

Part One: The Incident

1.1 The call up

Lou's introduction

Black screen, we hear the sound thud, thud, smack
- thud, thud, smack.

LOU O'REILLY, a stocky 28 year old, sits in his basement tossing a baseball downward off the floor, to the wall, and back to him for the catch.

We see that this is his den of sorts, albeit in one corner of the basement. There's an assortment of baseball trophies and memorabilia.

NARRATOR

This isn't a true story, but it could be.

After all, there's a little good and bad in all of us, isn't there?

He reflects with every toss.

LOU

If only God had given me wheels. (thud, thud, smack)

I'm a better hitter than almost every guy I see (thud, thud, smack)

Good arm (thud, thud, smack)

Good glove (thud, thud, smack)

No wheels (thud, thud, smack)

No quitting now (thud, thud, smack)

Zoom in on a photo of Lou as an umpire.

Livin' the dream (thud, thud, smack)

More umpire memorabilia.

Waitin' for the call (thud, thud, smack)

I just keep callin' 'em as I see 'em
(thud, thud, smack)

Toss 'em if I have to (thud, thud,
smack)

He scowls and raises his voice.

Adios amigo (thud, thud, tic)

The ball deflects off his fingertips and breaks
something.

Izzy's introduction

ISABELLA GONZALEZ, an attractive and athletic 25
year old, flies down the stairs. She's wearing
short shorts, running shoes, and a tee shirt with
a boxing/fighting image.

She stands with her hands on her hips and we see
the other portion of the basement is a fighter's
training area.

IZZY
What the hell are you doing?

You're an umpire, not a goddamn player,
stop throwing baseballs!

CUT TO NEW YORK OFFICE TOWER

Steve calls to order

NARRATOR
This part of the story is actually
true, or mostly true. In 1999, major
league umpires were not a happy crew
and neither were the owners, who were
also looking for a way to shorten the
duration of games.

OWNER #1
Listen!

The easiest way to solve this problem
and reduce the length of our games is
to call the high strike.

It's not rocket science fellas. Call
the high strike and our games will be
over in less than 3 hours!

OWNER #2

He is the voice of reason, but is roundly rejected by catcalls.

Hold it fellas.

You can't just arbitrarily change the strike zone.

You may as well throw away the record book.

Mayhem breaks out as several owners shout at the same time.

STEVE CHERNIAK, the commissioner of baseball, stands up and takes charge of the meeting. He's fifty years old and slightly balding.

STEVE

Order, order!

Okay, okay.

Let's table this discussion till our next meeting, shall we?

We have some rather pressing new business to deal with.

Just this morning, my office received a letter from the president of the umpires union.

He begins reading the letter.

"Dear Commissioner,

Due to the lack of progress in our negotiations, and the failure to address our concerns, we have decided to take the following action.

The umpires named below are hereby submitting their resignations, effective September 4, 1999."

Then it goes on to list the names of sixty-seven umpires.

Much chuckling and cat-calls.

STEVE

There you have it gentlemen. I don't know if this is an empty threat to be ignored...

Or a generous offer to be accepted!

Scattered laughter.

Owner #1 stands up.

OWNER #1

Due to the fact that these men, these umpires, are making more than two hundred thousand dollars a year - and are still unhappy - I move that we accept all their resignations and find minor league umpires, who actually love our game.

And will call the high strike!

Much cheering.

STEVE

Do we have a second for the motion?

Owner #3 stands up.

OWNER #3

I second the motion. Let's seize this opportunity and hopefully we can rid ourselves of this god damned union, once and for all!

Much cheering.

The letter

NARRATOR

Meanwhile, back in New Mexico.

IZZY

You got mail babe.

LOU (reading)

This is to inform you that you have been promoted to the major league of professional baseball, effective immediately.

Lou jumps to his feet and they hug each other in celebration.

Izzy performs her trademark capoeira fighting/dance move and her kicking foot just clears Lou's head.

LOU
Geez babe, one of these days you're gonna knock somebody out doing that.

IZZY
These limbs are licensed weapons to be used only in sanctioned fights. I would never assault anyone outside the ring.

She moves closer to Lou and gives him a kiss.

The swings

Lou and Izzy are in the backyard, each sitting on a tire, about five feet apart, suspended by ropes attached to an overhead branch.

LOU
In a way, I don't wanna go.

I like it here.

IZZY
You have to go Lou.

This is your dream.

LOU
My dream includes you.

Izzy teases.

IZZY
Maybe you would find someone new.

I'm sure there's lots of nice girls in New York.

LOU
So...(pause), you don't want to come with me?

IZZY
Well, I didn't say that.

But my manager has a schedule prepared for me.

By this time next year, I should have two fights under my belt, and then in two years time, I'll be ready for the title fight against Olga the butcher.

LOU
Could you not find some fights in New York?

IZZY
Oh for sure!

But it would set my schedule back at least a few months.

I'd have to find a new manager, a new gym - ya, it would set me back for sure.

Lou slips out of the tire placing his feet on the ground.

LOU
I'm not going without you.

You're the most important thing in my life.

Please come with me.

Be my inspiration and I'll be yours.

Lou gets down on one knee.

LOU
Will you marry me?

IZZY
Yes!

1.2 The triangle

Gladys's castle

NARRATOR

Upon arriving in New York, they find the perfect home for them.

It's an older house overlooking Central Park.

The landlord, GLADYS, lives downstairs.
She promises to give them space and not
intrude upon them. (Of course she will
not keep that promise)

GLADYS
Pleasure to meet you both.

I am Gladys Angelopoulos and this is my
home of forty years.

After my husband died, I moved
downstairs into the basement suite.

The whole upper floor is available.

Do you work?

LOU
I'm an umpire. I've just been called up
to the major league.

GLADYS
Is that a job?

Are you paid to be an umpire?

LOU
Of course, my salary will be well into
six figures.

Gladys turns to Izzy.

GLADYS
Splendid.

And what about you, my dear?

IZZY
I'm a professional martial arts
fighter.

GLADYS
Oh dear! You're such a petite little
thing.

I don't expect you're as well paid
though, naturally.

I'm more concerned with you getting
hurt.

She reaches out and touches Izzy's head.

Or, scarred.

Come. Let's go inside.

CUT TO THE UMPIRE CHANGE ROOM

Lou's first game in the bigs

Image of Lou, fully dressed in his umpire uniform, looking at himself in the full-length mirror as the other crew members are still getting ready.

The crew chief (home plate umpire) speaks to Lou.

CREW CHIEF
Hey pretty boy, have you worked with
the 4-man before?

Lou turns to face the crew chief.

LOU
Mostly 3-man in triple A, but I know
the 4-man. Where do you have me?

CREW CHIEF
You got the sleepy corner kid.

We're breaking you in slowly.

The crew chief puts his hand on Lou's shoulder.

Do a good job though, and we might just
get you into the All-Star game next
week.

Lou looks surprised.

The crew exits the change-room and enters onto
the ball field.

CUT TO THE DECK OF THE HOUSE

Izzy's wish

IZZY
What kind of bird would you be if you
could be any kind of bird you wished?

Lou thinks for a few seconds as he sees a robin pulling a worm out of the grass.

LOU
I think I'd be a robin.

Izzy is shocked.

IZZY
A robin?

LOU
Ya, a robin has a pretty good life.

IZZY
Wow, I thought an umpire would want to be an eagle or something like that. You know, the one who gets to make the decision about who lives and who gets eaten.

Lou laughs.

LOU
Not at all. I want to be invisible. Just make the calls, live the life, qualify for the pension, and retire in 20 years.

What kind of bird would you be?

IZZY
I'd be a hummingbird. So quick that nothing could catch me.

LOU
Really? Hummingbirds never relax.

IZZY
There's no time for this hummingbird to relax. I have a 2-year plan, not 20 like you!

Then I'll be retired and be able to raise our family.

LOU
Nice!

And how many kids does this hummingbird want to have?

IZZY
Well, I want to start with just one.

A girl.

LOU
A girl, not a boy?

IZZY
Oh, I know you want a boy, but I want a daughter.

Hey, maybe she could grow up to be an umpire!

They laugh.

Steve's All-Star game

It's the 1999 All-Star game being held in New York.

Steve is hosting guests in his stadium suite.

A banner reads "Welcome umpire wives and girlfriends"

On the field below, the All-Star festivities are in full swing and the home run contest is underway.

Steve is welcoming all to his suite.

Steve notices Izzy. She is attractive and sexy in her outfit.

He strikes up a conversation with her and finds out she is an MMA fighter and her stage name is "The Dancing Tarantuala"

He offers to be her promoter and promises he could get her a big fight in Madison Square Gardens or Atlantic City.

She is naturally interested as she needs a new promoter.

**Image PV from the exit door of Izzy approaching.
Steve in the distance staring at her butt.**

1.3 The demotion

The fax

Lou and Izzy are in their kitchen preparing breakfast, when there's a knock on the door.

Izzy answers and Steve enters holding a printed fax.

STEVE

I hate to be the one to deliver this news.

Gladys listens in from behind the door to the basement stairs.

The union has decided - in their ultimate knowledge - that you need more experience in the minors.

Here's the official notice with instructions for where you'll be stationed. I believe it's in Las Vegas.

Listen. I'm going to do everything within my power to get you back in New York in time to see Izzy's first fight.

Izzy goes to Lou and hugs him. Lou looking over her shoulder, sees Steve staring at her butt.

Don's intro

DON DYKSTRA is a likable 40 year old hotel manager. As a cousin, Steve has appointed him to be the scheduler of umpires for the Pacific Coast League. What Steve doesn't know is that Don also runs a sports betting business on the side.

Don is working in his office when his phone rings.

DON

Hello.

STEVE

How are things going out there?

DON

All good, why what's up?

STEVE

How's your schedule looking? What do you have for numbers?

DON
Numbers? You mean umpires?

STEVE
Ya, you got enough?

DON
Well, we're working the 3-man until the playoffs and right now we have two spares.

The plan is to go 4-man for the playoffs still, is that right?

STEVE
Actually, I'd like you to go 4-man right away. We need to groom some young umpires to replace these retirees.

DON
Ah, I hear ya.

STEVE
So, I've got another umpire for you.
You'll have him for the season.

Lou's promise

Izzy is heartbroken and considers going with Lou to Vegas.

Lou says his re-assignment will be short lived and he will be back in New York soon.

He gives her a new cell phone.

Gladys fills in

Gladys appears as Lou is leaving.

She plays dumb.

GLADYS
Lou is leaving?

IZZY
He's been reassigned to triple A on a
temporary assignment.

Gladys turns to face Izzy, places her hand on her
shoulder.

GLADYS
What's your sign?

IZZY
Capricorn.

GLADYS
Ah, your moon is behind Jupiter.
He'll be back soon

Part Two: The Problem

2.1 The new Castles

Izzy's new gym

Izzy arrives at the gym and is greeted by Steve, who introduces
her to the trainer and briefly shows her around.

Steve proceeds to sell Izzy on his plan.

He has an idea for her first fight.

He gives her a cell phone and says now they can keep in touch at all times.

Izzy says nothing about the phone given to her by Lou.

She expresses doubts about staying in NY.

She tells Steve that she longs to be with Lou and may leave for Vegas.

STEVE
He'll be back soon.

In the meantime let's get ready for
your first fight.

Don shows Lou his suite

Lou turns his motorcycle into the parking lot of the Sportsman Hotel.

Once inside he meets the manager Don Dykstra.

As Don leads him through the hotel they banter about 3-man and 4-man umpiring systems as they get to know each other.

DON
So, are you ready for tomorrow night?

LOU
Sure, where do you have me pegged?

DON
You got the dish!

LOU
Dish, right off the get-go huh?

DON
Ya, you the man!

You're being groomed for the bigs, right?

LOU

I'm ready now. I wanna get back up there before the playoffs.

DON

I don't like your chances.

Word I got, was you're here for the season.

Lou looks puzzled.

They walk through the casino.

DON

Are you a gambling man?

LOU

I like to bet on the horses.

And football.

DON

Baseball?

Lou laughs.

LOU

Are you trying to get me fired?

They both laugh as they enter the elevator.

They step out of the elevator and Don shows Lou his spacious studio.

DON DYCKSTRA

Have a gander at this Lou.

This whole floor is yours.

Compliments of the Sportsman Hotel, where the best umpires stay.

Take off your jacket and stay a while!

Lou hangs up this jacket.

DON DYCKSTRA
Pretty cool pad huh Lou?

Then he shows him the large patio, where he can enjoy the view.

DON DYCKSTRA
You'll love relaxing out here on the deck.

Just take a look at that spectacular view!

Lou looks satisfied.

Lou
Fuckin' Aye. This is quite the pad.

DON DYCKSTRA
Nothing is too good for the best young umpire in baseball.

Maybe you can help me out a little too?

I run a little sports book on the side. Keep that to yourself, okay?

Anyways, I do good on basketball, football, most every sport actually...except baseball.

LOU
Why don't you leave baseball alone?

DON
If you're gonna run a book, you gotta give the customer what he wants. You know what they say, the customer's always right!

LOU
Betting on baseball outta get you locked up.

Don is a bit taken back by Lou's bold statement. He's tempted to open a debate on gambling - but instead, he reaches inside his

jacket and retrieves a bag.

DON
I got a little something else for ya.
It'll pick up your spirits.
It's good stuff, you'll enjoy it.

LOU
Thanks but no thanks.

DON
What do you mean?
You know what they say about Vegas.
What happens in Vegas, stays in Vegas!

Lou laughs.

Lou
Thanks.
Never touch that stuff.

DON
Gotcha.

Don begins to head out, then turns for a last word.

DON
Just remember, if you need anything,
just let me know.
I'm gonna take real good care of you.

Gladys sells staying

Gladys has invited herself in for tea in Izzy's kitchen.

Her goal is to keep Izzy as a tenant in her house.

She will get to know Izzy's career plans and how she feels about Lou.

GLADYS
Oh my good lord. Who might that be?

IZZY
She goes by Olga, the butcher.

GLADYS
And what is your name in the ring?

IZZY
I am Isabella the dancing tarantula.

Don calls Big Boss

After getting such a positive response out of Lou, Don feels a rush of enthusiasm, and calls the BIG BOSS, whose voice we hear but we never see his face.

Don is excitedly explaining his real ambitions, which is to bribe Lou into fixing a game.

DON
Boss, I'm gonna make us both a shit pile of money.

You know I'm the scheduler of umpires for the PCL, right?

BIG BOSS
Okay.

DON
Well, I've got an umpire that's just arrived at my hotel.

We hit it off pretty good. Hehe...

He's a good guy, you know what I mean?

He's a good fella.

I like him - and he likes me!

We're gonna strike a deal, and then you know what?

Don lowers his voice to invoke drama.

The final game.

The final game, baby.

The final game is a huge upset.

We sweep the board!

Moment of silence.

BIG BOSS
Difficult.

DON
Whatya mean?

I got all the angles covered.

BIG BOSS
Too many things can go wrong.

It's been tried before.

Umpires are a strange breed.

Listen to me. You've got a good thing going there with the prison.

The Governor is actually encouraging sports betting in prisons!

Take advantage of that.

Solidify your first hive, and then expand.

There's nineteen institutions in Nevada.

Nearly ten thousand inmates!

You've got the ultimate captive market there. You know what I mean?

It's a fuckin' no brainer.

DON

Okay boss, I'll keep working on the inmates.

Don looks dejected.

2.2 The brouhaha

Steve's pain

Back in New York, Steve is visiting a psychiatrist. He is extremely upset. He has found Izzy a gym and set her up but he feels she has no respect for his efforts.

He fears that she has no feelings for him and longs to be with Lou.

Later, he looks at himself in the mirror. Maybe he talks to himself.

He is extremely jealous and knows that Lou stands in the way between himself and Izzy.

Brad's intro

BRAD BELLOWS is a 35-year old former player, who has transitioned into a manager. He is mingling with his players as they warm up.

Pan over to: HANK BRUNO, a 55 year old sports reporter shouts at him from the sidelines. His weathered face looks a bit cranky and his demeanour always has a critical slant.

HANK
Mr. Bellows, can I have a word with you?

Cut to Lou is in his room and getting ready. The TV is on in the background.

Zoom in on TV, where Hank is now interviewing Brad.

We're 5 games out of a playoff spot and I don't have to tell you that the fans are getting restless.

Some have begun a chant to have you fired.

BRAD

It's not about me.

So long as it doesn't affect my players, it doesn't affect me, and we'll stick with our game plan.

Every player on this team is willing to sacrifice himself or do whatever it takes to win as a team.

We do the little things right, and we work on fundamentals.

That's how we're going to win!

HANK

Is Joe batting cleanup today?

Brad exudes confidence and common sense.

BRAD

I'm happy with our overall approach at the plate so we'll go with the same order.

HANK

You do realize that the fans are getting restless. They want a winner and they want to see more home runs.

BRAD

Home runs are nice, but we need to get on base, we wanna be aggressive, move runners, do the little things right.

HANK

There's a new book about mathematics in baseball and it recommends batting your best hitter high in the order so he gets more at-bats.

BRAD

I like Joe in 5-hole right now.

Hank turns away from Brad and faces the camera.

HANK

Okay, it looks like Joe is still batting 5th and the fans aren't overly happy!

Sounds of fans jeering and chanting.

FANS
Fire Bellows now, fire Bellows now!

Over to you Darren.

Cut to the announcers booth.

Darren & Juice intro

DARREN PARSONS is the play-by-play announcer and the voice of reason, while JUICE JONES is the eccentric color-man. (*Their main purpose is to describe the baseball events and provide pace to the story*)

They set the stage for this important game as the Stars are trying to make the playoffs.

DARREN
The announcers set the stage by stressing the importance of stringing a few wins together.

They identify the problem to be runs against. Star pitchers have big problems. Not only are they giving up a lot of runs but they are a tired bunch as well.

In the top of the first inning.

Lefty Gareau is on the mound for the Stars and Joe Robinson is behind the plate.

DARREN
Lefty Gareau gets the start for the Stars and he'll be throwing to Joe Robinson behind the dish.

The visitors lead off the game with a single.

The next batter homers.

NARRATOR
The visitors got off to a good start but the Stars battled back.

After 9 innings the teams would be tied 5 runs apiece.

Top of the 10th inning.

The scoreboard shows 5-5 tie.

Brad reports a change to Lou, who records it on his copy of the lineup.

DARREN
Billy Hillhouse comes in to pitch.

Catcher Joe Robinson tosses the ball to Lefty.

NARRATOR
Hillhouse would struggle and give up 4 runs. After twelve and half innings, the score is still tied. The Stars can win it here in the bottom of the 13th and are at the bottom of their order.

Bottom of the 13th inning

The scoreboard shows a 9-9 tie.

Brad reports another change to Lou.

Stars are at the bottom of the order, Rolston is due up to the plate.

STADIUM ANNOUNCER
Your attention please. Hitting for Rolston is number 22 Max Johnson.

Johnson flies out to center field.

NARRATOR
After Johnson flew out to center, Pederson singled, before Turner grounded into a double play to end the inning.

After 13 complete, we're still tied.

Bottom of the 17th begins

The scoreboard shows a 13-13 tie.

Brad reports another change to Lou.

Tiny Williams come up to bat.

STADIUM ANNOUNCER

Your attention please. Now batting for
Henderson, number 37 Tiny Williams.

JUICE
I believe that's the last available
player Darren, the Stars are gonna have
to go with what they got from here on.

They load the bases

Tiny Williams draws a walk

Larry Swartz hits a single.

Pete Wallace gets intentionally walked.

NARRATOR
The Stars have managed to load the
bases in the bottom of the 17th with
nobody out.

There's no place to put him.

Joe comes to the plate

Big Joe Robinson strides to the plate.

STADIUM ANNOUNCER
Now batting, the catcher, Joe Robinson.

Crowd noise, cheering.

Joe holds his hand up while he digs in.

The pitcher takes the signal.

The pitch is inside by 6 inches

DARREN
Ball one. They gotta come in to big
Joe, there's no place to put him.

JUICE
A walk will win it for us Darren!

Joe draws the line

The pitcher takes the signal.

The second pitch nicks the corner of the plate.

Lou calls it a strike.

Joe steps back and draws a line in the dirt indicating that he thought the pitch was 6 inches off the plate.

Lou glares at Joe.

He steps out from behind the catcher, and points to the horizon.

LOU
Adios Amigo!

DARREN
Oh my gawd, Joe has just been tossed
and there are no more available
players.

Brad charges from the dugout with both hands in the air.

Brad and Lou square off in a heated argument.

Brad pleads with Lou to reverse the call as he has no players left.

Lou refuses and Brad becomes livid.

The beak of Brad's cap pokes Lou in the nose, so Lou grabs Brad's hat and tosses it. Brad in turn grabs Lou's hat and stomps on it. Lou tosses Brad from the game.

LOU
Hasta la vista amigo!

The wrap-up

Announcers summarize the loss.

JUICE
I've never seen that!

In all my years in baseball, I've never
seen a manager and an umpire throw each
other's hats!

They speculate as to what the repercussions could be.

Brad meets Manny

It's midnight when Brad leaves the stadium.

Out in the ballpark's parking lot, 50 year old MANNY RODRIGUEZ, is wiping the counter of his food truck, getting ready to close up.

He's the only food truck left in the lot.

Brad approaches.

BRAD

Hey, are you still open?

MANNY

Sure, what do you want?

BRAD

Nothing too spicy.

Comfort food.

Manny takes a second look at Brad.

MANNY

Hey, you're the skipper!

Brad leans up against the stand.

BRAD

Ya, and the freakin' media is all over me.

MANNY

Ah, just ignore them media...

Just win baby!

All you gotta do is win, and everybody gonna love you.

BRAD

You make it sound so easy.

I'll never forget what my dad said.

He swore I could never win as a manager.

When I retired as a player, he told me to leave baseball.

"You'll never win at that game, son"

"God has another plan for you"

"Get a real job and settle down"

Manny serves Brad a plate with a steaming enchilada.

MANNY

Ah, you're gonna be ok.

Brad digs into his enchilada, while Manny retrieves his notebook.

Manny opens the book for Brad to see.

MANNY

Look at this.

The three fastest pitchers in the league are our own Vegas Stars pitchers.

The fastest pitch so far this year is 104, by guess who?

Jr Worth!

Bonecrusher Frondall hit 97 and Lefty Gareau 96.

BRAD

What! How do you get this info?

MANNY

With my radar gun man!

BRAD

You're the radar gun guy?

MANNY

Ya man!

I been zooming my radar gun for two years.

I close up shop in the first inning and then go inside with my radar gun.

Brad looks at Manny in amazement.

BRAD

Then you open up this stand again when the game is over?

MANNY

Si!

When the fans start to leave, I leave.

Brad laughs.

BRAD

What time do you close?

MANNY

When there's no more customers!

BRAD

After every game, I have to meet the media, but when I'm done I'd sure like to chow down one of these sweet tacos.

Could you wait for me?

MANNY

Ya man, I'll stay open just for you.

BRAD

Aw, that's great buddy.

Hey, what's your name?

Manny takes a deep breath.

MANNY

Manuel Rodrigo Gonzalez.

BRAD

You OK if I just call you Manny?

MANNY

Si, Manny.

Brad starts to walk away, then stops.

BRAD

Hey Manny...

Could you do me a favor?

Keep a record of all those speeds?

That could be good information.

Manny

Sure thing Skipper, I'll do that for you. I want to see the Stars win, it's good for business!

(should there be any mention of gambling or odds?
Manny could be a small time gambler)

Part Three: The Setup

3.1 Steve seizes the opportunity

Izzy training

In New Work, Izzy is working out in the gym.

(Steve is watching?)

(a Gladys conversation when she gets home?)

Hank's morning news

Hank, the Vegas sportscaster, reports that both Brad and Lou have been fined and ordered to do some community service.

Steve is tipped off by Don

Don calls Steve and lets him know that Lou was involved in a brouhaha in last night's game and has been ordered to do community service and visit a children's hospital.

Steve calls Sheriff

Steve calls sheriff Herb Thacker.

Thacker looks at the call display and sees "Commissioner Cherniak"

He lets it go to voicemail.

STEVE

Listen carefully, Sheriff!

His message is cut short and we don't hear the remainder.

In the sheriff's office, RICK BLACK, a Vietnam veteran and friend of the Sheriff is counting his crib score.

RICK BLACK
Fifteen two, fifteen four, and pair is six.

I win again, Sheriff!

The Sheriff anxiously packs up the card game and ushers Rick out of the office.

We see that Rick Black has a wooden leg.

Thacker waits till Rick is out the door, then picks up his phone and retrieves the message.

We do not hear the message - only witness the Sheriff's deep concern.

Gladys's thoughts

Izzy is reluctantly buying into Steve's plan, but is confused. She faces a dilemma. She wants to pursue her dream but also longs to be with Lou.

Gladys is anxious to hear the latest news.

Brad sits with announcers

Star players take the field for the top of the 1st.

DARREN
And we're all set to begin game 2 of this 4 game series.

We're joined in the booth today by Star's skipper, Brad Bellows.

Brad, when can we expect to see you back on the field?

BRAD
No idea yet, Darren.

We're just waiting for the official word from the league.

Hopefully it won't be too long.

DARREN

I understand umpire Lou O'Reilly is also under suspension?

BRAD

That's right, we're both under suspension until the league

3.2 Alicia

Alicia's game

Lou and Brad arrive at the Children's Hospital. Lou begins to mow the lawn while Brad is painting the swings.

Sheriff Thacker drives his ghost car (police cruiser) into the parking lot and parks in a spot with a clear view of Lou's bike.

A nurse leads a parade of children out to the newly mowed lawn for a make-believe game of baseball.

ALICIA, a nine year old girl with a terminal disease, is playing umpire. Lou turns off the mower and goes over to assist in the game.

Alicia looks like she wants to play an umpire.

Lou notices this and retrieves an indicator from his side saddle.

He goes over to offer his assistance.

He speaks to the nurse.

Lou

Hi. Is a baseball game about to break out here?

NURSE

Well sort of, they like to play baseball.

The little girl there, Alicia, likes to pretend she's the umpire.

Lou

Well, what a coincidence!

I just happen to have my indicator.

Lou opens his palm to reveal a baseball indicator.

The nurse looks puzzled.

NURSE
What's that?

Lou
Umpires use it to keep track of the count.

Brad leans on his rake, watching.

Nurse shouts out to ALICIA FRASER, an eight year old girl who has cancer.

Alicia. This man is a real umpire, he has something to show you.

Lou displays the indicator and demonstrates what it does.

Alicia lets out a shriek of excitement.

ALICIA
Oh boy, we're really gonna have fun now!

Alicia takes charge and begins organizing the scene.

ALICIA
Hayley, you're the catcher. You squat down right here like this.

She demonstrates.

Lou finds a piece of cardboard and makes a home plate to put down.

Then she orders David to stand in and pretend to be the batter.

ALICIA
David, you be the batter.

She motions to him.

ALICIA
Mr Lou, you're the pitcher ok? You go over there and you're going to throw the baseball ok?

Alicia dons her mask, holds onto her giant chest protector as best she can and stations herself behind the child in the wheelchair and pretends to be the umpire.

David, the child who she wants to be the batter, is not participating yet.

ALICIA
Batter up!

Batter up!

C'mon David, you're the batter, get over here and be the batter. Mr Lou is gonna pitch the baseball now.

David's mother helps David gather the courage. She finds him a Star Wars sword to use as a baseball bat.

David takes his place as a batter, albeit with a very awkward stance.

ALICIA
Play ball!

Lou has been given a sponge baseball. He takes an exaggerated wind up and delivers a looping toss towards the child in the wheelchair.

It misses the mark and lands beside the wheelchair. Alicia removes her mask and protector and retrieves the ball. She takes the ball to the home plate in order to demonstrate that the ball must cross the plate.

ALICIA
Mr Lou the ball must cross over top of the plate to be a strike, ok?

So throw the ball again and this time make it cross over the plate, ok?

Lou nods approval and once again takes an exaggerated wind up before throwing the ball into the lap of the child in the wheelchair.

ALICIA
Striiiiike!

They erupt in applause and Alicia jumps for joy.

She's not done however. She retrieves the ball and once again demonstrates that the ball has to cross over the plate.

Lou jumps on the opportunity to further educate Alicia.

Lou
If the whole ball crosses over the
plate, it's a strike.

But what if the ball crosses over the edge? Do you
think it's a strike or a ball?

Alicia shrugs and waits for Lou's answer, with great
anticipation.

ALICIA
Ummm...I'm not sure, is it a strike?

Lou
Yes, it's a strike because it caught
the corner.

Alicia is super excited to learn this tidbit. She wants to play
again. She scurries about finding her mask and protector again
and takes her place behind the catcher.

Lou is humored by this. A wide smile spreads across his face.

ALICIA
Play ball!
Batter up!
C'mon David, you're the batter and Mr Lou is gonna
throw the baseball again.

Once again Lou takes his exaggerated wind up and tosses the
ball, making sure it crosses the edge of the plate.

ALICIA
Striiiiike!
It caught the corner!

They erupt in applause once again.

Lou
Yes it did Alicia. You're a good little
umpire.

The nurse quickly moves in, collecting the ball and the plate.

NURSE WENDY
Ok, it's nap time. Everybody inside and
let's get ready for your nap.

Nurse takes Lou aside.

NURSE WENDY

The excitement is good for Alicia, but she is very sick and will tire quickly so she needs her rest.

Lou

Oh, okay.

Could you do me a favor and keep me posted...you know, regarding her health.

The nurse smiles wryly.

NURSE WENDY

Of course.

Lou nods but before he leaves he goes to Alicia and gives her a pat on the head and some words of encouragement.

3.3 The tailgate meeting

Sheriff Thacker pulls his cruiser into the parking lot, where he has a clear view of the goings on.

Lou and Brad have kept their distance and are now out in the parking lot.

Lou is about to mount his bike when Brad calls out to him.

BRAD

Hey blue!

Lou glances over his shoulder.

Brad holds up a can of beer.

Got time for a cold one?

Lou grins and hangs his helmet over the handlebars, before making his way over to Brad's truck.

Brad is standing near the rear of his truck, with the tailgate down. There is a beer cooler on the tailgate and an opened can of beer in his right hand.

Brad holds a can of unopened beer out with his left hand for Lou, who accepts it.

BRAD
You changed my life.

LOU (SARCASTICALLY)
Oh really.

Brad laughs.

BRAD
Well in a roundabout way for sure.

Afterall, every incident and every person changes you a bit, right?

LOU
I suppose.

BRAD
But what you did back there was something special.

LOU
Thanks.

Brad changes his tone to sound slightly playful.

BRAD
I'm not saying I agree with your call.

But I do have more respect.

Brad holds out his beer for a toast.

Cheers!

They both take a swig.

LOU
I wish a few others shared your view.

BRAD
You're new here?

LOU
Yup, I just arrived here two days ago.
I worked the All-Star game last week.

Brad is shocked!

BRAD
What!

You worked the All-Star game in New York and last night's game was your first in the PCL?

LOU
You got it Pontiac.

Lou takes a swig.

BRAD
That's freaking amazing, you got a good introduction to baseball in Vegas huh?

So what happened?

LOU
Apparently the union thinks I need more seasoning.

I don't know what the hell is going on actually.

But I'm being re-evaluated by somebody.

How's baseball treating you? I hear the fans aren't too happy with you.

BRAD
Ya, but the fans are the least of my worries.

So long as my players aren't affected, I could care less what they think.

I just worry everyday about the contract I signed off on.

LOU
What? Are you working for nuthin'?

BRAD
Not exactly, but I could end up with nuthin'.

The big club guaranteed me they wouldn't raid my roster for the season.

They wanna see if I can win. They expect a championship.

I signed off on it. If I don't win, my career as a manager is likely over.

I'll be back in Alberquerque working in the steel mill.

Brad holds up his right hand, showing a missing part of his ring finger.

The mill ended my pitching career just after I had a good year in single A.

I lost my change-up finger. I actually thought I wouldn't miss it, but I never had my good stuff after that accident.

What about you? Were you a player?

LOU
Ya, I skipped single A.

Played three seasons in Tulsa.

BRAD
How'd you do?

LOU
Won the batting title all three years.

Good contact hitter but just average power.

And no wheels.

If you have no wheels, scouts wanna see power.

Ya, I'm bitter.

But I'm living the dream, and I gotta get back to the show.

BRAD
Don't we all.

Whatever it takes to win, that's my life.

LOU
And I gotta maintain control of the game.

If it means tossing a guy like who over steps his bounds, then hey, it's adios amigo one more time.

BRAD
I get it.

You gotta do what you gotta do.

I'll keep my distance and find another way to win.

He touches the beak of Lou's cap.

And I'll leave that cap alone.

They both laugh followed by a moment of silence.

BRAD

Ever wonder what you might be doing if you didn't have baseball?

LOU

Never.

I don't know how to do anything else.

BRAD

Just a couple of washed baseball players trying to earn a living.

Moment of silence.

LOU

The manager of the hotel I'm staying at runs a sports book.

He don't know shit about baseball.

Maybe I'd start my own book and run that sucker outta business!

BRAD

Ha! Now you're sounding like a resident. Welcome to Las Vegas!

Lou places his empty beer can back in the box and stands up.

LOU

Well, until we meet again...

Adios my friend.

The two shake hands.

BRAD

Adios to you.

They both place their left hand on the other's right shoulder as they have truly developed a mutual admiration for each other.

Part Four: The Fascinations

4.1 The arrest and phone calls

The sting

Lou sees a police car in his rear view mirror.

He pulls over to let it pass.

To his surprise, it pulls up behind him.

Red and blue lights are flashing.

Rick Black is watching from the coffee shop.

The Sheriff walks straight to Lou's bike and goes into the saddle bag.

The cop retrieves a bag and takes a whiff.

The cop grins.

SHERIFF
That's a lot of sugar.

You baking a cake?

Lou realizes he's being framed. (moment of realization)

Rick Black Witnesses

RICK BLACK is an auxiliary policeman and war veteran. He has a wooden leg.

Rick was just finishing up his coffee and donut in a cafe, when he saw the arrest being made.

He ambles out of the cafe just as Lou is being put into the back seat.

RICK
Wait for me, Sheriff!

He opens the door and leans in to speak to Sheriff Thatcher.

I missed my ride.

Sheriff holds his hand up as if to motion "No".

SHERIFF
Hang on. I'll be right back.

Lou's 1st call to Isabella

Upon entering the jail, Lou is given permission to make one phone call. He calls Izzy.

IZZY
Hello.

LOU
Guess what?

I'm in jail.

IZZY
What! Why?

LOU
I was framed by a Sheriff.

He pulled me over and then pulled a bag of coke out of my saddle bag.

IZZY
Why did you have coke in your possession?

Lou is surprised and angry that Izzy would even suggest it was his own.

LOU
I didn't!

Somebody planted it!

Don't tell me you don't believe me.

IZZY
No. Of course I believe you.

You gamble a bit, which I hate, but you don't do drugs and I like you for that.

But why would a Sheriff do that?

LOU
Who knows.

Whoever it is, probably wants me out of the picture.

Maybe I should just plead guilty.

Take the slap on the wrist and be back on the ballfield.

Gladys, in her pajamas, eavesdrops on Izzy and hears the conversation.

IZZY
Don't you dare!

You're not guilty, are you?

LOU
No.

IZZY
Then you're not pleading guilty!

That's not you.

I'll fly to Vegas.

LOU
Why would you do that?

There's nothing you can do here that you can't do out there.

Maybe there's more you can do out there.

IZZY
What do you mean?

LOU
Steve said it was the union that sent me down.

Check that out. Who exactly is the union.

Was it the union?

Could it be anyone else?

Sheriff calls Steve

SHERIFF
The cat's in the bag.

STEVE
Good work Herb.
You better call Don and let him know.
Don't let on you're spoken to me.

SHERIFF
Of course.

Sheriff calls Don

DON
Hello.

SHERIFF
Is this Don Dykstra?

DON
Yes.

SHERIFF
Do you know a Mr. Lou O'Reilly?

DON
Yes.

SHERIFF
We have him in custody.
He's being charged with possession of a
narcotic for the purposes of
trafficking.

Team introduced

Stars lose.

Announcers talk about disappointing loss.

Some players mentioned?

Joe is a dick in the dressing room.

Brad has to face Hank again.

Don visits jail

Don is shocked and puzzled as he races to the jail.

Once inside, he quizzes Lou.

Lou vehemently denies the charge.

Claims it was planted and the Sheriff is in on it.

Don confronts the Sheriff.

SHERIFF HERB THACKER
That's what they all say.

2nd Manny meeting

Brad is happy to see Manny in his food truck.

He complains a bit about Hank and the state of affairs.

The team is still a few games out of the playoff picture.

Pitchers in particular are struggling.

They're giving up too many runs.

It's a combination of many things.

They just aren't getting any lucky breaks.

Murphy's law!

Manny is more upbeat.

He has data on the pitchers.

Brad is intrigued but it doesn't help.

Star pitchers are all among the fastest in mph.

But the team leads the league in runs against.

4.2 The team and the trial

Steve hires Izzy

Steve appears at the gym where Izzy is working out.

Izzy appears upset.

STEVE
What's wrong?

You look upset.

Izzy explains Lou's arrest.

Steve plays dumb, pretending not to know anything.

STEVE
Maybe I can help.

We have programs to help individuals who suffer from addictions.

Izzy is confused.

Steve asks if she might be interested in a part-time job.

Izzy accepts.

She will be working with Steve as his personal assistant.

Court opens

Inside the courthouse, Lou is seated obediently in the defendant's seat.

CLERK
All rise.

Everyone in the courtroom stands.

JUDGE
Be seated.

The clerk rises to read the notice.

CLERK
The state of Nevada vs Mr. Lou
O'Reilly.

The announcers set the stage.

The Stars desperately need to start winning or
their playoffs hopes will disappear.

They're on the road.

Fans back in Vegas are calling for Brad to be
fired.

The announcers expand on the controversy.

The Stars take the lead.

The opposition battles back.

Score tied in the 5th inning.

Gladys sees aura

Izzy returns home to find Gladys at the mail box
beside her front door.

Gladys plays dumb, pretending not to have heard
the conversation last night.

She asks about Lou.

Izzy gives a vague answer.

GLADYS
Oh my dear!

Something is wrong, I can tell.

Gladys gazes at the space above Izzy's head. Then touches the space as if she feels a magnetic force.

Oh my God!

Something big has happened!

Or, is it about to happen?

Izzy is a bit taken aback by her seemingly extra sensory perceptions. Perhaps she has extra powers of some kind.

IZZY
Well, I do have a lot on my mind at this moment.

GLADYS
Tell me child, what's your birthdate?
Let us go inside and I will do a reading for you.

IZZY
What kind of reading?

GLADYS
Every living thing has a vibration.
Vibrations begin at birth and assume various cycles based on the sounds they identify with.

Gladys now has Izzy in the kitchen.

She sits down at the kitchen table, gathers a pen and paper and begins to write.

When were you born?

IZZY
December 22, 1975.

GLADYS
Okay, you're in a 9-year.

IZZY
What does that mean?

GLADYS
Well, 9 is the last number so this is a good year to wrap things up.

Whether it's a project or a relationship...anything that has been a part of your life for the past few years would be in that cycle.

It's a good time to say goodbye.

But just for a short time.

Izzy almost collapses, catching herself on a chair and propping herself back up and awkwardly into a sitting position.

Oh my goodness, are you okay?

IZZY
Yes, tell me more.

DA lays out the charges

He holds up a bag of white powder.

Game builds tension

5th to 8th inning.

Both teams are scoring runs.

Several Star pitchers have struggled with walks and bad luck.

Sheriff testifies

Jr walks in winning run

Meanwhile, the Stars are in the bottom of the 9th.

Jr comes in to relieve.

Announcers hype this young man's arm.

Jr aims and fires.

And misses.

Fans and announcers react.

He misses again and again.

Loading the bases.

Jr walks in the winning run.

Stars lose.

Judges ruling

Judge Jackson is seated.

The clerk passes him the verdict.

JUDGE JACKSON
The jury finds Mr. Lou O'Reilly guilty.

I hereby sentence you, Lou O'Reilly, to
??? years imprisonment at the Las Vegas
Correctional facility.

He slams his gavel down.

Lou's plea

Lou leaps to his feet.

LOU
I'm innocent! I was framed! That man
framed me (pointing to Sheriff Thacker)

Several police officers leap into action.

They handcuff Lou.

The DA and Sheriff shake hands.

The judge takes a drink of water.

Lou is led out in handcuffs.

Joe is a jerk somehow

Probably in the clubhouse.

Maybe an interview with Hank.

Could slight Jr or his teammates.

Or just be all about himself.

Sheriff captures Rick Black

He races out of the courthouse.

He realizes Rick Black must be kept out of plain sight.

Finds Rick Black and encourages him to jump into his cruiser.

Rick is maybe a bit thick.

The sheriff tells him he has a project for him.

He drives him up the mountain to his A-frame cabin on a small lake.

Says his wife really wants a retaining wall at their summer cabin.

They stop at a super store on the way out and pick up supplies.

He drops Rick off. Rick notices they forgot to buy chewing tobacco.

Players introduced?

(should some players be introduced as characters?)

(so far, only Jr, Joe, Ralph and Gizmo)

Hank grills poor Brad

Jr walked in the winning run.

Hank blames Brad.

It's brutal right now, being the Stars manager.

3rd Manny meeting

Brad is at rock bottom.

The team is losing.

Some fans want him fired.

He begins to doubt himself.

Manny has some data to look at.

Star pitchers have high mph.

But they lead the league in runs against.

He just can't find a solution.

At least Manny has good tacos.

Part Five: The Frustrations

5.1 Lou goes to prison

Kyrone's greeting

Inmates are gathered in the library when Lou arrives.

They're odd characters, playing various games and doing different things.

More jeers and catcalls.

KYRONE PEEL is obviously the leader of the pack.

He steps forward to confront Lou and has a menacing look on his face as he stares at Lou.

KYRONE
Well, well, well...

What do we have here?

A baseball umpire!

You know, we bet on baseball here,
don't you?

Who do you like, Blue?

Lou looks uncomfortable.

LOU
Sorry, I don't gamble.

Kyrone raises an eyebrow.

He looks over his shoulder at some other inmates.

KYRONE
Oh, listen to the umpire!

He says he doesn't want to gamble.
Well, that's just a shame!

Okay.

I presume you'll be contributing to our
holy service then, won't you?

LOU
Sorry. I'm not a religious man.

Kyrone grabs Lou by the throat and pins him
against a wall.

He glares at Lou with a threatening look.

KYRONE
You're gonna need help here pal.

You're gonna need all the help you can
get!

The other inmates join in and taunt Lou.

INMATE 1
Kill the ump!

Much laughter and banter.

Lou looks defiant.

(Maybe this scene should be more amiable?)

Izzy learns Sheriff's name

Lou calls Izzy from prison.

He now knows the Sheriff's name is Herb Thacker.

He tells her of Alicia

He tells Izzy the prisoners are allowed to gamble..

She reiterates: no gambling!

Izzy's first day on the job

Steve is just a bit cozier than Izzy expected.

She mentions to Gladys that she received some unwanted complements from Steve.

Gladys assures her that is completely normal and all men do that.

Then she goes on to tell of how voluptuous she was in her younger years....

Kyrone loses

Lou is watching as the scores come on the prison tv.

Kyrone's team has lost.

Kyrone is a broken man.

Lou feels sympathy.

Rick stuck in cabin

He's a bit puzzled, he sees no need for a retaining wall and the rocks are a ways off in the distance and he has no wheelbarrow.

He fishes with a makeshift pole.

Don's a jerk

Don visits the prison to collect his winnings.

Lou watches from the sidelines.

Don is an arrogant ass.

He mocks the losers as he collects their bills.

He makes a big production out of paying the one winner and invites all to join in on the fun.

Hank roasts Brad

The Stars are wrapping up a series that they split.

Post game media scrum.

Hank questions statistics on runs against etc.

Manny confirms the issue

Out in the parking lot, Brad is still musing over the numbers that Manny has.

He is puzzled because his pitchers have the highest MPH scores but have allowed the most runs.

Brad remembers what Lou said about Joe being stationery.

He asks Manny about that.

Manny confirms that Joe is very stationary and mentions that Hawaii's catcher, Ralph Reid is so mobile that he has to change positions so the radar gun can see the ball.

Brad checks Hawaii's stats and finds that they have the fewest runs against.

5.2 Brad trades Joe

Gladys learns of Izzy's unease

Izzy mentions that Steve is surprisingly close to her sometimes and gives her unwanted compliments.

Gladys brushes it off saying that all men are like that.

Then she tells stories about her younger years, when she was voluptuous.

Kyrone spills

Kyrone and Lou are seated at a table.

Kyrone is anxious to learn from Lou.

Lou is looking better but still has a black eye.

KYRONE

Lou, do you know anything about addiction?

Lou

Addiction?

Addiction to what?

KYRONE

Addiction to anything.

Did you ever crave anything so much you couldn't stop yourself?

Lou

Well, I consider myself to be a borderline alcoholic.

I mean, I can live without it.

But on the outside, I pretty much gotta have a drink every night.

KYRONE

That's not addiction, that's normal.

Let me tell you something you probably don't know; gambling is the only pure addiction.

It's 100 percent mental.

Alcohol, nicotine, all the others are partially physical.

Gambling is 100% mental.

The rush I get from a win is too much.

I can't stop. I just can't.

I've lost everything to gambling.

Two houses, my marriage, my life, everything.

I can't stop.

It's my worst nightmare.

Now the warden is allowing us inmates to bet on baseball.

I gotta do it, I can't stop.

I keep losing.

The harder I try, the worse it gets.

But it's all I have to live for.

And if I don't win, I'll never be able to hire a decent lawyer, who can get me outta here.

I shoulda been out months ago, but I keep losing.

Lou raises an eyebrow.

He glares at Kyrone and offers some cutting sympathy.

Lou
Let me tell you something you might not know.

Kyrone is all ears.

You know shit about baseball.

Kyrone looks cautiously angry.

Yesterday, you took Chicago.

Tampa was a lead pipe cinch.

Kyrone looks bewildered.

Smokey had the start.

Gibbons was behind the dish.

And ol' John Davidson was behind the plate.

I would'a put money on Tampa.

But I'm not a betting man.

Besides, it's part of my agreement.

I can't gamble.

Kyrone is intrigued.

KYRONE

You mean, you can tell who's gonna win?

Lou

No, nobody knows that, but pitching is not the only thing to consider.

You wanna know who the catcher is.

And the umpire.

Lou leans back and takes a sip of water.

Kyrone waits for the perfect moment.

KYRONE

Can you help me?

Lou looks directly at Kyrone.

Lou

If you want advice from me, then you have to find the information.

Get every newspaper, every piece of information you can get your hands on.

I can help you.

I can do that, I just can't gamble.

KYRONE

I can get all that.

He pauses and looks bewilderingly at Lou.

Why does the ump matter?

Lou's formula

Lou smiles wryly.

Lou
The combination of a good catcher and
an ump that calls the high strike,
gives advantage to a first-ball
fastball pitcher.

That's why I need to see who's catching
and who's behind the plate first.

Lou pours over the sports pages.

He recommends betting on Atlanta

Meanwhile a guard is watching a video monitor and
witnessing Lou participate in placing bets.

Kyrone calls Atlanta

Kyrone takes to his pulpit and delivers another
sermon.

He ends by announcing the favored cities.

KYRONE
The good lord blesses us today, for he
has sent a message for all good people.

The chosen ones!

The sacred ones!

Glory be to thee!

Say it Loud!

Atlaaaantaaaa!

The inmates all hail their leader.

Sheriff delivers groceries

Sheriff forgets Rick's chewing tobacco.

Atlanta wins

Lou and Kyrone are watching baseball on the prison TV.

Atlanta wins!

The inmates celebrate.

Game wrap up

On the ballfield the Stars are still struggling to put a string of wins together.

Joe strikes out to end the game.

Brad trades Joe

Telephone conversation with Bobby Smith, the owner of the big club.

Brad wants the okay from Bobby to trade Joe.

Bobby agrees.

Huge heat from Hank

Hank is doing his daily sports broadcast on the local TV station.

He is angry and perplexed.

HANK

The Stars have traded their best player
for two bald guys.

Lou is watching from prison.

Don's 3 losses

Don in his office, taking stock of the recent
days bets.

He has suffered losses 3 days in a row due to Lou
helping Kyrone and the inmates place their bets.

5.3 Lou in violation

Steve overrules Don

Phone conversation.

Don wants Lou released on good behaviour.

Steve has seen the video.

Steve makes the final decision that Lou has
violated the gambling clause.

Don is upset.

Kyrone preaching

Kyrone still preaching and promoting the picks
that Lou had determined.

Lou receives the fax

He sees the same video that the guard saw.

Steve seizes on the opportunity to invoke the
"gambling clause", which denies Lou early release
on good behavior.

Q: Could Steve do this directly with the warden?

Lou is handed Steve's decision by way of a fax.

He is devastated and angry.

Sheriff delivers more supplies

Forgets Rick's chewing tobacco again.

Lou now suspects Steve

Lou calls Izzy with the news of the violation.

As the fax was sent from the commissioner's office, Lou suspects Steve is behind the whole thing.

Don flips to Lou

Don is now angry at Steve about the decision to further detain Lou.

Don visits Lou in prison.

He appears to show real sympathy for Lou's situation.

They have a conversation.

Don asks about the witness and Lou mentions that he had a wooden leg and was wearing a Vietnam veterans hat.

Don's eyes light up

Don begins search

Don visits Lou in prison.

He suggests Lou refrain from helping Kyrone.

Don re-enforces his commitment to finding the witness.

Don leaves.

Gladys dismisses Lou's theory

Gladys mysteriously appears again as Izzy gets home.

She is anxious to hear the latest news.

Izzy explains Lou's latest issue and his suspicion that Steve is behind everything.

Gladys dismisses the theory as rubbish.

Stars new guys

The team is starting to click.

Gizmo is burning a lot of innings.

The pitching staff is happy with Ralph.

The pool table scene

The clubhouse has a pool table.

Gizmo, Ralph, and Jr are playing when Brad enters to check on Gizmo's arm.

Brad witnesses Jr playing pool.

Jr is a very good shot.

Conversation leads to someone mentioning that Jr is also a scratch golfer.

Brad is surprised to learn Jr has these skills and looks enlightened.

Part Six: The Nightmare

6.1 Don finds Rick Black and makes offer

Gladys hears uncomfortable news.

This is a turning point for Gladys as she begins to see Steve's bad side.

Steve touched her or went too far somehow.

Don finds Rick Black

Finds the A-frame cabin.

Rick recognizes Don and opens up about his situation.

Don explains the Lou situation.

Rick recounts what he witnessed.

Don is recording the conversation.

Don calls Big Boss again

Don leaves the prison armed with new knowledge about Rick Black.

He heads back to his office and phones Big Boss.

DON
And I got an umpire by the balls right now.

He's stuck in prison, and there ain't any way out.

Except by me.

I hold the key.

I know the witness. I know him well.

I can do this.

Big Boss repeats his previous warning, that fixing a baseball game is very difficult to do.

Big Boss's stark warning

BB lays it on the line.

If Don wants to go through with this it had better work out.

Don's offer to Lou

I have some very good news!

He plays the recording.

Lou celebrates!

Don looks more reserved.

Lou looks surprised as Don is acting unusually.

DON
(quietly and matter-of-factly)
We only need to work out a few details
Lou. I'm gonna get you outta here.

This guy with the wooden leg, no one
knows who this guy is...

Except me.

Understand?

I have to look at myself and ask myself
a question.

Why would I do this?

Why would I help a convict redeem
himself if it's of no apparent value to
me?

After all, it would only enrage Steve,
who is a very powerful man.

If I'm going to take all that risk, I
need a reward - or else it's just not
worth the bother.

Do you understand?

Lou stares disdainfully at him.

So, here's what I need from you. The
PCL playoffs begin in a couple of
weeks.

I can arrange a shortage of umpires.

I'll just close out their rooms. That
way, you're assured of getting the nod
behind the plate.

Then you just...

LOU
You want me to fix a game?

Lou looks defiant.

DON
Ya.

Just one game.

Maybe two, depending how the series goes.

Don smiles wryly.

Just don't call any strikes against one team.

It's that easy.

Lou wants to think it over

Izzy rejects

Lou calls Izzy.
He tells her about Don's offer.

She demands he reject.

Brad orders 100 pitches per day

(Jr will be the relief pitcher in the final scene so he must learn immaculate control)

Montage of a game lost.

Jr issued some walks.

Players file into the dressing room.

Brad addresses the team.

He orders Jr to throw 1000 fastballs in the next 10 days, 100 per day.

BRAD
You're not seeing any game action till I see you throw a thousand fastballs.

One hundred every day, for ten days.

No curveballs.
No sliders.
No knuckleballs.
No split finger screwballs.
Nothin' but fastballs.
Got it?

Jr nods reluctantly.

Jr toiling

He's working hard and throwing 100 pitches per day.

6.2 The differing opinions

Steve selling Izzy

Steve has been doing a good job of convincing her that he is actually trying to get Lou out.

Lou insists it's Steve

Another call to Izzy.

Lou is certain Steve is behind this.

Izzy is still not convinced.

Lou tells her about Don's offer.

She insists he not take it.

Don's feels betrayed

Don visits the prison.

Lou informs him he will not take the deal.

Don is livid.

DON
We were friends.

We were in this together, like a team.

I really wanted to help you.

To get you outta here and back to
freedom.

But if you're unwilling to help...

If you're just gonna be a stubborn mule
about this, then guess what?

You can rot in here.

Don exits.

Izzy spots photo

While at work, Izzy notices a framed photo on the wall.

It's Steve holding a line of several fish while standing in front of a cabin beside another man.

The photo is signed "Come again, Cheers Herb"

Gladys hears of the poster

Izzy returns home and once again meets Gladys seemingly by chance.

Izzy is happy to share what she saw at the office today - the photo of Steve standing beside someone she suspects could be Sheriff Herb Thacker.

Gladys is intrigued and invites herself inside for a cup of tea.

This time she determines that Izzy is in "7-day", which she claims is the perfect time to discover hidden information.

Gladys begins to see that Lou may be telling the truth and that perhaps Steve is the man behind the sting.

She tells Izzy that she knows "the million dollar" lawyer, Randolph Buckingham III, who could definitely get Lou out of prison but he needs one million dollars up front and he guarantees a positive result.

Jr has mastered his control

Huge improvement.

He is hitting the target with immaculate control.

6.3 Izzy's punch

Izzy's promise

Lou calls again?

Now Izzy knows Lou is correct and Steve has worked with Sheriff Herb Thacker.

Izzy now has a lawyer, Randolph III "the million dollar lawyer".

She promises Lou she will win the championship, hire Randolph, and win his release.

Kyrone preaches

Kyrone is still on a roll.

Broadcasting to his followers the pick of the day.

He preaches from his makeshift pulpit.

KYRONE
Baltimorrre!!!

Izzy's punch

He wants a big gig in Atlantic City.

He has been negotiating this for a while.

He has it rigged where he will make a fortune.

She finds the contract and realizes he is about to make a fortune and it does not guarantee her a title fight.

She moves close to him, staring him in the eye.

IZZY
You bastard, you want Atlantic City?

You can have Atlantic City!

She punches him square in the nose.

Steve falls backward and lands in a sitting position against the wall.

He holds his bloodied nose with his hand.

Izzy's call

She picks up the phone and begins to arrange her own title fight.

Goodbye to Gladys

Part Seven: The Deal

7.1 Izzy loses

Izzy arrives in Vegas

Lots of media hype.

Questions about her opponent "Olga the Butcher"

Jr is back in action

Announcers see the turnaround.

He is back in the lineup as a reliever.

He's now a master of control.

The team is on a roll.

The championship bout

Lou is in the prison's tv room watching the fight.

Every round the boxers come out and touch gloves to begin the round.

An evenly matched fight.

Izzy is doing ok.

In the final round Olga does something different.

Olga fakes like she is going to touch gloves but then hauls off and belts Izzy with a right upper cut.

Izzy takes the blow square on the chin.

She collapses to the canvas unconscious.

Izzy rushed to hospital

Lou sees the travesty happen live.

Lou's grief

He is beside himself in grief.

Worried about Izzy.

Manny talks odds

7.2 Lou accepts

Izzy still in a coma

Lou watches on tv in prison

Lou accepts the deal

Lou is at rock bottom.

He transforms somehow.

Maybe he smashes something.

The new Lou accepts Don's offer.

Don finally has Lou in the bag.

He smiles.

Stars sweep Phoenix

Announcers set the stage

It's coming together for the Star's

Don coaches PD

At the trial, Don educates the PD.
He introduces Rick Black to Jacob Herb.

Lou testifies

Rick Black testifies

Sheriff pleads the fifth

Lou is released

7.3 Visits Izzy

Lou rushes to hospital

Held up by bureaucracy...

Parking issues.

Finally gets to her room.

All bad news.

Not expected to live.

Don's guarantee to Big Boss

Another guarantee?

Why?

Big Boss's warning

Final warning?

Lou and Don in Vancouver

Don claims, so long as the first two games are a split, you won't have to suit up in Van

Game 1, Van wins

Gizmo throws complete game, saving the arms

Don explains his plan to Lou. He would be banking on a final game that involved the Stars.

Don would be cheering.

Lou has come 180, has agreed to break the number one rule in umpiring - don't accept favors or bribes.

Maybe Lou could be seen to be struggling with his decision.

Or, maybe he has fully transformed into a criminal.

Or, maybe the audience doesn't know if he is faking or real.

Game 2, Stars win

Game 3, Van wins

Game 4 in Vegas

Part Eight: The Final Game

8.1 Pregame

Brad sees Manny setting up

Brad stops for a chat.

He learns that the Stars are heavily favored and Manny finds that unusual.

Announcers set the stage

Darren and Juice hype it up while we see a montage.

Crew lining field.

Teams warming up.

Mascot.

Ralph putting on mask.

Don in perch

DON
Just don't swing!

For the love of God, stop swinging the
bat!

Home plate meeting

Managers and umpires meet at home plate.

Lou is behind the plate for the 2nd straight
time, the Stars won game 4 easily.

Brad would be happy and confident.

Lou could be uncomfortable as this time he has to
make sure Vancouver wins.

He is betraying his old friend Brad.

8.2 Game 5

Stars jump to a lead

Go with Gizmo

Ralph reports to Brad that the zone is extremely small.

RALPH

He says his zone has been established.

Brad orders Gizmo to come into the game despite the fact that he threw yesterday.

Announcers worry.

Gizmo comes in throwing lotsa knuckleballs.

Vancouver swinging and missing.

Don going crazy in the perch.

Gizmo gets er done.

Jr enters in 9th

Announcers set the scene.

It's the 9th and Gizmo is tiring.

Stars holding on to a slim lead.

Brad calls time and begins to walk towards the mound.

He taps his right arm signaling that he wants the right hander to come in.

He arrives at the mound and takes the ball from the pitcher.

Jr arrives at the mound and Brad hands him the ball.

Jr takes his warmup pitches.

He's at the top of his game.

Has been throwing incredibly well in his last few outings.

Batters are swinging and missing at high pitches.

Don going crazy.

Some good looking pitches called "ball" by Lou

8.3 Game 5 ending

Manny notices

He is radaring behind the screen and notices that Lou is squeezing the zone.

He reports this to Brad.

Manny fights through crowd

Manny decides to report this to Brad so he leaves his position behind the backstop and begins to head over to talk to Brad.

Announcers add tension

Jr walks the bases loaded as he is not getting any calls.

Don on the edge

Manny reports to Brad

Finally Manny reaches the dugout where Brad is.

He informs Brad that Lou is calling an extremely small strike zone.

Maybe they put two and two together as they recall the unusual odds on this game.

Brad's realization

Brad begins to realize what Lou is up against.

(He must have known about the prison sentence)

Huge time pressure.

Lou is still squeezing the zone.

Vancouver has drawn three walks while striking out twice.

DARREN

Five long months of baseball with one hundred and fifty-four games, and it's boiled down to one half inning.

We're just three outs away from a league championship!

JUICE JONES

Three outs seems like an eternity right now Darren.

Scoreboard shows Stars 9, Canadians 8

Close up of Jr on pitcher's mound

Lou has been squeezing zone, Jr is sweating

Facing the speedy lead off hitter

DARREN

Jr Worth trying to close this one out.

Jr throws and pitch appears to catch corner

Lou calls it a ball.

JUICE JONES

Home plate umpire O'Reilly being pretty stingy it seems with those corners.

He remembers Lou as being all about fairness.

Does he converse with Lou?

Does he show anger?

How does he show his betrayal?

This is where he shows the final stage of his transformation from confrontational to perceptive

Brad has been betrayed by Lou but he remembers their conversation about fairness.

Teams trade runs.

Announcers summarize the plays and the scores.

Top of the ninth inning.

Score is 9-8 for the Stars.

Don on the edge

Vancouver is coming up to bat.

Brad's mound meeting

Brad steps out of the dugout and calls time.

He begins walking towards the mound.

JUICE JONES

Here comes Bellows. He wants a word
with his pitcher.

Meeting on the mound between Brad, Jr, and Ralph.

Brad looks at Ralph.

BRAD

How's his stuff.

RALPH REID

Spot on.

Jr interjects.

JR WORTH

Blue's not giving me nuthin' skipper.

I keep hitting my spots and he ain't callin' nuthin'!

Brad looking at Jr.

BRAD

OK, just keep breathing and take your
time.

Brad turns and faces Ralph.

BRAD
Speak to Lou.

Ralph looks surprised.

RALPH REID
Huh? You want me to talk to Blue?

BRAD
Ya.

First, set your spot where you want it, over the edge,
just like always.

Show it to him.

Then ask him if it's a strike.

Find out where his zone is.

Brad then turns and looks to Jr.

BRAD
The glove.
Focus on the glove.
Just hit the glove, that's all you gotta do.

Part Nine: The FallOut

9.1 The call

Brad's clear instructions

Brad has all the infielders around him, but he speaks directly to Ralph, the catcher.

Brad instructs Ralph to position the glove directly over the edge.

Ralph objects and says they haven't been getting that call all game.

Brad insists.

As the mound meeting breaks up, the announcers set the stage.

Bases loaded, full count on the batter.

In his perch, Don looks frustrated.

DON DYCKSTRA
Lord in heaven, someone, please...

Tell them "don't swing".

Please, please, don't swing!

Ralph's question

Ralph sets up with his target over the inside corner.

He leans his head to one side and speaks over his shoulder to Lou.

RALPH REID
Is this a strike?

Lou calls time

Lou immediately has a flashback of Alicia asking the same question.

He steps out from behind the plate.

Lou
Time!

The Vancouver player and Ralph both look back at Lou.

Lou is hiding his face from them.

Up close we see tears welling in his eyes.

The two players approach him as if to help.

He brushes them away.

This is his moment of truth.

Lou
Damn black flies!

He motions them back to their boxes.

Lou
Play ball!

Ralph has the target set.

Junior's moment

Jr is focusing.

Jr delivers.

Pitch catches the corner (from Lou's perspective)

Ball smacks right into the glove.

Lou calls the K

Lou flies into his trademark punch

Lou
Strike !!!

Stars dugout erupts.

The announcers are jubilant.

DARREN
That's it, that's it.

Stars win, Stars win.

Don's fury

In his perch, Don erupts in anger.

DON DYCKSTRA
What the fuck?!

Don's eyes light up with rage!

DON DYCKSTRA
Kill him!

Kill the ump!

You hear me?

I want his head on a fucking pike!

Fans burst onto the field

Umpires leave the field

Jr carried high

Lou enters change room

Brad hoisted by team

Announcers on the field

Brad retrieves game ball

9.2 Izzy's rescue

Don is waiting

Outside the umpire's dressing room, Don is holding a baseball bat and waiting for Lou.

Lou leaves umpire room

He's the last umpire to leave the room.

He exits to face Don.

Don has Lou cornered

Don reminisces and toys with Lou.

All appears to be lost.

Izzy's rescue

Izzy appears in the distance.

Neither Lou nor Don see her.

Don charges Lou and takes a violent swing.

Lou sidesteps and avoids the blow but he falls down.

Don has Lou at his mercy and looks ready to deliver a brutal blow.

Izzy runs and flies into her patented "dancing tarantula" kick.

Her foot connects with Don's jaw and he falls to the ground unconscious.

Thugs appear

Two of Big Boss's thugs appear.

They size up the situation, wondering what happened.

They pick up Don's limp body and carry him away.

The embrace

Lou and Izzy have a long embrace.

9.3 The game ball

Lou and Izzy leave

Brad is on the field

Brad has the ball

BRAD
Hey Blue!

Lou turns to see Brad holding a baseball.

I thought you might wanna keep this.

He holds up the baseball.

The game ball!

Brad tosses it to Lou.

Lou reaches out with his left hand open.

The ball smacks into his bare hand and Lou closes his fingers around it.

***** THE END *****