you. But you're damn good ball players, so consider yourselves lucky you're not doing any fighting. Understand?

ALL

(shouting)

Yes sir.

WILKES

Okay...

CAPTAIN STEVE CRITTEN walks up to Wilkes.

CRITTEN

That's a shabby bunch of soldiers you have there.

WILKES

Shabby soldiers, but a hell of a bunch of ball players.

CRITTEN

So I've been hearing. Been winning pretty easy on your tour. Not against much competition, but winning still.

WILKES

That's why we're down here, to beat up some good competition.

CRITTEN

Seem a little over confident there Ben, considering how you've never put together any team to beat my guys. And I use real soldiers, not some pussy ass momma boys too scared to fight.

Critten spits a wad of tobacco in the direction of Leon. It lands short but gets Leon's attention. Leon stares in Critten's direction.

CRITTEN

(to Wilkes)

And I don't use no coloreds.

WILKES

You sound so sure, why don't we double the bet to a thousand, and you can buy us dinner and drinks after we kick you ass.

CRITTEN

You're on. And we like our steaks rare, just on this side of dead.

Critten walks away, stares at Leon and spits down into the dirt. He turns away and walks over to his team. His baseball uniform looks a little tight across his butt.

Wilkes sees Leon looking pissed off as he follows Critten walking away.

WILKES

Turner! Forget about him. He usually talks out of his ass, but his uniform is a little too tight today, so everything has to come out of his mouth. It's all still the same shit.

All the players break up laughing.

WILKES
 (to all his players)
 Just do me a favor and beat that
 son of a bitch's ass.

ALL
 Yes sir.

BEGIN SERIES OF SHOTS SHOWING THE GAME IS A SLAUGHTER AND
 LEON AND BILLY HOT DOGGING AS THE SCORE GETS OUT OF HAND.

ON SCOREBOARD: WILKES 12; CRITTEN 2.

Critten's team is at bat.

There is one out, a RUNNER on first. Critten is the first
 base coach.

CRITTEN
 (to runner)
 If there is any ball hit where you
 can take out that goddamn nigger
 you do it. You got that?

The runner nods.

The pitch comes towards the batter, he hits a hard ground
 ball up the middle, Billy ranges to his left going behind
 second base to snag the ball and flips it to Leon covering
 second.

CRITTEN (OC)
 (screaming)
 Take the bastard out!

BILLY
 (as he is flipping the ball to
 Leon)
 Runner hard!

Leon catches Billy's toss bare handed, toe taps the bag,
 turns and drops his arm and makes a throw right at the
 runner's head. The runner drops into a clumsy slide way
 short of second base.

The ball smacks into the FIRST BASEMAN'S glove. Double play.

Critten kicks at the dirt in the coaches box mouthing
 "Shit!"

INT. BAR-NIGHT

The bar is crowded with soldiers. Both teams are there. Wilkes and Critten are leaning against the bar.

WILKES

So what was the bet. Two thousand and dinner and drinks?

CRITTEN

A thousand. A thousand.

WILKES

And dinner and drinks for my team.

CRITTEN

Yeah, yeah. Dinner and drinks.

Critten looks around at the scene in the bar. Most of the players are drinking.

CRITTEN

Looks like it will be mostly drinks.

WILKES

(looking around)

I guess. No hard feelings?

CRITTEN

No. Have you ever known me to have any?

WILKES

Me? No, but you hear.

CRITTEN

Yeah. I know what you hear. You hear that I'm a prick, a hard ass. All that's true, you know that. But I have to get soldiers ready to fight, where one mistake and someone dies.

Critten downs a shot and slams the glass on the bar next to five others.

CRITTEN

And what do you do Ben? Train baseball players. Barely soldiers. Wouldn't want any of them watching my back in Nam.

WILKES

Why? Afraid they might surprise you like they did today?

CRITTEN

Surprise me? The only thing that surprised me was you bringing on a colored.

WILKES

Yeah. So?

CRITTEN

Come on Ben, that's not you.

WILKES

Steve, times are changing. This is what's happening.

CRITTEN

Not to me.

Critten slams another shot down.

WILKES

Slow down Steve. You're not as young as you use to be.

CRITTEN

No you're not. I can handle it. But a colored? Ben I never thought, I thought I knew you better.

WILKES

It's the future. The past is over. Better get use to it.

CRITTEN

Not here. Not me.

Critten looks around the bar. He sees Leon and Billy sitting at a table.

CRITTEN

I gotta take a leak.

Critten gets up from the bar, walks towards the bathroom, stops by one of his SOLDIERS and says something. Critten disappears into the bathroom.

The soldier walks over to where Leon and Billy are sitting.

SOLDIER

Never thought I would see the day
they would let a fag and nigger in
the Army.

BILLY

Shut your trap.

SOLDIER

A pussy and a darky.

LEON

Why don't you just go back with the
rest of your losers.

SOLDIER

Shut up boy! I didn't address you.
You don't speak to me unless I
speak to you. Understand boy?

Leon starts getting up, Billy pulls him back down into his
chair.

BILLY

Forget about the jerk.

Leon starts to rise again. Billy puts his hand on his
shoulder to push him back into his seat; as he is pushing
Leon down, he pushes himself up, swings around and cold
cocks the solider.

VOICE IN BAR (V.O.)

FIGHT!

SERIES OF SHOTS SHOWING BAR FIGHT.

Leon and Billy are protecting each other throughout the
fight.

Billy and Leon are standing back to back. The fight ends as
MPs come in.

INT. CAPTAIN WILKES OFFICE- DAY

Captain Wilkes is sitting at his desk. There are two folders
in front of him on his desk.

There is a knocking on the door.

WILKES

Come in.

Leon and Billy come in. They stand at attention.

WILKES
(motioning to two chairs)
Sit down.

Billy and Leon sit facing Wilkes.

WILKES
Well men, that's it for the team.
The colonel decided we were
becoming more of a disturbance than
having a positive affect.

LEON
Captain, I'm sorry, but...

BILLY
(interrupting Leon)
We're sorry Captain.

LEON
Yeah, both of us.

BILLY
The fight was...

WILKES
(interrupting)
No, don't blame the fight. You did
what you had to do. The both of
you. You had each others back.
That's what soldiers do. It's what
teammates do.

LEON
Yeah but...

WILKES
(interrupting)
We were too good, especially you
two. We won too easily, probably
ruffled too many feathers. Guys who
thought they had players. Guys who
have a pipeline to higher ups. Shit
just got shoved downhill. That's
Army.

BILLY
That sucks.

LEON
What are we going to do Captain?

WILKES

Well this is the part that really stinks. And I'm so sorry my hands are tied. But they're shipping you two to Vietnam.

Leon and Billy sit silently stunned.

OUTSIDE BRISTOL'S OFFICE

Billy is at a pay phone. He calls his father. Leon stands off to one side.

BILLY

Pop, we screwed up. They're shipping us to Vietnam.

BILLY

No Pop. I screwed up. We screwed up. It doesn't matter. We're both going.

BILLY

You're wrong Pop. He's my teammate, my brother in arms. I trust him with my life, like he trusts me with his.

BILLY

I'm sorry. That's not the way it is anymore. Things changed. Leon's my best friend. We'll help each other get through this.

BILLY

I'm sorry Pop, but you're wrong.

Billy hangs up. He walks over to Leon.

LEON

Tough call?

BILLY

He hates you, blames you.

LEON

What about you?

BILLY

I don't know...he's probably pissed. Maybe hates me. But he's my dad, he's all I got back home. He taught me the game...

LEON
No, how do you feel about me.

BILLY
You? (long pause) We're soldiers,
we're teammates. I'd die for you.

LEON
Same here.

INT. MCGUILTROY'S STORE-DAY

Clyde is hanging up the public phone. He walks over to
Jimmie Higgins.

JIMMIE
Bad news?

CLYDE
The Army is shipping Billy to
Vietnam.

JIMMIE
I thought Billy was just going to
play ball.

CLYDE
Because of that colored kid.

JIMMIE
Who?

CLYDE
The second baseman on his Army
team. A colored kid. He started a
big fight at a bar and Billy had to
help.

JIMMIE
Sounds like something Billy would
do.

CLYDE
Yeah for a white teammate. But a
colored kid? That's not what I
taught him.

JIMMIE
But times are changing.

CLYDE

I'm sick of hearing that. Times are changing. Times are changing because we're not doing enough. God dammit Jimmie we have to step it up!

EXT.WOODED HILL-DAY

A country road unwinds below the woods. Clyde's pick up is parked in the woods.

Clyde and Jimmie are standing facing each other over the pick up bed.

Clyde's back is to the camera.

CLYDE

You're sure that bus is coming this way.

JIMMIE

Yeah, yeah. They're on their way to picket the flag factory.

CLYDE

Sure?

JIMMIE

Yeah.

Clyde pulls his arms out of the pick up. In his hands is a rifle. Billy has binoculars in his hands.

Billy scans up the road. He sees a cloud of smoke and then the bus.

JIMMIE

Okay, they're coming.

Clyde puts the rifle between the crock of a tree. Jimmie is sweating nervously. He keeps looking through the binoculars.

CLYDE

Let me know when they round the corner.

JIMMIE

Yeah.

Now? CLYDE

No. JIMMIE

Now? CLYDE

Now? CLYDE

JIMMIE
Okay, they're turning the corner.

Clyde's trigger finger tenses.

CLYDE
Okay, I have them in sight. Just a
little closer.

Jimmie is still looking through the binoculars and sees
Becky Ann sitting in the front seat.

Just as Clyde pulls the trigger Jimmie jerks the barrel of
the gun skyward.

No! JIMMIE

CLYDE
What the hell!

The shot goes high.

INT. BUS

Becky Ann is in the front seat opposite the black DRIVER.

BECKY ANN
What was that?

DRIVER
Sounded like a shot.

BECKY ANN
Shot?

DRIVER
Someone probably hunting.

VOICE FROM BACK OF BUS (OC)
Hope they weren't hunting us.

EXT. WOODDED HILL

JIMMIE
Becky Ann was on the bus.

CLYDE
What the hell was she doing?

JIMMIE
Shit, Clyde... I meant to tell you,
but... she's working with them.
Registering voters.

CLYDE
Damn, Jimmie. Why are you letting
her? Now she's helping wreck our
life.

JIMMIE
I can't...I can't do this anymore.

CLYDE
Because of her?

JIMMIE
We're getting married.

CLYDE
Her twang has got your head all
screwed up. Why get married. You're
not gotta have the life we had
here. You're giving up. Her hay has
poisoned you. You're thinking with
your pecker.

JIMMIE
It always did my best thinking for
me. I just cant do this anymore.

Jimmie stands between Clyde and the pick up.

CLYDE
Pussy. Get out of my way. I'm going
after them. I'll do it all myself.
Screw you, Ned, Maribel all of you.

JIMMIE
Clyde don't.

Jimmie doesn't move.

CLYDE
Don't make me do this.

JIMMIE
Clyde...

Clyde swings the stock of the rifle against the side of Jimmie's head. Jimmie slumps to the ground.

Clyde gets in his pick up and takes off through the woods and throwing the rifle on the front seat.

Series of shots;

--The pick up tearing through the narrow woods. The bat clanging from sidewall to sidewall.

--The pick up clears the wood onto the road dirt flying as the it gains speed.

--The pick up gaining on the bus; then the bus is momentarily out of view as it rounds a turn.

--The pick up tears around the turn.

INT. PICK UP

Clyde slams on the brakes as he sees the bus pull into the stadium parking. (Same shot as when Clyde and Billy saw Billy's first game.)

Clyde grabs the steering wheel with both hands and slams his head against it.

CLYDE
My God! They're going to the game.

A car horn blares.

Clyde picks his head up and looks in the rear view mirror, seeing he is blocking the entrance to the lot. he looks at the rifle.

He looks at the bus and the stadium.

CLYDE
Damn! Not here.

Clyde drives off.

EXT. VIETNAM ARMY BASE-DAY

A makeshift baseball diamond has been set up. SOLDIERS are standing around behind home plate.

A BATTER is hitting ground balls to INFELDERS. Leon is at second, Billy is at shortstop.

Leon and Billy are putting on a show. There is a lot of hooting and hollering from soldiers watching.

Outside the perimeter of the field, a group of young VIETNAMESE KIDS, 11 or 12 years old look on.

The fielding exhibition continues as Billy and Leon banter with each other.

BILLY

Looks like we can still draw a crowd.

LEON

Yeah, just like the states. Maybe when we get back we can just put our show on the road. Call it the Hoover Show.

BILLY

Huh?

LEON

Hoover. You know like vacuums.

BILLY

What?

LEON

Hoover vacuums, because we suck up everything in our path.

BILLY

(shaking his head)

Let's take five. Get a drink.

LEON

Yeah. I'll be Hoover. What will we call you.

Leon and Billy jog off the field together.

LEON

Ever had a nickname?

BILLY
Eh...they called me "The Glove" in
high school.

LEON
Yeah. "The Glove." It fits.

Leon and Billy stop off to the side of the batter looking at
the kids.

The kids are throwing a mango around.

LEON
Look at that. Kids got nothing, but
they still want to play ball.

BILLY
Yeah. I feel sorry for them.

LEON
(to the batter)
Hey Andre, toss me a ball.

Leon catches the ball and starts walking towards the kids.
Billy watches.

He gets close to them.

LEON
(as he is softly tossing the
ball)
Here, catch.

One of the BOYS catches the ball and looks up with a smile
at Leon.

A mortar round explodes near third base.

VOICE (O.C)
INCOMING!

The Vietnamese kids bolt into the underbrush. The soldiers
scatter.

A round lands right at second base, blowing the bag to
smithereens.

EXT. VIETNAM JUNGLE- DAY

A CAPTAIN leads a patrol in the jungle. Leon and Billy and a number of other soldiers follow.

Two BLACK SOLDIERS walk behind Billy.

SOLDIER ONE

(to Billy)

You take that glove around with you everywhere?

SOLDIER TWO

Yeah, what is it like your teddy bear?

LEON

Shut up.

SOLDIER ONE

Leon, why the hell do you stick up for this whitey? His daddy is probably a member of the klan and would string up your ass if he found you in his town.

LEON

Shut up I said.

BILLY

It reminds me of my dad and home.

SOLDIER ONE

Yeah, like I said your dad and home and Ku Klux Klan.

LEON

I said shut up!.

SOLDIER ONE

What are you some uncle Tom?

LEON

Drop it.

SOLDIER ONE

Cutting it a little too close to home for you?

LEON

I stick up for him because he's got my back. Out in this hell hole we're all brothers.

SOLDIER ONE

Then he's the whitest brother I've ever seen.

CAPTAIN

Shut your yaps, all of you or every gook in the area will know we're here.

SOLDIER TWO

(mumbling)

Shit. We've been out in this stinking jungle for two days now and we ain't come close to any gooks. I'm seeing more action from these damn mosqu...

A shot rings out and he drops dead before finishing his sentence.

CAPTAIN

DOWN!

An intense fire fight breaks out. The patrol is pinned down.

Series of shots showing the chaos.

CAPTAIN

(shouting)

Radio! Radio! Get up here!

Leon and Billy are lying face down next to each other behind a log. Bullets whiz over their heads. They blindly return fire.

They are scared.

LEON

Damn I didn't sign up for this.

BILLY

Shit.

They hear the captain yelling.

LEON

Radio! Radio!

Billy looks to his right. He sees the radio man lying on his back.

BILLY
Radio's hit!

LEON
(yelling to the captain)
Radio's hit!

CAPTAIN
Get me that radio!

Billy looks at Leon.

LEON
No man, you'll get killed.

BILLY
If I don't get it we'll all get
killed.

CAPTAIN
Where's that damn radio!

BILLY
Cover me.

LEON
No...

Billy takes off for the radio. Leon lays a fierce cover of fire.

Billy gets to the radio man, gets the radio off him and starts running back just as a mortar round goes off near by knocking him to the ground.

LEON
Billy!

Billy picks himself up and as he starts running towards the captain his glove falls to the ground, the backpack strap holding it sheared by shrapnel.

Billy doesn't notice.

Leon is still laying covering fire.

Billy makes it to the captain. The captain grabs the radio.

CAPTAIN
(barking into the radio)
I need support at coordinates 135
Alpha 234.

The fire fight continues for several more minutes. Helicopters are heard in the distance and then their shadows pass overhead. Rockets from the helicopters rip apart the tree line.

The fire fight ends. Billy heads back to Leon.

LEON
That was crazy!

BILLY
You said it brother.

LEON
You're a crazy mother. You almost got yourself killed.

Billy reaches around the back of his pack. He doesn't feel his glove.

BILLY
Shit, where's my glove?

LEON
(walking around Billy)
Damn, looks like some shrapnel cut your strap. Lucky it didn't rip you a new asshole.

BILLY
(panicky)
Where's my glove?

LEON
(looking around down towards the radio man)
Look, it's down by Stubby.

Billy looks down towards the fallen radio man and starts walking towards him.

BILLY
(to Leon)
Yeah, thanks man. I'd die if I lost it.

Billy reaches his glove, picks it up and looks it over.

Out in the field a very young wounded Vietcong stands up with a rifle in his hand.

Leon sees him and opens fire.

LEON
Billy stay down!

Leon's fire cuts down the Vietcong, but not before he fires off a shot.

Billy is hit. He goes down.

LEON
Billy!

Billy falls face up. Leon runs over to Billy. Billy clutches his glove in his left hand; he is holding his stomach with his right hand, his eyes are closed.

LEON
Billy! Billy.

BILLY
Something happened.

LEON
Take it easy. Take it easy.

BILLY
(moving his right hand,
revealing a gaping wound)
It's bad.

LEON
No, you'll be fine. Medic! Medic!

Billy opens his eyes.

BILLY
I know you. We're brothers.

Billy reaches up his left hand holding the glove.

BILLY
You have to take my glove to Pop.

Leon takes the glove as Billy's arm goes limp. A MEDIC walks up. He feels for Billy's pulse.

MEDIC
There's nothing we can do for him
soldier. He's gone.

TWO SOLDIERS approach with a litter. They place Billy on it. They walk towards the clearing where a helicopter has landed not far from where the fallen Vietcong lies.

Leon walks with them. They walk past the Vietcong who shot Billy.

SOLDIER
 (motioning towards the dead
 Vietcong)
 Look at that. A kid. Twelve or
 thirteen at the most. Kids. Can you
 believe it?

They load the litter into the helicopter and hop in. Leon watches the helicopter lift off.

Leon is left in the clearing with the dead Vietcong.

Leon screams and empties his magazine into the dead Vietcong.

INT. ARMY TENT-NIGHT

The tent is dark except for a small flickering light from a candle.

VOICE FROM THE DARK
 Leon. Leon my brother. Sit.

The candle's flame heats liquid in a spoon.

VOICE FROM THE DARK
 The Nectar of the gods.

A syringe draws up the liquid.

VOICE FROM THE DARK
 For Billy.

The syringe plunges into a vein on a black forearm.

EXT. VIETNAM VILLAGE-DAY

A CAPTAIN leads a patrol. Leon is in the middle of the line. The captain hold his hand up stopping the patrol.

CAPTAIN
 (turning)
 Corporal. Keep an eye on Turner

The patrol continues, clears the jungle and enters into a village.

CAPTAIN

Easy here boys. These are suppose
to be friendly, but keep your eyes
open.

The patrol approaches a couple of huts. To the side of the
hut a group of YOUNG BOYS, eleven or twelve years old are
standing around.

Leon stares at the boys, his finger on the trigger.

SOLDIER ONE

Hey some of those kids look like
the ones that hang around camp.

SOLDIER TWO

Nah, they all look the same. Right
Leon?

Leon has stopped walking and is staring at the group.

The captain has also stopped and is looking at Leon.

One of the boys reaches under the hut and pulls something
out.

BOY

(making a throwing motion)
Hey Joe catch.

Leon looks up and sees a grenade tumbling through the air.

LEON

Grenade!

Leon levels his weapon at the group of boys. He fires his
weapon just as the captain lifts Leon's barrel with his
rifle.

The shots go into the tree above the hut. There is a
murderous shriek.

CAPTAIN

Turner, what the hell are you
doing! (to the other
soldiers) Get that weapon away
from him!

LEON

Grenade!

Two other soldiers are struggling with Leon. They take him
down. He lands face down in the dirt. His face is inches
from a baseball.

LEON
 (looking at the baseball)
 Grenade!

SOLDIER
 It's a baseball!

A dead monkey falls out of the tree, onto the hut roof and then onto the ground just past the baseball.

LEON
 I killed him. I killed him.

CAPTAIN
 Get him out of here. Get him to base!

LEON
 (looking at the dead monkey,
 shouting crazily)
 I got the gook who killed Billy. I got him. I got him

Two SOLDIERS struggle with Leon.

LEON
 I got him! I got him!

CAPTAIN
 Get him out of here.

One soldier slugs Leon.

EXT. TOWN CEMETERY-DAY

The entire town has turned out for Billy's funeral. The color guard is all white and present the American flag to Clyde.

After the burial Ned and Maribel walk up to Clyde.

NED
 Come back with us to the store. I closed it for the day.

MARIBEL
 I cooked up some food. You have to start eating again.

CLYDE
 (mumbling looking down at the flag)

How come they didn't have the glove? Where's our glove? Where's the glove?

INT. MCGUILTROY'S STORE

Clyde, Maribel, Ned, Jimmie along with most of the town are in the sporting goods department.

A table with food and drink is set up. Another table has news clippings about Billy's high school career.

ON NEWSPAPER STORY.

SUPERIMPOSE "Local Can't Miss Prospect Signs Pro Contract. Billy "The Glove" Beaumont, star shortstop for the Robert E. Lee high school team signed a professional contract with the Atlanta Braves. Beaumont will report to the Brave's minor league affiliate right after graduation."

Jimmie walks up to Clyde. Clyde is in state of shock.

JIMMIE

This whole thing really stinks.
It's not fair. Billy was special.
He deserved better. You deserved better.

Clyde looks at Jimmie. He says nothing.

JIMMIE

I know we had some disagreements recently, but...but, you're like a brother to me. I just want you to know that. And let's put what happen in the past.

CLYDE

It doesn't matter now. My life is over. Yeah, forget about it.

Maribel walks up to Clyde. Jimmie sees that she wants to talk to him.

JIMMIE

If you need anything call me.

CLYDE

Sure.

Maribel is holding a letter.

MARIBEL
(trying to hand the letter to
Clyde)
This came this morning.

CLYDE
What is it?

MARIBEL
(looking at the letter)
It's a letter from the Atlanta
Braves.

Maribel tries again to give the letter to Clyde. Clyde holds his hand up.

CLYDE
No, you open it and read it.

MARIBEL
(reading the letter)
Dear Mister Beaumont, I am very
sorry to hear about Billy's passing
in Vietnam. In my thirty years
coaching in the minor leagues I
never saw anyone with the talent
your son had. His glove was
exceptional all ready at a big
league level. He would have been a
great big leaguer. The thing I most
was impressed with was his ability
to turn a double play at any time
with his team mate, Leon Turner. I
know Leon and the rest of his
teammates will also miss him.

CLYDE
Stop.

MARIBEL
But there's more.

CLYDE
Stop reading. He killed Billy.

Clyde looks around the room. He sees Ned and Jimmie talking near the newspaper clippings.

He looks at Maribel.

CLYDE
They're building a shrine to
something that doesn't exist

anymore. Take care of my house. I'm leaving.

MARIBEL
Leaving? But have something to eat.

CLYDE
No. I'm leaving.

MARIBEL
Where are you going?

CLYDE
Away. I lost Billy. I lost Mary. You, Ned and Jimmie quit on me. All of you are letting our town, my town, my life change. Don't any of you understand what you're doing?

Clyde motions towards Ned and Jimmie.

CLYDE
They're building a shine to a life that is over. It's over. Everyone quit on me. I don't even have the glove.

SERIES OF SHOTS:

-Fighting in the civil rights movement.

-George Wallace speaking with Clyde on stage as his body guard.

-Shots showing civil rights progress being made.

EXT. SIDEWALK-DAY

A crowd has gathered around the store front of a general store. Inside the store facing towards the street a color television is showing the ATLANTA BRAVES game.

Clyde stands in the mixed race crowd. A black boy stands next to him.

ON TELEVISION, A BRAVE SLIDES ACROSS HOME PLATE.

CROWD
LOUD CHEERING.

The boy looks up at Clyde.

BOY
 (stammering nervously)
 You're...you're Billy Beaumont's
 dad...right?

Clyde looks at the boy.

BOY
 I...I saw him play in the
 championship game. He...he played
 great...and the last out...I hope I
 can be as good as him.

The boy pounds his glove.

ON CLYDE'S FACE. Puzzlement. He walks away.

CROWD
 LOUD CHEERING.

INT.VETERAN'S HOSPITAL PSYCHIATRIC WARD-DAY

Two ORDERLIES are walking down the hall.

ORDERLY 1
 So they blew it. Your Brewers.

ORDERLY 2
 Yeah, so?. At least they got in.
 Where did your Mets finish again?
 Last.

ORDERLY 1
 Who cares? Its over and you owe me
 fifty. Pay up!

ORDERLY 2
 Yeah, yeah. Last. Mets. My Entire
 Team Stinks. I'll pay you on pay
 day. I'm a little light.

ORDERLY 1
 Knew that was coming. Your boys got
 no game and you got no money.

They stop at Leon's door. It is closed. They peer inside
 through the door's window. Leon is sitting by the room's
 window staring outside.

ORDERLY 1
 No game...yeah. But talk about
 game, they say that old Leon was a

fine prospect. A slick fielding,
power hitting second baseman.

ORDERLY 2

Leon?

ORDERLY 1

Yeah, Leon.

ORDERLY 2

How the hell do you that?

ORDERLY 1

I was talking to my cousin from up
in the Bronx about some of the guys
in here. I mentioned Leon's name
and he recognized his last name.
Said Leon's old man is a doctor up
there. Told me the whole story
about how Leon was in the minor
leagues, playing sweet, putting on
a show.

ORDERLY 2

Leon? You sure?

ORDERLY 1

Hey, I'm not throwing you a
screwball, this is straight heat.
But when he was in the minors the
Army drafted him and he got sent to
Nam. He flipped over there.

ORDERLY 2

Yeah, Nam. He's not the only one
who flipped over there. We got a
whole ward full of them.

ORDERLY 1

Yeah, we do. That's not right.

ON LEON'S CATATONIC STARE. His eyes never blink.

ORDERLY 2

Wonder what made him flip out?

ORDERLY 1

Don't know. But whatever happened
over there is stuck up here (tapping
his head) and never coming out.

Orderly 2 opens door slightly and leans in.

ON LEON'S STARE. His eyes don't blink until he hears the word "catch." Then he blinks several times and closes his eyes.

ORDERLY 2

Hey Leon you play ball? Wanta have a catch?

FLASHBACK

Series of chaotic war scenes. Bombings, patrols, firefights, snipers, soldiers dying, wounded crying out on pain.

And out of the chaos a serene scene wrapped in haze. Leon is having a catch. We see him catching the ball and throwing it back into the haze. Each time the ball keeps coming back harder and harder.

LEON

Hey you got a pretty good arm. Who's there?

Out of the haze steps Clyde all shot up as Leon saw him when he died.

LEON

No.....

INT. BAR-DAY

Clyde sits at the end of the bar. There are a couple of other patrons. The television is on.

GEORGE WALLACE is speaking.

Clyde is watching the television.

WALLACE

I was wrong. Those days are over and they ought to be over.

CLYDE

(to himself)

God is it over? Is it? Was I wrong? Billy, was I wrong?

Long silence. Clyde stares into his beer. The television plays inaudibly in the background.

CLYDE
 (to bartender)
 Isn't there a game on?

BARTENDER
 No. (flipping a ticket on the bar
 towards Clyde). Why don't you take
 this and go see Moultrie. If you
 leave now you can see batting
 practice.

Clyde looks up at the television and takes the ticket off
 the bar.

CLYDE
 Yeah. Thanks.

Clyde leaves the bar.
 No.....

EXT. VETERAN'S HOSPITAL PSYCHIATRIC WARD-DAY

On the lawn the two orderlies are having a catch. They are
 under Leon's window. It is a beautiful spring day. They are
 lazily throwing a ball back and forth.

ORDERLY 1
 What a day! I can smell baseball!

ORDERLY 2
 The only thing you smell are your
 Brewers stinking it up again.

ORDERLY 1
 Hey, we made the Series.

ORDERLY 2
 And lost. How the hell did you come
 to like the Brewers anyway?

ORDERLY 1
 Robin Yount.

ORDERLY 2
 Robin Yount?

ORDERLY 1
 Yeah. When I read about him
 becoming a starting major league
 shortstop at 18 and with a first
 name like Robin it connected with
 me.

ORDERLY 2
What? What the hell you talking
about?

ORDERLY 1
Because of my first name.

ORDERLY 2
Alex?

ORDERLY 1
My parents really named me Alexis.

ORDERLY 2
That's a girl's name.

ORDERLY 1
Yeah, so is Robin.

ORDERLY 2
Or a bird, or frut-frut sidekick to
Batman.

ORDERLY 1
Yeah. But I figured if he had the
courage to use Robin and play in
front of thousands of people, I
could use Alexis. You know out of
respect to my folks.

ORDERLY 2
I never heard you use Alexis or
seen you sign it.

ORDERLY 1
Yeah. I never became a major league
shortstop at 18. Alex is a whole
lot easier. Hey at least the
Brewers made it. What did your Mets
do again? Zilch.

ORDERLY 2
Hey, I got no team. I'm just a pure
fan, in it for the love of the
game.

ORDERLY 1
That's crap.

The throwing starts to get harder.

ORDERLY 2

I'm a true connoisseur of the game.
The hit and run, the sac bunt, the
intentional walk, the 6-4-3 dp, the
suicide squeeze...

ORDERLY 1

Shit! Why don't you move from that
spot, you fertilized the grass
enough there.

They are throwing as hard as they can. The ball makes a loud
pop when it hits the gloves.

ORDERLY 2

Man why so angry Alexis?

ORDERLY 1

Shut up! It's Alex, legally. Let's
just have a catch.

ORDERLY 2

With a little heat.

ORDERLY 1

With heat as much as you got.

INT.VETERAN'S HOSPITAL LEON'S ROOM

A NURSE walks into Leon's room. Leon is sitting in a chair
staring straight outside six or seven feet from the window.
The nurse walks towards Leon shaking her head.

NURSE

Leon, it's such a beautiful spring
day why don't we open your window
and let some of that beautiful air
inside?

The nurse walks past Leon and opens the bottom sash full and
looks outside.

The pop of a baseball hitting gloves can be heard.

NURSE

Look, some of the boys are playing
a little ball.

The nurse turns to look at Leon, there is no response. She
steps away from the window. The popping sound gets a little
louder as she walks past Leon towards the door.

NURSE

Well, see you after lunch.

ON LEON

NURSE

Hope the boys have a nice catch.

Leon blinks three times, closes his eyes. Leon's flashback starts. (same as previous.)

In quick succession the door slams and the popping of the catch is heard.

As the sounds are heard Leon opens his eyes and gives a quick violent shake of his head. The flashback ends.

BEGIN SERIES OF SHOTS:

-- Leon slowly rising from his chair and walking to the window, looking out, seeing and hearing the popping of the ball.

-- One, two, three, four times the ball goes back and forth.

-- Leon turns and walks to his closet reaching onto a shelf and pulling down a plastic bag. Opening the bag and he pulls out a baseball glove.

-- Leon puts the glove on his left hand, balls his right fist and pounds the glove, once, twice, three times. He brings the glove up to his face and inhales deeply.

-- Throwing off his robe he quickly walks to the door. Opening the door, looking left down the hall, then right he sees an EXIT sign.

-- Kicking off his slippers Leon runs down the hall towards the sign.

-- Leon runs past the nurses station. His nurse is speaking with a DOCTOR.

Two male orderlies, MACK and JIM stand behind the desk.

NURSE

Leon?...Mack, Jim get him!

Mack and Jim leap the desk.

DOCTOR

No...follow him. Give him space.
Don't let him hurt himself or
anyone. Let's go.

Leon pushes open the staircase door, flies down two flights of stairs and pushes open the exterior door.

EXT. VETERAN'S HOSPITAL

Leon rushes towards the catch the two orderlies are having. Before the orderlies can react he sticks his glove in front of one of the orderlies' glove and snags the ball.

Leon awkwardly throws the ball back.

The doctor, the nurse and Mack and Jim arrive and stand to the side.

ORDERLY 1

What the hell!

Leon takes a few steps further away from the orderly.

LEON

Throw.

Orderly Two looks at the doctor, holding his hands out questioning. The doctor shakes his head "YES."

He throws the ball softly to Leon. Leon catches it and throws it back a little more surely.

LEON

Throw.

SERIES OF SHOTS SHOWING LEON BECOMING AN ACROBATIC VACUUM.

LEON

Throw.

A soft toss to Leon.

LEON

Harder.

A harder throw back to Leon. Leon whips the ball back.

LEON

Harder.

A much harder throw to Leon.

LEON

Grounders.

A ground ball right to Leon.

LEON
Not right to me.

The grounders get wider and wider.

A grounder is thrown way to his left, Leon reaches fully extended to nab it, plants on his right foot, jumps and spins as if to throw to where second base would be. At the top of his jump, as he is ready to make the throw, he sees the other orderly.

Leon lands without making the throw. The ball drops from his right hand. He looks in the pocket of the glove. He slowly turns his gloved hand. He looks up at the orderly again. He looks at the wrist band of the glove.

On the wrist band printed he sees "BILLY T. BEAUMONT."

LEON
God, he's gone!

EXT. MINOR LEAGUE BALL FIELD-DAY

Clyde stands by the railing separating the field from the stands watching batting practice.

Black and white players are scattered across the field.

Coach Driscoll is in the dugout, his back to Clyde facing a black player. Driscoll is in a hitter's stance, gripping an imaginary bat. He takes a swing.

The black player nods and walks out the dugout towards the batting cage. Driscoll follows him and sees Clyde. He walks towards Clyde.

DRISCOLL
Clyde Beaumont. It's good to see you back in the park. It's been a long time.

CLYDE
Coach. Yeah. I've been busy.

The men shake hands. Driscoll holds the shake, looking at Clyde.

DRISCOLL
Come on in the dugout. Let's talk. Catch up.

CLYDE
Yeah, coach. Sure.

Clyde hops the fence. Both men walk towards the dugout exaggerating a step so not to step on a chalk line.

INT/EXT. DUGOUT

Driscoll and Clyde lean against the top step watching the players warm up.

An errant throw bounces off the grass in front of them. Clyde snags it with his bare hand right.

DRISCOLL
(motioning to an outfielder)
Great arm on the kid. Gets a little goofy wild once in awhile. (to Clyde) Nice catch.

Clyde is rotating the ball in his hand throughout the entire scene.

CLYDE
Yeah.

DRISCOLL
I see it in your face Clyde. You're looking at this and me and wondering what happened.

Driscoll pauses. The men look at each other.

DRISCOLL
Well, we were wrong Clyde. We all were wrong. I was wrong. They play the game just like we do. They love it like us. They teach it to their kids, just like we do.

Driscoll pauses. Both men stare at warm ups.

DRISCOLL
(looking at Clyde)
This game is all I know. It's life. And all anyone wants is the same opportunities. It's okay Clyde.

Driscoll pauses. Both stare at the warm ups. Clyde turns to Driscoll.

CLYDE

I have someone I have to see.

Clyde flips the ball into the air. The coach catches it.

INT.VETERAN'S HOSPITAL PSYCHIATRIC WARD-DAY

Clyde stands in front of a reception desk.

RECEPTIONIST

I'm sorry, Mr. Beaumont. Mr. Turner was released several months ago.

CLYDE

Where did he go?

RECEPTIONIST

I'm sorry, that's confidential.

CLYDE

It's important.

RECEPTIONIST

I'm sorry sir, that's all I can tell you. Is there anything else I can help you with?

CLYDE

No.

Clyde leaves.

INT/EXT CLYDE'S PICK UP

Clyde pulls away from the hospital. The bat clangs in the bed of the pick up.

Clyde drives down a highway towards a bridge. He sees a sign that says "POTOMAC RIVER." He crosses the bridge and pulls to the side.

Clyde gets out, walks to the back of the pick up, reaches into the bed and picks up the bat.

Walking towards the center of the bridge the bat dangles at his side.

Reaching the center of the bridge, Clyde gets into a hitter's stance and takes a vicious swing and lets the bat fly into the river.

CLYDE
(screaming)
I just don't understand.

EXT. VIETNAM MEMORIAL-DAY-VERY LIGHT MISTING RAIN

Leon, in full dress uniform, stares at "Billy T. Beaumont" engraved in the black granite. The misting rain gathers in the letters and then rolls out as a tear.

Leon wipes the name and then wipes a tear from his eye.

Clyde Beaumont walks softly up the path to Leon's back stopping several feet behind Leon.

Leon is unaware of Clyde.

LEON
I'm scared Billy.

ON THE NAME "Billy T. BEAUMONT". The name cries back with more tears.

LEON
I'm scared Billy, because I'm back and now know what I have to do. I have to get back in the game. After you got wasted I didn't want to. I got crazy. I did whatever drug was available. Heavy. No one would cover my ass in the field. I was going to get myself and whoever was with me killed. I was crazy. I thought I shot up a bunch of kids. Totally flipped.

Leon pauses, wipes his eyes again.

LEON
For ten years I was in a mental hospital. A nut case. Ten years! A zombie. My body was here, but my mind was in Nam, always with you man. We were having catches, turning double plays, hitting and running, taking an extra base...but you were always getting blown away...always...every time.

ON CLYDE BEAUMONT

Clyde's face is questioning, perplexed, unsure. He is totally silent.

Leon takes a deep breath controlling a couple of sobs.

LEON

But I'm home now. Back. I know what you did. You turned the double play even though you knew Charlie was going to take you out. You did it for me, your brother, for the whole team.

Leon spreads his arm encompassing the entire monument.

LEON

All you guys did.

Leon pauses, looking up and down the monument.

LEON

I know I have to get back to living...for you...for the entire team. Baseball brought me back. I know how you loved the game, how we both do. I have to start on the bench. But I do have to get back into the game. I'm just sorry it won't be the big leagues with you.

Leon reaches into the plastic bag, pulling out an old baseball glove.

LEON

I kept it with me through everything. I wouldn't let anyone take it. I...I...couldn't use it. It made me feel like you were still alive, then it brought me back to life, and I wanted to give it to you when I saw you again. For the big leagues.

Leon slips the glove on his left hand and pounds it with his right.

LEON

But I know that won't happen now. So I'll give it to you here. I don't need it anymore. I got the game. Baseball. Man we loved it. It's life.

Some light snow flakes mix in with the rain as Leon starts bending to put the glove at the foot of the granite.

LEON

Here.

Leon is bent over, hesitating to let go of the glove.

Clyde steps up.

CLYDE

Soldier, I'll take that.

Leon straightens back up, the glove still in his hand. He turns towards Clyde.

CLYDE

You were speaking with my son.

The two men face each other a couple of feet apart. Leon hesitates, looks deep into Clyde's face and recognizes Billy.

LEON

You're Billy's father.

CLYDE

Yes.

He reaches out with the glove to Clyde's hand and gives him the glove. Clyde gazes down at the glove, tears roll down his face.

CLYDE

(looking up from the glove and
up and down the monument)
So this is what it was all about. I
thought life was all about
baseball. But there was so much
more.

LEON

Sir, the game was life to us.

CLYDE

No son, you guys brought life to
the game.

LEON

Yes sir.

CLYDE

He made the big leagues, didn't he?

LEON
Yes sir! He did!

CLYDE
(extending his hand to Leon)
With your help I'd like to get
there too.

The rain is all a fine snow now.

FADE OUT:

-THE END-