

® MS. BASEBALL

BY WINSTON LACROIX

Script

Draft 1

Ms. Baseball will make you cheer and make you cry. Samantha and her Coach, Rick, will change Baseball forever as this teenage girl is called up to play professional baseball. Both must endure great hardships on their paths to meet each other.

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CAST

Samantha (Sam) Evans	A graduating High School girl with exceptional baseball abilities.
Rachael	Samantha's Mother who has recently passed away.
Philip	Samantha's Father who passes away during her State Championship game.
Rick Jensen	45 year old player who has a heart attack and leaves active baseball to coach Samantha.
Justin Taylor	A pitcher on the Colorado Rockies, And friend of Rick, who Is sent down to Asheville.
Alex Riggliano	The Asheville Tourists manager who is replaced by Rick.
Jim Thompson	Owner of the Colorado Rockies and Asheville Tourists.
Dottie	Samantha's Grandmother.
Big Jim Daley	Reporter for the Denver Tribune
Robbin' Ron DeVilla	Reporter for Sports Illustrated
Kenny Luciano	Samantha's high school pitching friend
"Lean" Lenny Butkus	Asheville Tourist Announcer
Maharishi Jones	Asheville Tourist Statistician
Tom Blanchard	Colorado Rockies Manager
Dr. Ira Feldman	Rick's friend, and partner, who is a Doctor of Physiology. He helps to invent the Trajectory Training System.
Lou Brokov	Rick's friend, and partner, who is a mechanical engineer. He helps to invent the Trajectory Training System.
Manny Ortiz	Left fielder on the Tourists
Canon Cantrell	Catcher on the Tourists
Miguel & Roberto Mendez	Dominican brothers who play on The Asheville Tourists. Roberto is sent down to make room for Samantha.

"Moose" Sikowski	First baseman for the Tourists
Reggie Brooks	Right fielder for the Tourists
Andy McMillan	Center Fielder for the Tourists
Ron Sanders	Third Baseman for the Tourists
Jim Johnson	Tourists first base coach
Jim Rollins	Tourists third base coach
Jim Lyons	Pitcher for the Trojans and then the Tourists.
Rams Manager	Manager of Asheville's high school baseball team.
Trojan Manager	Manager of the high school team that plays Samantha's team for the state title.
Doctor Tannenbaum	Rick's Doctor
Umpire	Umpire at high school championship; Umpire at the Asheville Tourists games and at the Rockies games.
Medic	Medic that takes Philip to hospital
Bill Baker	Rockies announcer
Towel Boy	Rockies towel boy
Jerry Brighton	Jim Thompson's representative.
Trainer	Tourist Trainer.
Hickory Security	Large security man for Hickory
Hickory Reporter 1	Reporter for a Hickory newspaper
Hickory Reporter 2	Reporter for a Hickory radio station
Crawdad Fan 1	Fan at Fran Stadium
Crawdad Fan 2	Fan at Fran stadium
Crawdad Pitcher	Pitcher for Hickory Crawdads
Waitress	Waitress in Mama Lee's diner.

EXT. ASHEVILLE SKYLINE - AERIAL SHOT - DAY

The aerial shot passes along the mountains and into Asheville, passing McCormick Stadium, to a small neighborhood house. The shot ends outside the window showing a girl and man sitting at a table.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

A high school girl, SAMANTHA, plays a board game with her father, PHILIP. She shakes the dice and picks up her piece to move and just holds it without putting it down.

The father looks concerned.

PHILIP

What's on your mind Samantha?

Samantha looks up with tears in her eyes.

SAMANTHA

(Sadly)

I miss Mom. I think about her all the time and sometimes I can't do anything but cry. (Voice quivering)
The teachers speak and I don't hear, or maybe I just don't understand what they're saying because I'm thinking only about Mom.

Her father comes over to hug her.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Dad, I still smell her in the house. Am I crazy? Will I always feel like this?

PHILIP

(Tenderly)

I feel the same, Samantha. It's only been a few weeks since she's gone. There's always a lump in my throat.

SAMANTHA

(Crying)

Me too! It never goes away. Will it EVER go away Dad?

PHILIP

(Quivering voice)

I'm sure it will go away... in time. There's a huge hole left in our hearts... in our Souls that will take time to heal. Both of our lives will be different from now on. The most important person; the person who I lived for; my Heaven-on-Earth; our closest friend, is no longer physically here. But, she is a part of us. Love is a wonderful thing. When you share it with some one, it stays with that person. It's like a beautiful flower. The more sunshine and water you give it, like the Love we share, the more the plant grows. The roots get stronger and the flowers bloom. Mom will be with us forever.

SAMANTHA

I can't go through life crying like this! I can't even go to my classes.

Samantha breaks down and cries. She holds her father.

INT./EXT. SAMANTHA'S HOUSE - DAY

A car pulls up and a boy, KENNY, gets out and walks up to the house. Philip hears the car door and looks out the window.

PHILIP

Kenny is here to pick you up for practice.

SAMANTHA

I'm not going.

PHILIP

Life doesn't stop, Samantha. The best way to adjust is to keep living life. The best way to honor Mom is to keep living life like she taught you.

SAMANTHA

I can't even stand up! I can't go today!

The doorbell rings. Philip gets up to answer the door and Samantha runs to her room, crying. Philip opens the door.

KENNY

(Excitedly)

Is Sam ready? We need to get to practice early today to get ready to be the State Champions!

PHILIP

Sam isn't going to make it today. She's not feeling well.

KENNY

She's not sick! Oh please, don't tell me she has the flu. Not this weekend!

PHILIP

She doesn't have the flu. She'll be fine by the weekend.

KENNY

Can I talk to her?

PHILIP

Not today. I'll have her call you later. Practice hard. I'm so proud of all of you. See you later.

Philip shuts the door. He walks to Samantha's room and looks through the opened door to see her lying on the bed. He closes the door, goes in to the living room and puts on a CD, lights up a cigarette and coughs. He takes out the photo albums and brings them to the table.

Hearing the music, Samantha comes out and sits next to her father.

SAMANTHA

The Grateful Dead. It was Mom's favorite group.

PHILIP

(Smiling)

Yes. She was my 'Hippie Queen.'

Philip opens Album 1 and shows Samantha the picture of them at a concert.

PHILIP

There wasn't anything inside her but love, EVER. Maybe that's why she was called up there; they needed a huge hit of Love.

They look at pictures of Samantha and the family, many of which are at baseball games.

PHILIP

Here we are at the T-Ball All-star Game.

SAMANTHA

I still can't believe you video taped us with a 3-camera setup and interviewed us!

PHILIP

Yea. Well, you all got in to the spirit once Mom took the mic.

Samantha points to the picture showing her rounding second base with all the outfielders chasing the ball in left field. Her mother is in the foreground waving the microphone in the air.

Philip slowly turns the pages, showing photos and newspaper articles with Samantha featured in the titles. He picks up another album with more of the same. Samantha puts her head on his shoulder and smiles.

SAMANTHA

She was always there.

PHILIP

So was I. We were having just as much fun as you were. Sometimes more.

Philip gets up and walks to the trophy wall and picks up a trophy. Tears come from Samantha's eyes.

PHILIP

You know, the words Rachael left us with were that God gave you a very special gift, Baseball, and told you the road would be tough on the way to what He has in store for you.

Philip walks over to a crying Samantha and smiles to comfort her. He hands her the trophy.

PHILIP (CONT'D)

Rachael was the smartest woman I've ever met. She knew she was leaving us, so when she asked you to promise you would never stop trying to make it to pro ball, she was certain about your abilities. Let Rachael be the Power within you when you hit the ball; and give you the clear vision to watch the flight of the ball. There wasn't a negative feeling that EVER left your Mom! I will always use her positive energy in my work and everything I do. She'd want us to stay happy and continue to expand our horizons.

Samantha smiles and gets up and wipes her eyes.

SAMANTHA

Don't worry Dad. I won't quit baseball. Other than you, I love baseball more than anything.

Samantha grabs her bag and glove.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Can you give me a ride to practice?

They walk out the door.

INT./EXT. ANNOUNCER'S BOOTH BALL PARK - DAY

The announcer, LEAN LENNY BUTKUS goes through his papers as the crowd cheers. The players have just been announced and they are awaiting the color guard to finish assembling.

LENNY

(Into the pa mic)

I'm Lean Lenny Butkus, normally the announcer for the Asheville Tourists, but today I am excited to bring you the North Carolina State High School Championship Baseball game.

What a day for baseball! It's 78 degrees; the wind is light; and we have the two best high school teams in North Carolina playing for the State Championship.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

The West Brunswick Trojans and Asheville's T.C. Roberson's Rams. The same two teams that have slugged it out for the past two years in this championship game.

They know each other very well. They've played twice during the season, each winning on their home field; and the Ram fans hope the trend stays the same today. The Trojans have powered their way to the Championships behind the arms of their two great pitchers: Steve Harrison, who is 7-1 with a 1.50 ERA, and Jeff Lyons, who is starting today with a 10-0 record and a 1.04 ERA. The Rams have lost only to the Trojans in the past two years and rely on the pitching of Jerome Hudson, who is 9-1 with a 2.14 ERA and the amazing bat and glove of Samantha Evans, who has a lifetime High school record-setting batting average of .750! Edgewater took last years title by taking the bat out of Sam's hands. They walked her every time she came to bat. She still managed to score a run by stealing, but would have done more damage if she hit away. During the season, Steve Harrison did challenge Sam and the Trojans lost its only game 5-2, with Sam going 4 for 4 and collecting 3 RBI's.

The color guard marches to home plate.

LENNY (CONT'D)

Get ready to Rock in Asheville!
Everyone rise for the National Anthem.

EXT. MCCORMICK FIELD PLAYING FIELD - DAY

The teams line up on the field. Samantha looks to her father in the stands. He holds his chest and looks up to see Samantha, smiles, and motions that he loves her. She smiles and nods her head confidently.

THE NATIONAL ATHEM PLAYS OVER THE SERIES OF SHOTS

- A) Trojans first inning - Batter 1 grounds to second; Batter 2 strikes out; Batter 3 lines to the wall in left field.
- B) Rams first inning - Batters 1 strikes out swinging; Batter 2 strikes out looking; Samantha doubles down the third base line; Batter 4 swings at the first pitch and grounds out back to the pitcher.
- C) "0's" are put on the scoreboard.
- D) Trojans second inning - Batter 4 grounds between third and short. Samantha, at short, dives to her right and stops the ball, gets up on her knees and throws out the runner.
- E) Philip cheers in the stands.
- F) Trojan Batter 5 strikes out. Batter 6 walks, but is caught stealing by a great throw by the catcher.
- G) A "0" is put on the scoreboard.
- H) Rams second inning - Batter 5 flies out; Batter 6 foul tips for a third strike; Batter 7 strikes out swinging.
- I) A "0" is put on the scoreboard.
- J) Trojan third inning - Batter 7 bunts over the pitcher's head and Samantha dives to catch it for the out. Batter 8 strikes out swinging at a curve; Batter 9 strikes out looking at three pitches.
- K) A "0" is put on the scoreboard.
- L) Rams third inning - Batter 8 strikes out swinging; Batter 9 bunts, but pops up to the catcher; Batter 1 strikes out on a curve ball.
- M) A "0" is put on the scoreboard.

END SERIES OF SHOTS

EXT. RAMS DUGOUT - DAY

The manager is on the step and the other players are cheering the upcoming batters. Samantha paces through the dugout and looks out at Philip. He sees her looking and smiles while clenching his fists.

RAMS MANAGER

What's wrong Sam?

SAMANTHA

I don't know, but something's not right.

RAMS MANAGER

Shake it off! Get out there!

He pushes her out of the dugout and steps up to look at Philip who smiles and cheers when he sees them looking.

EXT. MCCORMICK FIELD - DAY

The Trojan's lead off batter singles to right. Batter 2 hits a ball to Samantha's right and she fields it. She pauses momentarily, looks at the second baseman waiting for the throw, and throws out the runner at first. The second baseman motions to Samantha with his palms open and shaking his head. Samantha shakes her head. The pitcher looks at her and throws the rosin bag down angrily. He throws and the third batter smacks it off the left field fence for a run-scoring double. The pitcher turns to Samantha and angrily points to her. Samantha turns her back and clears the dirt around her. She glances in to the stands at her father. Batter 4 grounds out to first, advancing the runner to third. Batter 5 singles up the middle scoring the runner. Batter 6 strikes out on three pitches.

The scoreboard shows 0-2.

Philip cheers on Samantha as she goes in to the dugout. She comes out again to look at him.

PHILIP

Come on, Sam! Shake it off!

MANAGER

Hey! Sam! Get your head in the game!

She nods to him and turns to watch the pitcher warm up.

INT./EXT. ANNOUNCERS' BOOTH - DAY

Two reporters enter the booth with paper pads and press passes around their necks. One is tall and skinny, BIG JIM DALEY, and the other is short and has a goatee, ROBBIN' RON DEVILLA. Lenny greets them.

LENNY

(Surprised smile)

Well, what do ya know. Big Jim Daley and Robbin' Ron DeVilla. What brings the Denver Tribune and Sports Illustrated all the way to an Asheville high school game?

BIG JIM

Come on! One of the best pitching prospects is facing Super Sam, the only female player in a boys state championship game this year!

ROBBIN' RON

We're not the only guys here from out of town. Take a look over there. (He points). The stories about Sam have hit the wires hard this week. She's a big story. The stands are filled with reporters, and scouts.

Lenny gets up and looks around the stadium.

LENNY

You're right! There's a full house and the press area is packed. Well, what do ya know! Our Sam, a star!

Big Jim hits Lenny in the arm and he takes the microphone.

LENNY

(In to the PA mic)

Leading off this inning is Kenny Lucianno, a .440 lifetime high school batter who will be going to UNC. Here's the pitch from Jeff Lyons. It sends Kenny to the dirt. He gets right back up and motions to Jeff. He winds and throws... It's a bunt! He's safe at first!

EXT. MCCORMICK FIELD - DAY

Jeff throws the rosin bag down angrily. His manager gets his attention and signals to walk Samantha. Jeff turns and looks into center field.

JEFF

(Talking to himself)

No way! I'm the best pitcher in the country and I've got all of these scouts here watchin'; I'm NOT giving a girl a free pass. Low and away, I'll get her to ground in to a double play.

Jeff shakes off the sign twice and pitches. Samantha reaches out and hits a liner to right. The ball curves, and hits the foul pole for a home run.

The scorer points to Samantha and hangs a "2" on the board.

Samantha looks toward her father as she rounds second. He's cheering but weakly. She motions to him as she round third and he waves to her that he's fine. An excited team at home plate greets her.

INT./EXT. ANNOUNCERS' BOOTH - DAY

Lenny looks at Big Jim in the stands who points to various men and runs his fingers along his cap. Lenny nods and smiles.

LENNY

(On PA mic)

That should show the scouts out there what kind of talent is on the field today! Hey, Hey from Lean Lenny, it's all tied up!

EXT. MCCORMICK FIELD - DAY

Rams 4th batter walks.

LENNY (V.O.)

Love those freebies!

He is thrown out trying to steal second.

LENNY (V.O.)

Ow! That hurts!

The Rams 5th & 6th batters strike out.

LENNY (V.O.)

Zam! Pow! We're out of here!

(FADE)

The bases are loaded with Trojans. Rams pitcher, JEROME HUDSON, looks in, winds and throws a fast ball by the batter as he swings by the pitch.

LENNY (V.O.)

That's J-Power! We're out of the
inning still tied at 2!

(FADE)

The Trojan batter hits a double. The next batter hits a sharp ball that bounces off Hudson and Samantha one-hands it and throws to get him at first. The lead runner advances to third.

LENNY (V.O.)

Whoh! Hello! I'd like you to meet
Super Sam!

(FADE)

The next Trojan batter hits a deep fly that scores the runner from third. The next batter lines to a diving Samantha at short. As she leaves the field, Samantha looks in to the stands but her father is not there.

INT./EXT. RAMS DUGOUT - DAY

Samantha looks over the top of the dugout and walks to the other end and does the same. She shows concern in her face.

RAMS MANAGER

What's wrong, Sam?

SAMANTHA

(Very concerned)

Something is not right. I know it,
not right at all.

RAMS MANAGER

Shake it off, Sam. Focus on the
ball game. We've got to make up
this run and you're up this inning.

Samantha looks up at the scoreboard that shows the Trojans leading 3 to 2 in the bottom of the ninth inning.

Samantha pulls the lead off batter as he starts out of the dugout and pulls the others getting their helmets.

SAMANTHA

(Very serious)

Let's get this game over fast! I
mean one-two-three. Okay!

They nod their heads.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

I mean it. Do it now!

They look at Samantha who is looking over the dugout and sweating.

UMPIRE

Batter up!

Kenny hears his heart beating and breathes loudly. He positions himself in the batters box with the sound of his shoe cleaning. His heartbeat and breathing are louder.

The pitcher winds and throws a high, inside pitch that hits Kenny in the helmet. Kenny falls motionless to the ground. The fans stand. Samantha runs up to him to see if he is all right. He smiles as she leans over him.

KENNY

I did my part, miss worrywart. Now you do yours.

Kenny gets up and walks to first. The crowd cheers as Samantha cleans her cleats. She looks at Jeff on the mound and smiles. Jeff stares back at her. His concentration is broken by his manager on the steps.

TROJAN MANAGER

Jeff! Walk her! Walk her or you're out of the game!

JEFF

(Speaking to himself)

Somehow, intentional walk and HER don't seem to go together.

Samantha smiles at Jeff and moves her arms in a chicken motion. Jeff throws the first pitch outside. Samantha steps out of the box and yawns at Jeff! She looks in press area and moves her arms again. Jeff gets the ball from the catcher and turns to center field.

LENNY (V.O.)

The score is 3-2 and Sam and the Rams are looking to stick it to the man. Today, the man is Jeff Lyons who has kept one of the State's best offenses in check; and he still looks strong out there. He has struck out 9 and given up only 5 hits; 2 to Sam. His manager is calling for him to intentionally walk Sam.

Samantha positions her body for another outside pitch. Jeff throws and Samantha reaches out and hits the ball high in the air. Jeff points up to it, as the right fielder drifts backwards. The wind catches the towering fly ball that sails over the 330 sign for a home run. She, slowly, rounds the bases as she lifts her finger signaling "one" and looks for her father.

LENNY (V.O.)

(Excited)

It's a walk-off home run! It's a walk-off homer to win the State Championship for Samantha Evans. Wow-Ka-Zowie! Wham, Bam, Thank You Sam! The Rams are the champions! The Rams are the champions!

Samantha looks to find her father, but cannot as she rounds second base. She speeds up. As she is greeted by her hysterically happy teammates at home, she jumps on the plate.

UMPIRE

Home run! Game over!

The Rams greet her and fans come on the field to congratulate her and the other players. Samantha looks for her father who does not show. She pushes her way through the crowd to try and see her father.

The coach comes up to her and whispers in her ear. She jumps the fence and runs up the stairs to the exit.

INT. MCCORMICK CONCESSION AREA - DAY

A crowd has gathered around a Philip on the floor. Medics enter rolling a gurney while another administers CPR.

MEDIC

Is this your father?

SAMANTHA

(Crying)

Oh God! What's wrong?

MEDIC

He's had a heart attack and we need to get him to a hospital right away.

SAMANTHA

(Hysterical)

Oh God!

The fans make a path to the exit as Samantha passes her manager, Big Jim and Robbin' Ron.

INT. SAMANTHA'S HOUSE - DAY

The house is full of mourners. Samantha cries as she pushes through her many friends that are giving her their condolences. She finds her way to her grandmother, DOTTIE, who takes her in to her father's bedroom.

INT. PHILIP'S BEDROOM - DAY

Philip's bedroom has his sweats hanging on the door and his glove and camera on the bed. Dottie takes Samantha by the hand and sits her on the bed.

SAMANTHA

(Crying)

I can't take this, Grandma. What am I suppose to say out there?

Samantha looks around.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Why did you bring me in here?

Samantha tries to leave but Dottie holds her. Samantha cries in to her chest. Dottie sits Samantha down on the bed again.

DOTTIE

Samantha, you don't need to say anything to the people out there. They're here because they love you and they loved your father and mother. There's nothing anyone can really say except that they are sorry and that they share your grief. They're here because they want you to know that if you ever need a friend, or need anything at all, they'll help you.

SAMANTHA

(Crying)

How can God let this happen? You know? How can there be a God. God has compassion and wouldn't take TWO people like mom and dad away from me like this.

DOTTIE

(Crying)

Your mom and dad, my daughter and son-in-law, were the most loving, and in-love, people I ever knew. The whole town is out there grieving because their love touched everyone. I believed in God my whole life and I must believe He has a plan. Maybe He needed a large dose of love in Heaven.

Dottie looks for more tissues and finds a box on the dresser. She wipes her eyes and nose and continues to cry.

DOTTIE (CONT'D)

(Crying)

Rachael and Philip were two very special people. We are lucky to have been blessed with their love for ANY period of time.

Dottie picks up Philip's glove.

DOTTIE (CONT'D 2)

Your Dad didn't bring his glove or camera today.

SAMANTHA

Are you sure someone didn't bring it here from the game?

Samantha takes the glove and puts it on. She cries harder.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

(Crying)

Oh God! Bring them back. Bring them both back.

Samantha picks up the camera.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D 2)

(Sobbing with broken voice)

Maybe it's just easier for me to die. That way I can be with them right away.

DOTTIE

Hush, Samantha. You're father knew he was going to die today, and still he went to the game. That's why he left his glove and camera at home. He wanted to see you play. He wanted for you to play in front of those scouts. It's what your mother wanted as well. It was her last wish before she went to Heaven. Her most important wish is to have you continue to play ball.

Samantha throws the glove on the bed and turns away from Dottie.

SAMANTHA

It really doesn't matter anymore. Neither of them is here to see it anyway.

Dottie turns here around and looks here in the eyes.

DOTTIE

(Firmly)

It wasn't about what they wanted. Rachael was the brightest person I ever met. Who knows where she got it. Your Grandfather and I weren't scholars. I think she had visions as well. She knew when things were going to happen and prepared for them.

Samantha nods.

SAMANTHA

Yeah. It was uncanny.

DOTTIE

So when she made you promise to keep playing baseball, it wasn't for her, it was because she knew that your talent would take you somewhere.

SAMANTHA

(Quivering voice)

I can't play ball! I can't even stop crying.

DOTTIE

You're not supposed to stop crying, not now.

Dottie gives Samantha a box of tissues and puts her arms around her.

INT. RICK'S HOUSE - DAY

A woman, JILL, is in her bathrobe putting on coffee and opening the refrigerator. A trophy case shows many trophies above the fireplace in the living room.

JILL

(Shouting)

Get out of bed, Rick! You've got a game today and you need to eat breakfast!

RICK

(From bedroom)

All right! All right!

Rick enters the kitchen in his underwear, shaking his head from side to side. He puts his arm around Jill and stares in to the refrigerator.

JILL

Oh Rick. Earth to Rick; where are you?

Rick backs up and flops in to the chair.

JILL (CONT'D)

Honey, how long have we been together?

RICK

Six years now.

JILL

I've NEVER seen you like this. You have no energy. It's like you have no desire to play any more. Are you depressed?

RICK

I'm just tired, Jill. I hoped to be on a championship team before I retire and not playing on a last place team. It is depressing.

Jill gives him a hug and whispers in his ear.

JILL

(Softly)

Maybe it's time to retire and think about coaching or managing or even taking it easy for a while. You look awfully tired.

Rick pulls away.

RICK

(Urgently)

No! Not retire this year! This Rockie team would be a perfect team to try out my new training program. They're going nowhere! We began the year in last place and haven't left the cellar yet. I know Roy or Jim will listen to me if I keep trying! If I retire, I won't have the chance to try it out because I won't be on the field.

JILL

You would stand a better chance if you were coaching, wouldn't you?

RICK

I think my best chance is to show them by example, on the field. Look honey, I know my playing time is short. Maybe this is my last year. I get so damned tired now it's hard for me to get up for the next game. Jill, I know it's tough on you for me to be gone so much.

JILL

(Smiling)

Oh Rick. You're a pro baseball player. I can't tell you how proud of you I am. I'm proud to BE with you.

RICK

(Affectionately)

Yeah; BE with me. You're the best thing that has happened to me. I really mean that. Better than baseball. These past 6 years have been my best years.

Jill sees his depression and desperation. She goes to the refrigerator and Rick follows and puts his arms around her. Jill has tears in her eyes and looks at him with worry.

INT./EXT. COORS FIELD ANNOUNCERS BOOTH

The Rockies announcer, BILL BAKER, has headphones over a toupee on his head and is arranging his papers. Other reporters are looking at their notes.

BAKER

It's a great day for baseball; 68 degrees, clear skies and a soft wind blowing out. Let's hope that Rockies break out of their record-setting 24 game losing streak today and give us a win. How about those Rockies! Rick Jensen is the only Rockies batter over .300 with a .325 average. Rick's playing in his 25th year with the Rockies and this team has given him lots of gray hair, and sometimes, I swear, I see him napping between innings. Justin Taylor, a Cy Young candidate last year with a 21 & 5 record, will start today. Justin hasn't made it past the 3rd inning in a game this year. No wins this year has everyone, including the manager, looking over their shoulders for a pink slip. Maybe this is the price we pay now that the game is about the player's salaries, not about how the team wins games.

INT. COORS FIELD LOCKER ROOM - DAY

JIM THOMPSON, the Rockies owner, is on his cell phone inside the manager's office. Rick comes over to greet him and overhears the conversation from around the corner of the office.

JIM

(Angry)

Where do you guys get off authorizing those trades while I was in the hospital? I still own the team and **am** head of Operations! I don't give a damn about your vote. I'm not taking the rest of the year off!

Jim paces as he listens.

JIM (CONT'D)

(Angry)

I'm won't allow that trade. He's been with me 25 years, and he is still the best hitter on the team. No, you won't see about it.

Jim closes his phone and puts it in his pocket. He looks out the window to see if any one heard him. Rick walks the other way so Jim can't see him. He goes over to his locker and begins to put on his uniform. Justin sits down next to him. He takes Rick's worn glove from the locker and rubs it.

JUSTIN

How many times have you won the Gold Glove?

RICK

Seven. Seven times.

JUSTIN

How many times have you won the batting title?

RICK

Five times. I can still win it a few more times if I stay healthy.

Rick looks at Justin with a serious look.

RICK

Look, Justin. I know that my playing days are getting shorter and playing in Coors Field has been a dream comes true. I love Coors Field! I love Colorado fans that come out every game knowing we're not going to make post season.

Rick lifts the picture of Jill in his locker.

RICK (CONT'D)

This is where I met Jill. I just want to win it all before I leave baseball. I've been loyal to Jim for over 20 years. You'd think they would listen to me when I tell 'em about my training system. What could it hurt? We have the record worst start in baseball history.

Rick stands up and puts his hand on Justin's shoulder.

RICK (CONT'D 2)

(Excitedly)

I know I've been out of it this year. It's like I'm runnin' on 4 cylinders, not 8. But starting right now, let's turn it up a notch. Let's show the team by example. I'll slide in some of my drills during practices.

JUSTIN

I already use them Rick. Nobody has scored an earned run off me in the last two games.

Rick pulls up his socks and the both pound their gloves as they walk out to the field.

EXT. COORS FIELD - DAY

Rick and Justin begin their stretching. MIGUEL MENDEZ and his brother ROBERTO join in the drills; and soon some other players join.

MIGUEL

(Broken English)

Joo have new drills?

RICK

Yeah. I thought we'd try something new.

MIGUEL

(Broken English)

Jeah. We really need something new around here.

Rick starts moving from side-to-side in a crouching position without his glove. Justin throws grounders in various positions in which he fields and flips it back. The others follow Rick. Rick adds to the drill by coming up to a throwing position and throwing it to Justin who has moved further away.

TOM BLANCHARD, the Rockies manager, completes his interview and notices Rick and his group doing their drills separate from the other players. He walks up to Rick and turns him around.

TOM

(Sternly)

What's this, Rick, a tea party in left field? You are supposed to be conditioning yourselves with the coaches and the rest of the team! Now get your Asses over there and get to work.

RICK

I'm doin' an infielders drill here, not calisthenics. This will help us. The other just makes us sweat a little.

TOM

(Angry)

If I say this again, none of you
will play. Get your asses over
there now.

Rick points to his head and then shakes his head with
his arms spread wide as he runs past Tom to join the
others.

MUSIC IS PLAYED OVER A SERIES OF SHOTS

- A) Justin strikes out a White Sox player, watching.
- B) Justin strikes out a White Sox player, swinging.
- C) Justin strikes out a White Sox player, swinging.
- D) Rick hits a liner down the third base line and
hustles with a head-first dive in to second.
- E) Miguel dives to catch a one-hopper, comes up to
his feet and throws out the runner. He points to
Rick.
- F) Rick backhands a grounder in the hole and throws
out the runner. He points to Miguel, then they
both point to Justin.
- G) Rick hits a home to center field and raises his
finger while circling the bases. The crowd stands
and cheers as he greets his teammates at home
plate. Rick's face changes from a big smile to a
grimace as he heads for the dugout.

END SERIES OF SHOTS

INT. JILL'S OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

Jill cheers in front of the television with her co-
workers as Rick circles the bases. She turns to give
her friend a high-five and glances back at the
television. Seeing Rick's face change, she moves in
front of the television and is serious.

BAKER (V.O.)

What a solid blast! All the way to
deep left center. Way up there!
Rick Jensen is on fire today!

Rick falls to the ground before he reaches the dugout.
The cameras are close-up on Rick who is motionless.

Jill's face is stunned and tears form. She runs out of
her office as the television audio continues.

BAKER (V.O.)

Rick's down! The players are all around him, so I don't have a view of what is happening. I can see now. He's not moving. He's lying face down and they're turning him over.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Jill is crying and is being held by the wife of a player. The room is filled with players and press.

Jim Thompson arrives with his wife TONI.

Justin goes up to them.

JUSTIN

Rick had a heart attack. He's in emergency and we haven't had anyone tell us anything yet. He just told me today how he wanted to lead the team from the cellar to the top. He had a great game today.

Jim puts his hand on Justin's shoulder and nods his head. He takes Toni's hand and walk over towards Jill.

Miguel sees activity on the other side of the glass door and gets up to look. Doctors and nurses are rushing in to Rick's area and a crash cart is being wheeled in to his room. Miguel turns and looks at Jill. Jill sees his worried face and hurries to the window.

MIGUEL

They are rushing in to Rick's room.

JILL

(Scared & crying)

Oh my God!

Jill's legs wobble and Miguel helps her to sit. Toni sits next to her and puts her arm around her.

JILL (CONT'D)

(Crying and quivering voice)

Rick is the best thing that has ever happened to me. He was always excited, like a kid, about baseball..every day. He made me happy all the time. He always made me feel like we had just met and were dating.

TONI

You are still dating. I remember the day you met. It was Thanksgiving 1998 and we were playing these same White Sox. He kept asking my opinion about asking you out because you were with another man. Rick didn't care. He didn't see a ring on your finger and he had stars in his eyes. I have known Rick for 20 years. That day changed his life.

Toni takes Jill's hands and looks in to her teary eyes.

The glass doors open and a doctor, DR. TANNENBAUM, enters. He comes up to Jill and takes her to the side as the others watch. Jill steps back from the doctor and puts her hands over her face. The doctor holds her wobbling body and Justin and Miguel rush over to help her sit down.

JILL

(Uncontrollable
crying)

Oh God! No! Not Rick! Please, not Rick!

DOCTOR

Rick really passed away on the ball field. When they brought him here his heart had already stopped. We tried to revive him, but were not successful. I'm very sorry.

Overhearing the Doctor, the others react with grief and consolation to Jill.

TIME LAPSE FADES

The others console Jill and leave. The only ones left in the area are Jill, Justin, Jim and Toni.

TIME LAPSE ENDS

The nurse at the station answers the phone and reacts with excitement. She looks around the room to see Jill being escorted out the door.

NURSE

(Loudly)

Wait! Jill; Mr. Thompson! Wait!

Jill and the others look back.

NURSE (CONT'D)

Come back! Something has happened
with Rick!

They hurry to the station. The nurse hangs up the phone and looks through the doors with a surprised look.

Dr. Tannenbaum pushes open the doors and walks towards them with a smile breaking his somber face.

DR. TANNENBAUM

Rick's awake, and he's asking for
you, Jill.

Jill runs through the doors and in to Rick's room.

INT. RICK'S HOSPITAL ROOM - EVENING

Rick is awake and lifting each of his arms and moving his fingers. Jill runs up to him and kisses his face next to his breathing tubes.

RICK

Take my mask off.

Jill looks at Rick and then the Doctor. He nods yes. She takes off his mask and kisses him on the lips. Rick puts his arm around Jill and weakly speaks.

RICK

(Whispering)

I love you more than anything and
I'm sorry for never asking you to
marry me. Jill, please marry me?

Jill cries and tries to speak, but she can't because her voice is quivering too much. She lowers her head and takes deep breaths. She looks up with tears on her face.

JILL

(Smiling & crying)

Yes! I'll marry you Rick Jensen.

The others are allowed in to the room.

JUSTIN

It was a nice spot to die, Coors
Field. I was going to ask Jim if
we could, like, put your ashes in a
bottle and put your urn up in
Center field; sort of a target for
batters. You know, we could get a
special prize if we hit it.

DR. TANNENBAUM

Just say hello everyone. Rick's had a tough day and needs rest. We need to keep a close eye on him.

JUSTIN

(Whispers as he walks by)

It's nice to have you back, Rick.

TONI

(Wiping tears)

I thought we had lost a part of our family. Thank God! It's a miracle.

Jim comes over to Rick. Rick pulls him down and whispers.

JIM

(Whispers)

You can't trade me now. I have no value. Let me help bring a title to Colorado.

Rick lets go. Jim looks in to Rick's eyes and smiles. He leaves with Toni.

JILL

So, where's the ring?

INT. RICK'S HOME - DAY

Rick is sitting up in a bed with papers spread around him. He tries to reach a folder on the table, but is unable. He looks out the window to see Jill working in the garden. He throws the blanket off and puts his feet on the floor. He tries to take a step and falls, knocking over a table with a lamp on it. He tries to pull himself up by grabbing the bedpost and falls again.

Jill hears the crash and runs in to the house. Rick is still trying to pull himself up and is getting angry.

RICK

(Angry)

I can't feel my legs any more!
Call Dr. Tannenbaum.

Jill begins to walk over to Rick.

RICK (CONT'D)

(Angry)

No! Let me get up myself! Didn't you hear me? Call Dr. Tannenbaum!

Rick pulls himself up only to fall on the floor breaking a glass as he reaches to pull himself.

Jill goes in to the kitchen and retrieves a broom and dustpan. She sweeps up the broken glass and looks sternly at Rick as she cleans the mess. Keeping a stern face, Jill pushes his arm to the side and lifts him back to the bed.

Rick points to the phone.

RICK (CONT'D 2)

Call the doctor, please?

JILL

Dr. Tannenbaum told you, just a few days ago, that they don't know if you will ever walk again. He said the most important thing is physical therapy to bring back communication between your brain and legs. I know your memory is still good, so why all these dramatics?

RICK

I'm a mess. A stupid bag of broken bones.

Rick lifts his dead leg and drops it.

RICK (CONT'D)

I've played baseball since I was six years old. Until I met you, baseball was my whole life. For the first time, today, I told myself that I'm never gonna play again. I'm never gonna feel the perfect grass at Coors Field; or feel the burst of adrenaline when the crowd cheers after I hit one out.

Rick throws his notes on the floor.

RICK

(Frustrated)

What's the use? Nobody upstairs ever gave me the time of day on this training program anyway.

Jill sits on the bed.

JILL

I know there's a great big void in you now. Baseball is your life. I know that I can't fill that voice... and I don't want to. I fell in love, and I am going to marry, a major league baseball star. You'll always be a baseball star to me and to millions of fans that you have entertained for over 20 years.

Jill runs her hand lightly over Rick's tearing face.

JILL (CONT'D)

Just think of this as a little downtime. You know, rehab time. You'll be up in the middle of things soon enough. In the meantime, use this time to put together your program. Don't let me lose the baseball star.

Rick puts the papers in the folders and puts them in his brief cases. Jill watches for a moment and turns and goes in to the kitchen.

INT. SAMANTHA'S KITCHEN - DAY

Dottie is on the phone while cooking.

DOTTIE

(Concerned)

You know, Jackie, I'm glad you called to let me know how Samantha's doing. It's been hard for me to get through to her. I'm hoping that soon she will come back to life. Nothing is important to her anymore. She quit baseball and barely eats. She spends most of her time in her room reading magazines with her headphones on. It is not the right time to discuss college and baseball. She is still grieving.

The shower stops.

DOTTIE (CONT'D)

I've got to hang up now; here comes Samantha.

Samantha goes in to her room and comes out with a tray filled with empty food packages and dishes. She's in a dirty sweatshirt and shorts and her eyes are puffy and red. She hands the tray to Dottie who hands it right back to her.

DOTTIE

(Sternly)

Throw away your own garbage and do your own dishes. It's time you joined the human race again!

Samantha throws it all in to the sink.

SAMANTHA

(Angry)

Fine! I'll do it later.

Samantha stares at Dottie and turns her back and walks in to her room, slamming the door.

Dottie picks up the garbage on the floor to throw it away. She notices that chocolate had spilled on a page in the sports section. She wipes off the chocolate with a napkin and reads the headline "Ballplayer dies on the field and comes back to life to propose to his fiancé." She reads the article and picks up the phone.

DOTTIE

(In to the phone)

Denver. Colorado. Colorado Rockies executive offices. (pause) Can you please give me the number of the Colorado Rockies baseball club's executive offices? Thank you.

Dottie writes down the number; presses a key and dials the number.

DOTTIE

(On phone)

Hello. Is this the Rockies office? Oh good. Possibly you can help me. I would like to contact Rick Jensen. My grand daughter is a gifted ball player and has lost both of her parents recently. I know her favorite ball player is Mr. Jensen, and maybe he can help motivate my grand daughter. Can you help? (pause) Oh, Thank You. I'll hold.

INT. RICK'S LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Rick is in a wheel chair watching television. Jill is reading in the kitchen. The phone rings.

JILL
(Loudly)
I'll get it!

INT. RICK'S KITCHEN - EVENING

Jill picks up the phone.

JILL (CONT'D)
Hello. Yes this is. I'm Jill,
Rick's fiancée. May I help you?

Jill listens.

JILL (CONT'D)
No? Please continue. (pause) I
think it is a great idea. Maybe
just the thing to motivate Rick as
well. Has Samantha gone through
that angry stage yet? (pause)
Yeah, me too, still. What do you
think about getting them together
here? I'll pay for your tickets,
hotel, everything. (pause) Okay,
we'll come to Asheville.
(excitedly whispering) Just tell
Samantha you're visiting someone
and I won't tell Rick at all.
See you both soon. Bye.

Jill looks in to the living room where Rick is still watching television.

EXT. ASHEVILLE AIRPORT - LATE AFTERNOON

Rick and Jill wait outside the airport. Rick is in a wheelchair with headphones and is moving to the music. Jill comes up to Rick and pulls down his earphones.

JILL
Hey, flash dance; I need you to be
civil to these people.

RICK
Who are we meeting?

JILL
Dottie Evans.

RICK

You said, um, Dottie Evans was an old friend? Yeah. Okay.

Rick puts the earphones on and Jill takes them off and unplugs them from the Ipod with a stern face.

JILL

Okay! I know you're psyched because you're now a TV star, but take a little time to get to know Dottie and her family. They have been big fans of yours and this is important to them.

RICK

Whatever.

Rick grabs the headset from Jill and puts them in his case.

Jill spots a sign with her name in the window of an oncoming van. Dottie spots them and pulls over. Jill opens the door and climbs in leaving Rick outside. Rick opens his arms and then motions to the baggage handlers who help load the luggage and Rick in to the van.

Dottie give Jill a big hug and turns to shake Rick's hand.

DOTTIE

Hi Rick. It's an honor, and pleasure, to meet you.

Rick looks out the window while answering.

RICK

Hey, it's great to meet you and be here in the Blue Ridge Mountains.

Dottie extends her hand but Rick connects his headset and looks out the window.

JILL

This has been a tough year for you and Samantha. How do you keep in such good spirits? This new Rick is trying my nerves.

DOTTIE

I believe God has a plan for us and Samantha is the key. I just moved here after my daughter passed to help look after Samantha.

She pauses and sobs.

DOTTIE

(Sobbing)

You see, I believed in Rachael.
Her wisdom was uncommon.
Samantha's deathbed promise to her
was Rachael's way of telling us all
how special Samantha's gift is.
Her preparations and statements to
us all tells me that Rachael knew
that, both, she and Philip were
going to pass away. Samantha is
taking this very hard. This has
been an emotional roller coaster of
a year for her. Right now, she
doesn't mention baseball at all;
doesn't take any phone calls and
hasn't opened any of the colleges'
letters.

JILL

Maybe meeting Rick will bring back
the baseball spark in both of them.

Jill turns to see Rick nodding to the music on his
headset and gestures with her eyes to him. He keeps
nodding. Jill grabs for the headset and Rick avoids
her. He pulls down the headset and turns of the music.
Dottie speaks to him as she drives.

DOTTIE

What about you, Rick? What have
you been doing since retiring?

RICK

(Perturbed)

I haven't retired yet! I'm in
rehab.

DOTTIE

Pardon me.

RICK

I just finished a TV commercial for
Burger King and I was on E.R. Not
bad for a guy who can't climb in to
a car!

Looking a little angry, Rick pulls out the headset and
puts them on. He plugs them in and plays the music.

Dottie smiles and puts her hand on Jill's hand.

INT. SAMANTHA'S BEDROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

Samantha looks out her window as the van pulls up. She watches as Rick struggles to get out of van and in to his wheel chair. Jill tries to help, but Rick pushes her away. As Dottie arrives to the door, Samantha puts on her headset and lies on the bed and reads a magazine.

INT. SAMANTHA'S LIVING ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

Dottie comes in to a house with a pizza box on the table, a plate on the arm of the chair and napkins on the couch and floor. She, quickly, picks them up as Rick and Jill's voices are heard outside.

RICK

Let me do this myself.

JILL

Go ahead!

Dottie knocks on Samantha's door and speaks through the door.

DOTTIE

Samantha, my friends are here.

No answer, so she knocks again.

DOTTIE (CONT'D)

Sam, can you, PLEASE, come out?

Dottie opens the door to find Samantha listening to the headset and reading on her bed. Samantha looks up while nodding her head, smiles, and returns to reading the magazine.

Dottie walks to Samantha and takes off her headset. Samantha grabs them back.

SAMANTHA

Hey! These are mine!

DOTTIE

You knew I had friends coming in and you left the house a mess.

Samantha puts her headset back on and Dottie grabs them and puts them in her purse.

DOTTIE (CONT'D)

I have people here, NOW, that have come along way to visit us. Just be civil and come out and spend some time with them.

SAMANTHA

Give me back my headset!

DOTTIE

After they leave.

Dottie puts the headset in a file drawer.

Jill enters followed by Rick. Rick grabs his headset from Jill and puts them in his case. Seeing Rick, Samantha pulls on Dottie.

SAMANTHA

All right! Give them back to me and I will be nice.

Dottie opens the file and takes out the headset. Samantha grabs them from her and puts them in her case.

DOTTIE

Come on in. Sit anywhere you'd like.

Jill sits on the couch and Rick rolls beside the armchair.

Dottie takes Samantha by the hand and walks her over to the living room.

DOTTIE (CONT'D)

This is my grand daughter Samantha Evans. Samantha, I'd like you to meet Rick Jensen and his fiancée, Jill Lieber.

Samantha shakes each of their hands. She steps back after shaking Rick's hand.

SAMANTHA

(Surprised)

Oh! I didn't recognize you until just now! Rick Jensen of the Rockies!

Rick looks down.

RICK

I've changed some, huh?

Samantha picks up the magazines and papers around the room and straightens the table. She looks away from Rick as she collects her thoughts.

SAMANTHA

Why are you in a wheel chair?

RICK

Where have you been, in Siberia?

SAMANTHA

No. Just out of it for a while.
When will you play again?

Rick looks around for something to read and reaches for his bag. Jill shakes her head no at him.

SAMANTHA

(Uncomfortable)

Forget the question. I'm sorry.
Of course you want to play. It
must piss you off to hear that
question.

RICK

That's okay Samantha. You didn't
know.

He glances at Jill.

RICK (CONT'D)

I'll Never play baseball again.

Looking frustrated, Samantha quickly walks to her room and shuts the door.

Dottie looks, sadly, at the door and then at Jill.

Rick takes out his headset and turns on the music.

RICK (CONT'D 2)

You should have told me what's
going on here. You want ME to
motivate your grand daughter. Boy,
have you picked the wrong person
for the job! You two can talk over
"old times", I'm gonna listen to
music.

INT. SAMANTHA'S KITCHEN - SUNSET

Dottie and Jill are preparing food.

INT. SAMANTHA'S BEDROOM - SUNSET

Samantha is reading the Sports Illustrated and listening to her headset on her bed. The title reads "The Grand Old Man of Baseball".

INT. SAMANTHA'S LIVING ROOM - SUNSET

Jill peaks out of the kitchen to see Rick looking through his CD's. She brings in a platter of food and gives it to Rick. Dottie follows and puts a videotape in the vcr and turns on the television. Jill and Dottie go back in to the kitchen.

The tape is a composite of newscasts on Samantha.

ANNOUNCER 1

Asheville baseball has a new star, Samantha Evans! She's a ten year old girl who single-handedly brought Asheville to the finals of the Little League World Series. She made sure she would always hold a record in the Little League Hall of Fame by pitching a no-hitter and hitting for the cycle.

ANNOUNCER 2

The Asheville High Rams are making the news today because this highly-ranked team started a freshman girl at short stop. Samantha Evans, Sam when she's on the field, hit a homer and 2 singles in her first game, plus fielded 8 chances flawlessly at short. Hat's off to Sam. It's hard enough to get a playing spot on a team like the Rams, but to do so as a female is a great accomplishment. Hat's off to the Rams manager, Jerry Mallory, for making that move.

CNN ANNOUNCER

Here's a story that will put red in your cheeks: Sports Illustrated highlights outstanding school athletes in each issue. This week they highlighted a young woman named Samantha Evans. Listen to this!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

Sam, as she is called, is a 4-year starter on the highly rated Asheville North Carolina Rams senior boys baseball team. Her numbers are incredible: Her 4-year batting average is .750; with 80 home runs and 140 rbi's; plus, she has a .998 fielding average at shortstop. Remember, this is in a very competitive North Carolina league!

CNN ANNOUNCER 2

It's time to talk baseball prospects coming out of high school. Our top prospect is the same person we chose last year, Samantha Evans. That's right! A young woman who plays for the North Carolina State Champion Asheville Rams. She has set numerous school and state records as a 4-year starter, and star, of this highly-rated high school team. Tragedy struck Samantha hard this year as her mother died just before the state playoffs and her father died at the championship game. America's hearts go out to you and we are proud to say that you are the Best High School Baseball prospect this year, again!

INT. SAMANTHA'S BEDROOM - SUNSET

Samantha takes off her headset and hears the television. Her goes to the door and listens. She begins to cry. She takes a trophy from the shelf and throws it, breaking a lamp.

Dottie knocks and enters to find Samantha crying on the bed. Jill follows and stands at the door. Dottie holds Samantha with one arm and picks up the Sports Illustrated that was opened to Rick's article.

SAMANTHA

(Crying)

I can't play baseball anymore. I can't go to college either. Grandma, I can't stop crying! The first thing that happened when I heard that tape just now was to get angry, and then I began to cry. Every time I think about baseball, or Mom, or Dad, or college, I cry.

Dottie hold Samantha with both arms and cries as well.
Jill wipes away her tears as well.

INT. SAMANTHA'S LIVING ROOM - SUNSET

Rick listens to them and opens a scrapbook to read a news article. He looks at Jill crying in the doorway.

INT. SAMANTHA'S BEDROOM - SUNSET

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

(Crying)

I know that you brought them here
to cheer me up, but it's not going
to work.

Sam takes the headset.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D 2)

This headset helps me not to cry.
I put them on and close my eyes and
I'm somewhere else.

DOTTIE

My lovely Samantha, God didn't
leave you, (looking back at Jill)
or Rick, here to just give up. I
am convinced like I said before
that there is a plan. Get to know
one another.

Jill closes the door as Dottie comforts Samantha.

INT. SAMANTHA'S KITCHEN - SUNSET

Rick is returning the dishes to the sink as Jill enters, wiping her eyes. She smiles at Rick.

JILL

(Teary)

I'd like to rest for a while and
take a nap.

RICK

Okay, honey. I'll read or
something.

She gives him a kiss on the head and retires to the bedroom.

Rick opens the drawer of videotapes and looks through them. He takes out one and puts it in the VCR and plays it on the TV. He plugs his headset into the TV and takes the remote.

Dottie leaves Samantha's room and goes, unnoticed, in to her bedroom.

INT. SAMANTHA'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Rick is in front of the TV writing notes on a paper. The small lamp next to him is the only light on in the room.

Sam enters carrying her mug and sees Rick on her way to the kitchen. She returns with a full mug and slowly walks up behind Sam who still has on the headset. She sees him writing and moves closer to see what it says.

Rick notices her and looks up. He takes off the headset.

SAM

What did you write?

RICK

Just some notes.

SAMANTHA

About me?

RICK

Yes.

SAMANTHA

What?

RICK

This one says, "needs to grip the ball lighter and hold it a little longer when throwing. Also, needs to plant her feet differently."

Rick rewinds and plays the tape back in slow motion.

RICK (CONT'D)

You see, when you throw, you hold the ball too tight which makes you hold on to the ball longer. This makes you throw those low balls to first. You compensate by releasing the ball too early, which takes the power out of your throws.

Rick plays the tape in super slow motion.

RICK (CONT'D 2)

When you were learning baseball, you were nervous making you grip the ball too tight. So your brain has been conditioned to throw like this.

Rick fast forwards the tape and shows Samantha a tough grounder she fields and throws a one-hopper to the first baseman.

RICK (CONT'D 3)

See here? You've made a great play to field that ball. Normally, that would be a hit. See your feet? You let go of the ball before planting your feet right. You have no push-off power. Do you throw a lot of one-hoppers to first.

SAMANTHA

Yes. Many times I count on a good one-hopper to make the play.

Rick opens the drawer of videotapes.

RICK

(A little excited)

I've watched most of these now. You're flawless in fielding. I am amazed to watch how often you come up with the ball. And your hitting... these pitchers don't give you any problem at all.

Rick takes out another tape and fast-forwards it.

RICK (CONT'D)

Who's the pitcher here?

SAMANTHA

Jeff Lyons. He's on the West Brunswick Trojans. He's the best in the league. I've face him a few times each year. We beat him for the State title this year and he beat us last year.

RICK

How'd you do against him over the years?

SAMANTHA

I did good. I hit a few homers and doubles. He really never gave me a problem.

Samantha takes the remote and fast-forwards to Jeff pitching. Then she plays it in slow motion.

SAMANTHA

You see, he comes over the top on fastballs and comes down a little for his breaking stuff.

RICK

Jeff will be drafted pretty high this year. He's rated as one of the best prospects.

Dottie comes out and goes in to the kitchen. Jill comes out and sees Rick and Samantha together, and walks in to the kitchen. Dottie opens the door.

DOTTIE

Anyone hungry?

RICK & SAMANTHA

Yeah!

Samantha, quickly, clears off the table and sets the places. Rick gathers his notes and pulls up to the table. He makes a quick note and puts the papers in his bag.

Dottie and Jill bring dishes of food out and place them on the table. Samantha and Rick immediately begin to serve themselves before Dottie and Jill return with more food. As Jill enters with another dish of food, she sees Rick look at Samantha who breaks out laughing.

RICK

(A little excited)

I think the best place to train is right here in Asheville. You will have your best chance of breaking in to pro ball right here. You've got the fan base, the media, and you know the ball players in this area.

He takes a few bites of food and chews as he talks.

RICK (CONT'D)

What do ya say, Sam? We need to start right away while you're in game shape. I can have you ready by the time the second half begins.

Samantha has a blank look on her face.

Rick grabs some papers out of his briefcase with one hand as he eats with the other. He puts them on the table and sees Jill looking surprised, so he puts them right back in his case.

Dottie looks at Jill with her eyes raised.

RICK (CONT'D 2)

Dottie, is it all right if I work with Samantha?

DOTTIE

(Quivering voice)

If Samantha is ready it's okay with me.

Dottie puts her hand on the table and Samantha puts her hand on top. She nods "yes".

RICK

What do ya say, Sam?

Samantha shakes Rick's hand.

SAMANTHA

(Smiling)

It's a deal! So what's next?

RICK

I've got to find the money.

Rick takes out pictures and shows Samantha.

RICK (CONT'D)

We need to find the money to build the toys.

MUSIC WITH SERIES OF SHOTS

A) INT. RICK'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Rick is in front of the computer with diagrams and outlines on the wall around him. He is on the phone and stands up from his chair to write on his calendar.

B) EXT. NORTHWESTERN UNIV. ATHLETICS BUILDING - DAY

Rick greets DR. FELDMAN, a 60 year old, graying, man dressed in a suit. They sit on a bench and they look through Rick's papers.

C) INT. LOU BROKOV'S LAB - DAY

LOU BROKOV, a 45 year old, heavy, man in jeans and a T-Shirt greets Rick. The lab is a warehouse with various mechanical systems staged in separate areas. A robot walks across the floor directed by a young man with a remote. The robot picks up a garbage can and empties it in to a bin across the room.

D) INT. SHIFRIN & ASSOCIATES LAW OFFICE - DAY

Jim Thompson, dressed in casual clothes with a Cubs hat on his head, sits in a meeting room with a man dressed in an expensive suit. The rear wall has a Shifrin & Associates sign. Jim smiles and stands. He shakes with the man and they raise their glasses.

E) EXT. COORS FIELD - DAY

The ball is hit between short and third as the two Rockies fielders start to go for it and then stop and look at each other. A runner scores from third and is followed by the runner from second who rounds third and scores.

F) INT. COORS FIELD LOCKER ROOM - DAY

The manager is screaming and throws a garbage can against the wall.

G) EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - DAY

Rick works with Samantha on fielding drills. She picks up the grounders, smoothly, positions her feet and throws, on-target, to first base.

H) INT. LOU BROKOV'S LAB - NIGHT

Rick, Lou and Dr. Feldman stand around a drafting table looking at diagrams. Rick points to something on the diagram and the others excitedly agree with smiles.

I) INT. JIM THOMPSON'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Jim Thompson looks out the window at the score in which the Rockies lose 9-1 and shakes his head. The phone rings and he answers, nodding his head yes. The phone rings again and he gets angry and screams in to the phone.

END SERIES OF SHOTS

INT. JIM THOMPSON'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Jim slams down the phone. He picks up a paperweight on his desk and throws it, knocking over a lamp.

Rick opens the door to see Jim throw and quickly rolls over to catch the lamp.

Jim moves things on his desk to find something else to throw. He stops when he notices Rick.

Rick returns the lamp to the table and picks up a glove. He brings it to his nose and smells it with a smile.

RICK

It sure does smell good to be at the ballpark. I love they way a glove smells.

JIM

(Smiling)

You gave me that glove, Rick.
Remember?

RICK

(Smiling)

It was 1994 and we were playing in the hunt to make it in to the playoffs. We blew a three game lead in the last week and I wanted to leave baseball. I gave you this as a remembrance.

Rick sets the glove back on the table. Jim comes over to greet him with a handshake and hug.

RICK

Baseball has been my whole life. I can't give it up even though I'm in this chair. I've been working on my training system and I'd like to try it out in Asheville. I've setup there and I am ready to go.

Rick takes out his papers and spreads them on the table. Jim looks them over and turns to Rick.

JIM

Are you crazy? Your doctors told me NOT to put you on the field. Do you want to kill yourself?

Rick rolls over to the window and looks at the field.

RICK

If I die, again, there is no better place than on the ball field here at Coors. I should know.

JIM

You were 20 years old when you came to play for me, and although my scouts had their doubts, I knew you were something special. How old are you now?

RICK

Forty-Five.

JIM

You still hit like you're 25.

RICK

I can teach your ballplayers to do the same. I DO have a plan. I can make your pitchers better and your fielding better.

JIM

Show me what you've got. God knows we need some kind of help.

Jim grabs the newspaper and shows Rick the headline.

JIM (CONT'D)

(Reading out loud)

"Will someone tell the Rockies to show up?"

Jim grabs another newspaper.

JIM (CONT'D 2)

"Last place with no where to go!"

Rick takes his papers out and pins them on the wall.

RICK

The brain remembers every little thing no matter how quickly it passes us by. When a pitcher throws a perfect pitch, the brain remembers what the muscles did to create that pitch. In my system, we measure all aspects of the players body, along with the flight of the pitch, then flash a statistical readout so the player's brain has a reference to re-enact that throw again. We can re-develop a player's body based on his physical makeup and condition his muscles to accurately reproduce the pitches.

Rick pins up a diagram of the Telemetry Tunnel. Jim comes closer to look.

RICK

The tunnel has video and motion sensors throughout. These sensors feed data into a computer that is instantly processed in various applications. The speed and location of the pitch is measured, along with the trajectory of the ball. The rubber and mound measure balance, weight and foot pressure. The plate and rear screen measures ball placement; and cameras throughout help measure the trajectory of the ball and the movements of the pitcher when throwing. Immediately after the ball hits the back screen, these readings flash on the back screen.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

We condition the brain by varying the target on the screen in size and location. Our goal is to have the pitcher hit the smallest target with almost perfect regularity no matter where it's location.

Rick pins up a diagram of the Tunnel with a batter.

RICK (CONT'D)

Now, the batter. The sensors can accurately calculate bat speed, bat location, bat trajectory, location with respect to the pitched ball; how hard and where the ball hits the bat; foot placement; foot movements; foot pressures; as well as record and analyze body movements. The computer will calculate a model of the player's swing based on his physical make-up.

Rick pins up a diagram of the Anatomy Analyzer.

RICK (CONT'D 2)

The first thing we do is to analyze the player, physically. We do this by scanning them, which gives us their muscular and physical makeup from the inside out. We feed this data in our model designed specifically for a baseball player. We utilize calisthenics, weights and machines to reshape their anatomy. We can accurately access the body and what are its best movement paths. We really can make them better!

Rick pins up a diagram of a Marlin's pitcher with statistics printed on it.

RICK (CONT'D 3)

Plus, we can accurately analyze our competitors! We can plot their patterns, find their habits and measure the results. We'll know their weaknesses and be able to exploit them.

Jim smiles and shakes his head 'yes' as he looks at the papers on the wall.

JIM

What do you need?

Rick hands him some papers.

RICK

Let me skipper the Asheville club
and give me the money to build this
system.

Jim looks through the papers and throws them on the
table. He looks up with a smile and extends his hand.

JIM

You know, I've got to get this past
the Board and it's not going to be
easy.

RICK

I'll explain it to them.

JIM

No, You better let me do this.
They were all set to trade you just
before your heart attack. They're
trying to push me out, too.

He lets go of Rick hand and looks at the papers on the
wall.

JIM (CONT'D)

How sure are you this will work?

RICK

I am sure that I will make the
players noticeably better. In
fact, I am sure enough to state to
you that I can make even the last
place Tourists better than the
Rockies.

JIM

(Smiling)

Nuts! You're nuts!

RICK

Remember, I've been down on that
field with these guys and without
knowing the playing level of the
Tourists, I can guarantee we'll be
better.

Rick picks up his folders.

RICK (CONT'D)

Everything you need to explain this
is right here, and anytime you have
a question just call.

JIM

(Slight smile)

Okay! I like it. I'll put up the money, personally, for it.

They shake hands.

RICK

(Smiling)

We'll keep them saying that you're the smartest man in baseball.

Rick picks up the glove on the table and smells it again.

RICK (CONT'D)

It's nice to be back in the game again.

Jim flips him a ball and he catches it.

JIM

You and me, both.

EXT. MCCORMICK FIELD - DAY

It's a sunny day as the ballplayers are stretching and arriving on the field. Out from the tunnel, and through the dugout, comes Justin Taylor.

Justin is greeted as he walks through the dugout and he passes them by without acknowledging.

#18, MANNY ORTIZ, a Caribbean player, comes up to Justin.

MANNY

Welcome to Asheville.

#32 CANNON CANTRELL, a red head, rubs his bat with a rag as Justin walks by.

CANNON

Hey Dude!

Justin walks by while acknowledging them and goes to the field where the catcher, #8, SWEENEY, turns and smiles. Sweeney extends his hand and Justin shakes it.

MANNY and CANNON CANTRELL come over to Sweeney.

MANNY

(Broken English)

He must be comin' down.

CANNON

Are you stupid? That's Justin Taylor. He won 20 games a few years ago for the Rockies. Why would they put him here for rehab?

Justin walks out to the bullpen where he sees the manager, RIGGLIANO with his back to him. #28 ION, points to Justin and Riggliano turns and walks to meet him. Riggliano extends his hand and Justin picks up a ball and throws it in to his glove. Riggliano directs Justin away from the other players.

RIGGLIANO

Hey, I know you don't want to be here, and although you're a welcome sight for a last place team, I'll get you out of here as fast as I can. Just go out and do your job. Work with the trainers to get back in shape and let me know when you feel good enough to work out.

Justin nods and walks back towards the dugout.

RIGGLIANO (CONT'D)

(Loudly)

Hey, Taylor! Where are you going? I'm not through talkin' to you.

Justin stops, turns to look, and waits.

RIGGLIANO (CONT'D 2)

You stay here on my say so. I say you're through and you're off the team and maybe out of baseball. So get back here and I'll tell you what you need to do!

Justin walks up to Riggliano and stands close to him so they are face-to-face. Riggliano turns and Justin repositions so he is again face-to-face.

JUSTIN

(Softly)

I'm not ready to pitch yet, coach Riggliano. I'll let you know.

Justin turns and walks towards the dugout.

Riggliano turns to the players on the field.

RIGGLIANO

(Yelling)

Pick it up out here. Some one has to start impressing me or you'll be gone! So far, no one is big league material on this field.

INT. TOURISTS LOCKER ROOM - DAY

Justin kicks open the door and sits on a chair. There is no one in the room except the towel boy. Justin smiles and puts his feet up.

TOWEL BOY

There's no one here. The trainers are all out on the field. Do you want me to get one for you?

JUSTIN

I'll just wait here.

EXT. SAMANTHA'S HOUSE - DAY

Samantha comes out of the house when Rick's car arrives. She stands on the porch as Dr. Feldman and Lou get out to help him. They lower Rick down and he takes the check out of his pocket and holds it up for Samantha to see. Samantha is excited and smiling and runs to Rick and turns him around. Dottie comes out and smiles as she watches.

(MUSIC STARTS) SERIES OF SHOTS

A) Samantha is introduced to Dr. Feldman and Lou.

B) INT. SAMANTHA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The table is full of food as they hand each other papers and speak to one another.

C) INT. MACHINISTS SHOP - DAY

Rick, Lou and Dr. Feldman look around the warehouse filled with various machinist stations. Lou nods his head as a man with goggles speaks to him. Rick and Dr. Feldman leave and Lou stays.

D) EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - DAY

Samantha works on her fielding drills with her friends, Jerome and Kenny. Rick and Dr. Feldman speak and Dr. Feldman writes notes.

E) INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

Rick, Dr. Feldman and Lou look over a large open warehouse. Rick points to various places and Samantha jumps and plays with a dog.

F) INT. RICK'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Jill is on the phone, smiling and talking. She looks through her mail and picks up a plane ticket envelope. She speaks on the phone.

END SERIES OF SHOTS

INT. RICK'S WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Rick, Dr. Feldman, Lou and Samantha look over the warehouse from the landing of the balcony office. The facility is complete. The warehouse now has tunnels for the pitchers and batters, a strengthening area with a variety of equipment and playing surfaces. In the corner is the computer room.

Rick takes Samantha in to the balcony office.

INT. BALCONY OFFICE - NIGHT

Rick motions for Samantha to sit as he rolls up to her.

RICK

Sam, I haven't spoken to you yet about how you'll be treated as the only female in the league.

SAMANTHA

I'm used to it. The other players would make remarks and leave things in the locker room that were disgusting.

RICK

It's going to get worse. These players, just like you, have dreamed of being major league players. They are very competitive, much more than in high school. They'll see you as a publicity stunt and no man wants to lose his chance to make it to a girl. Their egos won't fathom a female being better than them.

SAMANTHA

Really?

RICK

Oh yeah. You'll get threats and hate mail. The other players will do anything they can to make you quit. The league needs to deal with you as well.

SAMANTHA

I can handle it, Rick! No matter how bad it gets, I won't quit. I made promises that I will never break.

RICK

I know you'll handle it. What I'm saying is that you can't let any of this make you lose your concentration. We're only given a short time to play, and only the best players in the country stay in professional ball. There is a constant flow of ballplayers who will do anything to make it.

Rick takes her hand.

RICK (CONT'D)

You'll have friends to help you through this. Dottie, myself, Jill, the Doctor and Lou for starters, and there will be others.

Samantha hugs Rick. They leave the office and turn off the lights.

INT. MAMA LEE'S DINER - NIGHT

Rick, and the others, enter the diner which is half full of people. The diner is straight out of the fifties. They walk through to find a table at the window and begin to sit down. There is a man with a Rockies hat in the back booth facing away from them. They all sit and the waitress brings them menus.

WAITRESS

What can I get you all to drink?

SAMANTHA

Sweet tea, please.

DR. FELDMAN

Diet Coke, please.

LOU

Sweet tea if fine with me, thank
you.

Rick is looking out the window and doesn't answer.

LOU

Hey Rick, you're up to bat.

RICK

Can you make me a chocolate
phosphate?

WAITRESS

Sure. I'll be back with your
drinks right away.

The man in the Rockies hat turns around. He sees Rick
who does not notice him. He motions for the waitress
to come over to him.

JUSTIN

Can you put some cherries in the
chocolate phosphate that he
ordered?

Rick hears and turns around to see Justin. Justin
comes over to Rick and hugs him.

RICK

What are you doing here?

JUSTIN

I was sent down.

RICK

(Surprised)

What? You won 20 games last year
for a last place team. You've won
20 games 4 times for the Rockies.

JUSTIN

(Smiling)

Jim sent me down because I need to
rehab my shoulder.

RICK

What's wrong?

Justin smiles and shrugs his shoulders.

JUSTIN

Being in the Rockies clubhouse is a nightmare right now anyway. No one gets along. No one cares. Jim tells me you're working on the Telemetry Tunnel and the training system.

RICK

Sometimes I am pretty thick.
(smiles) We finished it tonight. Let me introduce you to my new team. Everyone, this is Justin Taylor. He played with me on the Rockies. This is Dr. Feldman, he's our physiotherapist. (Justin shakes his hand); This is Lou Brokov. He's a mechanical engineer. (Justin shakes his hand); and this is Samantha Evans, the player we are gonna send to the majors.

Justin looks at Rick with a smile and shakes her hand.

JUSTIN

(Slight laugh)

You're going to take a female player and get this manager to accept her? Plus get her by the other owners in the league?

RICK

Yep, and along the way the team will win some games, maybe the championship.

JUSTIN

Well. Sure looks like I'm gonna have a lot more fun than the Rockies this year. Who knows about this?

RICK

Just Jim and us. By the way, Justin, tomorrow I start as the Tourists new coach.

JUSTIN

You know, Jim Thompson is the smartest man in baseball.

INT. TOURISTS LOCKER ROOM - DAY

ALEX RIGGLIANO, the 55 year old manager of the Tourists, is behind closed doors and is seen through the window as he meets with his coach. He takes his thermos and throws it at the wall in anger, breaking it and a lamp.

The coach leaves the office and sits in front of his locker looking towards the floor.

Rick enters and stops. The coach looks up at him. Rick looks around the room as the players put on their uniforms and prepare for the game. He sees Alex looking at him from his doorway and goes over to him. As Rick begins across the room, Alex goes over to his desk and sits.

INT. ALEX'S OFFICE - DAY

Alex puts his feet up on the desk and looks at papers on a clipboard. Rick knocks and enters.

RICK

I'm Rick Jensen, your new coach.

Alex doesn't look up.

ALEX

(Subdued anger)

You'll have to excuse my surprise, but I just fired a friend to make a spot on the team for you. No one told me who was coming, only that I was getting a new coach and to fire my coach TODAY!

RICK

That's how baseball works. There's only room for so many. Hey, I've worked hard for this chance!

Rick hands him his contract and a large manila envelope. Alex reads them and throws them on the desk.

ALEX

(Angry)

I run this team. I decide who plays and who sits and who gets sent down! You can try out your new training system because this document says I must allow you to do so. But get this straight, I don't have to like it one bit or make it easy for you. I don't care if Jim signed this you work for me here.

Rick turns and rolls towards the door. Alex stands up.

ALEX (CONT'D)

(Angry)

I'm not done with you yet!

Rick turns and smiles. Alex walks to the middle of the room.

ALEX (CONT'D 2)

What the heck are you doing, Rick? Baseball is over for you. You've got no legs. You could die any minute if you get too excited. Your friend, Thompson, is doing you a favor while you keep hangin' on to baseball. In the mean time I'm firing real coaches!

RICK

Mr. Thompson is my friend because I performed every day for 24 years. In the scheme of things, you're just an annoying little manager on a perennial losing club.

Rick turns and leaves the office.

INT./EXT. TOURISTS ANNOUNCERS BOOTH - DAY

Lean Lenny is shaking hands with reporters as they walk by his booth. Inside is a man, MAHARISHI JONES, who is a full-white-bearded man in his forties dress in an Eastern Indian long dress, wearing a necklace, who is looking at his computer and papers surrounding him. He takes a microphone from his drawer and plugs it in to the cable.

LENNY

(In to the mic)

Hello fans! This is Lean Lenny Butkus welcoming you to historic McCormick field for the beginning of the second half of the season.

He spits in to an urn shaped like a McCormick Field. The Maharishi rings his finger bell. Lenny looks at him.

LENNY (CONT'D)

My new assistant, and statistician, is Maharishi Jones who was hand-picked by the owner himself to assist me.

Lenny shakes his head from side to side.

LENNY (CONT'D 2)

Let's welcome Maharishi Jones.
Tell us about yourself, Maharishi.

MAHARISHI

(In to the mic)

Hello Lean Lenny and everyone
listening. It's a pleasure to be
working with you in such an
historic ballpark.

LENNY

What's up with the Maharishi?

MAHARISHI

After 25 years as a Suit in
Chicago, I moved to Asheville to
get in touch with my Spiritual
side; and my greatest love is
baseball. So you can see, many
paths all lead to Asheville.

Lenny spits twice. The first is in the urn, the second
hits the wall. The Maharishi rings his finger bell
once. Lenny looks up as he speaks.

LENNY

No shit. Oh, excuse me. What
brought you to us?

MAHARISHI

The owner decided that maybe I can
help Zen the Tourists in to the
playoffs. You know, they're
getting a two-for-one deal:
Broadcaster and Spiritualist.

LENNY

Hey, maybe their right. I'm sure
the ghosts of Babe Ruth and Ty Cobb
who've played in this ballpark,
aren't happy to see the Tourists
slide in to last place and continue
to stay there. For the second half
of the year we have some new
additions led by Justin Taylor.
Even though he may be here for just
a short time during his rehab,
Justin brings a 20-win arm to a
team void of good pitching. He's
listed on the injured list for
today's game.

Someone comes in and gives Lenny a paper.

LENNY (CONT'D)

Well, look at this! I've just received word that as of today, Rick Jensen is now a coach for the Tourists. What a ballplayer Rick was for the Rockies for 24 years. He's now in a wheelchair after his heart attack. Welcome Rick! I'm sure he'll breath life in to our club.

INT./EXT. TOURISTS DUGOUT - DAY

Rick and Justin sit in the corner and take notes as the game is played. Alex paces the dugout and screams at the players.

ALEX

(Loudly)

You guys make me sick! You, MANNY, need to take the bat off your shoulder if you want to stay on this team. CANNON, you can't hit, so the only thing you can do is call a good game and throw out some of the continual players stealing second base!

Rick looks up to see the score: 13 - 0. The players run past them in to the tunnel and Alex throws a helmet in to the bat rack.

INT. RICK'S TRAINING FACILITY - DAY

Samantha, Dr. Feldman and Lou stand on the balcony as Rick greets the players at the door.

The players are surprised to see the type of facility in front of them. Rick gathers the players and guides them through each of the stations while explaining their functions.

Lou puts his hand on Samantha's shoulder.

LOU

You have to stay ahead of these men in your training. You've got a jump on them now, but everyone will reach their potentials soon enough.

SAMANTHA

(Confidently)

Don't worry, Lou. I'm well beyond what I thought I could do now after

only a few weeks of training.

LOU

You'll have a few more weeks while the team is doing their drills and we do the initial testing. You have looked great here. Now we can see how you look with players around. The only one you ever speak with is Justin. You got it?

Samantha shakes her head 'yes'.

EXT. MCCORMICK FIELD - DAY

RICK (V.O.)

You understand now that I'm going to get you ready to play in the Show. None of you could make it now. You ALL have bad habits that will be recognized.

The players crouch in a fielding position, touching their fingers to the ground as they move in directions given to them by the coach.

RICK (CONT'D) (V.O.)

We will evaluate your bodies to see your build, muscle density, elasticity and strength and may change how you throw or hit the ball. My training system will completely change who you are on the ball field. The key is to focus. If you lose focus, the work you do here may be wasted. Listen to us experts. We've worked on this for many years and YOU are the fortunate players who will help shape the game of baseball.

The players perform a fielding drill where balls are thrown, or hit, to them. They must field the ball without gloves. This is done in quick repetition. Rick makes notes.

The players run from home to first while Rick times them and makes notes.

The players run from left field to the center field fence while Rick times them and makes notes.

The infielders take infield with two coaches hitting. One hits from the third base line to the first and second basemen; the other hits from the first base line to the third baseman and short stop.

At the same time, two batters hit to the outfielders who field fly balls and grounders and hit a cutoff man when throwing back.

INT./EXT. TOURISTS ANNOUNCERS BOOTH - DAY

The Maharishi is chanting to a model of McCormick Field. There is incense burning and he holds a string of beads.

Lenny arrives with Big Jim Daley and Ron DeVilla.

LENNY

That's my stats & color man
preparing for the game. What's up
Maharishi?

The Maharishi waves for Lenny to be quiet and continues to rock back and forth with his eyes closed and chanting.

MAHARISHI

Oom. Oom. Oom.

Lenny pulls up chairs for the two men who join him.

LENNY

Why are you guys here today?

JIM

Word has it that Justin Taylor is
pitching today.

The Maharishi tops and opens one eye.

RON

We're hoping to get Rick to talk to
us. What's with this whole Rick
thing here?

The Maharishi turns around and opens the other eye.

Lenny notices.

LENNY

This is my assistant Maharishi
Jones. Maharishi, I'd like you to
meet Big Jim Daley, from the Denver
Tribune and Robbin' Ron DeVilla
from Sports Illustrated.

MAHARISHI

(Bowing)

A pleasure, gentlemen. Taylor's
pitching today? We haven't heard
anything about it.

BIG JIM

Jim Thompson told me yesterday so I made the trip.

MAHARISHI

I wonder if Riggliano knows yet?

INT. TOURIST LOCKER ROOM - DAY

The team is looking through Riggliano's window as a man, JERRY BRIGHTON, in a nice suit stands in front of his desk speaking to him.

RIGGLIANO

(Through the glass)

This is bullshit!

JERRY

He's in! You leave him in until he tells you he's through.

Riggliano slams the desk drawer closed. The man walks out and Riggliano throws his hat at the door. He storms in to the locker room.

RIGGLIANO

(Screaming)

Jerry, is that your name? Jerry, tell Jim Thompson he's full of shit!

Alex pushes the desk drawer shut with his foot and leans back in his chair.

RIGGLIANO (CONT'D)

(Indignant)

He makes me fire a good coach, and friend, to put Jensen here and sends down a pitcher who dictates his own pitching schedule. He shouldn't be meddling in the day-to-day of the Tourists; he doesn't know the league! You need to help me do something about this.

Jerry points his finger up at Alex and nods his head to wait. He reaches in to his coat pocket and takes out a cigar case; opens it and pulls out a cigar. He takes a cigar clipper from his pocket and clips the end of the cigar.

JERRY

You're right. You're fired. I'll be back in fifteen minutes and I don't want to see you in the ball park unless you buy a ticket.

RIGGLIANO
(Controlled anger)
You can't fire me.

JERRY
I have the authority to do so and I repeat, you're fired. You now have less than fifteen minutes to be out of here.

INT. TOURISTS ANNOUNCERS BOOTH - DAY

A boy comes in to the booth and hands Lenny a note. Lenny, quickly, gets up and grabs the microphone.

LENNY
The Maharishi will take you through some of the stats now. Maharishi!

Lenny leaves with the boy.

MAHARISHI
The star alignment was really weird today, so I meditated with extra vigor to bring a win to our Tourists over the visiting Greenville Bombers.

INT. MCCORMICK FIELD GRAND STANDS - DAY

Lenny runs to the side of the stands to see Riggliano being escorted out of the building pushing a cart with his belongings.

Big Jim and Ron wait for him outside the stadium and greet him with microphones.

Lenny runs back to the booth.

INT./EXT. TOURIST ANNOUNCERS BOOTH - DAY

Lenny rushes in and interrupts the Maharishi.

MAHARISHI
MANNY, as well as many of the other players, have been smiling a lot more lately..

LENNY

(Winded and excited)

The Tourists Manager, Alex Riggliano, has just left the stadium. We'll give you more about why he was fired and who will replace him as we find out.

INT. TOURISTS LOCKER ROOM - DAY

The players are confused and raising their voices at one another. The man who was in Riggliano's office comes in and addresses the players.

JERRY

Listen up! Hey! Listen up!

The players keep talking. Jerry takes a bat and pounds it on a metal chair. The players stop talking.

JERRY

Listen up! My name is Jerry Brighton and I'm representing Jim Thompson, your owner and the owner of the Rockies. Manager Riggliano has been fired. Mr. Thompson has instructed me to ask Rick if he'd take the reigns of the club. If he takes the job, it would be to your collective advantage to listen to his instructions. Do you get my drift!

Rick enters the room and rolls up to Jerry. The room is silent. Rick looks around at the team.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Rick, Mr. Thompson has asked you to take over the Tourists. What do you say?

CANNON

What do ya say Rick? We need something.

JUSTIN

What about it Rick? Take us to the top Skipper.

Rick takes the managers hat that Jerry offers and holds it up. The players give a weak cheer. Rick takes the clipboard. He scratches out some names and writes others.

RICK
Here's today's lineup...

EXT. MCCORMICK FIELD - DAY

The stands are half-full as the Tourists take the field to start the game. Rick is in the dugout and wheels to the middle to watch his fielders.

Justin hums the song "Smokin'!" as he walks to the mound.

SERIES OF SHOTS WITH THE SONG "SMOKIN'"

- A) Greenville 1st batter strikes out swinging.
- B) Greenvilles 2nd batter strikes out looking at a curve.
- C) Greenville's 3rd batter takes a third strike.
- D) The scoreboard shows 0
- E) Tourists Mendez pops up.
- F) Tourists Ortiz strikes out swinging.
- G) Tourists Roberto Mendez half swings and is called out.
- H) The scoreboard shows 0-0 in the first.
- I) Greenville's 4th batter takes a curve strike three.
- J) Greenvilles 5th batter jumps back and the ball curves over for strike three.
- K) Tourists Sanders hits a single to right.
- L) Tourists Cantrell is hit by a ball.
- M) Tourists Justin Taylor hits a single to score Sanders.
- N) The scoreboard shows 0-1 in the third.
- O) Greenville's 1st batter tries to bunt, but strikes out.
- P) Tourists Brooks grounds out to second.
- Q) Greenville's 4th batter strikes out swinging at a curve way outside.
- R) Tourists Roberto Mendez misses a grounder at short.

- S) The scoreboard shows 0-1 in the top of the ninth.
- T) Greenville's 1st batter hits a weak grounder back to Justin and is thrown out.
- U) Greenville's 2nd batter tries to bunt at a high fastball and is called out.
- V) Greenville's 3rd batter strikes out on an inside fast ball.
- W) The scoreboard shows: Greenville: 0 runs; 0 hits; 0 errors. Asheville: 1 run; 5 hits; 2 errors.

END SERIES OF SHOTS AND MUSIC

INT./EXT. TOURISTS ANNOUNCER BOOTH - DAY

Lenny is standing and points his mic out the window as the fans cheer. The Maharishi points to his statue of McCormick Field.

Lenny spits in to the urn. The Maharishi rings his bells three times.

LENNY

(Excited)

Whoa! You can say that again
 Maharishi! (Cling! Cling! Cling!)
 Justin Taylor shows us why he won
 20 games multiple times in the
 majors with a no-hit shutout of the
 Bombers who struck out 18 times!

EXT. MCCORMICK FIELD - DAY

Justin bends down and hugs Rick as the rest of the team celebrates on the field.

INT. TOURISTS LOCKER ROOM - DAY

The players are in street clothes and are assembling their gear to begin a road trip. Rick arrives and stops in the middle of the room.

Samantha waits outside the door.

RICK

(Loudly)

Hey everyone! Listen up!

The players look at Rick.

RICK (CONT'D)

Don't get on the bus yet. I have an announcement to make in a minute.

Rick goes to Roberto and motions for him to go to his office. The players watch as Rick shuts the door behind them. The players watch as Rick speaks to him and he pleads to Rick. Rick looks out the window at Miguel. Roberto pushes his chair back, angrily, and storms out of the office. He sits down in front of his locker. Miguel goes over to him.

Rick goes to the door and signals. He waits a minute as Samantha enters. He pushes her forward.

RICK (CONT'D 2)

This is Samantha Evans. Call her Sam. She plays shortstop for the Tourists now. Treat her with respect. Sam has been Sports Illustrated's top prospect for the last two years.

Rick looks around the room to see the others shaking their heads.

RICK (CONT'D 3)

Give her locker 398 at the end. We'll work on where she dresses and showers when we get back. Don't give her any shit!

Roberto is furious and Miguel and Roberto follow Rick in to his office. Rick closes the door. The players listen to them through the glass.

MIGUEL

(Angry)

This is more bullshit!

RICK

(Interrupting)

Watch out Miguel. Roberto was replaced with someone who I feel is better than you are right now. If you don't kick it up a notch, you won't be able to keep up. Now get on the bus!

INT. TOURISTS BUS - DAY

Samantha enters the bus with everyone looking at her. She, nervously, walks with her eyes down to an open seat in the middle of the bus. Everyone who enters looks at her. The last one in is Rick who is lifted in by two players. He rolls over to Samantha and turns his head.

RICK

Let's get going.

The driver shuts the door and the bus pulls out.

RICK (CONT'D)

Listen up! We have a new player joining us; Stand up Sam.

Samantha stands.

RICK (CONT'D 2)

Sam is going to start at shortstop today and bat eighth in the lineup. I scouted Sam, personally, and she has the skills. The skills are ALL that matters, people. If Sam does the job she stays, if not, she goes. It's the same for the rest of you. Sit down Sam.

Samantha sits.

RICK (CONT'D 3)

You're all here to elevate your level of play. I'm here because the owner of the team wanted to see if my training system works. I told him that by the end of the season the Tourists would compete, and win our division.

The players look at each other with skepticism. Justin smiles and shakes his head up and down.

JUSTIN

(Shouts)

Take me to the top, Skipper!

MIGUEL

(Angry)

This is all for publicity. Roberto was one of the best shortstops in our country! Now, you sent him home and replaced him with a girl.

RICK

He missed balls. The way he's built, he won't improve much in either his fielding or hitting. He's at the top of his game right now and it's just not good enough. You have the capabilities to improve. Do you have the desire?

MIGUEL

What makes her so special? Her face looks like she's fifteen years old.

RICK

State and National First Team pick for the past 4 years in men's baseball. She has a lifetime .700plus batting average with records in most of the other categories. She was picked by Sports Illustrated as a top major league prospect for the past 2 years. You were close to her age though, Sam is only 17 years old.

BROOKS

(Low to McMillan)

This is crazy. Is this a publicity stunt or is Rick really bonkers?

MIGUEL

(To Manny)

You know how it's gonna look to my countrymen when the newspapers say that Roberto was sent home because of a 17 year old girl. He will have no respect.

MANNY

(To Miguel)

Hey man, she'll never make it in pro ball.

JUSTIN

(To Samantha)

They haven't seen you play. If anyone gives you any trouble, let Rick or myself know. You're gonna hear a lot of crap like this from the players; but the fans are gonna love you. Just block everything out but the game when you're out there.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

The main reason most players don't make it to the show is that they lose their focus and give up, or they are just lazy.

Justin sees a locket around Samantha's neck and lifts it with his fingers. She opens it to show pictures of her parents.

JUSTIN (CONT'D)

They're with you every step of the way... and they're smiling. As long as you're happy doing something you love, they'll be smiling.

EXT. FRANS STADIUM - LATE AFTERNOON

The players exit the bus outside the stadium. There are 30 fans and the press outside. Samantha exits the bus and walks behind the players to the entrance door where a security man stops her.

FRANS SECURITY

You can't go in there little lady. It's for players only. Girlfriends go through the gate.

SAMANTHA

I am a player.

SECURITY

Move aside now; let the real players get through.

Rick sees Samantha having trouble as does two reporters. Rick screams to the security man.

RICK

(Loudly)

Let her in! I'm the manager and she is my starting shortstop.

The reporters quickly go between Samantha and the door and put up their microphones.

Samantha comes over to address them:

HICKORY REPORTER 1

Is this for real, or a publicity stunt?

RICK

Sam is very real.

HICKORY REPORTER 2

How old are you Sam?

SAMANTHA

Eighteen in a few weeks.

HICKORY REPORTER 2

That means you just graduated high school.

SAMANTHA

Just this year, Asheville Rams.

HICKORY REPORTER 1

I remember you. Of course, Sam Evans. You're the best ballplayer Western North Carolina has ever produced. Rick, what makes you think she can play at this level?

RICK

Good coaching. That's it for now.

Samantha pushes Rick through the entrance.

INT. FRANS HALLWAY - LATE AFTERNOON

Two Hickory players stand in the hallway. They speak to each other so Rick and Samantha can hear.

HICKORY PLAYER 1

The Tourists are a joke anyway. Women don't have the skill levels to compete with us. You're gonna ruin the game Coach.

HICKORY PLAYER 2

Well, you really can't bring down the Tourists any further. But this is ridiculous.

RICK

Let's just play ball guys. It'll all work its way out on the field.

Rick and Samantha enter the locker room.

INT. FRANS LOCKER ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

The players are getting dressed. Miguel come up to Samantha in just a cup and stands looking at her. Moose, Reggie and Andy put towels around themselves.

SAMANTHA

It doesn't bother me, if it doesn't bother you guys.

She smiles and looks around the room.

Rick grabs her arm and takes her in to his office.

RICK

(Concerned)

I'm not worried about you seeing them. I'm concerned about them seeing you. These are strong young men, many who are single and many who are away from their girlfriends.

Rick sits Samantha down.

RICK (CONT'D)

It's going to be hard enough for you to concentrate on the game. I don't want the locker room to be a distraction at all. Sam, you're something very new and unique to these players, and the press. You will, constantly, be in the spotlight making every little thing you do news. But remember, you're here to play ball. You're here to play ball better than any one else on the field. It may not happen today, but as I work with you it WILL happen.

SAMANTHA

(Smiling)

Don't worry, Skipper.

INT./EXT. FRANS STADIUM ANNOUNCERS BOOTH - EVENING

Fran Stadiums visiting booth is painted green and has pictures of the owners on the wall. Lenny is preparing his papers for the game and the Maharishi hangs tapestries over the pictures that he takes from his duffle bag.

MAHARISHI

These are bad Karma. That's why they put them in here.

LENNY

(In to microphone)

Good evening baseball fans. This is Lean Lenny Butkus, along with my stat man and analyst Maharishi Jones. The Maharishi predicted as season of surprises and today's game has some biggies. Rick Jensen, the Tourists new Skipper, rides shotgun over his players from the seat of his wheel chair.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

I applaud the management for making a change. Any change! Dead last in the league and dead last in the majors is not where this proud organization wants to be. But listen to this... Jensen's first roster change is a duzzie! Starting today at shortstop is Samantha Evans. You remember Sam, as she likes to be called. She was the high school player of the year for the four years she played in Asheville. Get ready men! Get ready baseball, Rick Jensen's here!

EXT. FRANS STADIUM'S FIELD - EVENING

The infielders are warming up in a dual fielding drill where the third baseman and shortstop are hit balls by a coach on the first base line and the first baseman and second baseman are hit balls by a coach on the third base line in rapid succession. The outfielders perform running and fly ball drills.

Justin is warming up as Rick watches.

RICK

How do you feel?

JUSTIN

The target is very small today.

A fan screams out to Rick.

CRAWDAD FAN 1

(Screaming)

No wonder you're always in last place! You have a handicapped manager and a team of pussies.

FRAN FAM 2

(Screaming)

This isn't girl's baseball or high school baseball coach! Get her off the field before she gets hurt!

The team finishes its drills and Rick waves them in. They enter the dugout as the Crawdads take the field to begin the game.

INT./EXT. ASHEVILLE DUGOUT - EVENING

The Crawdad pitcher comes to the mound and begins to warm up.

Rick sits forward and watches the pitcher closely.
 He throws a fastball and the catcher throws it back.
 He re-positions his feet and adjusts his hand inside
 the glove.
 He throws and the catcher moves his glove to catch the
 ball.

RICK

Damn!

Rick blinks his eyes and looks puzzled at Justin.

RICK

Did you see that?

MIGUEL

See what Skipper?

RICK

Let him show you a strike before
 you swing. He's having a bit of
 trouble with his fastball location.

MIGUEL

Thanks Skipper.

UMPIRE

Play ball!

Miguel gets in to the batter's box and digs in. The
 pitcher looks in for the sign.

RICK

Fastball, lower outside corner.

He pitches a fastball low and outside.

UMPIRE

Ball!

Rick concentrates on the pitcher who looks in for the
 sign.

RICK

Fastball, outside corner of the
 plate.

He pitches one on the outside corner of the plate.

UMPIRE

Strike!

Rick shakes his head and smiles. He rubs his hands
 together and moves closer to the bat rack.

RICK
Fastball, outside corner.

He pitches a fastball on the outside corner.

UMPIRE
Strike two!

RICK
Curve, inside corner, low.

He pitches a curve and Miguel moves away from the plate.

UMPIRE
Strike three. You're out!

RICK
(Excited and loud)
Great!

The others look at him. Rick is moving himself back and forth while still smiling.

MOOSE
Justin, look at the Skipper; what's wrong? It's like he's flippin' out.

UMPIRE
Strike!

Rick points to the pitcher.

RICK
(Excited)
Oooh, yeah! I've got your number!

Justin goes over to Rick.

JUSTIN
(Whispering)
Hey, Skipper. Is there anything wrong?

RICK
Oh, no.

UMPIRE
Strike two!

RICK
In fact, everything just got righter!

UMPIRE
Strike three, you're out!

RICK

Sam! Come here! Sam! Time out,
Ump!

UMPIRE

Time!

Samantha comes up to Rick. Rick motions for the first base coach, JIM JOHNSON, to come over. The coach runs over.

RICK

Let's try something. I'm gonna signal you coaches what the pitcher is going to throw. You signal the batter.

Samantha and Coach Johnson have blank faces.

RICK

I'm serious. Just try it. The fastball is the fist (shows them); curve a cupped hand (shows them); sliders a "V" with my fingers (shows them) and watch for the position I give (showing) low, high, inside and outside.

UMPIRE

Hey coach, let's get going!

RICK

All right. Stay focused, all of you. Justin, you tell the others.

Coach Johnson runs back to first and Samantha looks back at Rick as she walks to the plate. He smiles and nods his head.

The pitcher looks in for the sign.

RICK (CONT'D)

Fastball high and tight. Yeah, let's introduce her to real baseball.

Rick signals to Johnson who relays it to Samantha. She fixes her hat.

The pitcher throws as Samantha, calmly, steps back.

UMPIRE

Ball!

The pitcher looks in for the sign.

RICK

Curve, inside corner.

Rick signals to Johnson who relays it to Samantha. She fixes her hat.

The pitcher throws and Samantha stays in the box.

UMPIRE

Ball two!

The pitcher looks in for the sign.

RICK

Fastball, lower outside half of the plate.

Rick signals to Johnson who relays it to Samantha. She fixes her hat.

Samantha positions her feet and body for an outside pitch. He throws and Samantha hits a high fly to right field that drops over the fence for a home run.

The pitcher throws his glove to the ground as Samantha rounds the bases. As Samantha rounds third she hears the fans.

CRAWDAD FAN

(Screaming)

How can you let a girl get a hit, pitcher! You won't live this down!

Moose meets Samantha at the plate and they hit fists.

Rick motions for Johnson to speak with Moose about the signals. Johnson calls Moose over and tells him. Moose looks at Rick on his way to the plate. Rick points to Samantha who nods 'yes'.

The pitcher looks in for the sign.

RICK

Fast ball, inside.

Johnson relays Rick's signal. Moose doesn't fix his hat.

The pitch is a fastball that Moose hits on his fists and sends a soft liner to second.

UMPIRE

You're out!

Johnson motions to Moose with his arms open as he runs towards him.

The Tourists take the field. The coaches trot off the field and go right up to Rick.

Justin smiles as he watches the coaches speak to Rick.

INT./EXT. TOURIST DUGOUT - NIGHT

The coaches and players on the bench sit and listen to Rick.

RICK

Just stick with me boys.
Ballplayers have narrow thought
patterns. Coaches train their
players from the beginning to focus
on a few fundamentals so they can
block out all other distractions.

Rick takes some folded papers from his back pocket.

RICK (CONT'D)

This guy only has three good
pitches that he can regularly get
over the plate. I watched his
tapes and read the stats. After 20
years the patterns fall right in to
place.

Rick is excited as he watches Rick pitch.

Crawdad batter 1 swings and strikes out. Crawdad
batter 2 falls back as a curve strikes him out.
Crawdad batter 3 pops up to second on an inside
fastball. The players come off the field back to the
dugout. Rick addresses the team.

RICK

I'm gonna try something for a few
games, and you ALL have to work
with me on this. Right Moose? You
look to Coach Johnson or Coach
Rollins right when the pitcher is
getting his sign and touch your
helmet to verify. You must all
trust me. I've studied the
patterns of these pitchers, and
with reasonable certainty, can tell
you by the way they take their
signals what pitch you are going to
receive.

MIGUEL

Skipper, this is way out.

RICK

Give it a try, Miguel. I tried it
with Sam.

SAMANTHA

It worked. Johnson signaled
exactly where he threw and I re-
positioned my stance.

MIGUEL

What about Moose?

RICK

We signaled inside fastball. Moose should have let it go. It was off the plate.

UMPIRE

Come on, Coach! Get your batter up here!

EXT. FRAN FIELD - NIGHT

Brooks gets in the box. The pitcher gets his sign.

RICK

Fastball, low inside corner.

Brooks glances to Johnson, who signals, and touches his helmet. The pitcher delivers a low inside fastball for a strike.

The pitcher looks in for the sign.

RICK

Fastball, low inside corner

Brooks glances to Johnson, who signals, and touches his helmet and repositions his feet. The pitcher delivers a fastball that Brooks hits in to the gap in left center for a double. Brooks stands on second and points to Rick.

McMillan steps up to the plate. The pitcher looks in for his sign.

RICK

Curve, low outside part of the plate.

McMillan glances to Johnson, who signals, and touches his helmet. He moves in on the plate. The pitcher delivers a curve that McMillan hits to right for a single that scores Brooks. McMillan opens his arms and nods as he stands on first.

Sanders comes to the plate and doesn't look to Johnson. He swings at the first pitch and hits a grounder to second for a double play.

Cantrell fixes his hat and hits a double off the wall in left center.

Justin fixes his hat and hits a single to right which scores Cantrell.

Mendez doesn't look to Johnson and lines out to left field.

The scoreboard shows: 3-0.

SERIES OF SHOTS WITH MUSIC "LIGHT IT UP!"

- A) Crawdad batter backs off for strike three.
- B) Crawdad player 1 from the tunnel looks at strike three. He glares at Rick who acts like he's wiping a tear.
- C) Crawdad player 2 from the tunnel swing wildly at strike three and throws hit bat.
- D) Ortiz lines to left for a single.
- E) Samantha lines the ball off the left field wall.
- F) Crawdad's put in a new pitcher.
- G) Moose hits a homer to left center and runs around the bases pointing to Rick.
- H) Crawdad batter hits a liner that Samantha dives and catches.
- I) Miguel dives backwards to catch a soft liner.
- J) The Crawdad pitcher intentionally walks Samantha.
- K) Fans throw drinks at Samantha as she comes back to the dugout.
- L) Sanders makes a one-handed running pickup and throws out the runner.
- M) The scoreboard reads: Tourists- 14 runs; 18 hits; 0 errors. Crawdad's- 0 runs; 2 hits; 4 errors.

END OF SERIES OF SHOTS AND MUSIC

INT. TOURISTS LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

The players celebrate as Rick comes out of his office and centers himself in the room.

RICK

(Loudly)

Only ballplayers in the locker room. Every one else out!

The non-players leave. The players cover themselves as Samantha enters.

MIGUEL

Like, how did you do that, Skipper?

MOOSE

Yeah! Can you do it again? I went 4 for 5 today. I should have listened to you on the first at bat.

JUSTIN

You WERE right every time!

RICK

It's all about how close you watch the game and how well prepared you are. I watched tapes of the pitchers and picked up little signs they give. Everyone has 'tells'. Little things you do; habits. I'll train you to find them. I'll train you to field better and if you trust me like today, I'll make you champions.

JUSTIN

I'm with you Skipper!

MIGUEL

I'm with you, too, Skipper.

MOOSE

I'm in it for the ride!

JUSTIN

Take me to the Show, Skipper!

They put their hands on top of Ricks.

INT. MAMA LEE'S DINER - NIGHT

Rick, Samantha, Justin, Dr. Feldman and Lou sit at a table as the people in the restaurant look at them. Rick, jokingly, pushes Samantha on the arm and laughs.

DR. FELDMAN

What happened today, Rick? The team broke wide open.

Rick looks out the window without answering.

DR. FELDMAN (CONT'D)

Rick. Earth to Rick. You didn't answer me.

Jill enters the diner and comes over and give Rick a big hug and kiss. Dr. Feldman, Justin and Lou stand. Dr. Feldman shakes her hand and Samantha hugs her.

Rick motions for them to sit.

RICK

(Quietly)

I can answer you question now Dr. Feldman. I knew every pitch he was going to throw by watching his face, his forearm and his feet.

Rick looks around to see their reactions. They all just sit there with no reaction waiting for him to say more. Jill looks at Dr. Feldman who shrugs his shoulders. Samantha stands.

SAMANTHA

(Excitedly)

It sure worked for me!

Rick pulls her down.

SAMANTHA

Every pitch Rick knew. We all talked about it in the dugout.

JUSTIN

I have to agree, the Skipper was 100 percent.

RICK

We fed their footage in to our computers and it told me what the pitchers' sends are. What he does physically before he throws a fastball or breaking pitch.

DR. FELDMAN

Did you do that with the batters as well, Justin?

JUSTIN

(Smiling)

Somewhat. I pitched well because of your training. My target was small all day and I studied the batters habits with our system.

JILL

Was that why you told me to drop everything and come here?

RICK

Yes. Sorry honey. I was both excited and afraid and all I could think about was calling you.

JILL

I'm glad you did.

Jill gets up to kiss Rick and gives him a hug.

DR. FELDMAN

Will it happen again?

RICK

I don't know. We'll see. In the mean time, can you stay Jill? Stay here in Asheville?

JILL

Gee, Rick. What about my job?

RICK

Take a sabbatical, I'm making plenty and sure would like to share all of this with you.

JILL

Yeah, I wouldn't miss this ride.

EXT. MAMA LEE'S DINER - NIGHT

Exterior view of the diner looking through the window at Rick's group at the table.

INT. JIM THOMPSON'S OFFICE - DAY

Jim is on the phone while walking around the room.

JIM

I've just received a message that you called an emergency Board meeting today to discuss the direction of the team. I've been here all week, why didn't you contact me personally?

Jim gets angrier and walks faster as he listens.

JIM (CONT'D)

(Angrily chuckles)

You're having it now and I'm on speakerphone.

Jim looks up and closes his eyes. He takes a deep breath.

JIM

I have the floor now. Please don't interrupt. Each of you has a copy of the our individual agreements. In every case, you will note that I own the Rockies and have controlling interest.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

It also states that I will have operational control unless I relinquish that control or that I am performing actions detrimental to the organization. If you sharks intend on voting me out as Chief Operations Officer, you will need to be prepared to present an overwhelming case to the arbitrators and to a Judge who have seen the Rockies lose before over the years my family has owned this team.

Jim listens and sits down in his chair.

JIM (CONT'D)

Let me get this straight. You want ME to step down so that someone, whoever that may be, can rebuild the whole organization from top to bottom? Without a plan or personnel being presented to me.

Jim listens and stands up with a stern face.

JIM (CONT'D 2)

(Sternly)

I will NOT step down! If you are foolish enough to vote today, do so right now. I don't want to waste my time any more.

Jim listens and then has a slight smile.

JIM (CONT'D 3)

I'm leaving. If you do vote, my vote is to keep myself the CEO, COO and Owner.

Jim disconnects the phone. He smiles and lights a cigar as he grabs the remote and turns on the TV. He turns to ESPN and sees footage on Rick and Samantha.

CNN ANNOUNCER

Here's a great story folks! The Asheville Tourists, a minor league affiliate of the Rockies, have caught our attention because of their tremendous turn-around. They, perennially, hold down the cellar position and managed to create the worst record in SAC history over the past few years. Sort of like their major league equivalent.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

After a record losing streak of 30 games the first half of the season, the Tourists are on a pace to set a new winning record for the second half of the season, having won 28 straight! What caused this you say? Rick Jensen! He became their manager for the second half and has shaken up the league with his team's performance since adopting his new training program. Rick has shaken up the league even more by adding an 18 year old girl to the starting roster; and get this, she leads the league in batting! Hats off to Rick, Sam and the rest of the Tourists. A special hats off to Jim Thompson, the Rockies organization owner, who put this together.

Jim laughs and puts his feet up on the desk.

INT. RICK'S TRAINING FACILITY - DAY

The players are in groups around the stations as Rick and Jill watch from the balcony. Rick points to the Pitchers' Tunnel where Jeff Lyon pitches. The ball hits the target, numbers flash and the target changes position and decreases in size.

Samantha turns and watches Jeff from her place in line in the batting tunnel.

LOU

(Through the
loudspeaker)

Listen up! Today, we will add game environment simulations.

Game Pictures of McCormick Park are projected completely around the tunnel along with the audio.

LOU (CONT'D)

(Through the
loudspeaker)

Rick!

Rick waves from the balcony.

LOU (CONT'D)

(Through the
loudspeaker)

Here's one Jill helped us finish.

Game pictures of Hickory's Fran Field are projected.

Rick takes Jill on his lap and wheels her around.

JILL

You're happy again. You're as happy as when I first met you.

RICK

Maybe everything in my life has led me to this moment.

Jill holds him. He stops wheeling.

The players continue their drills.

Jill stands and leans on the wall.

JILL

Maybe; but, look back at your life in baseball. What a wonderful, and blessed, life you've led. I think this moment is a result of the path you've led.

Rick points to the batting cage where Miguel is hitting. The batting machine throws from a projected image of the opposing pitcher surrounded with the picture and sounds of the ballpark.

RICK

Remember Miguel and how he couldn't hit to right. Look at him in there now. His average has jumped from under .200 to .320.

JILL

Maybe, Rick, it's because you are sending in the pitches.

Rick looks at her. She takes his hand and he pulls it away. She looks at him and waits until their eyes meet.

JILL (CONT'D)

They've got to do it themselves. You know that don't you?

RICK

I know. (slower) I know. We're getting there. I have them watching the game tapes and they're beginning to pick up the subtle things the pitchers do. Some pitchers they have stone cold!

JILL

Put them on their own. Do it now before something screws up. When they get to the majors they won't have you.

RICK

I know. But, maybe, some of them will play for me in the majors.

Jill shows surprise and smiles. She takes his hand.

The batters stop and watch Dr. Feldman in the batting area.

DR. FELDMAN

Hey, you guys! Look at the upper left corner of the screen. The computer will tell you what the pitcher's sends are. Concentrate on the video of the pitcher and use the information to learn.

Justin steps in to the box and the ball is pitched.

JUSTIN

Fastball outside corner.

He smacks the ball to the right.

The ball is pitched again.

JUSTIN

Curve.

He smacks the ball to the left.

EXT. MCCORMICK FIELD - DAY

A close-up of Jeff Lyon's foot landing widens to find Jeff warming up on the sidelines of a game. The stands are filled and the stadium is buzzing.

Jeff receives the ball back from the catcher. He rubs the ball and looks at the stands. He looks at the catcher reposition the glove and throws a curve. The catcher didn't move his glove.

The Maharishi is sitting with crossed legs behind the pitchers screen, facing center field, as the hitters take pre-game batting practice.

INT./EXT. TOURISTS ANNOUNCER'S BOOTH - DAY

A large Asian Gong hangs in the corner of the booth.

Lenny is leaning out to look at the Maharishi. He shakes his head and smiles.

Big Jim Daley enters the booth and Lenny turns around with his arm extended out the window.

LENNY

This is baseball in Asheville. The altitude DEFINITELY affects the attitude!

BIG JIM

Lenny, the Tourists are the talk of baseball right now! The team now adds a record-winning streak to their record-losing streak all in one year.

Lenny takes a bit of a veggie burger. They both look out the window.

Jim Thompson stands in the hall looking at them.

BIG JIM (CONT'D)

...and I can't believe what's in your concessions. Hey, I just went to the Maharishi's pre-game yoga session to "elevate our consciousness" in to a winning state. He assures us that it's our Karma that has driven the team to its record wins. Who's to say he's wrong? Well, I know better. I've seen footage on the Tourists streak. Rick has the team batting near .500 and pitching under a 3 ERA. They're the best team in baseball right now; and I don't mean just the minors.

LENNY

They're on a hot streak all right.

BIG JIM

I mean that they're playing as good, or better, than the Red Sox who are running away with their division. I'd sure like to see them play this year. What a game! What a media craze!

JIM

I heard you guys talking out in the hall.

Big Jim and Lenny turn around.

JIM

It's a great idea for a match
between the Red Sox and the
Tourists.

Jim shakes their hands.

Lenny looks at his watch and grabs the microphone. He
leans out the window.

LENNY

(On the PA)

It's time to start Maharishi.
Please elevate yourself to the
booth.

The Maharishi gets up and bows. A ball flies over him
as he bows. He walks off the field in bare feet with
ankle bracelets of bells ringing. Drums beat from his
followers at the top of the stadium with clouds and
mountains behind them.

Lenny looks at his watch and the cue light goes on. He
spits in to his urn and rings a bell with his pen.

He speaks in to his game microphone.

LENNY

(In to the mic)

What a year! What a roller coaster
ride! What a great day to play
baseball here at McCormick Field!
The Tourists will win the division
for the second half of the season
if they can sweep the Crawdads this
weekend.

The Maharishi enters the room. Lenny turns around as
he talks.

LENNY (CONT'D)

(In to the mic)

How's that, Maharishi?... and we have
veggie burgers, tofu treats and
yogurt shakes in the concessions;
plus, free before and after game
meditations.

The Maharishi clings his finger bells twice.

LENNY (CONT'D 2)

(In to the mic)

What's the clinging about
Maharishi?

MAHARISHI

(In to the mic)

It was on the last thing you said, Lenny. Who else but Asheville would hire a Maharishi announcer, a manager in a wheel chair and a young high school graduate ballplayer? Bless our own Jim Thompson. He's here today, you know?

LENNY

(In to the mic)

Everyone is here today! The press areas are full and there's lot's of news trucks in the lot.

INT. TOURISTS LOCKER ROOM - DAY

Security guards the door as Rick arrives and pushes his way through reporters. The players are joking with each other and laughing at Miguel who falls because his shoelaces were tied together.

Rick goes to the middle of the room.

RICK

Please come here; I've got something important to say!

The team gathers in front of him.

RICK (CONT'D)

I've had the honor to be around the best team of ball players I've ever seen. That includes the '94 Rockies and many other teams in my 25 years in baseball. Your skills have improved to major-league levels; competing major-league levels; and your work ethic is better than any team I've seen. You've all watched the tapes on this team. You know that the Crawdads Randolph drops slightly to throw a breaking ball and positions his feet to tip us on location. (Raising his voice level) I'm not going to give you signals today. You're on your own! Concentrate! Keep your eyes on his tells. You all know his pitching history; we've been mapping out every pitch he throws.

MIGUEL

Oh, man. Just two more games,
Skipper?

RICK

No, Miguel.

MOOSE

I already know before the coach
gives me the sign anyway.

RICK

You're not going to have me around
in the show; and believe me, you
continue to use your new skills and
you'll all be called up! The
stands are packed with media,
scouts and owners. Plus, we now
have a television contract and will
be aired everywhere! You saw the
reporters and trucks! So let's
show 'em what Sports Illustrated
calls The Best Team in Professional
Baseball!

Justin hangs a poster of the cover of Sports
Illustrated on the wall.

The fired up Tourist players scream at each other and
pound their lockers.

SERIES OF SHOTS ON TELEVISION OVER LENNY'S VOICE OVER

LENNY (V.O.)

Here's today's line-up for our
Asheville Tourists! Batting first
and playing second base is Miguel
Mendez; batting second and playing
left field is Manny Ortiz; batting
third (fans cheer stronger) and
playing shortstop is Sam Evans;
batting fourth and playing first
base is Moose Sikowski; batting
fifth and playing right field is
Reggie Brooks; batting sixth and
playing center field is Andy
McMillan; batting seventh and
playing third base is Ron Sanders;
catching, and batting eighth is
Cannon Cantrell; and pitching in
his first game in professional
baseball, and batting ninth, is WNC
native Jeff Lyons!

- A) INT. TOURISTS CONCESSION STAND - DAY Two female workers have on 'F-Power' T-Shirts and have a long line awaiting food.
- B) INT. ASHEVILLE PIZZA & BREWING - DAY The restaurant is packed with Asheville fans. There's plenty of pizzas and drinks being served to the cheering crowd.
- C) INT. MAGNOLIA'S - DAY The restaurant is filled with cheering fans watching the monitors and video projector.
- D) EXT. HOLISTIC RETREAT - DAY Televisions are set up around the yard that has a mountain view. There is a large group of "hippie-looking" people cheering and eating.
- E) EXT. BLACK FAMILY BACK YARD - DAY A projector on the porch faces out to a large group drinking and barbecuing. Kids play woofle ball and adults play catch.
- F) EXT. MCCORMICK FIELD STANDS - DAY Dottie and Jill are standing and talking with people around them.

END SERIES OF SHOTS AND V.O.

EXT. MCCORMICK FIELD - DAY

Drummers of all kind are playing as the Tourists do their infield drill.

Justin is warming up on the mound and Cannon has a camera attached to his mask.

INT. MOBILE TELEVISION TRUCK CONTROL ROOM - DAY

The men on the truck view the helmet-cam pictures on the screens. The drums are heard through their speakers.

EXT. MCCORMICK FIELD - DAY

SERIES OF SHOTS OVER DRUMS BEING PLAYED

- A) Cannon throws the ball to Miguel at second who does a flip.
- B) A close-up of Cannon catcher's glove receiving the ball widening to the umpire raising his right arm and calling out a Hickory batter.
- C) Samantha fields a grounder going up the middle and throws out the runner at first.

- D) Miguel looks down to first for a sign as he walks up to bat and Coach Johnson opens his arms. Miguel steps in to the batters box and stares at the pitcher. He hits the first pitch in to left field for a single.
- E) The Crawdad pitcher fires a high fastball that sends Samantha falling to the dirt. He smiles and nods his head as the catcher throws it back to him. Samantha gets up, and steps out of the box to brush her self off. She smiles at the crowd cheering her on. She steps in to the box and stares at the pitcher. The pitcher throws a curve ball that Samantha hits in to the left field corner for a double that scores Miguel.
- F) Moose hits a double to right center scoring a sliding Samantha at the plate.
- G) The scoreboard reads 2-0, first inning.
- H) Justin pitches a fastball past the Crawdad hitter for strike three.
- I) Ron runs in to field a slow-roller; one-hands it and throws out the runner.
- J) The Crawdad batter pops out to Moose.
- K) Cannon hits a homer to center field and motions a shooting cannon as he rounds the bases.
- L) The scoreboard reads 5-0, fourth inning.
- M) The Crawdads put in a relief pitcher
- N) The scoreboard reads 8-0, seventh inning.
- O) The Crawdads put in another relief pitcher.
- P) Samantha is in the on-deck circle and the women chant along with the drums, "Fe-male pow-er! Fe-male pow-er!"
- Q) Manny lines to the pitcher and Samantha steps up to the plate. The fans cheer wildly. Women all over the stadium stand up with their hands in the air showing their F-Power T-shirts and chant, "Fe-male pow-er! Fe-male pow-er!"
- R) Samantha takes the first pitch; ball! She hits the second pitch out of the park in left for a home run. She circles the bases with her fist in the air. The fans jump and cheer and her fellow players all come to greet her at home plate.

The drumming ends when she jumps on home plate.

END SERIES OF SHOTS

INT./EXT. TOURISTS ANNOUCERS BOOTH - DAY

The Maharishi hits the big gong and Lenny is standing.

LENNY

(Excited)

What a performance today by the Tourists as they crushed the Hickory Crawdads 12 to nothing! Justin Taylor was fantastic as he shutout last years, and this year's first season champion, Crawdads on five weak singles. Just one game to go to clinch the championship. Holy Cow! Wowie Kazowie and Pow and Wham! What a game!

INT. RICK'S ASHEVILLE HOUSE - NIGHT

Rick paces through the living room with a worried look on his face. Jill is in the kitchen with Jim Thompson preparing dinner.

JIM

Rick's got something on his mind.

JILL

Let him work it out.

JIM

His pace is getting faster.

JILL

Rick!

RICK

(Worried)

I'm... I'm...

JILL

(Interrupts)

What's on your mind Rick?

Rick takes Jill by the hand and sits her on the couch. He reaches in to his pocket and takes out a ring case. Jill sees it and gasps, putting her hand over her mouth.

Jim moves forward so he can see.

RICK

Here's the ring I promised you in the hospital.

He takes the ring out of the box and puts it on Jill's finger. Jill smiles and cries. She kisses and hugs Rick. Jim smiles.

JIM

Congrad...

RICK

(Interrupts)

Wait! There's more! Lets get married tomorrow.

Rick pulls out another ring box and shows Jill.

RICK

Imagine I'm on one knee. I have the Maharishi, who is an ordained Minister of something; I have my best man right here and we'll have plenty of witness at the park tomorrow.

Jill cries as she hugs Rick.

JILL

(Broken voice)

Marrying you was never a necessity, Rick. My entire world changed the minute I met you. You were beyond what I ever imagined my husband could be. I was, and still am, happy every moment I'm with you; and I must be with you.

She wipes her eyes with a tissue.

JILL (CONT'D)

(Crying)

At first, I feared baseball, which is a force larger than life. It compels you completely. But baseball is exciting. You don't always know how it will end. I love to watch the players as they come and go. To see, and be a part of, so many lives during these glorious years. Fine hotels. Fine restaurants. Fabulous wealth. I thank God for finding you every day.

Jill breaks the hug and looks at Rick.

JILL (CONT'D 2)

(Smiling with tears)

Let's get married!

Jim comes over to hug Jill and shake hands with Rick.
He hugs Rick.

JIM
Congratulations! So, you're doing
this at the park tomorrow?

JILL
Where else?

Rick spins around his chair and bumps a table.

RICK
(Excited)
Yes! All right!

EXT. MCCORMICK FIELD - DAY - AERIAL

The sun is shining as the crowd gathers. A white-flowered canopy covers home plate that has sheers draped that blow in the wind.

INT. MCCORMICK FIELD RUNWAY - DAY

Groups are gathering in the tunnel. Located at the entrance to the field is a Harpist. First in line are the musicians, drummers and dancers who are dressed in hippie ceremonial clothing. Next, are the wheel-chair fans with their chairs decorated. Behind the chair brigade are Rick, in a tuxedo; Dottie, Dr. Feldman, Lou, Jim Thompson, his wife Tonie and Jill in a beautiful wedding gown.

The Maharishi is in full dress as he works his way through the crowd in the tunnel. He gets to the entrance of the field and addresses the wedding party.

MAHARISHI
Everyone ready?

They all acknowledge yes.

MAHARISHI (CONT'D)
Then we're going live when I cue
you.

The Maharishi goes just outside the field entrance and waves to a camera crew. He puts five fingers in the air, four, three, two, one.

MAHARISHI (CONT'D 2)
Please, everyone! We are beginning
the ceremony, where we will be
joining forever, Rick Jensen and
Jill Lieber. Please give us your
attention.

INT. ASHEVILLE PIZZA AND BREWING - DAY

The customers settle in to the seats to watch the screen.

INT. MAGNOLIA'S - DAY

A Champaign fountain is in the middle of the room as the customers watch the tv's and video projector. The servers serve the Champaign and hour devours.

INT. BLACK FAMILY BARBEQUE - DAY

A lady moves her arms down to quiet the large crowd gathered.

EXT. MCCORMICK FIELD STANDS - DAY

The fans are standing. A young couple holds hands.

EXT. MCCORMICK FIELD - DAY

A gong is heard and the harp player begins.

The Maharishi enters the field from the dugout followed by the musicians and dancers and he positions himself under the canopy. Rick walks out and the crowd cheers.

MAHARISHI

(On the PA)

Please hold your cheering and
applause for later.

The rest of the procession enters the field and takes their places around the canopy.

The drummers stop and the musicians play the wedding march. The batboys spread the white runner.

Jill appears in the dugout and two small girls fix her train as she steps out on the field. They hold it and follow her as she walks to the canopy. Her face is aglow with a large smile as the crowd buzzes. She takes her place next to Rick.

MAHARISHI (CONT'D)

(On the PA)

The charts for both Rick and Jill
show today to be a glorious day in
their lives. It showed that today
would be a major junction in their
lives as well.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

I am so happy that Rick and Jill have asked me to bless their wedding, because I know that their love will last forever. Love transcends the levels of consciousness in our world now, and transcends time. True love that is shared is a seed planted that grows forever in our minds and souls. Soul Mates is the right term for lovers, and friends, that are meant to be together. Rick and Jill are true soul mates. The most beautiful place to a ball player is a well-groomed playing field; especially when affectionate fans surround you. There is no better place than beautiful McCormick Field where we are surrounded with fans who love our ballplayers and love the sport. Today, right now, let us rejoice in the loves that are shared before us. We are all truly in a glorious moment in time. Rick, is there anything that you would like to say to Jill at this moment?

Rick looks surprised at the Maharishi. The Maharishi turns to Jill.

RICK

Baseball has been a wonderful life for me. I am able to play the game I love so dearly and it, and you fans, have rewarded me with 25 years of enjoyment as we traveled the roads together. With all my great success, I still felt as if I needed to achieve more. (chuckling) I thought it was winning the World Series. But when I met Jill, I knew the answer was to have her by my side. My Heaven is holding you and being at your side. My Heaven-on-Earth is playing baseball with you near me. I am a whole man, no matter what happens to my body, because of you. Please share my life as my wife and accept this ring.

Jim gives him the ring and he puts it on Jill's finger.

MAHARISHI

Jill?

Jill is beaming with a big smile and sniffs. Rick hands her a handkerchief. She lifts her veil and wipes her eyes and nose.

JILL

(Quivering voice)

This moment...

She stops, sniffs and takes a deep breath.

JILL (CONT'D)

This moment is, by far, the most romantic of my very romantic life with you. Your large heart carries love for so many people. You amaze me every day. You amaze me with your playing and your managing. You amaze me with your wit and sense of humor. You amaze me with your sensitivity, to the people around you and your willingness to help friends and strangers. You amazed me yesterday by proposing and telling me we were getting married today. I can't think of a life without you. I will love you forever. Through time and through space, I will love you forever.

Jill looks at Dottie who gives her the ring. Jill puts it on Rick's finger.

MAHARISHI

Your lives are now entwined forever. Your loves have pooled and will flow throughout each other in this life and the next.

RICK

Can we kiss?

The crowd stands and cheers.

The Maharishi puts his hands on their shoulders.

MAHARISHI

As ordained by God, and sanctioned by the State of North Carolina, I now pronounce you man and wife. Kiss the bride!

Fireworks are shot from the top of the stadium and the crowd cheers loudly.

Rick kisses Jill.

INT. ASHEVILLE PIZZA AND BREWING - DAY

The people cheer and kiss.

INT. MAGNOLIA'S - DAY

The people cheer and touch their glasses.

EXT. HOLISTIC RETREAT - DAY

The people dance and kiss.

INT. HOUSEHOLD - DAY

A couple kisses and holds hands.

EXT. MCCORMICK FIELD - DAY

Rick and Jill leave the field followed by the wedding party and the playing musicians and dancers.

UMPIRE

Play ball!

The crowd cheers wildly.

INT. BOMBERS DUGOUT - DAY

The players are preparing to bat as two players stand on the edge of the dugout looking.

BOMBER 1

It just gets stranger and stranger here in Asheville.

BOMBER 2

It sure is. But it's a lot of fun.

INT./EXT. TOURIST ANNOUNCERS BOOTH - DAY

Lenny pours Champaign to other reporters and to Big Jim and Robbin' Ron.

He grabs the microphone and looks at the fans being served Champaign on the field and in the stands.

LENNY

(In to the mic)

What a glorious day already, and we have a ballgame yet to play!

Lenny looks back at Big Jim.

LENNY

(In to the mic)

Don't you think the Maharishi performed a great service with just a few hours notice? I know I was crying.

Big Jim nods his head and smiles.

EXT. MCCORMICK FIELD

The fans in the stands jump up and down cheering and hold signs that say: "The Best Team in Pro Baseball - Sports Illustrated"; "God is smiling on the Tourists"; "Wheel us to the top Rick" and "F-Power".

Samantha and Jeff are together in the corner. She puts her hand on his and they look at each other.

LENNY (V.O.)

(In to the mic)

Here we go fans! Here's the starting lineup of the Hickory Crawdads.

FADE

INT./EXT. TOURISTS DUGOUT - DAY

Jeff looks at the scoreboard that reads Hickory 2, Asheville 0 in the bottom of the third inning.

Justin sits down next to him.

JUSTIN

Shake it off Jeff.

JEFF

I can't hit the target. I'm barely throwing in the wide zone.

JUSTIN

Come with me.

They walk over to the end of the dugout where a small tunnel has been installed. At the end of the tunnel is a dartboard. Jeff looks back at the players.

JUSTIN

Don't look back there. Just focus on the dartboard

He hands Jeff some darts.

Jeff looks at the board with a square wide zone projected on the board. He throws and hits the zone. Numbers flash on the board; The square gets smaller. He throws and misses. Numbers flash. The square stays and he throws dead center. Numbers flash. The square repositions. He throws. Numbers flash.

Rick comes up to Justin.

RICK

How's he doing?

JUSTIN

He's okay. We're re-focusing him now.

RICK

This new kid Jones has been coached well. But he's too mechanical and I've finally picked up some sends. Watch here. Jones hides the ball in his glove when he positions his fingers. Watch his forearm closely. Flat, that means a fastball. Watch the feet. He points his toe at the target. Fastball, outside corner.

Jones fires a fastball low and on the outside corner. He takes the throwback and sets up. Looking in, Jones rotates his forearm.

JUSTIN

Breaking ball.

Jones moves his toe slightly right on the rubber.

JUSTIN (CONT'D)

Inside corner.

Jones throws a curve on the inside corner.

JUSTIN (CONT'D 2)

I'll tell the others.

RICK

What about Jeff?

They look at Jeff hitting the small target as it moves around the board.

JUSTIN

He looks okay to me now.

UMPIRE

(Screams)

Batter up!

Jeff swings his bat and lifts his knees. He looks back at Rick and sets up in the batters box.

Jones looks over his glove to get the sign; positions his hands and feet; winds and throws. He watches a fastball go past down the middle.

UMPIRE

Strike!

Jeff catches the return and stares at the pitcher who sets and throws and fastball on the inside corner.

UMPIRE (CONT'D)

Strike two!

Jones catches the return, gets his sign and sets. Jeff nods his head. Jones throws a curve that misses on the outside.

UMPIRE (CONT'D 2)

Ball!

Jones catches the return and walks around the mound. He gets his sign, sets and throws.

Jeff pokes the pitch in to right field for a hit.

Jeff stands on first and Miguel comes to the plate. He touches the bill of his hat.

Jones pitches and Miguel hits it over the fence in left for a home run. He trots around the bases with his arms raise.

LENNY (V.O.)

(Excited)

Here! (gong) We! (gong) Go! (gong)

Fireworks explode in the sky.

LENNY (V.O.)

Jeff Lyons rounds the bases first and jumps on home plate. Look at those Tourists there to greet him. Miguel rounds third pointing to the crowd and to Rick in the dugout. Listen to this noise as he jumps on home plate. It's tied at two!
(gong!) (gong!) Thank you
Maharishi!

Samantha walks to the batters box and hits the dirt off her spikes with her bat. The fans chant "F-Power".

Jones intentionally walks Samantha. The crowd "boo's" as Samantha trots to first.

INT./EXT. TOURIST ANNOUNCERS BOOTH - DAY

Lenny motions to the Maharishi who speaks in to the microphone.

MAHARISHI

(In to the mic)

It's great to see how Sam has earned the league's respect. Rick proved that he is a genius manager by signing Sam and coming up with quite a training system.

LENNY

(In to the mic)

Strike one on Moose who looks at the first pitch. Am I mistaken, but did I just see Jeff throwing darts in the corner of the dugout? Strike two as Moose to a half swing at a curve.

MAHARISHI

(In to the mic)

Yes you did see Jeff throwing darts. It's part of the Skipper's training to focus the pitcher. It seems to work.

EXT. MCCORMICK FIELD - DAY

SERIES OF SHOTS (MULTI-IMAGE) WITH VOICE OVERS

A) Crawdad batter pops up to Moose.

LENNY (V.O.)

Nice gun, Jeff. You're out!

B) Crawdad batter strikes out looking at a curve.

LENNY (V.O.)

Oooh! Too bad! The darts helped.

C) Reggie singles up the middle.

LENNY (V.O.)

Yeah! Zip it, Reggie!

D) Andy bunts safely and moves Reggie to second.

LENNY (V.O.)

Don't these guys look sweeeeet?

E) Ron flies to deep left. Reggie slides in to third as he advances and Andy moves to second.

- F) Cannon hits a liner to left, slips and falls, gets up and goes to first. Reggie scores and Andy moves to third.

LENNY (V.O.)

The Cannon fires one to left
scoring Reggie to take the lead!

- G) Jeff hits a fly to right. Andy scores as he slides away from the catcher's tag.
- H) The scoreboard reads Crawdads - 2 runs; 4 hits; 0 errors and the Tourists 4 runs on 5 hits with 0 errors.

LENNY (V.O.)

(gong!) (gong!) That's right
Maharishi, the Tourists take a two
run lead in to the top of the fifth
inning!

- I) Jeff fires a strike past the batter who looks at strike three as the umpire raises his arm calling him out. The batter glares at the umpire, drops his helmet at this feet and storms back to the dugout.
- J) The Crawdad batter grounds to Samantha as she scoops up the ball over second base and throws him out.
- K) Jeff throws a curve to the next Crawdad batter who hits a soft line that Miguel catches. Miguel does a flip as he leaves the field.
- L) The scoreboard reads Crawdads 0110000 2 4 0;
Tourists 002211 6 9 0.

LENNY (V.O.)

Can't touch us!

END SERIES OF SHOTS

EXT. MCCORMICK FIELD - DAY

Jim throws and the batter lines one to left for a single.

INT./EXT. TOURIST ANNOUNCERS BOOTH - DAY

Lenny pours a glass of water; drinks the whole thing and speaks in to the microphone.

LENNY

(In to the mic)

Okay. That's the first hit since the third inning off of Jeff, who has lots of fans cheering him on here in his hometown.

Jeff takes a sign, stretches and throws. The pitch hits the batter on the arm and he takes first.

LENNY

(In to the mic)

Ouch! That hurts! Two on and no one out with Jon Corkin coming to the plate. Jon has a hit and a run scored today

Jeff steps off the rubber and stands towards center field rubbing the ball and taking deep breathes. He looks at Samantha who gives him the fist.

He takes the sign, stretches and throws a fastball down the middle that is hit hard. Samantha dives to her right and catches the ball. She lands with her face in the dirt and lifts the glove and ball.

MAHARISHI

(Excitedly In to the mic)

Wow! Did I just see Sam Fly?
(gong!) (gong!)

LENNY

(In to the mic)

You bet! That IS a double gonger if I ever saw one. In fact, gong her again. That saved us a run or two! (gong!)

EXT. MCCORMICK FIELD - DAY

Jeff walks the next batter on four pitches to load the bases.

Rick calls time and is lifted out of the dugout and goes to the mound. The crowd cheers and the wheel chair fans wave their signs when Rick appears.

LENNY (V.O.)

Hang on folks! The bases are full of Crawdads!

RICK

You've lost your focus, Jeff.

JEFF

You're telling me!

RICK
Is there something bothering you?

JEFF
Yeah. My girlfriend started on me just before the game about how SHE wants to get married like you.

Ron and Cannon come to the mound.

RON
What's up?

RICK
Jeff's girlfriend wants to get married. Can't you think about this some other time?

JEFF
She showed up without telling me and she's right behind the screen flashing me.

Jeff pulls Rick down.

JEFF (CONT'D)
(Whispering)
Rick, I don't want to marry her. I met someone else who I've fallen big time for.

UMPIRE
Come on! Let's get going!

Jeff looks back at Samantha and at Rick.

RICK
Don't tell me that the girl is Sam?

Jeff has a slight smile and nods yes.

JEFF
She's getting pissed now.

RICK
Which one is getting pissed?

JEFF
Sam!

RICK
Oh, geez!

The umpire walks out to the mound.

UMPIRE
What's the problem here? Let's get going.

RICK

I'll take care of her for now. But
we've got to have a serious talk.
Focus on the catchers target and
let's get out of here!

Rick leaves the mound and is lifted in to the dugout.
He calls over a security man who takes the girl away.

Jeff stands behind the rubber and watches as he rubs
the ball. He looks back at Samantha who is smiling and
pounding her glove. She motions for him to pitch.

The batter digs his feet and grips the bat.

Jeff throws a fastball on his fists that he fouls off.

UMPIRE

Strike!

Jeff looks in for the sign, checks the runners and
throws a fastball past the late swinging batter.

UMPIRE

Strike two!

Jeff stares at the target and throws a curve that
misses on the outside.

UMPIRE

Ball!

Jeff looks at Rick and smiles. He takes his sign and
throws a curve that the batter reaches out for and
misses.

UMPIRE

Strike three! You're out!

The next batter swings at the first pitch and hits a
soft liner to right that Miguel dives back and catches.

INT./EXT. TOURISTS ANNOUNCERS BOOTH - DAY

Lenny spits twice in to the urn and the Maharishi rings
his finger bells twice. Lenny looks back at the
Maharishi in surprise.

LENNY

(In to the mic)

It looks like Jeff has found his
center again.

MAHARISHI

(In to the mic)

Now you're getting it.

LENNY

(In to the mic)

Hey, Maharishi, it's the seventh
inning. Why aren't you out there
for your meditation?

The Maharishi points to left field where a gate opens
and a group of his followers enter the field. Each one
carries a different instrument.

A lady in a spiritual gown walks out to home plate and
sings "Take me out to the Ballgame".

MAHARISHI

(In to the mic)

These are the Maharishi Jones
Spirit Builders. Each one carries
a tool to lift, and strengthen, our
consciousness, build richer auras
and lift our spirits in general.

LENNY

(In to the mic)

They get us high without drugs?

MAHARISHI

(In to the mic)

They'll give us the strength to win
this championship!

The Spirit Builders wave their tools as the dance
around the field to the PA playing "Take me out to the
Ball game".

Lenny fires up a cigar and puts his feet on the
counter.

LENNY

(In to the mic)

Don't you just love Asheville? The
Crawdads have a new pitcher on the
mound, George Johnson.

Lenny and the Maharishi look at each other and shake
their head 'no'.

LENNY (CONT'D)

(In to the mic)

Johnson is a perennial leader in
saves and has always been a problem
for the Tourists. The first half
of the year we didn't get a hit off
him; and during our resurrection
this half, we haven't faced him.
What makes him so hard to hit is
his great pitch placement and very
unusual motion.

EXT. MCCORMICK FIELD - DAY

Manny gets back in to the box and digs in.

Johnson throws fastballs by him for three called strikes.

Manny speaks to Samantha as they pass.

MANNY

I couldn't pick up his tell, Sam.

Samantha looks back at Rick and Justin who shrug their shoulders.

Samantha stares at Johnson while he takes his sign. She steps out of the box and asks for time as he is about to throw. She steps back in and he throws a fastball on the inside corner for a strike.

UMPIRE

Strike!

Samantha stays in the box as Johnson quickly goes in to his motion and throws.

UMPIRE (CONT'D)

Strike two!

Samantha backs up and hits her cleats to knock the dirt off. She stares at Johnson as he takes the sign and sets. He throws a curve.

UMPIRE (CONT'D)

Ball!

Samantha smiles slightly as she stares at Johnson. He sets and throws another curve that Samantha hits in to the gap in right center. She rounds first and sees the third base coach waving her on. She rounds second and sees him still waving so she runs for third. The throw comes in and the third baseman holds the ball in his glove in front of the base for Samantha to slide in to. She slides around the tag and puts her hand on the base. The third baseman takes a second wave at her with his glove and brushes her chest.

The umpire waves her 'safe'.

EXT. MCCORMICK FIELD - DAY

Samantha smiles at the third baseman who is rubbing his crotch with one hand and rubbing blood from his nose with the other. He calls time and goes to talk with Johnson.

As they speak, they look at Samantha.

Samantha takes a lead and Johnson tries to pick her off. The third base swings his glove at Samantha's face and misses as she pulls her head back.

SAMANTHA

You're more of a pussy than I am.

The third baseman gives a sign to the pitcher who tries to pick her off again. As he swings his glove again, Samantha bumps the back of it and the ball flies out. She runs home. The shortstop fields the ball and throws to home plate and hits Samantha in the back as she slides in.

UMPIRE

Safe!

INT./EXT. TOURIST ANNOUNCERS BOOTH - DAY

Lenny and the Maharishi jump up and down. The Maharishi holds the gong stick in his hand.

Lenny motions to the Maharishi and he hits the gong twice. (gong!) (gong!)

LENNY

(Excited In to the
mic)

Don't mess with our little miss!
Score one for Sam and the Tourists.
It's now a seven to two lead.

Samantha raises her fist to the fans as she walks back to the dugout.

EXT. MCCORMICK FIELD - DAY

The fans are on their feet and cheering loudly.

Jeff throws a curve that is grounded to Moose. He fields it and runs with his arms up across the base.

The Tourist players leave the dugout to celebrate on the field.

INT./EXT. TOURISTS ANNOUNCERS BOOTH - DAY

Fireworks explode as Lenny and the Maharishi hug.

Lenny puts the microphone out the window as the crowd cheers louder.

LENNY

(Excitedly In to the
mic)

We are the Champs! We are the
Champs! From dead last and a
record-setting losing streak to
first place with a record-setting
winning streak. The Tourists are
Champs!

The fans cheer wildly as the Tourist players jog around
the field waving to the fans.

INT. GRAPE ESCAPE RESTAURANT - EVENING

The players, and their families, celebrate as Champaign
is poured and hor dourves are served.

Jim and Toni Thompson enter the restaurant.

Rick lifts his drink to Jim.

RICK

(Loudly)

Here's to the smartest man in
baseball!

TEAM

Yeah!

They lift their drinks and drink them down.

Jim smiles and shakes their hands on his way to Rick.

He hugs Rick, as Toni and Jill hug.

JIM

(Softly in to Rick's
ear)

It gets better Skipper!

Jim goes over to the bar and takes a microphone.

JIM

(In to the mic)

Listen up everyone! Hey! Listen
up!

The players stop talking and the music is turned down.

JIM

(loudly)

These past few years I've been at odds with the new Board of Directors. It's my fault because when the Rockies started losing regularly, our revenues went down. People were tired of seeing the Rockies lose almost every day. I took in investors to get new players. What a terrible mistake! My dad told me never to take in partners. I love baseball and I love the Rockies and the Tourists.

Jim walks from the bar to the center of the room by Rick.

JIM (CONT'D)

They're gonna try to take the operational control of the organization away from me and with the Rockies prospects so poor the near future, public opinion may sway the Judges. These guys stacked the team to fail while I was out sick this past season.

TEAM

No way! What jerks.

MIGUEL

That's the suits for ya.

Jim smiles and motions for the players to quiet down. He walks around the room and smiles at each of the players and their families.

JIM

I think, no, I know Rick's system works. You are the living proof! Sports Illustrated says you, the Asheville Tourists, are the best team in professional baseball. So I have decided to swap you out with the Rockies.

The players look stunned at one another.

JIM (CONT'D)

Let me repeat that in a different way...

Jim walks over the bar and gets the microphone. He gives it to Lenny along with a piece of paper.

Lenny reads the paper and looks up at Rick.

LENNY

Is this for real, Jim?

JIM

Very real! Read it like you mean it, Lenny, after all you're my new Rockies announcer.

LENNY

(Excited In to the mic)

Now! Introducing the all new Colorado Rockies ball club; Miguel Mendez, Manny Ortiz, Sam Evans, Moose Sikowski, Reggie Brooks, Andy McMillan, Ron Sanders, Cannon Cantrell, Justin Taylor, Jeff Lyons and the rest of you guys on the Asheville Tourists.

The people cheer wildly and hug each other.

LENNY (CONT'D)

Holy Maharishi, you are ALL going to the show! Including the Maharishi and me!

The Maharishi comes over to shake Jim's hand and picks up Lenny and twirls him around.

EXT. GRAPE ESCAPE - NIGHT

People outside watch as everyone celebrates.

INT. GRAPE ESCAPE - NIGHT

Jim watches them celebrate with a big smile and Toni hugs him. He reaches into his pocket and brings out another piece of paper and holds it up.

JIM

(In to the mic)

Listen up! Come on everyone, quiet down a minute! I've got more!

The room quiets.

JIM (CONT'D)

(In to the mic)

Let me read you this: "Dear Jim, We have followed the Rockies team situation with distaste, as well as following the amazing Asheville Tourists and Rick's training system. We have met with our management and players and their representatives to discuss your proposal. Listen up! We are happy to announce that we have agreed to play your NEW Rockies club in an exhibition game this fall after we win the World Series, again, this year! This is contingent on league approval. The venue for the game will be in Asheville! Sincerely, the Boston Red Sox!

The Maharishi jumps up and down. The other players celebrate and scream.

Jim holds up another piece of paper.

JIM (CONT'D)

(Yelling In to the mic)

The league approved it! Welcome to the show gentlemen, and lady!

MICHEL, the Grape Escape owner, turns on the confetti and bubble machines. He turns up the music.

Samantha kisses Rick and runs over to Jeff and gives him a big hug and kiss.

Rick looks at them and begins to go over to them and Jill grabs his chair. She shakes her head 'no'.

Dottie comes over to hug Rick and Jill.

JILL

Thank you so much Dottie for calling us.

DOTTIE

It was Rachael, my daughter, who made us all promise to keep Samantha playing ball.

JILL

It's hard to say that God has a plan when loved ones pass away so young. But sometimes Her plan becomes very clear. Baseball is going to change.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

Sam is the key. Sam is the proof,
and the teacher, of Rick's training
system. The players' level of play
WILL get better. I'm sure that
Sam's abilities, her popularity and
her beauty inside will help change
baseball as well.

Samantha kisses Jeff.

EXT. GRAPE ESCAPE - NIGHT

People outside watch the celebration.

INT. MONITOR IN BALL PARK CONCESSION - DAY

The concession stand has a long line of fans. The
stand is filled with Rockies souvenirs as well as
Tourist souvenirs. The female vendor shows off her F-
Power T-shirt to 3 female customers.

LENNY (V.O.)

Hello Rockies fans. I'm Lean Lenny
Butkus your new announcer for the
NEW Colorado Rockies!

He spits in to an urn and the Maharishi rings his
finger bells.

LENNY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I have with me Maharishi Jones who
will be my new partner in Colorado.
Hang on Denver!

INT. ASHEVILLE PIZZA AND BREWING - DAY

The seats are filled with excited fans in Rockies hats
and T-shirts.

LENNY (V.O.)

Rick Jensen is back on top again.
This time as the manager of the,
truly amazing, Rockies team.

INT. BLACK FAMILY'S HOME - DAY

Family and friends gather around the television as they
eat, drink and cheer.

LENNY (V.O.)

Jim Thompson has shaken this sleepy big town, and baseball, by replacing his entire Rockies club with the Class A Asheville Tourist team. Now, he's out to prove his claim that Rick Jensen's training system will elevate players to their full potential by playing the world champion Boston Red Sox!

EXT. HOLISTIC RETREAT - DAY

The people are dressed in hippy-type clothing eating the natural foods that are being served. Some play drums and other instruments. Many of them are wearing Maharishi T-shirts and caps. There is a projection television and monitors spread around the grounds and the audio is through the loudspeakers.

The Maharishi is shown on the television and they cheer.

MAHARISHI (V.O.)

The Red Sox players, in a close vote, agreed to play this exhibition for a cool one million dollars each and a high percentage of the media royalties. They're taking the game very seriously and have the same lineup as the starting game of the World Series. What a bold move by Big Jim Thompson! He is personally financing this exhibition. Here's a gong for Big Jim who continues to prove that he is the smartest man in baseball! (gong!)

INT. ASHEVILLE PIZZA AND BREWING - DAY

The crowd stands and cheers as they watch the screens.

Samantha smashes the ball for a homer in to the left field stands and rounds the bases.

The fans stand and cheer wildly.

The Maharishi bangs the gong twice. (gong!) (gong!)

LENNY (V.O.)

That ties it at two all! Super-Sister-Sam takes an inside curve for a big ride with Miguel Mendez scoring ahead of her.

EXT. PRITCHARD PARK - DAY

A video display has been set up and the park is filled with cheering fans.

The monitors show Jeff throwing darts in the corner of the dugout.

Moose strikes out.

LENNY (V.O.)

David Alhorn is on fire! He has struck out 8 Rockies!

EXT. HOLISTIC RETREAT - DAY

Everyone is standing and cheering as they watch the score on the screens. Rockies 00200010 3 6 0; Red Sox 01100010 3 6 0.

LENNY (V.O.)

Here we are, tied at three in the top of the ninth inning. What a great show by rookie pitcher Jeff Lyons. Coming up is the top of the order with Miguel Mendez, Manny Ortiz and Sam Evans.

FADE

EXT. PRITCHARD PARK - DAY

The people exclaim as they watch Miguel fly out to left.

A couple holds hands and cross their fingers.

FADE

INT. MAGNOLIA'S - DAY

The customers are standing and cheering as they watch the screens.

Manny is called out looking at strike three.

The crowd "oh no's" and cheers on Samantha as she walks up to the plate.

INT. ASHEVILLE PIZZA AND BREWING - DAY

The people are standing, jumping, waving their hats and banners. They watch the screens as Samantha steps in to the box. She digs in her feet and takes dirt in to her hands.

Ahern looks in for the sign as Samantha stares at him. Her right lip cracks a smile.

Ahern throws and Samantha fouls it straight back. The noise is deafening in the restaurant from the sound systems and the customers.

Ahern gets back the ball, gets his sign, sets and throws a curve.

UMPIRE

Strike two!

Samantha steps out of the box and looks at the umpire.

Ahern rubs the ball with spit and sets up on the rubber. He looks in for the sign, checks his feet.

Samantha changes her stance.

Ahern throws a fastball on the outside corner that Samantha reaches for and hits. The ball is a high fly to right and the right fielder runs back to the fence and waits to catch the ball. The ball sails in to the stands for a homer.

The fans jump and cheer as Samantha rounds the bases. She takes off her helmet as she rounds third and shakes her hair down as her teammates greet her at home plate.

The Asheville Pizza and Brewing customers are cheering out of control.

Outside, the cars are honking their horns.

Samantha waves to the fans and enters the dugout. The fans continue to cheer. She comes back out to wave and the fans cheer louder.

Moose grounds out to the pitcher.

INT./EXT. TOURISTS ANNOUNCERS BOOTH - DAY

Lenny and the Maharishi are standing at the window.

LENNY

(In to the mic)

It's the bottom of the ninth! Can the Tourist, I mean the Rockies, hold on? The Red Sox are sending up Trot Nixon, Johnny Damon and David Ortiz to face Jeff Lyons who has pitched a wonderful game today. Warming up in the bullpen is Justin Taylor.

But, Jeff's breaking balls and great accuracy today have kept the Red Sox off stride. He's had a lot of help from the Rockies fielders who have been flawless!

FADE

INT. ASHEVILLE PIZZA AND BREWING - DAY

Everyone is on their feet cheering as they watch monitors. A fan rubs his Maharishi T-shirt. A man rubs a woman's F-Power shirt and she is about to smack him and doesn't.

The first batter, Nixon, hits the second pitch to deep right center field where McMillan catches it on the run.

FADE

The second batter, Damon, grounds to Moose at first.

FADE

The third batter, Ortiz, hits a shot that Samantha dives for and catches. She gets up and fires the ball to first just beating Ortiz for the third out.

The people in the restaurant go crazy.

EXT. MCCORMICK FIELD - DAY

The fans are cheering as the Rockies celebrate at the pitchers mound.

INT. CONCESSION STAND - DAY

The women behind the counter throw popcorn and hold up F-Power shirts.

INT. GRAPE ESCAPE - DAY

The people lift their wine glasses as they cheer.

EXT. HOLISTIC RETREAT - DAY

The people are rolling on the ground; dancing in circles and beating their drums.

INT. ASHEVILLE PIZZA AND BREWING - DAY

The fans are celebrating. A woman looks at the screen and shouts.

WOMAN

Wait! Wait! Quiet down!

The people quiet down as they watch the screen.

The camera shot is a close-up of Rick whose head is back and mouth open in his chair in front of the dugout.

Miguel and Moose stop celebrating when they notice Rick and run to see what's wrong.

The trainer looks at motionless Rick and wheels him in through the dugout in to the locker room.

Samantha sees what is going on and sprints from Center field to the dugout as the cameras follow her.

LENNY (V.O.)

Rick Jensen has been rushed into the locker room after, what appears to be, fainting.

A messenger hands Lenny a note.

LENNY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

The Maharishi is down in the clubhouse. Let's see if he can give us more information.

The Maharishi is on the monitor in front of the Rockies locker room door.

MAHARISHI (V.O.)

Rick Jensen was wheeled, unconscious, in to the locker room moments ago. They won't allow any reporters inside.

Jill pushes through the reporters and is allowed to enter.

Outside sirens stop and paramedics wheel a gurney in to the locker room.

MAHARISHI (V.O.)

As you have just viewed, Rick's wife and the medics have just arrived.

The door opens and pushes a reporter in to the Maharishi.

The medics wheel Rick out with a mask on his face. Jill accompanies him crying.

EXT. MCCORMICK FIELD - DAY FLYING SHOT

A flying shot of McCormick Field, and Asheville, ends as it looks through the windows of the Funeral Home.

INT. FUNERAL HOME - DAY

The seats are full with players and friends. Jill cries as she makes her way through the people in the lobby to the front door. She opens it to find reporters, cameras and many people. She finds a woman reporter and cameraman and motions for them to enter.

EXT. FUNERAL HOME - DAY

The news truck engineer patches a feed in to the panel of his truck and brings out a monitor from his truck. He attaches the cable and there is a live feed from the reporter Jill allowed to enter.

The other news trucks patch in and the people watch the monitors.

INT. FUNERAL HOME - DAY

The people are seated and the Minister motions for the crying Jill to come up to the pulpit. She smiles at Dottie and Samantha as she stands and slowly walks to the pulpit.

JILL

(Crying)

Thank you, all, for coming today to honor my husband, Rick Jensen. He was a friend of many of you, and a friend to everyone in baseball.

Dottie cries as Samantha holds her hand.

JILL

(Crying)

He enjoyed going down the street to watch the boys play summer league ball. His enthusiasm for aspiring young talent would seem endless after weekend tournaments. I've been fortunate to have traveled with him over the past six years. Everywhere he played, he was greeted with true affection. But there were no better cities than Denver and Asheville. He chose to play in these cities, and for his friend Jim Thompson. He was the shining star on the loveable, but non-winning Rockies for 24 years! Thanks to the confidence of Jim, he was able to fulfill a dream of his, The Telemetry Training System, before being bumped up to the Celestial League.

The comment drew smiles from the people.

JILL (CONT'D 2)

Rick intended all along for Sam, Justin, Dr. Feldman and Lou Brokov to continue his work. He knew that baseball would change once he introduced them to TTS.

Jill cries harder and her voice breaks more.

JILL (CONT'D 3)

(Crying hard)

Rick Jensen, the human being, lover and husband is someone so special that he'll leave behind, to all of us who have come in contact with him, the seeds of genuine love and happiness; and a spark that ignites every time you play, or watch, a baseball game. It's time for us to celebrate his life like he wanted us to. He left me with this tape and a note that said, "My life is everything I had hoped it would be. I have found true happiness in love and baseball and God gave me a second chance to share my dreams with you. Please, celebrate the time wonderful time we spent together, not by mourning, but by dancing and singing.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

I will stay with you as long as the game of baseball lives and there is love in your hearts. Goodbye my good friends. I'll see you when you're sent up to my new league."

"Light it Up!" plays as shots of his career play on the big screen.

THE END