

THE G.O.A.T
Season 1, Episode 7
"The Fourth of July All-Star Bash"

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TITLE: THE FOURTH OF JULY ALL-STAR BASH

FADE IN.

EXT. APERTURE PARK, PORTLAND - DAY

SUPER: First Inning

The Statesmen are visiting the Portland Pilots. Cam Kendricks pitches in the bottom of the first. His first pitch of the game is way outside and catcher Savoy Bishop can't get to it.

CUT TO:

The bases are loaded now, but the scoreboard shows no hits for the Pilots. Kendricks winds up and again, his throw is wild and the ball goes to the backstop. The runner on third, RASHAD, scores.

Kendricks now has a 3-0 count with no outs and runners on second and third. Bishop calls for the intentional walk and Kendricks obliges.

In the dugout, scout Ferd Langwieler marks his scorebook.

LANGWIELER

That's four walks and three wild pitches in four batters.

Bench coach Craig Glover nods.

GLOVER

Gonna be a long game.

CUT TO:

SUPER: Third Inning

Kendricks faces off against SHIVERS, with VAN SANT standing on second. Kendricks pitches, but the ball gets away from him, flying BEHIND Shivers and to the backstop. Van Sant easily makes his way to third.

The count is 1-0 to Shivers. Kendricks throws almost exactly the same pitch and Shivers scores. The Pilots now lead 3-0.

CUT TO:

SUPER: Fifth Inning

Kendricks faces off against PILEGGI and has a 2-0 count with nobody on base. Kendricks throws yet another wild pitch, this one far outside. Bishop dives for it, but it gets past him.

HOWELL
I've seen enough. Skip?

Gray spits.

GRAY
Pull him.

CUT TO:

Chaka Purvis stands confidently on the mound. He throws a fastball and strikes out the batter, PHOENIX.

The B*stards of Section B cheer. Mitch puts up a third K on the fence as Purvis runs into the dugout. Richard Smith leads the B*stards in a chant:

B*STARDS
Strike 'em out, Purvis, strike 'em
out! Strike 'em out, Purvis, strike
'em out. Strike 'em out, Purvis,
strike 'em out.

CUT TO:

SUPER: Sixth Inning

Pulsipher bats against the Portland pitcher, GROENING, with the bases loaded. Pulsipher watches the first pitch go by for a called strike.

He steps out of the batters' box and takes a few practice swings. He steps back into the box. Groening throws a sinker that completely fools Pulsipher. The count is 0-2.

Pulsipher steps out of the batters' box again and takes a deep breath. The sound drops away.

On the mound, Groening takes a deep breath and the sound drops away for him, too. Groening throws a fastball and Pulsipher fouls it off.

Pulsipher takes a deep breath from the batters' box this time. The sound drops away. Groening throws another fastball and Pulsipher rips it to right field. It hits the wall on one bounce and three runs score to tie the game. Pulsipher pulls into third with a triple.

CUT TO:

Alfredo Brito stands in the box with a 2-2 count. Groening throws a sinker and Brito swings wildly. It bloop just over the first baseman and drops in for a single. Pulsipher scores. Statesmen lead 4-3.

The bench explodes.

HUEBNER

Pulsipher sure is making a case for himself.

GRAY

Coming along a little slow for my tastes.

Huebner crosses his arms with a frown.

CUT TO:

SUPER: Ninth Inning

Purvis faces down against the batter, ROSE. He throws a pitch that is low and away. Ball four. There are now runners on first and second with one out.

Howell walks out to the mound. Bishop joins him.

HOWELL

Nice game. Good to see you're back.

Purvis nods and hands Howell the ball.

HOWELL (CONT'D)

We need you pitching like this.

Purvis trots off the field with a smile. In the stands, the B*stards give Purvis a standing ovation. On the fence before them, Purvis has racked up 11 Ks.

Clint Youngblood runs in from the bullpen.

CUT TO:

Youngblood is warmed up. He checks the runner at first and gets set. He throws a ball that fools the batter, ROTHKO. He hits a chopper to second baseman Richard Speck, who easily tags second and throws to first for the double play.

In the dugout, Howell claps.

HOWELL (CONT'D)

How do you like that. One pitch and a save.

Scout Ferd Langwieler claps him on the shoulder.

LANGWIELER

Yeah, but your starter had SIX wild pitches, which I believe is a record.

HOWELL

Did we win?

Laughter.

INT. VISITOR'S LOCKER ROOM - LATER

The locker room mood is jubilant. Kendricks is absent.

Rookie Ajax Cloud sits next to Bishop.

CLOUD

Why's everybody so pumped up? It wasn't that big a win.

BISHOP

Nah, man, it's not about that. We're at the All-Star Break. Only Kendricks and Youngblood are playing. The rest of us get a week off.

Second baseman Richard Speck walks by, drinking from a flask. He hears Bishop.

SPECK

Dude, this is like Spring Break. You went to college, right?

CLOUD

Yes. But we don't have Spring Break.

BISHOP

Nope, went straight to the minors.

SPECK

Well, shit. THESE guys know what I'm talking about.

He gestures to the Reliever Party Patrol, who are also getting started on the drinking a little early.

SPECK (CONT'D)

When you're in college, Spring Break is like your big break.

CLOUD
Don't you have a big summer break?

SPECK
Yeah, but that's not the same thing. I used to work back home in my dad's shop for the summer. But Spring Break? That's for partying.

The Party Patrol emits various "woos" and other cheers. Cloud still doesn't get it.

SPECK (CONT'D)
It's America. When we have time off from work, we party!

OPENING CREDITS.

EXT. NATIONAL STADIUM - DAY

Conan Jones stands on the mound during a clearly-simulated game. Nobody's wearing the right uniforms, no logos or names appear and the colors are slightly off.

Jones throws a pitch and the BATTER strikes out.

JONES
Most of the time, I finish what I start.

Jones throws a pitch and a new BATTER gets ball four. He runs down to first.

JONES (CONT'D)
But sometimes, I need someone to come in and save the day.

Clint Youngblood walks up to Jones.

YOUNGBLOOD
Hey, champ. I got this.

JONES
Thanks.

CUT TO:

INT. AMERICAN OATH MORTGAGE COMPANY - DAY

Still in his uniform, Jones now stands inside the American Oath Mortgage Company front office.

JONES

On the field, I have great teammates who pick me up when I'm down. Off the field, I need friends like Joe from American Oath Mortgage Company.

JOE walks in wearing khaki pants and a red American Oath Mortgage Company polo shirt.

JOE

Hey, Barbarian.

JONES

You got that paperwork ready?

Joe nods.

JOE

I always have what you need.

He looks directly into the CAMERA as he says this.

JONES

American Oath Mortgage Company
ALWAYS has what you need.

Jones leans down to sign the papers.

JONES (CONT'D)

Where do I sign? Here?

Joe points at the signature line. Jones signs.

SUPER: American Oath Mortgage Company/www.aomc-insurance.com

INT. SPORTS CENTRAL STUDIO

Sports Central starts up with lots of whooshes and flags and sports images and bald eagles and such.

This leads us to the very futuristic and busy Sports Central set. Blue is the dominant color. At the desk are Inesta Morgan and Major Sumrell.

INESTA

Welcome back.

MAJOR

We thank you for watching Sports Central. Hope your Independence Day was a good one.

INESTA

And while today IS National Bikini Day, the boys upstairs said it would be inappropriate for me to do the news in a bikini.

MAJOR

And no matter how many appeals I filed, they wouldn't let me wear one, either.

Inesta laughs out loud.

INESTA

Speaking of appeals, our top story tonight is how appealing Major was on our date last week.

MAJOR

Yes, the people are dying to know that Inesta looked amazing and is just as sparkling a conversationalist OFF the air as she is ON the air.

INESTA

And let's just say, ladies, you missed out. Major is a perfect gentleman. And not bad on the eyes.

MAJOR

I clean up real nice.

INESTA

Speaking of nice, let's go to our field reporter Sharon Alligood, who has the final All-Star Game starting lineups.

MAJOR

Thank you for joining us, Sharon.

INESTA

Welcome back.

ALLIGOOD

My pleasure, as always.

As she speaks, a screen saying "East Starters" comes up with a list of:

John Adams, Boston Colonials, C

Cam Kendricks, DC Statesmen, 1B

Billy Joel, New York Smashers, 2B

Amiri Baraka, New Jersey Titans, SS

Gus Bennett, New York Hawks, 3B

Carl Hiaasen, Miami Blades, RF

Gregory Hines, New York Smashers, CF

David Keith, Nashville Blues, LF

Jack Kennedy, Boston Colonials, SP

ALLIGOOD (CONT'D)

The East are definitely the favorites this year, led by players from the defending champion Smashers and the upstart Colonials and Statesmen.

The screen changes and the "West Starters" come up:

Michael Pena, Chicago Ghosts, C

Duff McKagan, Seattle Cobras, 1B

Rainn Wilson, Seattle Cobras, 2B

Roger Nelson, Minnesota Monsters, SS

Vincent Price, St. Louis Wolves, 3B

James Gunn, St. Louis Wolves, LF

Calvin Broadus, California Bulls, CF

Roy Disney, Chicago Ghosts, RF

Red Foxx, St. Louis Wolves, SP

ALLIGOOD (CONT'D)

But the West has dominant pitching and no shortage of power hitters. The game should be exciting. Let's take a deeper look at the rosters...

The crawl at the bottom of the screen shows the following messages, on a loop:

"Oregon Slam Dunkers win USBL Finals in five"

"President Winfrey launches Heat Wave Advisory Panel"

"Wally West dominates X Games skating with 3 gold medals"

"Ambassador Jennifer Lopez forced out of Puerto Rico"

"Hurricane Coulter first of year to make landfall"

"James Bell wins Nobel in science for cryonics research"

"Loki's Love Song to be revived on Broadway after 5 year hiatus"

INT. NBS NEWS STUDIO

Jeffrey Brack sits in the NBS News Studio, which is a lot less busy and more professional than the Sports Central set. Blue is still the dominant color, although it's softer here. The news opens tonight with no fanfare and no music, just Brack at the desk.

BRACK

Kaja Ballo...

A picture of Ballo. An Italian woman in her 30s of average weight and attractiveness with brown hair.

BRACK (CONT'D)

...Phil Gale...

A Black man in his late 20s, thin with long, straightened hair.

BRACK (CONT'D)

...Joseph Havenith...

A white man in his early 20s, overweight with dark hair and pasty skin.

BRACK (CONT'D)

...Bianca Leno...

A white woman in her mid-20s, athletic and short.

BRACK (CONT'D)

...Noah Lofton...

A Black man in his late 30s, overweight, balding.

BRACK (CONT'D)

...Lisa McPherson...

A Black woman in her mid-20s, natural hair and glasses.

BRACK (CONT'D)
...Stacy Meyer...

A white woman in her early 30s, blonde hair, average weight.

BRACK (CONT'D)
...Steve Parent...

A white man, 30-ish, blonde hair.

BRACK (CONT'D)
...Abbie Peet...

A white woman in her early 20s, black hair, overweight.

BRACK (CONT'D)
...Elle Perkins...

A white woman in her early 20s, red hair, thin.

BRACK (CONT'D)
...Herbert Pfaff...

A white man in his 30s, balding, glasses.

BRACK (CONT'D)
...Sherry Tate...

A Black woman in her late 20s, average size, short hair.

BRACK (CONT'D)
...Kathy Walicki...

A white woman in her early 20s, fit and attractive with brown hair.

BRACK (CONT'D)
...Mike Walicki...

A white man in his early 20s, fit and attractive with brown hair. Looks a LOT like Kathy.

BRACK (CONT'D)
...and Sue Walicki. A moment of
silence, please.

A white woman in her early 20s, fit and attractive with brown hair. Looks a LOT like Kathy and Mike.

Brack closes his eyes and the CAMERA holds on him for a few beats.

INT. SHIRLEY MULDOON'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Shirley types on her laptop as she watches Brack and the NBS news. Once he starts reading the names of the victims, she stops and watches. She picks up her glass of wine and takes a sip.

BRACK (O.S.)
...and Sue Walicki. A moment of
silence, please.

Shirley points at the TV.

SHIRLEY
And Nellie and Ben Pitezal down in
Florida! Don't forget them!

She toasts the victims and takes a sip from her wine. Then she turns back to her laptop, which now shows an FTP client. Shirley pulls out the scrap of paper from Applegate and types in the address and login information.

A directory of files comes up. The naming convention is simply dates. Shirley frowns. She scrolls through the directory. Hundreds of files.

She picks a random file and downloads it. She opens it. It's an arrest report for PDDC. Levin signed the report.

She opens another document and another. They're all files from the PDDC. And there are thousands of them.

She hits print and the first file slides out of a printer across the room.

Shirley picks up her phone and calls Chad.

CUT TO:

Chad sits at his computer, watch a big screen TV in the background.

CHAD
What is it? I'm watching He-Man.

He is.

CUT TO:

Shirley hits print on another document.

SHIRLEY
I think I got something. Something
maybe big.

Shirley hits print on another document.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)
I'm printing the documents. No idea
how long it'll take.

CUT TO:

Chad isn't impressed.

CHAD
Sure. I'll be here. Watching He-
man.

EXT. CAL RIPKEN JR. STADIUM - DAY

Large crowds stand before a stage outside Cal Ripken Jr.
Stadium in Northeast Washington, D.C. On stage with a mic is
Mayor Elizabeth Fair.

FAIR
Washington, D.C., are you ready for
the National Fourth of July Fest!

The crowd goes wild.

FAIR (CONT'D)
We'll let you inside in just a
moment...

Some boos.

FAIR (CONT'D)
...but first an announcement.

More boos.

FAIR.
Calm down. Calm down. I know we've
been through some tough times
together... and we've all had to
make sacrifices.

Murmurs of assent.

FAIR
Public events, such as sporting
events and music festivals like
this, are important as a rejection
of the darkness that seeks to make
us live in fear.

The crowd starts getting into the speech.

FAIR (CONT'D)

But we WON'T live in fear. Yes, we will have to take steps to protect ourselves and make sure that we are all safe.

A smattering of boos.

FAIR (CONT'D)

And those safety protocols will be in effect for today's show.

More boos.

FAIR (CONT'D)

Alright now. Calm down. Do you want to boo me? Or are you ready to hear some great live music?

Cheers.

FAIR (CONT'D)

Then welcome to the National Fourth of July Fest!

The crowd roars.

CUT TO:

As the crowds make their way past the gate, nearly the entire Statesmen team is in attendance. Bishop, Cloud and Gay follow the crowds towards the field. The rest of the team heads towards the elevators.

SPECK

Hey, rookies!

Cloud and Gay turn towards him. Bishop keeps going.

SPECK (CONT'D)

Bishop! This way. Luxury box.

Bishop gets excited.

INT. CRJ STADIUM, LUXURY BOX - MOMENTS LATER

Bishop and the rookies step off the elevator and follow Speck and the others into the luxury box. The spread is impressive.

BISHOP

What is this place?

SPECK
The Armada played here.

BISHOP
The football team? I thought they
played in Maryland or something.

Speck laughs.

SPECK
They do. This is where they USED to
play.

Bishop looks at the building's rusted infrastructure and
frowns.

BISHOP
Is it safe?

Laughs.

SPECK
Are you here for an architecture
lesson or are you here to party?

Omar Wheeler claps Bishop on the back.

WHEELER
Time to party, Sausage King!

SPECK
Yeah, it's Spring Break and none of
us are good enough to be in the All-
Star Game, so let's get fucked up!
Where are the drinks?

He walks off. Bishop frowns, but he follows. Rookie Ivan
Pasco isn't having it and turns and walks out of the box.

PASCO
Definitely not my scene.

He leaves. Bishop walks to a bar set up at the end of the
box. Already at the bar are Speck and Shawn Derby.

BISHOP
Gimme a Jack and Coke.

Speck claps him on the back.

SPECK
There you go! Getting started
early! I like it!

DERBY
Shots?

SPECK
Shots!

The bartender gives them a round of shots and they clink the glasses together.

CUT TO:

Bishop gets off the elevator and joins the masses on the ground level. Whatever the EDM DJ is doing includes a sample of Prince's "Batdance." Bishop erupts with joy.

He wades directly into the middle of the pulsing crowd. Overwhelmingly, people are not wearing masks and social distancing isn't even an afterthought. The crowd is one big sweaty mass, high and drunk and dancing to the beat.

CUT TO:

Bishop dances among the hot young people. He's athletic and attractive and is one of them, even if he wears more clothing than most. The band on stage plays poppy EDM and the dancers can't get enough.

Bishop realizes he and a blonde woman, KARYN L., have been dancing closer and closer to each other. He makes eye contact and she grins. They dance even closer.

And closer. They are touching. They are grinding. They are sweating together.

Bishop leans in close and whispers in her ear.

BISHOP
You want a drink?

She nods eagerly. He grabs her hand and they wind their way through the crowd.

CUT TO:

Bishop leads Karyn L. into the Statesmen's luxury box and shows her the spread. She immediately makes her way to the buffet and grabs some food. Bishop heads to the bar.

Speck sidles up to Bishop.

SPECK
That your date?

Bishop frowns.

SPECK (CONT'D)
Bring her to the private room in a few.

Speck grabs his drink and heads towards a door at the other end of the luxury box. Bishop watches him go and then heads over to where Karyn L. wolfs down as much free food as she can.

CUT TO:

Bishop and Karyn L. join Speck, Delarosa, Shotwell and Wheeler in what is definitely somebody's office. On the desk is a LOT of coke. Speck does a line and hands the rolled-up dollar bill to Wheeler.

Bishop and Wheeler exchange a glance. Wheeler shrugs and does a line. He hands the dollar to Shotwell. Shotwell looks towards Bishop and Karyn L.

SHOTWELL
You guys here to party?

SPECK
You finally gonna join the team, Bishop?

SHOTWELL
What's your name, new lady?

KARYN L.
Karyn.

SHOTWELL
You party, Karyn? Or are you a fraidy cat like Bishop here.

She grabs the dollar and immediately does a line. The guys cheer. She holds the dollar out to Bishop.

KARYN L.
It's good stuff.

Laughter.

Bishop takes the dollar. Everyone cheers.

CUT TO:

Bishop pulls Karyn L. into the private bathroom and locks the door behind him. They instantly kiss. They take each others' pants off.

Karyn L. rips off her shirt and is clad only in her bra and panties. Bishop grins and kisses her somewhere between her breasts and neck. She moans.

CUT TO:

Bishop staggers down the concourse, grinning. That's when he sees reporter Dwayne McDaris. Bishop is furious, quickly shaking off the drugs and focusing on rage.

BISHOP
Fuck this guy!

He balls up his fists and rushes at McDaris.

McDaris sees him coming and ducks under Bishop's wild swing. Bishop is high and he isn't fast or agile.

MCDARIS
Get the hell away from me!

BISHOP
I'm gonna kick your--

Bishop swings again, loses balance and falls to the ground. McDaris runs away.

INT. PDDC INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Pervis Till sits alone in an interrogation room, hands cuffed to the table. Outside the room, several cops gather around. Cody Paige stands at the far end of the room, away from the other cops, but still interested in what's going on with Till. Brice Eversmith walks in.

EVERSMITH
I assume Levin is leading the
interrogation?

Cody nods.

EVERSMITH (CONT'D)
She going in alone?

Cody shakes her head.

CODY
This as bad an idea as it looks
like?

EVERSMITH

Let's just say if we had legit laws, Levin would in deep trouble by the end of the day. At this point, she'll probably get a promotion.

CODY

Good for us, bad for the city.

Eversmith laughs. A few of the other cops stare at Cody and Eversmith. Levin walks into the room and the excitement from the other cops is elevated, as they anticipate that Levin will destroy the suspect.

CUT TO:

Levin sits across from Pervis Till. Till looks unkempt and uncomfortable. He hasn't slept. He wasn't clean when he was arrested. He wears jeans and a white tank top.

LEVIN

Now. Let's make this simple. We have sufficient evidence to connect you to these murders. Why don't you tell us how you, and your friend Clifford Byars, did it?

Till is afraid.

TILL

I didn't have nothing to do with those murders. I never hurt nobody.

LEVIN

Sure, that's what everybody says the first time. Now that we've got the initial denial out of the way, we can relax, right?

Till does NOT relax.

LEVIN (CONT'D)

Was it you? Or was it Byars?

TILL

What you mean?

LEVIN

Like who started it? Whose idea was it?

TILL

Whose idea was what?

LEVIN
Killing Kaja Ballo.

Levin tosses a picture of Ballo's severed head on the table. Till recoils in horror. Levin falters for a second.

TILL
I've never seen that. You ain't pinning that on me.

LEVIN
Okay. I believe you, Pervis.

Pervis doesn't believe her.

LEVIN (CONT'D)
I WANT to believe you. But I need you to tell me the truth.

TILL
I am telling the truth.

LEVIN
That's all I'm asking. I'm here to help you. You have to let me help you.

TILL
Then let me go home.

LEVIN
Sure. I will. You just have to tell me what happened. What did you do? What did Byars do?

TILL
I didn't do nothing.

LEVIN
What about Byars?

Levin tosses a picture of Sue Walicki's severed head on the table. Till recoils.

LEVIN (CONT'D)
Was he the one who met Sue Walicki?

Till looks away.

LEVIN (CONT'D)
Was this the first time you were involved in something like this?

TILL

I didn't do that either.

Levin throws down a picture of Elle Perkins, but it's a headshot, not the murder photo.

LEVIN

What about... Elle Perkins?

Levin throws down the murder photo. Till flinches. He recognizes her.

LEVIN (CONT'D)

That's right. We know you know Elle Perkins. She was the secretary at the day labor company you worked for on at least 87 occasions when you were on the clock. You definitely met her, didn't you?

Till grunts.

LEVIN (CONT'D)

So what it looks like to us is that we have evidence that connects you to one of the victims. I wonder what we'll find if we dig a little deeper. Should we start digging?

Till looks at her with panic.

LEVIN (CONT'D)

Unless it wasn't you. Maybe it was Byars. If only we knew where he was, we could ask HIM questions instead of you.

Till goes through an internal struggle. He makes a decision.

TILL

I know where he is.

Levin smiles.

LEVIN

Thank you for your honesty. Tell me where and I'll continue this conversation with him...

Till takes a deep breath.

INT. PDDC HALLWAY - LATER

Cody walks down the hallway, headed towards the stairs when she bumps into Vivian Carlton.

CARLTON
Officer Paige.

CODY
Uh... hey.

CARLTON
You haven't been making your appointments.

Cody shrugs.

CODY
I've been busy with... you know... the murders and all that.

Carlton nods.

CARLTON
I understand it is challenging, but this is MANDATED counseling. You'll have to make it or I'll have to let Capt. Levin know you're skipping school, you understand?

CODY
Uh... sure....

Cody hurries away.

INT. TINA WARREN'S MANSION - NIGHT

Tina Warren's mansion reflects her status as an Oscar-nominated actress. Clearly, her movies are crowd-pleasers, too, as the mansion isn't small. Tina and Cam Kendricks sit alone at the dining room table. They are done eating, but there is still much wine to consume.

KENDRICKS
That was great. Thanks.

TINA
Glad you liked it.

She takes a sip of wine. Her phone buzzes and Tina takes it out.

TINA (CONT'D)
I need to take this.

She gets up and leaves the room.

CUT TO:

Tina comes back in the room upset. Her eyes are puffy as if she was crying.

KENDRICKS
What's up? You don't look so hot.

Tina pours more wine and takes her seat.

TINA
My mother.

KENDRICKS
Problems?

She nods.

KENDRICKS (CONT'D)
I had real problems with my mom,
too. We were very dysfunctional.
Moved around a lot.

TINA
Not now.

KENDRICKS
What?

She shakes her head.

KENDRICKS (CONT'D)
We spent some time in shelters.
There was a lot of isolation.
Loneliness--

TINA
Can we not? Not right now?

KENDRICKS
There was some... abuse.

TINA
Are you not even listening to me?

KENDRICKS
My mom got the worst of it, but I
got my share.

He stares off into the distance.

TINA
I think I'd like you to leave.

Kendricks stares at her for a second.

KENDRICKS
You sure?

She nods.

Kendricks gets up and leaves without saying a word.

EXT. DOWNTOWN WASHINGTON, D.C. - NIGHT

Cody drives through the fairly empty downtown streets of D.C.
Her phone rings. It's Eversmith.

CODY
Yeah?

EVERSMITH (O.S.)
Where are you?

CODY
Doing the day job.

EVERSMITH (O.S.)
In the dark?

Cody chuckles.

CODY
Working for Levin? Of course I'm in
the dark. You're in the dark. We're
all in the dark.

EVERSMITH (O.S.)
The whole SYSTEM is in the dark.

Laughter.

CODY
What do you need?

EVERSMITH (O.S.)
Checking in. What's happening
today?

CODY

Ugh. Levin has me checking out a series of so-called cult-related crimes that definitely don't have anything to do with our case.

EVERSMITH (O.S.)

Busy work.

CODY

Exactly. Definitely not the best use of my time. But I have to cross them off the list.

EVERSMITH (O.S.)

Okay, I'm going to try to get the Setup working again. I have no idea what happened.

CODY

We got embarrassed.

EVERSMITH (O.S.)

Yeah. Be safe out there.

CODY

I will.

Cody hangs up. She looks at her laptop and traces her finger across an address on the screen. She checks the street number a dark house and pulls into the driveway.

She gets out and walks up to the front door. She peers in through the window, but the house is abandoned. She knocks on the door, but no response.

Across the street is another dark abandoned house. Esau sits in a chair on the porch.

Cody turns on her flashlight and starts shining it through the various windows, which aren't covered by shades or curtains. Inside the house is empty except for some various trash.

Across the street, a floorboard creaks. Cody whirls around towards the sound, shining her flashlight on the porch. But no one is there. She looks around. The neighborhood is quiet. Nothing moves. No sound.

Cody turns back towards the house and tries the front door, but it's locked. She walks around to the side of the house, carefully shining her light anywhere someone might be hidden. Seeing no one, she makes her way to the back.

Esau follows her to the back of the house.

Cody tries the knob on the back door. It's open. She goes inside.

Seconds later, Esau follows.

CUT TO:

Cody walks through the abandoned house's kitchen, shining her light around the room, into the pantry, through every doorway. She walks into the living room. Esau sneaks in through the door, which Cody left slightly ajar.

Cody moves across the living room. She hears a sound and whips the flashlight around towards it. At that moment, Esau smashes into her, knocking the flashlight and gun from her hands. Cody falls to her back.

Esau crashes on top of her and starts to choke her. He's not strong enough, though, and she wrestles free.

She scrambles for her gun and grabs it. She turns and opens fire towards Esau, but he's gone.

She grabs the flashlight and sweeps the room. Nothing.

She quickly searches the house, but Esau is gone. Cody walks outside, breathing deeply, her eyes flitting around to scrutinize every shadow.

EXT. CITY HALL - NIGHT

A limo pulls up to the front of City Hall and idles.

CUT TO:

Inside the limo, Mayor Elizabeth Fair sits across from the lone Figure in the black robe and voice modulator.

FIGURE

Are your instructions clear?

Fair is taken aback.

FAIR

Of course they are. Do I look simple?

The Figure doesn't respond.

FAIR (CONT'D)
 We kept all the home games. We kept
 the All-Star Game. We haven't even
 cut Metro hours. I've done my part.

Beat.

FAIR (CONT'D)
 And I will continue to do my part.

The Figure hands her a thick envelope of cash.

FIGURE
 Everything stays open.

FAIR
 For how long?

FIGURE
 Forever.

Fair reaches for the door handle without taking her eyes off
 of the Figure.

FIGURE (CONT'D)
 You may leave.

Fair opens the door and gets out quickly. She rushes towards
 the building without looking back.

EXT. NATIONAL STADIUM FIELD - NIGHT

The crowd goes crazy as USBL President Mary Billups sits in
 her wheel chair at home plate, holding a microphone.

BILLUPS
 I'd like to take this time to thank
 you all for supporting in-person,
 live sports again.

The crowd cheers.

BILLUPS (CONT'D)
 With the pandemic and the on-going
 violence in Washington, D.C., some
 wanted us to cancel games and
 withdraw from the public circle.

Scattered boos.

BILLUPS (CONT'D)
 But that's not how the USBL rolls.

Cheers.

BILLUPS (CONT'D)
 We know that sports are one of the
 ways we come together. We come
 together to celebrate excellence
 and to recapture the innocence and
 joy we all had as children when we
 played and watched baseball.

Cheers.

BILLUPS (CONT'D)
 And tonight, we're about to see
 some power hitters smashing some
 dingers. And I, for one, am ready
 for it. How about you?

Loud cheers.

BILLUPS (CONT'D)
 Here are your contenders in today's
 contest...

The CAMERA pans past each of the sluggers as Billups says
 their names.

BILLUPS (CONT'D)
 From the New York Smashers...

A smattering of boos.

BILLUPS (CONT'D)
 ...Alan Alda.

More boos.

BILLUPS (CONT'D)
 From the Boston Colonials...

More boos.

BILLUPS (CONT'D)
 ...Ben Franklin.

The biggest boos.

BILLUPS (CONT'D)
 From the New York Hawks... Gus
 Bennett.

Polite applause.

BILLUPS (CONT'D)
 Cat Power from the Atlanta Peaches.

Mild applause.

BILLUPS (CONT'D)
 And your hometown hero...

The cheers start to rise.

BILLUPS (CONT'D)
 ...representing the D.C.
 Statesmen...

The cheers rise.

BILLUPS (CONT'D)
 Cam Kendricks!

The cheers become a roar.

CUT TO:

Umpire William Smith stands at the microphone. The crowd calms down.

SMITH
 Play ball!

The crowd cheers as Alda steps up to the plate.

CUT TO:

Alda stands at the plate. The clock reads 4 minutes. The pitcher is John Mulaney from the West squad. The clock starts and Mulaney throws the first pitch at batting practice speed. Alda drives it deep to right field, but it stays in the park. Dozens of KIDS in pink Breast Cancer Awareness Month shirts vie to catch the ball.

The next pitch. Alda hits a home run that barely clears the right field fence. Next pitch. Another homer. Next pitch. Another. A few more. Alda finishes with 18 home runs when the clock hits zero.

CUT TO:

Franklin faces off against pitcher Luis Narvaez. Narvaez is just happy to be here and he throws as to set Franklin up. Franklin obliges with his first homer.

Then another. And another. Then a towering shot that nearly escapes the stadium. The crowd goes wild.

At the end of his swings, Franklin has 23 home runs. He tips his cap to the fans and heads back to the dugout.

He passes Kendricks on the way in.

FRANKLIN
(under his breath)
Top that, dick.

Kendricks ignores him.

CUT TO:

Power stands at the plate, facing Mulaney. Mulaney throws a pitch and Power fouls it off. Mulaney throws again. Deep fly to left, but stays in the park. Another pitch. Power finally catches one and gets his first dinger.

By the end of the clock, Power has tallied 17 homers.

CUT TO:

Bennett stands in the box, hitting against Narvaez. Bennett is in the zone and hits the first pitch out of the park. He smiles.

He hits another home run. And another. And another. He finishes with 31.

On the bench, Power and Alda exchange a high five and a hug. Enjoying themselves, but sad to be eliminated.

CUT TO:

Mulaney holds up the ball. Kendricks nods. First pitch. Kendricks hits the longest shot of the day, nearly 500 feet.

In the dugout, Franklin laughs.

FRANKLIN (CONT'D)
Can't compete against science.

Bennett raises an eyebrow and stares at Kendricks.

Kendricks goes on a bender of towering shots. He hits the first 10 pitches out of the stadium, shown in quick succession. Finally, he slips up and fouls one off. Next pitch is once again a home run.

As the clock winds down, Kendricks has 37 home runs. He hits one more, for good measure.

CUT TO:

Kendricks walks into the dugout, triumphant.

FRANKLIN (CONT'D)

That was some Mark McGwire shit if
I ever saw it.

Kendricks throws down his bat and rushes Franklin. Bennett
steps between them and pushes Kendricks away.

BENNETT

Hey man, we're on TV, for
chrissakes.

Kendricks considers it and walks away.

KENDRICKS

Yeah, and I just won. On TV.

He throws his batting helmet in Franklin's general direction.

INT. NATIONAL STADIUM OWNER'S BOX - CONTINUOUS

For the All-Star Game, Nationals owner Leah Owens has invited
the press to fill up her personal luxury suite overlooking
the field. Among those present are Shirley Muldoon, Sharon
Alligood, Edith Merman, David Tessell, Jonnie Travis, Michael
Weisman and Ricky Womble.

Billups rolls her wheelchair away from the group and turns to
face them. She pulls out her phone where no one can see and
opens her banking app.

Edith Merman makes her way over to Billups.

MERMAN

Before the game gets started, can I
ask you quick question? On the
record?

BILLUPS

Just a moment, checking on
something.

The banking up opens up. She clicks on "Account Balance" and
the screen pops up. The balance is "\$234,248.15." The most
recent transaction is a deposit of \$100,000 that is curiously
blank in the "From" box. Billups smiles and closes the app.

BILLUPS (CONT'D)

Hey, Edith, great to see you. What
can I help you with?

MERMAN

I was just following up on that benches-clearing brawl between the Statesmen and Colonials. What was the outcome of that?

BILLUPS

We fully investigated it and found no reason for any further disciplinary action. Boys WILL be boys and those who engaged in the worst conduct were ejected from the game.

MERMAN

That's the final word?

BILLUPS

That it is. We're just ready to serve the fans. We're doing everything we can to keep the games going. Nothing will stop us from providing the bright spot in dark times.

MERMAN

You can turn it off. There's no story here, just crossing my t's and dotting my i's.

Laughter.

INT. NATIONAL STADIUM CONCOURSE - MOMENTS LATER

Albert Whaley wears jeans and a Statesmen T-shirt as he walks through the concourse outside the luxury suites. Reporter David Tessell walks in his direction, holding a hotdog and a beer. Whaley spots him and rushes to confront him. Tessell looks up and sees Whaley.

TESSELL

This fucking guy.

WHALEY

(aggressively)
What's up, man?

TESSELL

Not much, Albert. Trying to eat.

He holds up the hotdog.

WHALEY
Why haven't I seen anything?

TESSELL
Anything about what?

WHALEY
That Kendricks stuff I gave you.

TESSELL
Not much there. Not my story.

Whaley throws up his arms in exasperation.

WHALEY
What the hell are you talking
about? Kendricks is clearly--

.ESSELL
Back off!

Whaley gets angry.

WHALEY
Or what?

TESSELL
I said back off.

WHALEY
Or what?

Whaley stares him down. Tessell looks at the floor.

WHALEY (CONT'D)
That's what I--

ALLIGOOD (O.S.)
Everything okay in here?

Both men look up to see Sharon Alligood, who carries her own
beer. Tessell let's out a breath.

TESSELL
Nothing, I--

WHALEY
Oh, look, another useless reporter.

TESSELL
Screw you. If you don't leave me
alone, I'm going to call the
police.

Whaley glares at him. Tessell stands his ground.

ALLIGOOD

Guys?

Beat.

ALLIGOOD (CONT'D)

Hey, Whaley? You going to get any playing time any time soon?

Whaley whips his head towards her.

WHALEY

What did you say?

Tessell moves towards Alligood and stands side-by-side with her.

ALLIGOOD

I asked you a question. On the record.

She holds up a small recording device. It is on. Whaley sees it and is scared.

ALLIGOOD (CONT'D)

Anything?

Whaley walks away. Tessell breathes a sigh of relief.

TESSELL

I AM going to call the police on that guy. Hold this...

He hands her the hot dog and grabs his phone.

EXT. SUBURBAN HOME, ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA - DAY

A small, two-story home in Alexandria is the perfect image of suburban bliss: perfectly-manicured lawn, recently touched-up paint, a family-sized porch swing, two cars in the driveway, one of which is a minivan and the other was a black Dodge Charger.

INT. SUBURBAN HOME - CONTINUOUS

Inside his mancave, SCHMITTY puts his armor on. His Under Armor. And a Statesmen cap. And cargo shorts. And Statesmen socks. And cleats for some reason.

The room is a shrine to the Statesmen. A very expensive shrine. No way Schmitty's wife is down with all of this. The room contains every type of memorabilia possible. The center piece is an official team jersey in a glass case. The name on the back is "Schmitty" and the jersey number is 69, natch.

Schmitty steps outside of his mancave and then locks it with a key. He walks down the hall towards a LOUD kitchen. Inside are his four CHILDREN, all boys ages 6-14, and his EXASPERATED WIFE.

The noises of his wild sons immediately set him on edge. He grabs a beer from the fridge and chugs it.

EXASPERATED WIFE
Aren't you driving?

SCHMITTY
This is my first one. Seriously.

She stares at him while a big pot of spaghetti boils on the stove.

Beat.

SCHMITTY (CONT'D)
Seriously.

She's not buying it. He shrugs, tosses the can in the recycling bin and walks outside.

Schmitty gets in the Charger, takes a deep breath and drives away.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROW HOUSE, CAPITOL HILL - DAY

Outside a nondescript row house on Capitol Hill, a blonde woman in her mid-20s, NICKIE, locks her door and turns to face her date, a bearded man in his mid-20s, ROBERT.

ROBERT
What are we going to again? A
baseball game?

She swats him on the chest.

NICKIE
Of course. The All-Star Game! These
tickets were expensive.

ROBERT

I know, it's a great gesture. I've never been to an All-Star Game. On a first date.

NICKIE

It'll be fun!

He's not sure.

ROBERT

So how long have you been on Bumble?

CUT TO:

INT. D.C. METRO CAR - DAY

BART, a Black man in his 30s wearing business casual clothing sits next to his daughter, MARY. Bart adjusts the D.C. Statesmen cap on Mary's head.

BART

What was your favorite part?

MARY

Hmmm... the room with the shiny rocks.

He and nods.

BART

What was your least favorite part?

She scrunches up her face.

MARY

The ocean room. It was scary in there.

BART

That giant squid was gross.

MARY

And the crab thingies.

Bart laughs.

BART

This is our stop.

The train comes to a halt and they get off. Mary steps VERY carefully onto the escalator, careful not to step on the cracks between steps.

MARY

Dad?

She has a concerned look on her face.

BART

Yeah?

MARY

I don't know anything about baseball.

He laughs.

BART

Don't worry. I do. That's why we're here.

She thinks about it for a second and nods. She grabs her father's hand.

CUT TO:

INT. THE PINCH - DUSK

Upstairs at the Pinch, a half dozen Karens wear very clear and obnoxious Bachelorette Party outfits: crowns, sashes, tiny penises. They all wear nametags, the bride's says KRISTY K. Annie serves them, but she doesn't want to.

KRISTY K.

We have to come back here after the game.

KAREN K. has black hair and is in her late 20s, like all the Karens.

KAREN K.

Why?

KRISTY K.

I hear the players hang out here after a big game.

She motions towards the table roped off for Conan Jones.

CAREN J.

Eww. Jones is like... older than my dad.

CAREN J. has dyed red hair.

CARYN M.
Still works for me.

KARYN L.
Me? I like the thicker guys. Like
catchers.

She grins.

KARREN E.
Baseball players are so gross. Why
are we going to the game?

KARYN L.
The bride LOVES her some baseball
players.

The Karens woo collectively.

CAREN J.
Eww.

KRISTY K.
I don't like ALL baseball
players...

CARYN M.
Yeah, Billy gave her a Fast Pass
for Mr. Cam Kendricks.

Some woos. Some ewwws.

KARREN E.
I definitely need another shot.

Annie is on the job and has a tray of shots ready for them.
They woo some more.

KARYN L.
Works for me.

They all do the shot and woo.

CUT TO:

EXT. NATIONAL STADIUM PARKING LOT - DUSK

A half dozen frat bros stand around the open tailgate of one
of the guys' trucks. A bottle of Jägermeister sits next to
six red Solo cups, all filled halfway. Each of the Bros picks
up a cup.

The "leader" of the group, JOE, holds his cup up for a toast.

JOE
I now officially convene this
meeting of the Bro Squad.

The Bro Squad all chug their Jägermeister. CHO, a Korean-American man in his early 20s grabs the bottle and starts refilling everyone's cups.

MONROE
Gimme that shit.

MONROE is 30-ish, brown hair, muscles, boring.

POE
Fill me up.

POE is 30-ish, brown hair, muscles, boring.

MOE
Nice.

Moe is 30-ish, brown hair, muscles, boring.

BOUDREAUX
Go Monroe, it's your birthday!

Boudreaux is mid-20s, brown hair, muscles, boring.

They all clink their plastic cups together and take the shot.

POE
That why we're going to a boring-
ass baseball game?

JOE
Hey! It's Monroe's birthday and we
do what he wants. Bro Squad Rule
#37.

CHO
No matter how boring it is!

They do another shot and woo.

INT. NATIONAL STADIUM PRESS ROOM - NIGHT

The press conference is over. Jones stands near the exit, talking to Shirley.

SHIRLEY
Is every season like this?

JONES
Not even close.

SHIRLEY
I guess I'll be coming to more
games.

JONES
Always glad to have you here.

SHIRLEY
How are you doing? You don't look
your best.

JONES
I've got enough to make it till the
end.

SHIRLEY
You sure?

He heads out the door. He turns back and shrugs.

EXT. NATIONAL STADIUM FIELD - NIGHT

SUPER: First Inning

As the All-Star Game gets started, the stadium is packed and the crowd is excited to forget what's on the news and just focus on baseball.

Gus Bennett stands at the plate, representing the East squad. He faces the West pitcher, Foxx. Foxx throws a fastball, but Bennett is ready and hits a home run to left. The fans go crazy as the East goes up 1-0.

In the dugout, Cam Kendricks and Clint Youngblood watch Bennett round the bases.

YOUNGBLOOD
I hate facing that guy.

Kendricks shrugs.

KENDRICKS
Meh. I'm not impressed.

Sitting nearby are Adams and Kennedy from the Boston Colonials.

KENNEDY
Dick.

If Kendricks hears, he doesn't say anything. Youngblood DOES hear and raises an eyebrow.

ADAMS
Screw this guy.

Adams stands up and steps in front of Kendricks.

ADAMS (CONT'D)
What the hell is wrong with you?

Kendricks stands up and the two large men are nearly nose-to-nose. Kennedy and Youngblood stand as well.

KENDRICKS
You. You're what the hell is wrong with me.

ADAMS
You want to do something about it?

Kendricks inches closer. Adams pushes him away. Kendricks grins and raises a fist to punch him.

Youngblood grabs the hand. Kendricks whirls around and glares at him.

YOUNGBLOOD
Yo, calm down, man.

He pushes Kendricks away from the Colonials players and various onlookers.

YOUNGBLOOD (CONT'D)
You don't want to get suspended because of the freaking All-Star Game.

Kendricks looks up at him, gets it and backs down.

CUT TO:

SUPER: Fourth Inning

Kendricks steps up to the plate, his first appearance in the game. Now pitching for the West is Mulaney. Kendricks takes in the crowd, which is large and noisy, and more hostile than usual, with half the crowd NOT being Statesmen fans.

Mulaney winds up and throws a fastball. Kendricks takes it for a strike.

Mulaney throws a slider and gets Kendricks to bite. The count is 0-2.

Kendricks takes a deep breath and stares Mulaney down. Mulaney ignores him and throws another slider. Kendricks strikes out in three pitches.

CUT TO:

SUPER: Fifth Inning

ROGER NELSON bats for the West. Pitching for the East is Narvaez. One runner, HINES, is on third. Cam Kendricks plays first base.

Narvaez throws a sinker that Nelson barely gets ahold of. It's a chopper to first. Kendricks steps into it and the ball ricochets off of his glove and into the outfield. Hines scores.

Narvaez shakes it off.

CUT TO:

INT. THE SEVENTH INNING STRETCH PUB - LATER

Schmitty and his pals sit at a table in the Seventh Inning Stretch Pub, which overlooks center field. He's joined by three of his DRINKING BUDDIES, all white guys in their late 30s, all a bit overweight, all brown hair and all unshaven faces. Sitting in front of each of the four men is a large half-drunken mug of beer.

Schmitty has a scorebook and pencil and marks a strike for the current batter. He takes a huge sip of beer.

CUT TO:

Nickie and Robert sit in seats deep into the upper deck in right field. He holds a can of beer, she holds a cider.

The scoreboard shows a "Kiss Cam" and various couples around the stadium kiss: a white couple, a Black couple, an interracial couple, a lesbian couple.

The camera stops on Nickie and Robert. They look at each other embarrassed. The crowd starts to cheer louder. Some people chant "kiss her."

Robert shrugs and leans in to kiss Nickie. It's bad.

CUT TO:

Bart and Mary sit along the left-field line on the last row in the section. Behind them is the concrete wall.

Above them is a standing bar with people eating chicken fingers and nachos and drinking beers.

BART
Can you see?

Mary cranes her head.

MARY
Not really.

BART
Switch seats with me.

Bart moves in and now Mary has the aisle seat. She can actually see now. She smacks her hand into her baseball glove.

CUT TO:

A foul ball flies directly towards Mary's outstretched glove. She grins.

A DRUNKEN FAN climbs up onto the bar above them, holding out his hands to catch the ball. Bart sees him and moves.

The Drunken Fan falls, but Mary doesn't notice. She moves out of the aisle and onto the stairs to make the catch. Bart steps towards her and gets in the pathway of the Drunken Fan. Bart throws his hands up and flips the fan away from Mary.

She catches the foul ball. The Drunken Fan crashes into a group of fans, who catch him before anyone gets too hurt.

Mary jumps up and down showing her dad the ball. The fans around them cheer just as much for Bart as Mary.

CUT TO:

Kristy K. and the Karens sit in the front row, close to first base. They all have foot-long frozen drinks.

KAREN K.
We are WAY too far away from the players.

CAREN J.
Yeah, I can't even SEE the players.

KARYN L.
I can see #34's BUTT.

CARYN M.
You are so gross.

KARREN E.
 She is gross. But she's not wrong.
 Yum!

KRISTY K.
 Where is Cam Kendricks?

She cranes her neck to find him.

KAREN K.
 Aren't you getting married?

KRISTY K.
 I'm not married YET.

CARYN M.
 You are so gross.

CAREN J.
 How are we actually going to MEET
 the players.

KARYN L.
 I know they hang out after the game
 at the Pinch.

Kristy K. smacks her on the arm.

KARREN E.
 How in the world?

KARYN L.
 I went to that concert at CRJ.

CAREN J.
 The Fourth of July one?

Karyn L. nods.

CARYN M.
 I knew I should've gone.

KARYN L.
 I went. And I hooked up with one of
 the players.

Kristy K. smacks her again.

KRISTY K.
 Shut up!

KAREN K.
 Which one?

KARYN L.
Bishop. The catcher.

They all look to see him on the field.

CAREN J.
Oooh, he's hot.

CARYN M.
Isn't he the sausage guy?

KARYN L.
Yes he is.

She grins.

CARYN M.
You are sooooo gross.

CUT TO:

A few sections away from Kristy K. and the Karens sit the Bro Squad. Joe pulls out a flask, takes a big sip and passes it to Poe.

JOE
Check out those chicks.

He motions towards the Karens.

MONROE
Nice.

POE
I LOVE bachelorette parties.

MOE
So hot.

BOUDREAUX
To bachelorette parties!

They all grab their beers and toast.

The crack of a bat from the field leads to a run scoring. The Bros go crazy. Cho spills some beer on his shirt and looks around embarrassed.

He makes eye contact with Karen K. They both smile.

SUPER: Sixth Inning

Mulaney still pitches for the West as Kendricks steps up to the plate again. Adams is on third and Hiasen is on first with two outs.

Mulaney throws a curve and Kendricks swings away. He pops it up for an easy putout by second baseman Wilson.

CUT TO:

SUPER: Ninth Inning

The East hangs onto a 4-3 lead. PRICE stands on first and BROADUS on second. The batter is DUNCAN. Pitching for the East is Clint Youngblood.

Youngblood throws and Duncan hits a line drive up the middle. Youngblood dives for it, but misses.

Broadus scores as the center fielder, Hines, gets to the ball. He picks it up and rockets it towards third baseman Bennett.

Price rounds third before the throw arrives and is halfway home when Bennett catches the ball. He turns and makes a great throw to the catcher, Adams.

Adams bobbles the catch and he sees that Price, a LARGE man, is about to run him over. He loses the ball as he falls away to avoid the contact. Price scores. The West wins.

Youngblood throws his glove into the outfield and walks towards the dugout.

CUT TO:

The game is over. Standing near pitcher's mound, Sharon Alligood holds her microphone up to Kendricks, who looks exhausted and anxious. He doesn't want to be here.

ALLIGOOD

Tough night out there. What happened?

He scowls at her.

KENDRICKS

Hey, I don't see you out there. This [BEEP] isn't easy.

ALLIGOOD

Whoa, whoa, you can't say that. We're live on the air.

KENDRICKS

I don't give a--

Youngblood swoops in with an arm around Kendricks.

YOUNGBLOOD

Hey, Sharon. Sorry about Cam here. He hasn't been feeling good. Food poisoning. He shouldn't have even played, but he's such a hard worker...

Alligood loosens up.

ALLIGOOD

Is that true, Cam?

He throws off Youngblood's arm and walks away.

KENDRICKS

Whatever.

Youngblood steps up to Alligood with a grin.

YOUNGBLOOD

NEVER eat strip club shrimp, amirite?

CUT TO:

EXT. THE PINCH - LATER

Schmitty and his Drinking Buddies stand outside the Pinch, waiting in the ID check line.

DRINKING BUDDY

C'mon, man. You've GOTTA party with us.

Schmitty shakes his head.

SCHMITTY

I can't.

ANOTHER DRINKING BUDDY

Get outta here with that shit.

SCHMITTY

I'm tired.

YET ANOTHER DRINKING BUDDY

Boo! Wuss.

DRINKING BUDDY

I hear the players hang out here.

Schmittty shakes his head.

ANOTHER DRINKING BUDDY

I think I saw a Bachelorette Party
go inside earlier.

Beat.

ANOTHER DRINKING BUDDY (CONT'D)

C'mon dude, bridesmaids!

Schmittty shakes his head.

YET ANOTHER DRINKING BUDDY

You suck.

Schmittty looks across the street and sees a HAPPY FAMILY
decked out in Statesmen gear leaving the stadium.

SCHMITTTY

I can't. I gotta get home.

Boos and jeers. The drinking buddies go inside without him.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROW HOUSE, NORTHEAST, D.C. - LATER

Nickie and Robert stand outside her row house. Neither of
them looks very enthusiastic.

NICKIE

So...

ROBERT

So...

Robert puts his hands in his pockets.

NICKIE

That wasn't good at all.

ROBERT

I should've told you I hate
baseball.

NICKIE

Yeah, you should've. Like I said,
the tickets weren't cheap.

Robert rocks back and forth on his feet.

ROBERT
Yeah, sorry about that. Again.

NICKIE
Maybe put that on your profile.

ROBERT
What?

NICKIE
That you hate America.

She's kidding, but not really.

ROBERT
Funny.

Nobody's laughing.

ROBERT (CONT'D)
So... another date?

She turns and walks inside. Robert shrugs, pulls out his phone and opens up Bumble.

CUT TO:

EXT. NATIONAL STADIUM PLAYERS' ENTRANCE - LATER

Bart and Mary stand outside the players' entrance.

BART
Who's autograph did you want to get?

She frowns.

MARY
Can't I get all of them?

Bart chuckles.

BART
Not tonight. The players are tired. They need to go home and see their own daughters.

Mary's eyebrows shoot up.

MARY
They all have daughters?

BART
Some of them.

She nods.

MARY
How many autographs can I get?

Bart shrugs.

BART
Probably only one or two.

Mary scrunches her forehead.

MARY
Then I want Savoy Bishop.

Bart didn't expect that.

BART
The catcher?

She grins.

MARY
He's my favorite.

BART
But he didn't even play. He plays
for the Statesmen and this was the
All-Star Game.

Beat.

MARY
Okay. We'll get him NEXT time.

Bart chuckles.

MARY (CONT'D)
I get it. He's got a tough job. And
instead of playing baseball he had
to go home and make the sausage.

Bart roars with laughter.

CUT TO:

INT. THE PINCH BASEMENT - LATER

In the Pinch basement, Kristy K. and the Karens are flirting with Clint Youngblood and the Reliever Party Patrol. Bishop drunkenly hangs with the group.

KARYN L.

Where are the other players?

Karyn L. hangs on Bishop, caressing his arm.

BISHOP

No idea.

CAREN J.

Tell us where the afterparty is!

KAREN K.

We know there's an afterparty.

KARREN E.

This one over here has a crush on Cam Kendricks.

Kristy K. blushes.

BISHOP

I don't know of any afterparty.

Karen K. starts flirting with Cho. The Bro Squad crowds around the table next to the Bachelorette Party.

CARYN M.

I'll bet he doesn't even know Cam..

Bishop snaps to attention.

BISHOP

(under his breath)

Betty?

Bishop stands up and walks out of the bar.

KARYN L.

Hey, where are you going?

Bishop doesn't look back. Karyn L. pouts. Karen K. makes out with Cho.

CUT TO:

The Bro Squad crowds around Speck, everybody clearly drunk.

SPECK

Man, you guys are pretty cool.

They cheer.

SPECK (CONT'D)

I'm buying all y'all's drinks!

The cheers go nuclear.

JOE

Man, my favorite player WAS Cam
Kendricks...

SPECK

Fuck that guy!

He says it cheerfully and takes a shot. The Bros roar in support.

JOE

But I got a NEW favorite player.

MONROE

Righteous!

INT. JANICE TAYLOR'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Janice Taylor sits on her couch, wearing LizLemon sleeping wear and eating microwave popcorn from a bowl.

The Sports Central theme music comes on.

INESTA

Join us tonight on Sports Central.

MAJOR

Albert Whaley...

Janice gets stiff at the mention of his name. She drops the bowl of popcorn.

MAJOR (CONT'D)

...Chuck Chester, Winston
Pulsipher, Steve Reeves.

INESTA

Gus Bennett?

MAJOR

Have the Statesmen solved their
third base problems?

INESTA
The answer at the top of the hour.

 MAJOR
Only on Sports Central.

Janice turns off the TV. She grabs her phone and dials Monika Aro.

 JANICE
Hey... it's Janice Taylor. I work
at National Stadium.

Beat.

 JANICE (CONT'D)
I... I need to report something
that happened at the stadium.

Beat.

 JANICE (CONT'D)
With one of the players.

She listens.

 JANICE (CONT'D)
Yeah, I can. When?

Janice walks into her kitchen and looks at a calendar on the wall.

 JANICE (CONT'D)
Okay. I'm off. See you then.

INT. NATIONAL STADIUM, PRESS ROOM - DAY

Ashley Hernandez leads a press conference, but there is an empty seat next to her.

 ASHLEY
Thank you all for joining me today.
I have some exciting announcements
to make. The D.C. Statesmen are
serious about winning. And winning
now.

Reporters try to ask questions.

 ASHLEY (CONT'D)
There will be time for questions,
but let me make a few
announcements. First, the bad news.

Reporters type furiously on laptops.

ASHLEY (CONT'D)

Harrell Flowers has suffered a SLAP tear and will be out for the rest of the season. His spot on the roster will be filled with Melvin Rodgers, who has made significant progress while pitching in Roswell.

She takes a deep breath.

ASHLEY (CONT'D)

Next. Chuck Chester and Kit Riggins are no longer members of the D.C. Statesmen. While Chuck and Kit are consummate professionals who would be valuable additions to nearly any roster, our organization has decided to go in another direction and we have traded them for All-Star Third Baseman Gus Bennett...

Bennett walks into the room, dressed in a Statesman uniform. Ashley grins as the assembled reporters explode with excitement.

INT. ALTON NIX'S OFFICE - DAY

Alton Nix sits in his office, talking on his phone.

NIX

I said I'm on it.

Beat.

NIX (CONT'D)

I know. Yes. Of course.

Beat.

NIX (CONT'D)

I've got this. I know. I'm going to personally lead the investigation. If something's going on, I'm going to find it.

Beat.

NIX (CONT'D)

Yes. Everything is on the table. This will be a cradle-to-grave investigation.

He hangs up the phone and opens up a web browser. He googles "Cam Kendricks."

INT. LEAH OWENS' OFFICE - NIGHT

Owens pours a second glass of whiskey and hands it to her guest, MANDA STARR. Starr is 80 if she's a day, but she's sharp and intelligent. Her bright white hair is pulled back in a tight, perfect bun. She wears a man-tailored Brooks Brothers suit.

Owens looks down at a business card. It reads Manda Starr, President. Carmesi Molto Corp.

OWENS
Carmesi Molto. That Italian?

STARR
Something like that.

OWENS
And you own Hater-Ade?

Starr smiles.

STARR
Among my many investments.

OWENS
And what led to the pleasure of hosting you today?

Starr's smile fades.

STARR
It has come to my attention that your new star player... Cam Kendricks... did an ad for a competitor of mine.

Owens frowns.

OWENS
What ad? Hater-Ade.

STARR
No, that one's mine. The violation was a direct competitor called ThunderBrew.

Owens knows it.

OWENS

So...

STARR

So... I'm here as a courtesy. I am informing you of my intention to sue over this violation. I will win. It won't be cheap.

Owens does her best to hold her poker face.

STARR (CONT'D)

Or...

Owens loosens up.

OWENS

Or?

STARR

Why don't you sell ME the team?

Owens doesn't comprehend.

STARR (CONT'D)

Name your price. I can cover it.

Owens shakes her head in shock.

STARR (CONT'D)

Your record, to date, makes it clear you don't want to be here. So take the money and walk.

Starr gets up and leaves.

STARR (CONT'D)

Offer's on the table. Name your price. Let me know. Soon. I'd rather not give my lawyers any more billable hours if I don't have to.

She leaves. Owens stares after her.

EXT. ALBERT WHALEY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Officers Anne Snell and Steven Beck knock on Whaley's front door. They wait a few seconds and he opens it. He's surprised to see them and gets fidgety.

SNELL

You Albert Whaley?

BECK
The baseball player?

WHALEY
That's me. What's this about,
officers?

SNELL
Can we come inside?

WHALEY
Do you have a warrant?

Snell and Beck exchange a glance.

BECK
Hey, man, this doesn't have to be a
thing.

Whaley loosens up.

SNELL
We just have a few questions about
David Tessell.

Whaley stiffens again.

BECK
I assume you know Tessell?

WHALEY
I wouldn't say I "know" him. He's
on TV all the time, so I guess I
know him a little bit.

SNELL
And you've met him in person?

Whaley shrugs.

WHALEY
Can't remember.

BECK
We have several pictures of the two
of you together. Various times and
places.

Whaley frowns.

WHALEY
I guess I've met him in person.

SNELL

Did you meet him in person at the All-Star game? In the private concourse on the upper deck? Outside the press area?

Whaley nods.

BECK

You threaten him?

WHALEY

What? No. What did he say?

BECK

He said you threatened him.

WHALEY

No, no, no. Not at all. I just asked him about a story.

SNELL

A story?

WHALEY

For the newspaper.

BECK

The Dispatch-Times?

Whaley nods.

SNELL

He write something bad about you? Or your teammates?

Whaley shakes his head.

WHALEY

No, no, no. This was about a future story.

SNELL

What happened?

WHALEY

Nothing. He's not going to write it.

BECK

That's it? Story's dead?

Whaley nods.

SNELL

That make you angry?

WHALEY

No. Well, a little. BUT... I didn't threaten him. I just let him know my displeasure. A little loudly.

BECK

A little TOO loudly?

WHALEY

A little TOO loudly. It won't happen again. I promise. Scout's honor.

He does the Scouting salute. The officers exchange a look of skepticism.

INT. SIMON MEYERS' OFFICE - DAY

Shirley sits across from editor Simon Meyers, who has his arms crossed.

SHIRLEY

What do you mean, no?

He stares at her. She stares back.

MEYERS

We don't have cults in this town.

SHIRLEY

But I showed you the evidence. You can't--

MEYERS

No. Now get out of here before I fire you.

SHIRLEY

I put HOURS of work into this--

Meyers stares at her.

Beat.

She gets up and walks out, slamming the door behind her. Everyone in the newsroom turns and stares.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)

(under her breath)

Way? Meet will.

INT. CHAD'S HOUSE - LATER

Shirley sits with Chad.

SHIRLEY

Tell me about your blog? Dr.
Chad's... what is it?

Chad smiles.

CHAD

Dr. Chad's Curiosity Shoppe.

Beat.

SHIRLEY

You come up with that yourself?

CHAD

I did.

He's proud. She's weirded out.

SHIRLEY

You do it anonymously?

CHAD

I do.

SHIRLEY

How do you keep it secret?

CHAD

My secret identity?

She nods.

SHIRLEY

Let's say I wanted to create my OWN
blog, but have no way of connecting
it to me directly?

CHAD

That's easy.

SHIRLEY

Show me.

INT. LEAH OWENS' OFFICE - DAY

Gray sits in Owens' office, his arms crossed. She drinks
whiskey. She didn't offer him any.

OWENS

Tell me the truth. Are your players
on steroids?

Gray scoffs.

OWENS (CONT'D)

That is the rumor. Kendricks?

GRAY

Nothing I've seen. He passed the
tests.

Owens isn't convinced.

GRAY (CONT'D)

Hey, you were the one that put
Kendricks on the team.

OWENS

I only said you had to give him a
tryout. You hired him.

GRAY

Where the hell did you find this
guy?

OWENS

He was a... recommendation.

Gray stares at her.

OWENS (CONT'D)

From a... friend. Someone who knew
Augustus.

GRAY

He better be legit...

Owens takes a sip of whiskey.

GRAY (CONT'D)

...for all our sakes.

INT. LEAH OWENS' OFFICE - LATER

Owens calls Applegate. It goes directly to voicemail. She
hangs up, frustrated.

She hits the intercom on her desk.

OWENS

Ms. Richardson?

MS. RICHARDSON (O.S.)

Yes?

OWENS

Get me Mackey from security.

CUT TO:

Mackey sits across from Owens. He hangs up his phone.

MACKEY

Voice mail is full.

Owens frowns.

OWENS

When was the last time you heard from him?

Mackey shrugs.

MACKEY

A few weeks. We don't talk that often. Why?

OWENS

He was doing some work for me.

Mackey nods.

OWENS (CONT'D)

But then he just dropped off the radar.

Mackey frowns.

INT. SUNDAY SPORTS CHAT SHOW STUDIO

The lights shine down on host Michael Weisman and his guests. Behind him is a giant sign that says: The Sunday Sports Chat Show.

WEISMAN

Hello everyone and welcome to this week's Sunday Sports Chat Show.

Next to Weisman is Tessell.

WEISMAN (CONT'D)

With me today are four of our regular panelists: David Tessell from the Chicago Dispatch-Times...

TESSELL
Hello from the Windy City.

WEISMAN
Sharon Alligood of NBS...

ALLIGOOD
Thanks for having me back.

WEISMAN
Ricky Womble of the Los Angeles
Defender...

Womble waves at the camera.

WOMBLE
Great to see everyone.

WEISMAN
And the dean of East coast sports
media, Edith Merman of ABS.

She nods towards him with a pleasant smile.

MERMAN
You honor me.

Weisman turns and looks into the camera.

WEISMAN
Okay, first question. What on God's
green Earth is the point of the All-
Star Game? Why do we still
participate in this ancient ritual?

TESSELL
Money.

ALLIGOOD
It's a celebration of the game.

WOMBLE
It's a boring game with no meaning.

MERMAN
You young guys... It's all about
tradition. One that has brought
many years of joy to fans. We
should respect it more.

Beat.

WEISMAN

Okay, time for a real question.
Without McDaris here to steal the
answer...

Laughter.

WEISMAN (CONT'D)

...ARE the Statesmen for real?

More laughs.

MERMAN

They are starting to slow down.
They've only gone 18-10 this month.

ALLIGOOD

Only? They're 76-30 overall. That's
as good as it gets.

TESSELL

And Cam Kendricks is going crazy.
His latest feat? Scored a run in 24
consecutive games.

WOMBLE

I don't trust the coach or the
players to be as good as what we're
seeing. But they keep winning....

WEISMAN

Time for a tough question. Are we
seeing the growth of corruption in
professional sports? In the USBL?
Beyond?

WOMBLE

Meh, seems like politically correct
nonsense. Sure, there's some
corruption. There always has been
and there always will be.

ALLIGOOD

Ricky, are you ENDORSING
corruption?

Womble laughs.

TESSELL

My vote is definitely "yes."

Beat.

WEISMAN

Care to expand on that?

TESSELL

I do, but my lawyer said not to.

ALLIGOOD

What?

Tessell shrugs.

MERMAN

I can't confirm the corruption personally, but there are a lot of strange things happening.

ALLIGOOD

A lot that is hard to explain.

INT. DWAYNE MCDARIS' OFFICE - NIGHT

Dwayne McDaris' office is VERY busy. He's not a tidy guy, but he is clean. No food or drinks or any other kind of waste is in the office, but books and papers are everywhere. As are little promo items and chotskies related to sports and popular culture.

Across from McDaris sits MEACO ALI. Ali is approximately 30, Black man, muscular, weary. Modest clothing, not too rich, not too poor.

McDaris surfs the Internet during their conversation.

MCDARIS

Spell your name for me so I know I have it right.

ALI

M-E-A-C-O. A-L-I.

McDaris types.

MCDARIS

Where are you from?

ALI

Akron. Ohio.

MCDARIS

That where you knew Cam Kendricks?

Ali shakes his head.

ALI

He didn't go by that name when I
knew him.

McDaris is stunned. Ali puts his hand on his stomach, clearly
it's upset.

ALI (CONT'D)

I used to work at a boxing gym. For
a guy, Spike Johnson, ran the
place. Gave me a gig and let me
train for free.

MCDARIS

Spike Johnson?

Ali nods. McDaris types the name.

ALI

Dan had the same gig for a while.
Slept in the back. Trained for
free. Worked cleaning up and
training other boxers and all that.

MCDARIS

Dan?

ALI

Dan Cooper. That's the name he told
me.

McDaris brings up a boxing poster from Akron with the name
Dan Cooper listed at the bottom of the card. No pictures. He
finds a few more similar flyers.

ALI (CONT'D)

He got pretty good. Was talking
about going pro.

McDaris finds an amateur boxing database online and searches
for Dan Cooper.

ALI (CONT'D)

Then he disappeared.

McDaris finds a record of matches that Cooper fought. He was
10-0 with eight knockouts. No notable details.

MCDARIS

Disappeared?

Ali nods. He burps and sways a little bit. His eyes fade
closed as if he's about to pass out.

MCDARIS (CONT'D)

You okay?

Ali snaps awake.

ALI

Yeah. Disappeared.

He burps again.

ALI (CONT'D)

Then he showed up on TV.

MCDARIS

How well did you know him?

ALI

Not well. He used to hang out with some weird people.

MCDARIS

What kind of weird?

Ali shrugs.

ALI

I don't know, just weird.

Ali burps. He's clearly intoxicated. He rapidly taps his foot on the floor.

MCDARIS

Maybe we can meet again when you're sober?

ALI

No need. Said what I had to say.

MCDARIS

There's some cash in it for you.

ALI

How much?

MCDARIS

\$20.

Beat.

MCDARIS (CONT'D)

\$50.

Ali shakes his head.

MCDARIS (CONT'D)

\$100.

Ali nods.

MCDARIS (CONT'D)

I'll call you.

Ali nods again, but he's uncertain.

ALI

You got it now? The money?

McDaris pulls out his wallet and hands Ali a \$20.

INT. SAVOY BISHOP'S CONDO - NIGHT

The lights are out, but Bishop's home. Alone. Drinking directly from a flask of whiskey. It's mostly dark inside, as if he's not home.

Outside, Betty walks up to the front door. She rings the bell. Bishop looks through the peep hole quietly. He recoils, his face wracked with guilt.

She knocks on the door. She's eager to see him. He doesn't answer.

She knocks again. He stays silent.

She leaves.

He takes another sip of whiskey.

EXT. ROW HOUSE, NORTHEAST D.C. - NIGHT

A dozen heavily-armed local and federal law enforcement officers approach the front door of a row house. Another half dozen are deployed at the back door.

Inside Clifford Byars sits in a recliner, a blanket on his lap. His hand rests on a .22 on top of the blanket.

A battering ram smashes the front door in. Byars shoots awake and grabs the .22. The first cops come in through the front door, but the hallway is narrow and they are slow.

Byars runs towards the back of the house and grabs the door knob. As he does, officers Bill Tucker and Mitchell O'Reilly walk up behind him. Tucker fires into Byars' back. The .22 falls and slides across the floor, stopping against Tucker's boot. O'Reilly tries to hide his fear and anger.

INT. PDDC BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

Eversmith works away on the main computer that runs The Setup.

CODY
Is it working again?

EVERSMITH
I think so. I'll print up the files
and bring them to Levin.

CODY
Think it will matter?

Eversmith doesn't respond. Cody lays down on a couch.

EVERSMITH
Something up?

Cody turns away from her.

CODY
Not now.

Eversmith stares at Cody for a few moments, then turns to The Setup.

INT. ROW HOUSE, NORTHEAST, D.C. - CONTINUOUS

The crime scene is chaotic. Paramedics, forensics, crowd control, press, onlookers. Officers Tucker and O'Reilly stand off to the side of the scene chatting.

Levin arrives and walks up to them, pulling them further away from any hearing ears.

LEVIN
Am I happy?

O'Reilly nods and grins.

TUCKER
You're about to be.

Levin smiles and walks towards the crime scene.

EXT. NAVY YARD - NIGHT

Ashley Hernandez and Alfredo Brito walk down the boardwalk, eating ice cream cones.

ASHLEY
This is fun.

BRITO
It is.

They grin and eat in silence as they walk.
Ashley's phone rings. It's Jamelle Lewis.

ASHLEY
Yeah.

LEWIS (O.S.)
You alone?

Ashley holds up a finger to Brito and then walks away for privacy.

ASHLEY
Yeah. What's up?

LEWIS (O.S.)
Get in early tomorrow. We have a
BIG problem with this ThunderBrew
thing. They had an exclusivity
clause--

ASHLEY
No, I TRIPLE-checked--

LEWIS (O.S.)
Something to do with a contract
with the parent company.

Ashley frowns.

LEWIS (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Whatever. Don't be late.

Ashley hangs up. Brito approaches.

BRITO
Everything okay.

ASHLEY
Yeah, just have an early morning.

BRITO
You want me to take you home?

Ashley smiles.

ASHLEY
No, let's go to your place.

Brito is happy.

INT. LEAH OWENS' MANSION - NIGHT

Owens sits on her couch, sipping from whiskey. She flips through movies on demand. She sees "Major League." She shrugs and hits play.

CUT TO:

The final credits roll on the movie.

OWENS
That wasn't funny at all.

She nods as she gets it.

OWENS (CONT'D)
Dick.

INT. JAMELLE LEWIS' HOUSE - NIGHT

Jamelle Lewis sits on her couch with a glass of white wine. Her shoes are off, but she's otherwise still dressed from work. The Entertainment News Network is on, with host Rachel Brosh reporting.

BROSH
There they are, Cam Kendricks and Tina Harris, the latest celebrity couple to spike our Craze Meter.

The ENN Craze Meter appears on the screen. The first column is very short and has pics of Johnny Depp and Amber Heard. The middle column reaches halfway up the screen and features Bennifer. The last column is all the way to the top of the screen and features Kendricks and Warren.

BROSH (CONT'D)
They've been seen hanging out more than a dozen times recently and we're ready to call them an Official THING.

A full-screen picture of Kendricks and Warren leaving a restaurant appears. Out of nowhere, a big seal with the words "Official Logo" appears to be stamped on the photo.

BROSH (CONT'D)
This is the Next Big Love and I'm
ALL about it...

EXT. ROCK CREEK PARK - CONTINUOUS

Cody Paige and Brice Eversmith get out of their squad car in a parking lot filled with other police cars and media vans. Lights are flashing and ambulances aren't far off.

Snell stops them. She's clearly shaken up.

SNELL
You're going to want to take a
moment. You've never seen anything
like this.

CODY
I found one of the previous scenes.

SNELL
This is worse.

Tucker walks up to them. Cody sneers.

TUCKER
Some rando found them. Called the
press. Press called us.

SNELL
This is a shitshow.

Levin arrives in a huff.

LEVIN
Paige, Eversmith, Tucker, Snell.

The named officers approach Levin.

LEVIN (CONT'D)
Get the press out of here.

EVERSMITH
They have a right to be here.

LEVIN
Not inside the actual fucking crime
scene. Get them out of here!

Levin walks away. Snell shrugs and she and Tucker move towards the reporters.

CODY
I hate this job.

EVERSMITH
Why do you think I quit?

They walk towards the crime scene.

INT. JAMELLE LEWIS' HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Lewis picks up the remote to turn the TV off. A breaking news alert goes off. She snaps to attention.

BRACK
Breaking news at this hour...

The shot cuts away from Jeffrey Brack to a live shot from Rock Creek Park where cops are keeping the press and onlookers away from an area marked by police tape.

BRACK (CONT'D)
...reporters on site say that at
least a dozen bodies have been
found in a bizarre, ritualistic--

Lewis turns off the TV. She finishes her wine and sets the glass on the table. She gets up and walks into her bedroom.

FADE OUT.