

MONEYBALL

By

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Revisions by Steven Soderbergh (6-22-09)

NOTE

Billy Beane's minor and major league career will be shown via filmed interviews with scouts, coaches, managers, players, and family members who were with him at the time. These interviews will comprise approximately ten percent of the film.

Another ten percent of the film will consist of re-enactments of real events as remembered by the people playing themselves. The purpose of these scenes will be to provide set-up and perspective for subjects, situations, or relationships which currently appear in the screenplay without the requisite/normal amount of context.

All that is to say an important portion of this film will be written in the editing room. This isn't a cop-out; it's just a fact, and entirely by design.

BILLY

(pre-lap)
From a personal standpoint, I appreciate the confidence and faith the organization has shown in me.

1 INT. HOTEL LOBBY - DAY

1

BILLY BEANE, forty, casual dress, filling a chair. As he talks on his cell phone, he eyes a group of well-dressed white men of a certain age (between 57 and 72) across the lobby. They seem to know and like each other.

Legend: Naples, Florida

BILLY

(continuing, to his phone)

I have a lot invested in the players here. A guy like Jason Giambi, I was around when he was drafted and signed. I'd like to see this through.

A beat.

BILLY

In terms of the resources available there are easier jobs out there, but I think we're headed in the right direction.

A beat. His eyes move to the elevator bank.

BILLY

I want to make a decision by the end of the week.

A young man of thirty exits the elevator and begins scanning the lobby. This is PAUL DEPODESTA.

BILLY

Sean, listen, I have to step into a meeting. Can we finish this later? I'll let you know when I decide. Okay.

Billy hang up and stands, Paul sees him and heads over. When they're a few feet apart:

BILLY
Billy Beane.

PAUL
I'm Paul.

BILLY
How are you?

PAUL
Good, thanks.

They shake hands.

Legend: November 5, 1998

BILLY
JP said you're the guy I should be talking to.

PAUL
JP is great.

BILLY
JP is great. He said you just got promoted.

PAUL
Yeah, I was advance scouting and I was just made Special Assistant to the GM.

BILLY
Well, Cleveland's a monster franchise. I think John Hart and Mark Shapiro are super smart. They got a good thing going.

PAUL
I have to say, it's nice knowing at the beginning of the year that you're probably going to the playoffs.

BILLY
I'll bet.

PAUL
I hear you extended.

BILLY
Yeah, four years. It's good, you know, I can watch things happen.

(MORE)

BILLY (CONT'D)

And we're close to getting a new stadium.

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PAUL

Which you need.

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*

BILLY

Which we definitely need.
So let me ask you: can you work
spreadsheets and all that stuff,
like Excel? Can you manage a
payroll?

*
*

PAUL

Yeah.

BILLY

Great, because I suck at that. And
you're totally up to speed on all
the league rules? I need to make
sure I don't accidentally put
someone on waivers or something.

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BILLY
(excited)
Right, exactly. That's what we
have to do. We have to be the
house.

PAUL
You've heard of Peter Drucker?

BILLY
The management guy.

PAUL
He's got a thing called the Naive
Question: "If we weren't already
doing it this way, is this the way
we would start?" And can I drop
another name?

BILLY
Hey, you're the Harvard grad, not
me.

PAUL
You've heard of him: Thomas Paine.
"A long habit of not thinking a
thing wrong gives it a superficial
appearance of being right."

BILLY
That's fantastic. Look, Paul, you
should do this. We should do this.
Before somebody else does.
Somebody with money.

PAUL
How comfortable are you looking
crazy? I mean, people have dabbled
in statistical analysis, but to
run a whole team based on
sabermetrics...no one's really
done it before. Some of the
decisions we make will look really
strange.

BILLY
(trying to close him)
That's our edge, them thinking
we're crazy. The longer they think
we're crazy, the better. By the
time they figure out what we're
doing, we'll have beaten them. So
let's do this, right?

(MORE)

BILLY (CONT'D)

You and me will do this, we'll go
after the big boys with our
slingshot.

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INT. HOTEL SUITE - DAY *
A bell chimes. A VERY SUCCESSFUL, WELL-DRESSED TEAM OWNER *
answers the door, revealing Billy and Paul. *
TEAM OWNER *
Hi, Billy. *
BILLY *
Hi, Tom. *
TEAM OWNER *
Welcome. Come on in. *
They do. *
Legend: A month later *
BILLY *
Tom, this is Paul DePodesta, my *
assistant GM. *
TEAM OWNER *
I heard. Congratulations. *
PAUL *
Thank you. *
They sit. *
TEAM OWNER *
So. You have a proposal. *
BILLY *
Yes. We've discovered a sort of *
loophole that affords some *
interesting possibilities, and we *
think it's worth discussing *
because it will probably be closed *
soon. *
PAUL *
Like by the next contract. *
TEAM OWNER *
A loophole. *
BILLY *
Sloppy language. *
The Team Owner looks at Billy and Paul, wondering where *
this is going. *
TEAM OWNER *
Okay. *

BILLY

These are the facts: You're a big market team above the luxury tax threshold, and this means you can trade a player AND pay all of that player's salary--by giving the other team cash in the transaction to offset the salary--while reducing your tax obligation.

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TEAM OWNER

Give me an example.

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BILLY

Well...

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PAUL

Here's an exmample: if I'm in your tax bracket and I have a player making \$5 million, I can give him to another team for a player to be named later and pay the other team \$5 million as part of the transaction. The other team then gets the player effectively for zero dollars and I save \$1.75 million in taxes, or it may even knock me out of the higher tax bracket altogether, which would save you more in reduced taxes than the salary you paid off.

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The Team Owner stops writing. He can't keep up. Paul just keeps going.

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PAUL

That's a good deal for everyone if you want to get rid of a guy and/or save some money, and the small market team could use him but doesn't want to pay him. Or can't afford to. Another scenario might be if--

*
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TEAM OWNER

Listen, I really think I should get my general counsel on the phone.

*
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*
*

Paul looks to Billy, who smiles.

*

BILLY

Yeah, you should.

*
* 2

3 EXT. OAKLAND COLISEUM FIELD/EXTREME CLOSE-UP - DAY * 3
MUSIC: Fugazi, SWEET AND LOW, plays under: *

Impossibly slow motion: The stitches of a baseball as it approaches us, spinning to create the pink dot blur at the center of a curveball. Beyond it, out of focus, is the pitcher who threw it, completing his motion. The ball is heading right at us...

Legend: MONEYBALL

The pitch hits the lens.

CUT TO:

4 EXT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - NIGHT 4
From high above. Dark, deserted, silent. Locked up and shut down.

Legend: October 15, 2001

We drift across the empty diamond to the vacant stands.

As we head toward the A's empty dugout, we begin to hear disembodied cheering crowds and the faint voice of an announcer -

BRENNAMAN V/O

... one out, nobody on, two and two to Saenz - who has just three at bats in the series, and none of them hits - as he settles back in -

We descend into the dugout and move along it to a tunnel that plunges us into the netherworld bowels of the Coliseum -

BRENNAMAN V/O

- Rivera looks in for the sign, he has it, the pitch, Saenz swings and -

5 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS 5
The announcer's voice and excited crowd continue as we move in silence down a cinder-block corridor dimly lit with wire-encased lamps like in a coal mine.

STEVE LYONS V/O
 - a ground out to second, Thom, is
 not what the A's were looking for
 from Saenz - down by two in the
 ninth.

BRENNAMAN V/O
 Eric Byrnes has emerged from the
 dugout to bat for Menechino -

6 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - WEIGHT ROOM - CONTINUOUS 6

We reach an underground room - a dank and desolate
 purgatory: THE GYM.

Where the equipment is silent.

CUT TO:

EXT. LUXURY BOX - YANKEE STADIUM - NIGHT *

Paul sits, despondent. Below him is the game. Behind him,
 monitors showing the game. The sound of cheering is
 deafening. *

Near him is the Owner of the Oakland A's, who we will
 meet later. He's not happy, either. *

7 INT. NO. 4 SUBWAY TRAIN, NEW YORK CITY - NIGHT 7

Where Billy Beane sits, riding nowhere. His face is a
 mask.

BRENNAMAN V/O
 - the A's are down to their last
 strike and this Yankee crowd is on
 its feet. Rivera squints for the
 sign, gets it, delivers and -

Billy's eyes drift to a man sleeping on the other side of
 the subway car.

BRENNAMAN V/O
 - it is bedlam in New York. *

At the other end of the car, a young couple speaks with
 obvious intimacy. Billy watches them as well.

8 EXT. SUBWAY PLATFORM - NIGHT 8

Billy exits the train and heads up the stairs.

STEVE LYONS V/O

This is historic not only for New
York, Thom, but for Oakland.

(MORE)

STEVE LYONS V/O (CONT'D)

The A's have just set a new record, too, but not the kind you want: No other team has ever lost a division series after winning the first two games on the road -

*

9 EXT. MANHATTAN STREET - NIGHT

9

Billy walks to his hotel.

10 INT. MANHATTAN HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

10

Billy sits on the edge of his bed.

On TV are images of the Yankees spraying champagne on one another in a locker room that's wrapped in plastic and packed with reporters and cameramen.

Billy watches them celebrate. His phone rings.

*

BILLY

*

Yeah.

*

PAUL

*

You see it.

*

BILLY

*

I'm watching it now.

*

A beat. He's crushed.

*

BILLY

*

This was the team. We had the team.

*

*

PAUL

*

I know.

*

11 INTERVIEWS

11

Describing the intensity and potential of one BILLY BEANE, a star high school athlete in San Diego in the spring of 1980. Scouted by numerous major league teams, it would appear Billy's future as a major leaguer is a forgone conclusion...

BILLY V/O

(totally amped)

*

We might be able to survive losing Damon. We might. But we won't if we lose him and Giambi.

*

12 EXT. BAY AREA SUBURB - LATER - LATE AFTERNOON 12

Billy drives to an office building.

BILLY V/O

I know every year I tell you this
could be the year it collapses,
but this really good be the year
it collapses. We had a lot of
luck.

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SCHOTT V/O

Isringhausen's gone, too, don't
you think?

13 INT. OFFICE BUILDING LOBBY - LATE AFTERNOON 13

Billy enters an elevator. The directory indicates this is
the headquarters of Citation Homes.

BILLY V/O

I can create a closer. I can't
create power.

*
*

14

INT. CITATION HOMES - CONFERENCE ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

14

Billy and STEVE SCHOTT, the A's owner, and the developer of housing projects. He's 60 years old, and a college player way back when. On a television, ESPN reports that Johnny Damon is signing with the Boston Red Sox.

SCHOTT

What are they paying Giambi?

BILLY

Seventeen.

SCHOTT

For one year?

Billy nods. Steve exhales.

BILLY

I need more money, Steve. We can't compete against a hundred and twenty million dollar payroll with a forty million dollar payroll.

SCHOTT

We just won 102 games with a thirty-four million dollar payroll.

BILLY

With Jason Giambi. We wouldn't have without him.

SCHOTT

Look: Losing Giambi, Damon, and Isringhausen to free agency gets us six more draft picks.

BILLY

And pay them what. There's four million in the budget for the draft; we'd need twelve if we were paying last year's prices

SCHOTT

I'll give you nine-four.

*

15

EXT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - PARKING LOT - DAY

15

The Coliseum from high above again, and the industrial sprawl around it. Off in the distance, the San Francisco skyline and Golden Gate sparkle like unattainable jewels.

Workers remove Jason Giambi's portrait from the A's parking lot.

16 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - BILLY'S OFFICE - DAY 16

Billy's on the speakerphone to his counterpart in Cleveland - Indian's General Manager, Mark Shapiro. Paul's on the couch. Billy's leg is bouncing. *

SHAPIRO

Killer in New York, huh?

BILLY

He's stealing Giambi from me.

SHAPIRO

I know.

BILLY

120 million for 7 years.

SHAPIRO

I know.

BILLY

I'm losing Damon, too. To Boston. Eight million a year. And Isringhausen to the Cardinals. It's a disaster. It's the Bataan Death March.

SHAPIRO

Barry Bonds is available.

BILLY

Yeah, and how do I field the other eight positions?

SHAPIRO

What can I do for you, Billy? I want to do something for you. That was the team. No one should have to suffer like this.

BILLY

I need a lefty reliever. I'm thinking Rincon. You've got that Venezuelan kid in North Carolina you're bringing up next year, right? You can live without Rincon.

SHAPIRO

I can live without his salary.

BILLY
 I could pay something -
 (meaning not a lot)
 - or you could check out some of
 my kids in Midland.

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*

SHAPIRO
 I'll have a look, sure.

BILLY
 Call me back.

He disconnects the call.

BILLY
 Maybe something.

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PAUL
 No.

*

BILLY
 No?

*

PAUL
 He was my boss. That was a no.

*

BILLY
 Oh.

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*
*

Frustrated, Billy takes a styrofoam Union 76 ball, plays with it and then throws hard over Paul's head.

*
*

NOTE: The following will play as one continuous conversation.

17 INT. OAKLAND AIRPORT - DAY

17

A blur of shapes and colors as we move through a crush of travelers. Billy has a cell phone to his ear:

BILLY
 (fast, like always)
 We're never going to find a
 hundred dollar bill on the ground,
 but maybe we can find a hundred
 dollars in nickels.

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PAUL V/O
 Right.

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BILLY

We can't replace Giambi with
another first baseman like him,
because there isn't another one
like him. And if there were, we
couldn't afford him.

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18

INT. BILLY'S OFFICE - OAKLAND

18

Billy and Paul, tossing the ball back and forth.

PAUL

Exactly. So if we can't recreate Jason Giambi, the individual, what we might be able to do is recreate him in the aggregate. Where is there value where other people don't see value? Like our boy Chad Bradford.

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EXT. PRACTICE FACILITY

*

CHAD BRADFORD, pitcher, throws off a practice mound. His motion is bizarre--his fingers nearly scrape the ground when he releases the ball. Over a series of angles:

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PAUL V/O

White Sox had him, he's getting people out like crazy, but his motion is weird and he throws 84 miles an hour. If you look at his stats, he's outstanding. If you look at him on the mound, he's a circus freak. He was born to be an Oakland A.

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19

EXT. HAGENBURGER DINER - DAY

19

Billy and Paul, eating.

BILLY

So what you're saying is, he was a guy with warts.

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*

PAUL

And I like guys with warts. For us.

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*

BILLY

I like guys with warts for us too. Why do you like guys with warts for us?

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PAUL

I like guys with warts for us because everybody knows they have warts, but for us the warts don't matter. And we already have a guy with warts. Jason's little brother Jeremy.

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20 EXT. ND BASEBALL FIELD - FLASHBACK - NIGHT 20

Jeremy, in the outfield in an A's uniform, loses a ball in the lights. It falls next to him.

PAUL V/O

Granted, Jeremy has his occasional issues on the field.

21 EXT. ND BASEBALL FIELD - FLASHBACK 21

In the 2001 ALDS, he tries to jump over Yankees catcher Jorge Posada instead of sliding under him, and is out at the plate - the infamous Jeremy-Giambi-non-slide.

BILLY V/O

Not to mention his issues off the field -

22 INT. MCCARRAN AIRPORT - LAS VEGAS - FLASHBACK - DAY 22

A camera flash bleaches the screen white before an image appears: Jeremy's Nevada mug shot.

23 INT. OAKLAND AIRPORT - DAY 23

Billy heading for the security line.

PAUL V/O

But his on-base percentage is all we're looking at now, and he has a real knack for getting on base, especially for someone who makes two hundred and eighty-two thousand a year. His numbers are as good as Jason's, actually. In fact, his minor league numbers are better. He sees a lot of pitches per at bat. He's shrinks the strike zone, and that's what we need to be looking for.

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*

In line for the security check.

BILLY

Hold on.

Billy kicks his shoes off, puts them and his carry-on onto the x-ray belt, drops his open phone and keys in a plastic container, steps through the metal detector.

TSA OFFICER 1

Is that phone still on?

BILLY

What's the difference?

Everything, at the airport and everywhere else in the world, is different since 9/11, but the TSA is still trying to get a handle on it all.

TSA OFFICER 1

Trudie. Can his phone be on?

TSA OFFICER 2

Whose.

TSA OFFICER 1

(indicating)

His.

TSA OFFICER 2

Is it going through?

BILLY

It's already through.

Billy's other items are piling up on the far side of the conveyor.

TSA OFFICER 2

It's fine.

He retrieves the phone and picks up exactly where he left off -

BILLY

Who's number two?

PAUL

Well, when I was with Cleveland and we traded Kenny Lofton and lost Albert Belle to free agency, we went out and got three people: Matt Williams, Marquis Grissom and the person I'm thinking of for us: David Justice.

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24 EXT. ND - FLASHBACK - NIGHT 24

David Justice out on the town with Halle Berry, surrounded by paparazzi. The cameras flash around them, but the picture that appears on a tabloid cover comes with the screaming headline: HALLE & DAVID - DIVORCE!

25 INT. BILLY'S OFFICE - NIGHT 25

Billy and Paul.

PAUL

He's 36, and he's got an owner willing to eat half his salary if someone will just take him off his hands. He's lost some power, but he's another one of those hitters that knows how to shrink the strike zone.

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*

BILLY

Okay. Who else?

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PAUL

Scott Hatteberg.

*

26 INT. SOUTHWEST AIRPLANE - DAY 26

Billy makes his way to his seat.

BILLY

Don't tell me--he shrinks the zone too.

*
*

PAUL V/O

To the size of a CD. He was six years with Boston. Might go to Colorado in a deal for Pokey Reese. Decent catcher until he ruptured a nerve in his elbow.

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*

BILLY

(to passenger)

Excuse me. I'm in the middle.

27 EXT. ND BASEBALL FIELD - FLASHBACK 27

Scott Hatteberg, movie star looks wrapped in a Red Sox uniform, leaps from a crouch to throw out a base stealer. The ball bounces two times before it reaches 2nd - the runner safe by a mile.

*

PAUL V/O

Keep in mind, we don't want Hatteberg for his defense any more than we want Jeremy for his.

28 INT. LAX - DOLLAR-RENT-A-CAR COUNTER - LATER - DAY 28

Billy presents his credit card to a Dollar-Rent-A-Car clerk. As the guy fills out the rental contract, Billy makes another call on his cell phone -

BILLY

How much to upgrade to a mid-size?

CLERK

Twenty-seven a day.

BILLY

(to Paul)

How are his numbers?

(to the clerk)

I'll stay with the compact.

*
*
*

CLERK

You mean the Economy?



PAUL

He's used primarily as a pinch-hitter, and pinch-hitters' numbers usually aren't great because they're coming off the bench cold.

BILLY

(to the clerk)

The compact isn't the Economy?

(to Paul)

But you like his numbers.

PAUL

Not really. .245 and a .323 on-base.

CLERK

The Economy is the sub-compact.

BILLY

Fine. The sub-compact.

(to Paul)

Christ, Paul, that's not warts, that's leprosy.

PAUL

I like his metrics, though. He's a really tough out.

CLERK

The Economy is the sub-compact.

The clerk has set the rental contract in front of Billy for him to sign.

BILLY

(to Paul)

This feels like a stretch, even for us.

(to clerk)

I don't need the loss and damage, my card covers it.

CLERK

Initial here, here, here, here ...

PAUL

So what should we do?

BILLY

What we usually do: If he gets non-tendered, call his agent at 12:01.

PAUL

Great.

BILLY
Let's talk about Damon.

29 INT. BILLY'S OFFICE - OAKLAND - DAY

29

Billy and Paul, still tossing the styrofoam ball.

PAUL

Losing Damon will create two obvious holes: defense in center field, and offense in the lead-off spot. So we shift Terrence Long back to center where he used to be, and we bat Jeremy in the Damon's leadoff spot.

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BILLY

(incredulous)
Jeremy Giambi leading off? They're gonna kill us. He can't run.

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*

PAUL

No question, Damon is the prototypical leadoff hitter.

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30

EXT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - FIELD - DAY

30

The back of Johnny Damon's A's jersey as he walks to the plate to adoring Oakland crowds. He settles into the box, swings on the first pitch and bangs it into left field.

PAUL V/O

But when I look at him, I see an imperfect understanding of where runs come from.

*

Damon leads off first.

PAUL V/O

His on-base percentage is .324. Ten points lower than league average.

On the next pitch, Damon takes off for second -

PAUL V/O

What about his speed? Well, he had the green light all year and only stole 27 bags, because we had big dogs hitting behind him, and his success rate stealing was below the threshold of usefulness.

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31

EXT. RENTAL CAR, NEWPORT BEACH - DAY

31

As Billy drives to Newport Beach.

PAUL V/O

So Damon's offense is not that
hard to replace. What about his
defense? The short answer is we
can't measure it. The long answer
is we can get close.

32

EXT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - FIELD - DAY

32

Damon in center field, poised to break on contact.

PAUL V/O

Over the course of the season, a hundred and twenty-seven fly balls were hit to the Coliseum's center field by A's opponents.

*

As the next pitch is hit, Damon gets a good jump and makes a dazzling diving catch.

PAUL V/O

Totaling the outcomes of those fly balls and comparing them to the average, we're able to calculate how many runs Damon saved us.

33 EXT. CASEY'S HOUSE, NEWPORT BEACH - DAY 33

Billy escorting his daughter CASEY, 13, to the car. *

PAUL V/O

Damon in center field saved us one run every twenty games. Over the season, eight runs, though most of those games we'd've won anyway. *

34 INT/EXT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - DUGOUT - DAY 34

Damon, back in the dugout, joking with his A's teammates in his usual good-natured way.

PAUL V/O

So, yes, he's got a good glove, he's a decent lead-off hitter, he steals bases, and is a delightful human being and a pleasure to be around.

35 INT. COLOR ME MINE - DAY 35

Billy looks on as Casey makes a ceramic bowl.

PAUL V/O

But he's not worth the 8 million Boston's paying him. And like you've always said, we can recover from not having a player, but we can't recover from signing the wrong player to the wrong deal. Having him off the payroll opens up all kinds of interesting possibilities. *

BILLY
I'm feeling a little better.

36 INT/EXT. DOLLAR SHUTTLE/LAX - LATER - DAY 36

Billy riding back to the terminal.

PAUL V/O

So before we pull the trigger on this, is the Barry Bonds scenario totally dead? I'm just asking.

BILLY

I just don't see it.

37 INT. SOUTHWEST PLANE - IN FLIGHT - LATER - DUSK 37

Billy is heading for his seat. The day is starting to wear on him. *

BILLY

Even if we could get the deferrals, which is a big "if", we'd have to leverage everything, and if he got hurt or under-performed...it would be catastrophic. I don't know how to sell Steve on it. Or anyone in our position. It's too risky.

PAUL V/O

Well, it was a thought.

38 INT. BILLY'S HOUSE - NIGHT 38

Billy enters, collapses into a chair. His dog, TAGGART, comes to him and tries to get into his lap. Moments later, his wife, TARA, enters. She approaches the chair and his arm reaches out and corals her leg. She touches his hair. *

TARA

Long day. Crazy day.

BILLY

Yeah. How was work?

TARA

By my standards, very busy.

BILLY

That's a good thing.

Billy exhales, gets up.

BILLY
I should call Paul.

TARA

I love how you guys talk all day
then call when you get home.
You're like a couple of teenage
girls.

39 INTERVIEWS 39

Billy is drafted in the first round by the New York Mets in the June 1980 draft. He has also been offered an academic scholarship at Stanford. He signs with the Mets, thinking he can still attend Stanford, but Stanford withdraws the scholarship.

40 EXT. PACIFIC NORTHWEST - NIGHT 40

Christmas lights and angels dangle across a downtown street. It's late and deserted, and the signal lights switched to blinking yellow reflect off the rain-slicked pavement.

Legend: Tacoma, Washington

41 EXT. GOLF COURSE - TACOMA - NIGHT 41

A wet greens-flag hangs limp against its pole. The windows of the houses that line the fairway are dark. Except one.

42 INT. HOUSE - TACOMA - NIGHT 42

A Christmas tree. Four stockings hanging from a mantel. A sleeping 4-year-old girl in a bed. A sleeping infant girl in a crib. Have we wandered into *It's a Wonderful Life*?

No. This Silent Night is accompanied by a relentless ticking as we now regard some gold-plate-peeling trophies on a bookshelf in a den, some retired catchers' mitts, balls in Lucite cubes, and, finally, the oppressive grandfather clock.

The little girls' parents listen to the clock chime midnight. Regard the phone that's not ringing. Then each other. Scott Hatteberg gets up.

SCOTT

I'm going to bed.

His wife nods with a manufactured smile she hopes convinces them both that 'it'll be okay,' but neither buys it. As her husband trudges up the stairs, the phone rings. He comes back down. Picks it up.

SCOTT
Hello?

BILLY
Scott?

SCOTT
Yes.

BILLY
It's Billy Beane. Oakland A's.

Legend: December 21, 2001

Scott was expecting someone else obviously, and can only manage a hesitant -

SCOTT
Yes?

BILLY
Can we talk?

SCOTT
Yes.

BILLY
How's the elbow?

SCOTT
It's feeling good.

BILLY
I don't care about your elbow actually. Far as I'm concerned you've thrown your last baseball from behind the plate. I want you at first.

SCOTT
I've been a catcher my whole life.

BILLY
Well, you aren't any more. And if you were, you wouldn't have gotten a call when your contract expired at midnight.

*

*
*
*
*

SCOTT
I appreciate that -

BILLY
Thank you -

SCOTT
But -

BILLY
You don't know how to play first
base. Of course you don't. We're
gonna teach you. If I have my way,
you'll get five hundred at bats
this year.

*
*
*

Scott looks unhappily at his wife again before something
even more troubling occurs to him -

SCOTT
Wait a minute - what about -

BILLY
Jason Giambi's gone, Scott. And
you know what I say? Good
riddance.

SCOTT
I'm taking Giambi's spot at first?
How can I do that?

BILLY
I told you. We'll teach you.

SCOTT
No, but the fans.

BILLY
The fans? The fans run my ball
club?

SCOTT
No, but they'll -

BILLY
They won't hate you. They'll hate
Giambi. They hate anyone who
makes 17 million a year.

SCOTT
He's making - ?

BILLY
Yeah.

*

BILLY

This is my Christmas present to you and your wife. A contract's on its way to your agent. Discuss it with him in the morning and let me know.

SCOTT

All right...

BILLY

And Scott?

SCOTT

Yeah?

BILLY

Don't tell anybody about the first base thing, okay?

43 EXT. TENNIS COURT - TACOMA - NEXT DAY

43

The nets have been taken down, because of the season. Elizabeth Hatteberg at one of end of the court with a plastic laundry hamper full of balls, a batting tee, and her younger daughter in a stroller. Her older daughter is backing up Scott at first base.

She whacks grounders off the tee. One takes a bad hop, hits Scott in the chest. Another goes between his legs and rolls to his 4-year-old daughter who scoops it up.

44 EXT. DESERT - DAY

44

A Saguaro cactus stands akimbo alongside a two-lane highway stretching off toward nothingness.

Suddenly, a late-model Mercedes convertible breaks the stillness, roaring past blasting Mariah Carey.

Legend: February 26, 2002

45 EXT. PHOENIX MUNICIPAL STADIUM - PARKING LOT - DAY

45

The Mercedes pulls into a sparsely-filled parking lot. Its driver grabs a sports bag, climbs out and crosses toward the little stadium. We follow him from behind, but can still tell from back here he's a well-built, ultra-confident big league ballplayer.

46

INT. PHOENIX MUNICIPAL STADIUM - CLUBHOUSE - DAY

46

He strides into a locker room that is already full of players. Jeremy Giambi's boombox - and Jeremy himself, who always has a smile on his face despite a salary that's 80 times less than his brother's - entertains the new A's team suiting up.

Some of the players acknowledge the new arrival. Most - like Scott Hatteberg, and a baby-faced young man with the name Bradford on the back of his jersey - are too shy to.

JEREMY

Hey, Dave.

DAVID

Hey.

Dave reaches a locker on which someone has already hung his A's jersey. It says: JUSTICE.

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

Billy walking, fast. Bumps into Manager Art Howe rounding a corner.

BILLY

(civil)
Oh, hey, Art.

ART

(civil back)
Hey Billy.

BILLY

How you doing?

ART

Getting there. You know. Lot of work to do.

BILLY

Yeah.

ART

Congratulations on your new contract.

BILLY

Thanks.

Art looks at him, smiling. There's something unsaid, but it will remain unsaid...

INT. MANAGER'S OFFICE - DAY

*

Art Howe speaks with his coaching staff. His demeanor is calm, resolute.

*
*

ART

*

Guys, I want to say something that's in the air. We've lost three outstanding players, and that's a big blow. A lot of people think we won't be able to recover. But we've learned how to do something over the last couple of years, and it's something that's bigger than any individual player: we've learned how to win. This is a winning team now, a team that always finds a way to win, and that's what we have over all the other teams, and that's why we'll still be on top at the end of the year. Never forget that.

*
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47 INT. PRESS BOX, PHOENIX MUNICIPAL STADIUM - DAY

47

Billy and Steve Schott face the press.

JOURNALIST

Are you going to pick up Art Howe's option for next year?

Billy and Steve look at each other.

SCHOTT

I think Art has done a very, very good job on a year-to-year basis, considering where we started. I have no problem with the way Art has managed. But I think that's a decision that will be made as a group, and I'm not the one who makes all the calls. Walter Alston asked for one-year contracts.

BILLY

He did?

SCHOTT

I think so.

BILLY

Wow.

Laughs.

BILLY

Listen, it's not an issue right now. We'll address it when it is.

JOURNALIST

When?

BILLY

Like I said, "if".

48

EXT. PHOENIX MUNICIPAL STADIUM - FIELD/STANDS - INTERCUT

48

Spring training has begun. Various stations have been set up at which infielders scoop grounders, outfielders - like Justice - shag flies, and pitchers warm up.

Justice chases down a fly ball perfectly and fires it back in with an arm that seems a decade younger than its 36 years.

ON THE SIDELINES

Art is talking to journalists.

JOURNALIST

Are they picking up your option for next year?

A beat.

ART

I brought it up to them during the off-season, and I still do not have my option.

JOURNALIST

Are you frustrated?

ART

I think it's fair to say that.

JOURNALIST

What do you think of Billy's contract extension?

ART

I'm happy for Billy. It's nice when you can get some security in this game.

49

INT. PRESS BOX - INTERCUT

49

JOURNALIST

You didn't allow the Red Sox to speak with bench coach Ken Macha. Are you keeping him in reserve in case you have an issue with Art?

BILLY

That's a speculation, and it's a waste of time to respond to a speculation. Ken's here because he's extremely valuable.

ON THE FIELD, PREVIOUSLY

Billy talking to Steve Schott.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Red Sox just dumped Jimmy Williams.

SCHOTT

Well, that's no surprise. Not after the Everett thing.

BILLY

Duquette called me asking about Macha.

SCHOTT

To manage?

Billy nods. Both regard bench coach Ken Macha down on the field, who is talking to Art Howe.

SCHOTT

What are we - a Red Sox farm club? We're not here to service their needs.

*
*
*

BILLY

Especially when their decision created the need. And how about the timing? It's already spring training, for god's sake. We're preparing for our season here.

*
*
*
*
*
*

SCHOTT

You told him no.

*

BILLY

I told him we'd trade Ken Macha for Kevin Youkilis.

*
*

SCHOTT
What?

*
*

BILLY
Just kidding.

*
*

Schott just looks at him.

*

BILLY
He's nobody. Someone we didn't
get. It's a running gag with me
and Paul.

*
*
*
*

SCHOTT
Uh-huh. But you told Boston no.

*
*

BILLY
Of course I told them no. I said I
would talk to you, but that the
answer was no.

*
*

SCHOTT
Right.

50 INT. PRESS BOX - INTERCUT

50

Billy and Steve Schott.

JOURNALIST

Billy, your contract has an out clause if the team is sold. Would you leave Oakland?

BILLY

Oakland is where I want to be. I love working here, I love working for this franchise. The ownership has showed incredible faith in me, and I appreciate that. I wanted to be signed through my daughter's senior year in high school. It's also possible she could end up going to college near here. It's always going to be a big part of my decision-making.

SCHOTT

I really hopes this dispels any rumors about Billy going to Boston. And if he went somewhere else, he might have some hands-on owner looking over his shoulder.

JOURNALIST

What about a new stadium?

SCHOTT

We would love to build a baseball-only stadium in Oakland, but we're also extending our lease at the Coliseum.

51 EXT. PRACTICE FACILITY - INTERCUT

51

Jeremy Giambi in the outfield. The next poke off the bat sends him scrambling back like a postman trying to escape a mad dog. The ball lands behind him.

Scott Hatteberg hits every pitch he sees, hard.

52 EXT. PRACTICE FACILITY - INTERCUT

52

We meet other players as well, like center fielder
TERRENCE LONG and catcher GREG MYERS.

*
*

53 INT. PRESS BOX - INTERCUT

53

JOURNALIST

You've made over forty trades as GM. Do you worry that players feel insecure in Oakland?

BILLY

We try to be sensitive, I mean, no player wants to feel like an asset on a ledger, but I have to think of the entire organization, and it's a problem when someone doesn't deliver. If a big-market team makes a multi-million dollar mistake, it's a rounding error. For us it could mean some people working in cubicles who've been with the A's a long time don't have a job next year.

54 EXT. PRACTICE FACILITY - INTERCUT

54

Pitching coach Rick Peterson works with each of the pitchers. We meet the superstars: TIM HUDSON, MARK MULDER, and BARRY ZITO. Total thoroughbreds.

*
*

The other pitchers each have one issue or another. BILLY KOCH has trouble throwing strikes; JIM MECIR has a club foot; MIKE MAGNANTE has knee braces; MIKE VENAFRO is small and throws sidearm, and JEFF TAM and ERIK HILJUS were minor league free agents. And of course there's Chad Bradford with his underhand motion. Taken together, a motley crew...

*
*
*
*
*
*

Peterson has a conversation with Tim Hudson about his workout routine; Rick feels Tim's hip issues aren't being addressed.

*
*

55 INT. PRESS BOX - INTERCUT

55

JOURNALIST

How devastating is it to lose three type A free agents?

*

BILLY

This is an opportunity, it's not a burden. It's not like it caught us by surprise. People act like we're supposed to be depressed; it's not going to happen. Because no matter what, this is one of the thirty best jobs in the world.

(MORE)

BILLY (CONT'D)

I love going to work. And how
unhappy can I be with Hudson,
Mulder, and Zito starting? I'm
excited every day.

56 EXT. PHOENIX MUNICIPAL STADIUM - ANOTHER PART OF FIELD

56

Scott Hatteberg fields grounders, tentatively, as Ron
Washington corrects him.

Billy and Paul watch.

WASHINGTON

(pre-lap V.O.)

He's on his heels. He doesn't know where to go, what to do, how to do it. You know he doesn't want nuthin' happening in his area.

57 INT. PHOENIX MUNICIPAL STADIUM - CLUBHOUSE - DAY 57

Coach's room. Billy and Art talk to Ron Washington.

BILLY

(concerned)

Where will he be by opening day? *

WASHINGTON

You'll be able to run him out there every three or four days, but don't go thinking you can run him out there every day.

58 INT. CLUBHOUSE CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY 58

Art Howe, Billy, Paul, and the entire coaching staff meet to discuss who will stay with the team and who won't. * *

59 INTERVIEWS 59

Though unquestionably gifted, Billy Beane struggles in the minor leagues.

Of particular note is the interview with JP RICCIARDI, who will become a teammate and Billy's closest friend.

Music up: The Who's EMINENCE FRONT

60 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - VISITOR'S LOCKER ROOM - DAY 60

We see the player's nameplates on their lockers, and see those lockers filled. Show the photo session where they get their Jumbotron portraits shot.

We see the VISITOR'S CLUBHOUSE ASSISTANT (MIKEY) bringing supplies to the visiting Texas Ranger team; stocking the kitchen, etc.

We see the drink machines, which charge a dollar per
soda.

61 EXT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - PARKING LOT/ENTRANCE - DAY 61

A portrait of David Justice is now where Jason Giambi's used to be in the parking lot.

A spattering of diehard fans files through the turnstiles. You know what they look like, dripping A's merchandise, radios and Sharpies, arriving so early the batting practice cage is still being dragged into place. *

A dog belonging to one of the grounds keepers leaps up repeatedly like he's catching a frisbee to grab drinks from the spraying hose.

Legend: April 4, 2002 Opening Day

62 EXT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - CONCOURSE - DAY 62

Billy, holding some manila packets, moves toward a group of four VIPs waiting by a security guard. He hands them each a packet and explains the contents: tickets, on-field passes, etc.

63 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - LOCKER ROOM - SAME TIME - DAY 63

Jeremy Giambi's boombox is on again as he and his 24 teammates suit up.

36-year-old David Justice wanders past noting cards and cribbage boards and Travel Scrabbles on the tables.

Scott Hatteberg sits by his locker oiling his 1st baseman's mitt while the A's catcher - Ramon Hernandez - whose job Scott wishes he had - gathers his gear. *

As coach Ron Washington watches Hatteberg, knowing what he's thinking, Art Howe fills out his line-up card and a second identical one for the home plate umpire.

64 EXT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - STANDS/FIELD - DAY 64

The crowds have filled in. In prime seats behind home plate, a dozen or so women, most of them blonde, sit and chat. They're the players' wives. We see Elizabeth Hatteberg. She looks to another section and sees a woman: TARA BEANE. They both look anxious.

As the A's trot out to their positions, cheers erupt from the crowd, and Roy Steele - the A's Voice of God PA announcer - introduces them:

VOICE OF GOD
And now, Your 2002 Oakland
Athletics. Leading off, number 7,
Jer-e-my Giam-bi, left field.

Amidst some polite applause, someone yells out -

FAN
Hey, Jeremy, it's 4:20, dude!

VOICE OF GOD
Hitting second, number 11, Frank
Mene-chinooo, second base. Batting
third, number 10, designated
hitter, Scott Hatt-e-berg.

Someone in the crowd - actually several people - turn to
their companions and say, "Who?" Even some of the wives
say it as Elizabeth Hatteberg - then Tara - clap.

VOICE OF GOD
Batting clean-up, number 23, in
right field, Da-viddd Jus-tice.

Thunderous applause. Justice is used to it, but never
tires of it, and tips his cap.

65 REAL FOOTAGE - EXT. OAKLAND COLISEUM

65

Eric Chavez leads off the second with a home run to give
the A's the lead, but the Rangers score their first run
off Mulder in the third.

Frank Menechino has a RBI double in the bottom of the
third to break the tie and David Justice follows with a
two-run home run to make the score 4-1.

The A's add four insurance runs in the sixth inning on
consecutive RBI doubles by Chavez and Miguel Tejada and
RBI singles by Terrence Long and Jeremy Giambi.

Mark Mulder goes eight innings to pick up the win,
allowing three runs on six hits, no walks, striking out
eight.

The A's win.

66 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - LOCKER ROOM

66

The mood in the locker room is upbeat.

67 EXT. OAKLAND AIRPORT - NIGHT 67

As a plane lifts off a runway - beginning an A's Road-trip - Paul Westerberg's "Ain't Got Me" bangs in and continues over -

68 INT. OAKLAND AIRPORT - DAY 68

Billy waits in the baggage claim area for someone, glancing through a box score in the paper. It indicates that the A's are 5-2, and in first place by one game.

A planeload of arriving passengers streams in. Casey Beane spots her father waiting for her and smothers him with a hug. Then she presents him with a music CD. *

69 INTERVIEWS 69

Billy is called up to the majors, but doesn't excel. Teammates describe the self-directed outbursts that occur after bad at-bats.

70 REAL FOOTAGE - EDISON FIELD - ANAHEIM 70

Legend: April 12-14, 2002

The A's win the first two games of a three-game series.

71 EXT. TELEGRAPH AVENUE - BERKELEY - NIGHT 71

Billy and Casey stand in a line leading to the doors of Amoeba Records.

CASEY

How come you never travel with the team?

BILLY

It's not good for me to be friends with the players. On the road you can't avoid it. It clouds your judgement. Besides, I'd rather be with you. *

CASEY

Would you tour with a band?

BILLY

Whose band? Your band? You want to hire me in a couple years as a road manager? I'd do that.

CASEY

It's the same.

BILLY

It's not. In a band, you make a mistake, no one notices but you. In baseball, everything you do - every single note you play - is written down, added up and averaged, and that's you. I've been on that tour.

72 INT. AMOEBA RECORDS - LATER - NIGHT 72

Father and daughter have the same taste in music, and tonight, it's what we've been listening to on the sound track: Paul Westerberg.

73 EXT. YANKEE STADIUM - DAY 73

The A's are in New York.

Legend: April 25, 2002

Zito blanks the Yankees on four hits over the first six innings before allowing his only run in the seventh inning. Reliever Chad Bradford allows a run in the eighth inning and Billy Koch retires the side in order in the ninth to preserve the win. Frank Menechino has a RBI double in the fifth inning and Greg Myers hits a two-run home run in the sixth inning to complete the A's scoring.

74 INT. GUITAR CENTER - CERRITOS - DAY 74

In the guitar section, Casey bangs out a version of I WANT TO BE SEDATED. Billy watches, happy. Then his beeper goes off, showing him the A's score. They're losing.

75 REAL FOOTAGE 75

A's play Boston in Oakland. *

Legend: May 7-9, 2002

The Red Sox sweep the A's.

76 INT. OAKLAND AIRPORT - SAME TIME - DAY 76

At the security checkpoint, the new guitar in its case goes through the x-ray machine. Casey and her father are saying goodbye.

She smiles and goes through security. Billy watches after her as she walks toward the boarding gates with her guitar case. His cell phone chimes. He's got a text message: 3 RUN HR OFF MULDER.

BILLY

Shit.

(to Casey)

You didn't hear that.

*
*
*
*

77 EXT. BLUE JAYS FIELD - TORONTO -DAY/NIGHT 77

Legend: May 17-19, 2002

The A's are swept by the Toronto Blue Jays, losing the last game 11-0.

*

78 TABLETOP FIGURINES 78

Over this, the current standing in the AL WEST. The A's are in last place.

79 EXT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - FIELD - DAY 79

The visiting Orioles take batting practice.

80 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - BILLY'S OFFICE - SAME TIME - DAY 80

Billy and Paul sit with Steve Schott. Billy's leg is bouncing again, though he tries to look calm.

*
*

STEVE

Thirteen out of the last sixteen.

*
*

BILLY

It's still early.

SCHOTT

It's not that early.

Legend: May 21, 2002

BILLY

We've got some guys who are nervous and some guys who are old.

(MORE)

BILLY (CONT'D)

We've got the team we can afford.
And we've got Art.

SCHOTT

I like Art.

BILLY

I like Art, too.

SCHOTT
This is your program. It's not
working.

*

81 EXT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - NIGHT

81

The A's erase a 4-1 deficit but go on to lose to
Baltimore 6-4 in 14 innings.

Jeremy Giambi adds a solo home run in the eighth inning
to pull the A's to within two, and two batters later
Jermaine Dye ties the game with a two-run home run. Chad
Bradford and Jim Mecir each pitch two perfect innings and
Billy Koch tosses a career high 3.0 scoreless innings.
The score remains tied after 13 innings. Mike Venafro
then allows two runs in the 14th inning to snap an 11.1
inning scoreless streak and take the loss.

*

INT. WEIGHT ROOM - NIGHT

*

As the game plays out, Billy is on the phone, pacing.
He's slightly panicked.

*

*

BILLY
JP, I'm telling you, nothing's
working. Steve Schott's got blood
squirting out of his eyes. I don't
know how to pull them out of this.
My whole thing with players is pat
them when they're down and kick
them when they're up. Nothing's
working.

*

*

*

*

*

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*

*

JP
What's your policy with coaches?

*

*

BILLY
Kick them all the time.

*

*

JP
Well, maybe you should try
something else.

*

*

*

BILLY
Like what?

*

*

JP
Like something else.

*

*

INT. OFFICE HALLWAY - NIGHT

Paul is rushing down the hallway with a videocassette in his hand. He enters Billy's office.

BILLY

You got it?

PAUL

I got it.

Billy gets up, takes the tape and heads out. Paul follows.

BILLY

This is a great idea. A great idea.

PAUL

Definitely.

BILLY

Why didn't we think of this before?

82 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

The coaches, still in their uniforms, are heading into Art Howe's office. Billy and Paul are waiting for them.

83 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - ART HOWE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

A TV shows GLENGARRY GLEN ROSS. The coaches and Art sit in the darkened room, in their uniforms, being made to watch it by Billy and Paul.

ALEC BALDWIN (TV)

We're adding a little something to this month's sales contest. As you all know, first prize is a Cadillac El Dorado. Anybody want to see second prize? Second prize is a set of steak knives. Third prize is you're fired. You get the picture? You laughing now?

When the film ends, Billy turns to his coaching staff.

BILLY

We all need to decide if we're going for the Cadillac or the steak knives.

Some of the coaches exchange glances.

84 INT/EXT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - DUGOUT - DAY 84

Art works on his lineup card, hoping to do so in peace. Unfortunately, that's not going to happen.

BILLY

(forceful)

When you sit on the bench an entire game, you look like a prisoner at Auschwitz. Stand at the steps like a manager.

*

ART

I'm on the steps when we hit. Pitchers don't like you on the steps, Billy, they think you look worried, especially when there isn't a railing to lean on. Ask a pitcher.

Billy will work out his fury in the weight room, but not before issuing Art a final warning -

BILLY

I like Hatteberg at first.

85 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - WEIGHT ROOM - SAME TIME - NIGHT 85

The game plays silently on the TV as Billy lifts weights. Not wanting to watch, but not being able not to watch, he glances at the screen to see Pena trotting out to first base ...

86 REAL FOOTAGE - EXT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - LATER - NIGHT 86

The Orioles' bench clears to high-five the players coming off the field. The game is over, and, obviously, they've won. The A's exit their dugout to the tunnels.

87 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - LOCKER ROOM - LATER - NIGHT 87

Jeremy Giambi has his DVD of HAPPY GILMORE playing on a TV, and he isn't the only one watching it.

*

Then Jeff Tam walks through the locker room, naked save for the fact that he is covered head to toe in shaving cream. Everyone laughs.

*

VENAFRO

I've never seen a guy more proud
of a bad body.

Billy, drawn from Art's office by the laughter, looks
into the locker room and notes the cheery atmosphere.

*
*

He's pissed.

*

88

INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - BILLY'S OFFICE - DAY

88

Billy shoves a wad of Copenhagen under his lip, picks up
the phone, and, from a list, dials a number next to the
Phillies' GM's name. It connects.

BILLY

Ed. Billy. Just checking in to
see if there's anything you're
looking for.

*
*
*

(pause)

A bat? Oh, I've got a bat. How
about Jeremy Giambi? His on-base
is over .400. Yeah. Who you got?

*
*
*
*

Billy turns to look at a board on the wall of his office
filled with players' names.

BILLY

(into the phone)

No, not him. No, him neither. How
about Mabry?

*
*

(pause)

I'm not picking your pocket,
you're picking mine. Giambi's
name alone is worth more. Can we
say it's done in theory and start
drawing up the paperwork? Great.

Billy hangs up and quickly walks across the hall to
Paul's office.

*
*

BILLY

(brusque)

I just traded Jeremy Giambi to the
Phillies.

*
*
*

A beat.

PAUL

Okay. Who'd you get?

BILLY

John Mabry.

A beat.

PAUL
Is there anyone else?

BILLY
No.

PAUL
He's a free swinger. He's the
opposite of someone like
Hatteberg.

BILLY
I know.

*
*
*
*

*
*

PAUL

Well, maybe --

*

BILLY

Paul, it's done. We have to tell
Jeremy.

*

*

Billy starts walking. Paul follows him.

89

EXT. PLAZA BETWEEN FRONT OFFICE AND COLISEUM - DAY

89

Paul following Billy in silence. Extreme silence. Then:

*

BILLY

This may be the worst baseball
trade I've ever made, but it's
also the best move I've ever made.

*

*

*

*

Paul says nothing. A long pause.

*

BILLY

Losing shouldn't be fun. It's not
fun for me.

*

*

*

Paul says nothing. Another long pause.

*

BILLY

We're not touching the core of the
team.

*

*

*

Paul says nothing. Another long pause.

*

BILLY

(heated)

Look, Paul, I know everything
you're saying is right, but I
don't want to hear it. When you're
a GM, you'll understand: Sometimes
you just have to do something.

90 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - CORRIDOR - LATER - DAY 90

In the locker room, Jeremy Giambi is listening to his boombox and talking to his teammates. Smiling.

One of the attendants approaches him and whispers in his ear.

Jeremy, taken aback somewhat, turns his music off, then heads for Art's office.

The other players clock this. The mood has shifted.

When Jeremy enters Art's office, he sees Art, Billy, and Paul, seated and silent. They don't look happy.

BILLY

Hey Jeremy. Close the door.

He does.

91 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - LOCKER ROOM - DAY 91

Back in the locker room, players watch the clubhouse crew clear out the lockers of GIAMBI, ERIK HILJUS, JEFF TAM, AND CARLOS PENA.

HATTEBERG

(to someone)

Man. This guy'll do anything.

92 EXT/INT. FREEWAY/SUV - DAY 92
Billy drives south on the 405, listening to the Ramones.
The dog is in the car with him. *

93 EXT. NEWPORT BEACH HOUSE - LATER - DAY 93
Casey Beane comes out of her mother's house and climbs
into Billy's car. They drive off.

94 INT. CLUBHOUSE - DAY 94
Paul hands a folder to hitting coach THAD BOSLEY. *
PAUL *
Here are the metrics on John *
Mabry. Every pitch he's seen since *
he's been with the Phillies. *
Thad opens the folder and looks at the data. *
PAUL *
You see what I see? *
THAD *
Yeah. I'll work with him. *

95 INT. RESTAURANT - DAY 95
Billy and Casey eat lunch. *
EXT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - DAY *
Thad Bosley is working with John Mabry. He has a waist- *
high tee set up with a baseball on it. *
THAD *
You ever hit off a tee? *
MABRY *
Not really. *
THAD *
You're swinging at a lot of *
pitches, and you're making *
contact, but there's a certain *
area of the plate where you're *
getting all your hits. *
(MORE)

THAD (CONT'D)

I'm gonna have you hit off the tee from those areas, so that you get in the habit of only hitting balls in that zone. Sound good?

*
*
*
*

MABRY

Uh, sure...

*
*

96 INTERVIEWS

96

The Mets trade Billy to the Minnesota Twins, who eventually trade Billy to the Detroit Tigers and then the Oakland Athletics. In the spring of 1990, Billy quits playing to become a scout for Oakland GM SANDY ALDERSON. TONY LARUSSA, the A's manager at that time, describes Billy's talent for spotting talent.

97 EXT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

97

The parking lot is a vast, empty black sea with just two pin-points of moving light. Headlights.

98 EXT. PACBELL PARK -SAN FRANCISCO

98

Legend: June 14-16, 2002

The A's take two out of three from the Giants.

99 EXT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - PARKING LOT - CONTINUED - NIGHT

99

A lower angle on the empty parking lot as the single pair of headlights turns toward and blinds us -

100 INT. BILLY'S CAR - MOVING - NIGHT 100

Billy, manic, drives around the lot like a downhill skier with nothing in his way - his daughter's mix-tape playing. His phone vibrates and he checks a text message that tells him - *

101 EXT. PIRATES PARK - PITTSBURGH 101

Legend: June 18-20, 2002

The A's sweep the Pittsburgh Pirates.

102 EXT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - PARKING LOT - CONTINUED - NIGHT 102

The headlights rake across a security guard who's used to Billy's nocturnal ritual and gives him a little wave.

Billy's hands strangle the steering wheel. *

103 INT. BILLY'S HOUSE - NIGHT 103

Tara is watching the ninth inning of the A's game on TV.

Hearing Billy's car pull in, she jumps up and turns off the TV before meeting him at the door.

104 EXT. SAFECO FIELD - SEATTLE 104

Legend: June 24-27, 2002

The A's drop three of four to the Mariners.

COMMENTATOR V/O

Six games back is not where you
want to be at the All-Star Break,
but really, how unexpected is it?

105 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - WEIGHT ROOM - NIGHT 105

The TV's on, but Billy mutes it. A 3 to 5 losing score on the banner, and two announcers silently pontificating. Paul knocks, pokes his head in.

PAUL

You're not listening to this?

BILLY

I never listen to these assholes
and neither should you.

Paul, just to annoy Billy, turns the sound back on.

*

COMMENTATOR 1

When a science experiment fails in the lab, things blow up. When it fails at the Oakland Coliseum, guess what, same result.

COMMENTATOR 2

That's right, Bob. You cannot assemble a crew of castoffs as Billy Beane has, prop it up with voodoo numbers, and say you're surprised when it blows up in your face.

Paul mutes it, starts to leave.

PAUL

Oh, and guess who has the highest on-base percentage in A ball. In fact, the highest OBP of anyone from last year's draft.

BILLY

Who?

PAUL

Wait, let me get this right...I think his name is...Kevin Youkilis.

Billy hangs his head.

PAUL

They're kicking him up to AA. Second promotion in two months.

BILLY

Please stop. I can't take it.

107 REAL FOOTAGE - EXT.

107

Barry Zito, Chad Bradford and Billy Koch combine for a six-hit shutout, and the A's beat the Angels, 2-0.

*

108 INT/EXT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - DUGOUTS/FIELD - EVENING

108

Paul's erstwhile team, the Indians, have come to town. They hang out in and around the Visitors' dugout as the A's take batting practice.

Legend: July 29, 2002

Paul interaction with former colleagues TBW. He notes the presence of one Indian player in particular: Ricardo Rincon.

*

Getting loose for the A's, relief pitchers Magnante, Venafro and Bradford.

Billy finds Art in the dugout - sitting on the bench - filling out his lineup card.

BILLY

*

The first guy I want to see out of the pen, regardless of the situation, is Bradford.

*

ART
Anything you say.

Billy isn't sure if that's a yes or a no. You can never tell with Art. Billy disappears into the tunnel.

109 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - WEIGHT ROOM - LATER - NIGHT 109

The game telecast plays silently on the TV. Billy "ignores" it as he lifts weights, but can't ignore the live collective groan of 30,000 fans echoing through the corridors, and looks up at the broadcast to see that the Indians just got a second base runner on.

110 INT/EXT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - DUGOUT/FIELD - LATER - NIGHT 110

The A's are up by three, but obviously that lead is tenuous now. Art, at the dugout steps but not liking it, lumbers out to pull his starter, Tim Hudson. Halfway to the mound, he touches his left arm.

111 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - WEIGHT ROOM - SAME TIME 111

Billy sees Magnante leave the pen on the TV -

112 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - VIDEO ROOM - SAME TIME 112

Paul hears something crash in the weight room.

113 EXT/INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - FIELD/DUGOUT - LATER - NIGHT 113

Magnante mops his brow, squints for the sign, winds up and makes his pitch. It misses low and Jim Thome trots to first, loading the bases.

Back on the bench of the dugout - not at the steps - Art watches Milton Bradley come up and quickly bloop a single, scoring two.

Magnante is dying as Lee Stevens comes up with two still on. To the horror of all, Stevens sends a Magnante pitch over the wall. Art sighs. There will now be even more hell to pay.

*

114 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - LOCKER ROOM - LATER - NIGHT 114

It's just one game as far as most of the players are concerned, but for Magnante, it's not.

No game is just one game when you're 37 years old, have braces on your legs, and get shelled like he did tonight. He sits glumly at his locker.

Billy, beyond livid, and Rick Peterson walk to the manager's office. Before they get there, Billy stops him.

BILLY
Look, I'm not yelling at you, I'm yelling at him. That's just the way I have to do it.

Rick nods.

115 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - ART'S OFFICE - NIGHT

115

Billy, Rick, and Art. Billy is standing, Art and Rick are sitting.

BILLY
What the fuck, Rick? Do I really have to explain why I'm unhappy? Why is Magnante in there? I said, in any tight situation, I want Bradford!

RICK
We wanted to go lefty on lefty.

ART
Mike's had success against Thome.

BILLY
I told you to think of Bradford as our closer before the ninth inning!

RICK
Billy, if he's on the roster, we're going to use him. You don't want us to use him, he shouldn't be on the team. You want us to cook a gourmet meal, but we're only allowed to shop at 7-Eleven.

BILLY
That's great.

Billy leaves, apoplectic.

Rick looks at Art.

ART
Steak knives.

No shit.

RICK

116 EXT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - ENTRANCE - LATE DAY 116

The early-bird fan fanatics are arriving. So are the players at the players' entrance -

117 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - LOCKER ROOM - DAY 117

Magnante suits up in the A's locker room.

Legend: JULY 30 - ONE DAY BEFORE THE TRADE DEADLINE

118 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - BILLY'S OFFICE - SAME TIME - DAY 118

Billy, anxious, sticks some tobacco under his lip. The Indians' GM, Mark Shapiro, is on the speakerphone. Paul is nearby with the styrofoam Union 76 ball. *

BILLY

Mark. A premiere setup man is not going to get you any closer to the playoffs. It's a luxury you can't afford.

SHAPIRO

And you can? There's half a million on Rincon's contract and at least one other suitor.

BILLY

By at least one, you mean one? Who is it?

SHAPIRO

I'd rather not say.

PAUL

(whispers)
San Francisco.

BILLY

I'll call you back.

He hangs up, starts dialing a number from the printed list of GM's direct lines.

PAUL

What do you think we can get for Magnante?

BILLY

Nothing. What's left on Venafro's contract?

PAUL

Two-thirty-three.

*

BILLY

San Francisco might be interested in Venafro. If they are, Shapiro's only got one buyer for Rincon. Me.

Billy's call to the Giants' GM connects.

BILLY

Sabes. Billy. You like Venafro. I can let you have him for almost nothing.

SABEAN

(smelling a rat)
Why would you do that, Billy?

BILLY

Because I'm magnanimous.

SABEAN

Uh-huh.

BILLY

Think about it and call me back.

SABEAN

I'll think about it and call you back.

He calls Shapiro back.

BILLY

Mark -

SHAPIRO

You can't afford him, Billy.

BILLY

You sure about that? I get the impression the market for Rincon is softening. You might want to make sure whoever's interested is still interested. Call me back.

He hangs up.

*

BILLY

Who else might take Venafro?

*

PAUL

You just offered him to the
Giants.

BILLY

Between Bonds, Nen, Kent, and
Snow, they can't afford car fare.
I just need them to cool on
Rincon.

PAUL

Mets.

*
*

BILLY

Right.

*
*

Billy dials. His call connects, again on speaker.

*

DENISE

Steve Phillips' office.

BILLY

Denise, it's Billy Beane.

DENISE

Hi, Mr. Beane.

BILLY

Denise, who's the best-looking GM
in the game?

DENISE

You are, Mr. Beane.

BILLY

Thank you, Denise. Is he in?

DENISE

Yes, Mr. Beane. I'll get him.

In a moment -

PHILLIPS

Steve Phillips.

BILLY

Steve. Billy. I hear you're
looking for a left-handed
reliever. What do you think of
Venafro? I can make it quick and
easy for you.

PHILLIPS

What's the angle?

BILLY

No angle.

PHILLIPS

Who am I getting fleeced for?

BILLY

Hang on a second.

He puts him on hold. Paul is already scrolling through the Mets' farm system, his eyes darting around the stats.

PAUL

Gonzalez maybe?

BILLY

How old?

PAUL

Twenty-nine.

BILLY

Twenty-nine and in Double-A?
Forget it.

PAUL

Redman? No. Salazar? No.
Furbush?

BILLY

Furbush? I'd take him for his
name alone.

PAUL

Bates. Bates.

Billy punches the phone off hold.

BILLY

Bates.

PHILLIPS

Bates? I like Bates.

BILLY

You don't even know who Bates is.

*

Paul answers a second blinking line while Billy continues with Phillips -

PHILLIPS

Is Venafro hurt?

BILLY

No, he's not hurt. He's fine.
This is just a situation for us.

PHILLIPS

Last couple of times out, he got
hammered.

BILLY

That was Art. Art misused him.
(to Paul)
What.

PAUL

It's Steve.

BILLY

I'm on with Steve.

PAUL

Steve Schott.

BILLY

Tell him to hold.
(to Steve Phillips)
Look. Steve. Here's the deal.
I'm being straight with you. I'm
getting Rincon. It's a done deal.
It's done.

PHILLIPS

I heard the Giants -

BILLY

No, the Giants want Venafro. And
I told them they can have him for
Luke Robertson -

PAUL

Anderson -

BILLY

Luke Anderson. But I'd rather
deal with you. Because you can
give me Bates and two hundred and
twenty-five thousand cash and the
Giants can't.

Billy's look to Paul says, Doesn't hurt to ask. As they
listen to silence on Phillips' side of the call -

PAUL

Schott is still holding.

PHILLIPS

I'll think about it.

BILLY

Of course. Think. But whoever
calls me back first gets Venafro.

He hangs up. Looks for the blinking light that belongs to his owner.

PAUL

He hung up.

Suddenly the phone rings again. Paul answers.

PAUL

Sorry, Mr. Schott.

(listens)

Oh. Hang on a second.

It's not Steve Schott. It's someone else. Paul puts the call on hold.

PAUL

It's Omar with the Expos.

BILLY

Omar? Why would Omar be calling?

PAUL

Cliff Floyd?

BILLY

Is that possible? Let me think.

He thinks for three seconds and hits the speaker button.

BILLY

Omar! What's up?

Omar Minaya's voice is unlike the other GMs' voices we've heard. It's soft and too trusting.

OMAR

Hi, Billy. Listen, I was just calling to say Floyd is unavailable.

BILLY

Did I say I wanted Floyd?

OMAR

Last year.

BILLY

Last year?

OMAR

I'm looking at his contract and it says he can veto a trade to Oakland.

BILLY
Oakland and who else?

OMAR
Only Oakland. Anywhere else is
okay with him.

BILLY
That's why you're calling?
Thanks, Omar, that makes me feel
great.

OMAR
I just thought, if you were still
interested, you should (know) -

BILLY
Wait.

OMAR
What?

Billy's most devious synapses are firing. His leg stops
bouncing.

*
*

BILLY
Where's he going?

OMAR
I'm talking to the Red Sox.

BILLY
What are they giving you?

OMAR
Two million, Rolando Arrojo and
Seung-jun Song.

Billy lets some silence draw out for effect.

OMAR
Are you there?

BILLY
You really want to do that, Omar?
You really like those guys?

OMAR
Yes.

BILLY
And two million sounds good to
you?

OMAR

Yes.

BILLY

Then you should do it.

OMAR

(pause)

Why shouldn't I?

BILLY

Because I could get you more.

OMAR

What do you mean?

BILLY

You don't have the stomach to extract every last hunk of flesh out of the Red Sox, Omar, but I do. Let me. Give me Cliff Floyd for five minutes and I'll get you two and a half million, Arrojo, Sing Song, and another player.

Silence. Then -

OMAR

What would you get out of it?

BILLY

The third player you didn't have to begin with.

OMAR

Who?

BILLY

His name is Youkilis.

Paul suddenly comes alive. He practically jumps onto Billy's desk. Billy puts a finger to his lips - shhhh.

*
*

OMAR

Who?

BILLY

He's nobody. A Double-A third baseman.

BOGARD

Competitive Drive - one out of ten. Leadership - one out of ten. Conscientiousness - one out of -

BILLY

Shit, does he have a two in anything?

BOGARD

Velocity. Ten out of ten.

BILLY

Take him off the board. Next.

HOPKINS

Simmons. Outfielder. Chico State. Good looking, but -

BILLY

But what. Drugs?

HOPKINS

No drugs. Just no grades.

BILLY

You mean bad grades?

HOPKINS

No, I mean no grades. He really has no desire to be in college.

BILLY

Hates college, on a scholarship. Next.

PITTARO

We love this guy, Billy.

BILLY

Can he hit?

PITTARO

He's a tools guy.

BILLY

So he can't hit.

PITTARO

He can hit.

BILLY

He can hit - or he can hit?

PITTARO

He can hit.

BILLY

So you're saying he can't hit.

PITTARO

He can hit.

BILLY

That's not what I asked. I asked
can he hit.

PITTARO

He's a good hitter.

BILLY

(enough already)

If he's a good hitter, why doesn't
he hit good?

PITTARO

He needs a little work. He'll be
able to hit.

BILLY

Oh, he hasn't hit yet, but he's
going to start hitting against
tougher competition. Next.
Let's talk about Youkilis.

Some of the scouts begin leafing through paperwork.
Billy looks at Paul. This must be one of his finds.

SCOUT

The Cincinnati U guy?

BILLY

Why's he so low on our board?

SCOUT

He's low on everyone's board.

BILLY

That's not a reason. In fact, we
should be taking advantage of the
perception gap. We should be
looking at this guy and rating him
higher precisely because no one is
looking at him and rating him
higher.

(MORE)

*

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*

*

BILLY (CONT'D)

*

GRADY

He can't run, throw, or field.

*

BILLY

No, he just hits all the time,
which is a quality I happen to
like when I'm drafting a hitter.

*

*

*

*

PAUL

He crushed in college. Set school
records in OBP, slugging, and
walks. Oh, and 50 jacks.

*

*

*

SCOUT

Yeah, the UC Bearcats have a
helluva tough schedule.

PAUL

You read Sparky's report on his
Cape Cod League summer? Great
numbers. Postage stamp strike
zone. He even said, quote, "seems
like an Oakland A's-type player."

*

*

*

*

*

BILLY

*

And here's your next scouting
report: He's no longer fat, he's
big-boned. He no longer has no
chance, he's got a slight chance.
Then it's not a slight chance,
it's a bright future. Only now
he's playing against us because
you let him get away!

*

BOGARD

Billy, if you saw him, I'm telling you, you wouldn't -

BILLY

You don't like to look at him, Bogie, I get it. He doesn't fit your idea of what a ball player should look like. We're talking opportunity costs. We can get Youkilis for fifty grand. It makes more sense than drafting pitchers like Bonderman out of high school, which has been proven over and over again to be one of the worst returns on investment.

BOGARD

You can't say that we haven't been good at scouting pitchers, Billy. You can't. We drafted Zito, Mulder, and Hudson, for god's sake.

BILLY

What I'm saying is: I was a first round draft pick, a minor leaguer, a major leaguer, an advance scout, an assistant GM, and a GM. I've been up the ass of this game twenty-five years, and I can't tell you with any certainty if a guy is going to make it. We pick fifty guys are we're happy if two of them make it. In what other business is this a success?

PAUL

The lottery.

GRADY

I like Bonderman.

BILLY

You haven't even seen Bonderman.

SCOUT

You haven't seen Youkilis.

BILLY

I've seen his numbers.

GRADY

And I've seen Bonderman's numbers.

BILLY

In high school. In his junior
year in high school. High school
numbers are meaningless. Would you
bet your 401K on this guy?

GRADY

Actually, yes. I would.

Billy exhales.

GRADY

I'll get Youkilis for you in the twelfth. I promise. No one else is even thinking about him. Even at twelve, we're overdrafting him.

BILLY

And if he's not there in the twelfth?

GRADY

He'll be there.

*

120 INT. 2001 DRAFT - OAKLAND COLISEUM

120

Legend: 2001 draft, round one

Everyone sitting around the speakerphone. Teams making their picks. The A's turn comes and Grady takes Jeremy Bonderman. Billy and Paul exchange a look.

*

JUMPCUT -

121 INT. 2001 DRAFT - OAKLAND COLISEUM

121

Legend: 2001 draft, round eight

The Boston Red Sox draft Kevin Youkilis. The room goes dead quiet. Billy stands quickly, slamming the chair against back wall, where it folds and collapses to the floor. He walks out.

OMAR V/O

I'll see what I can do.

BILLY V/O

Here's how you do it, I'll walk you through it. You call them and-

BACK TO -

122 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - BILLY'S OFFICE - PRESENT DAY

122

OMAR

--I know, ask for Youkilis.

BILLY

No! You don't ask for Youkilis, Omar. You tell them Youkilis is in the deal or there's no deal. And hang up.

(MORE)

BILLY (CONT'D)

I guarantee you they'll call you right back and give you everything. They're not going to blow a deal for Cliff Floyd over Kevin Youkilis. They don't know who Youkilis is any more than you do. Here, let me read you the Boston Globe's headline tomorrow: "Sox Lose Cliff Floyd to Keep Fat Minor Leaguer."

Omar is sweet, but no fool.

OMAR

Who is Youkilis, Billy?

BILLY

I told you.

OMAR

You did but you didn't. You want him for some reason.

BILLY

I'm doing a friend of mine a sentimental favor. That's all, I swear. He's a "no" for you and a "maybe" for me.

*
*

OMAR

I'll call them and see.

BILLY

Call me back.

He hangs up. Paul can't believe what Billy just did for him.

PAUL

Thank you.

BILLY

Don't thank me yet, he hasn't done it.

Billy unhappily regards the phone that's not ringing.

BILLY

Why isn't anybody calling?

He hates the silence. Dials another number from memory.

BILLY

Calling Schott back. Pick it up. I'm on the other line.

Paul picks up the receiver and listens to it ring. Billy is not on another line.

SCHOTT

Hello?

PAUL

Steve, it's Paul. Sorry I left you on hold. Billy asked me to call you back. He's on another line. *

BILLY

Tell him I need two hundred and twenty-five grand for Rincon.

PAUL

Billy says he needs two hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars for Ricardo Rincon.

(pause, to Billy)

No.

BILLY

Tell him I'll pay it, but when I sell him next year for twice that, I keep the money.

PAUL

Billy says he'll pay for Rincon himself, sell him, and keep the profit.

Paul listens to whatever Steve Schott is saying, thanks him, and hangs up.

PAUL

He says he'll pay for Rincon.

Billy dials Shapiro's number.

BILLY

Mark. Billy. Sorry it took so long. Here's the deal. I don't want Rincon pitching against me tonight. Tell him to change his clothes. I got you the money. Yeah. Thanks.

He hangs up.

BILLY

Do you want to go down and release Magnante? *

*

PAUL

Do I want to?

*

BILLY

Somebody's got to tell him.

*

*

As Billy dials, Paul stays put.

BILLY

Voos. You got twenty minutes to make Ricardo Rincon a jersey. Put any number on it. R-I-N-C-O-N.

The second he hangs up the phone, it rings.

BILLY

Billy Beane.

(pause)

Oh, hi, Ricardo.

(pause)

Ricardo, I know it's a bit shocking for you, but we've been trying to get you for a long time. You're going to love the guys on this team. They're fun.

(pause)

Yes! Yes! I don't know if you'll pitch tonight, but you're on our team tonight. Possibly you'll punch out Jim Thome!

(pause)

We'll have a uniform and everything ready for you. Where are you from, Ricardo?

(pause)

Well, Veracruz is closer to here than Cleveland. You're closer to home!

(pause)

Okay. See you tonight.

Billy hangs up.

BILLY

It's gonna be a longer road trip than he thought.

PAUL

What about Art?

BILLY

What about Art.

PAUL

Can Art tell Mags?

Great idea. Billy dials another extension.

BILLY

Art. Billy. I've got some good news and some bad news.

ART

Okay.

BILLY

The good news is Ricardo Rincon's heading over to the clubhouse. The bad news is you got to tell Magnante he threw his last pitch in the major leagues last night.

ART

(long pause)
All right.

123 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - LOCKER ROOM - 20 MINUTES LATER 123

A sewing machine needle bangs the last of the stitching on an "N" in RINCON.

124 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - ART'S OFFICE - SAME TIME 124

In the office, Magnante, still in uniform, stares at the floor. Art has already told him the bad news and now waits for him to get on with it and leave. Eventually -

MAGNANTE

I'm four days away from having my ten years.

Art thinks for a moment, then picks up the phone and presses a few buttons.

ART

Billy, it's Art.

BILLY

What's up?

ART

I'm here with Magnante. Did you know he's four days away from his ten years?

BILLY

No, I didn't.

ART

Is there anything we can do?

BILLY

Art, there really isn't. I'm sorry.

ART (CONT'D)

Can he go the DL?

BILLY

Art, I get it, but I am not allowed to do that, literally. He's vested, he's just not at the elite level. I can't help him.

ART

Okay.

Art hangs up.

ART

There's nothing he can do.

125 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - LOCKER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

125

Magnante talks to his wife on his cell phone.

JILL

I want to come anyway.

MAGNANTE

Why?

JILL

I want to say goodbye to my friends. I may never see them again. And I'm bringing the boys.

A beat.

MAGNANTE

Okay.

Magnante comes past his teammates - who all know what must have gone on - unbuttons his jersey as he crosses to his locker.

After he is gone, Rincon arrives, putting on his new jersey, the interpreter next to him - a thoroughly uncomfortable moment. His new teammates watch him finish dressing.

126 EXT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - THAT NIGHT 126

Oakland plays the Indians. Mike Magnante is in the stands with his wife and kids.

127 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - WEIGHT ROOM - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS) 127

Billy works out.

128 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - LOCKER ROOM (CONTINUOUS) 128

Billy heads to the showers. On the way, he sees Ricardo Rincon sitting in a chair, watching the game with his uniform on.

BILLY

Ricardo.

He looks up to see Billy. His expression is blank.

BILLY

I'm Billy.

RINCON

Oh, hello.

BILLY

You okay?

RINCON

I can't play today. I can't concentrate.

Billy nods.

BILLY

Okay. How's your arm?

RINCON

My arm is great.

BILLY

Good.

- 129 INTERVIEWS 129
- Billy's boss, Sandy Alderson, turns Billy onto a new way of thinking about baseball, largely influenced by the writings of BILL JAMES and ERIC WALKER. These new ideas attack received notions of strategy and player evaluation. For a small market team, there is the potential of exploiting a variety of inefficiencies.*
- 130 REAL FOOTAGE - EXT. OAKLAND COLISEUM 130
- Legend: August 13, 2002
- Barry Zito - on his way to the American League Cy Young Award - hurls his strikeout pitch - his curveball - past the Blue Jays' Brian Leshar -
- The A's are pitching well, hitting well, and winning games.
- Jeff Tam and Frank Menechino have been called back up to the team. They are welcomed into the clubhouse.
- 131 EXT. OAKLAND AIRPORT 131
- The WHEELS OF THE TEAM JET lift off -
- REPORTER
- The A's begin this road trip having won the last five at home, picking up two games on the Angels and Mariners -
- 132 EXT. TIGER STADIUM, DETROIT - NIGHT 132
- Legend: August 23, 2002
- In the dugout, Art Howe writes JOHN MABRY into the lineup.
- 133 REAL FOOTAGE - TIGER STADIUM, DETROIT - SAME NIGHT 133
- John Mabry hits two home runs. Barry Zito wins his 18th game.
- 134 EXT. AIRPORT 134
- The plane takes off from Detroit.

135 EXT. KAUFMAN STADIUM, KANSAS CITY - FIELD 135

Legend: August 26, 2002

Ricardo Rincon and Billy Koch close out a victory against the Royals.

136 EXT. AIRPORT - KANSAS CITY 136

The plane takes off.

INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - VIDEO ROOM *

Billy, Paul, and the Oakland Video Technician watch video of the Anaheim Angels starting pitcher. They make comments of his effectiveness and how A's hitters should approach him. The phone rings. *

VIDEO TECHNICIAN
God, this guy is relentless. Don't answer it. *

BILLY
Who is it? *

VIDEO TECHNICIAN
The video guy in the visitor's clubhouse. He keeps calling about the reception or something. *

Billy picks up the phone. (intercut Visitor's locker room) *

BILLY
(cheerful)
Hello! *

ANGELS VIDEO GUY
Hi, I'm calling from the visitor's video room. We're having some problems getting a signal here. *

BILLY
Oh, well, what kind of problem are you having? *

Paul and the video guy look at Billy. *

ANGELS VIDEO GUY
Well, we're just not getting a signal, and we're not sure if it's a reception thing, or... *

BILLY

Oh, it's a reception thing. This happens a lot. You know, I've been here all summer, kind of as an intern while I'm going to school. It's been a really good experience. You going to school?

ANGELS VIDEO GUY

No...

BILLY

I've been going at night. I like it, it's quiet. Long commute, though. So is it the TV in the corner?

ANGELS VIDEO GUY

Yeah.

BILLY

That's the same one that was acting up when Tampa was here. So here's what you do: go into the kitchen there and get yourself some aluminum foil. Enough to cover a few fingers.

ANGELS VIDEO GUY

Aluminum foil.

BILLY

Yep. I'll hold on.

Paul mouths "What are you doing?" and Billy raises a finger. After a beat:

ANGELS VIDEO GUY

Okay, I've got the foil.

BILLY

Now, wrap one of your fingers in the foil. Doesn't matter which one.

ANGELS VIDEO GUY

Okay.

BILLY

You got it?

ANGELS VIDEO GUY

Yeah.

BILLY
Okay. Now get right in front of
the monitor.

*
*
*

ANGELS VIDEO GUY
All right.

*
*

BILLY
Now: put the finger with the
aluminum foil right up to the
monitor, right to the screen.

*
*
*
*

ANGELS VIDEO GUY
Okay...

*
*

BILLY
Let me know when your finger is
touching the screen.

*
*
*

ANGELS VIDEO GUY
It's touching the screen.

*
*

BILLY
Okay, now lift your left leg in
the air.

*
*
*

ANGELS VIDEO GUY
My left leg?

*
*

BILLY
Your left leg. Trust me, this
works.

*
*
*

Billy's cell phone rings.

*

BILLY
Are you doing it?

*
*

137 EXT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - FIELD

137

Legend: August 31, 2002

The A's win the game with three in the bottom of the eighth as Chavez has a two-run single and Dye a RBI single. Jim Mecir picks up the win after being charged with the blown save and Billy Koch pitches a scoreless ninth inning for his career high 37th save.

138 TABLETOP FIGURINES

138

The standings show the A's in first place by three games.

139 EXT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - CONCESSIONS - NIGHT 139

Long lines at the souvenir stands. Money changing hands.

140 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT 140

Art Howe tells John Mabry he will be playing tonight.

BILL KING (TV)

You got to hand it to Art Howe.
He's managing this unorthodox team
in an unorthodox way. They are
not bunting. They are not
stealing. They are just winning.
And Art Howe is the reason.

141 REAL FOOTAGE - EXT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - NIGHT 141

The Coliseum's three-quarters full now as John Mabry hits
a solo shot against Twins starter Joe Mays -

GREG PAPA

This is getting eerie now and far
be it from me to jinx it by saying
how many consecutive games the A's
have won -

BILL KING

Seventeen - and ten of those were
on the road.

GREG PAPA

You said it, not me. It's on the
record. If they lose tonight, you
can answer to Billy Beane.

142 INT. BILLY'S OFFICE - DAY

142

Billy on his cell phone. Paul is on the couch.
Occasionally they toss the styrofoam ball back and forth.

BILLY

(breezy)

When you say your "source", if
it's not me or Paul, then they
don't know what they're talking
about. We're the only two people
that know everything that's going
on.

*

A beat.

BILLY

That's not what we're saying.
There's no one way of doing things
that always works. We're just
saying every inherited idea needs
to be looked at.

Beat.

BILLY

If I can take advantage of data
that says you score more runs with
a man on first with no out than
with a man on second with one out,
then I will. Then somebody else
will come along with something
else, and we'll have to adapt.
This is what we're doing now.

Billy looks to Paul with a "I can't believe this"
expression as he takes the next question.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Well, I have to credit Paul for that. I keep saying I don't do this alone, and you guys never print it. My people all hate me.

*

Time cut. The call is finished.

Billy and Paul.

PAUL

You gotta give Art a little credit for playing Mabry.

BILLY

Hey, Mabry's a great guy. But sooner or later Tattoo's going to show up and take him off the island.

143 EXT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - OVERHEAD - LATE AFTERNOON

143

From a news chopper overhead, the Coliseum looks like its counterpart in Rome -

Legend: September 4, 2002

And all roads leading to it are jammed with traffic.

REPORTER

None of the Oakland fans in their cars down there have forgotten the A's inglorious history-making choke in Game 5 of the AL division series last October -

144 EXT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - ENTRANCE - LATE AFTERNOON

144

Tickets are torn and purses searched as a record breaking number of fans stream into the stadium.

REPORTER

Tonight, one game shy of 20 consecutive wins, they have a shot at redemption. How rare is it to win 20 games in a row? This rare: No American League team has ever done it.

145 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - LOCKER ROOM - EVENING 145

It's like a tomb. The players getting ready without music or chat. Each fretting he'll be the one who'll make the error, or not get the hit tonight, that will cost them the game.

*

146 INT. CAR - MOVING - EVENING 146

Billy heads east on 580 with Bob Mould on the CD player. His cell phone rings. He answers it with -

*

BILLY

Don't tell me the score, Paul.

CATHY

Billy, it's Cathy.

It's his ex-wife.

CATHY

How you feeling? Nervous?

BILLY

No, not at all. I'm good.

His hands are gripping the wheel like they used to with her in the car.

CATHY

I just wanted to call and say that, you know, everything's going to go great tonight ... but if it doesn't ... it doesn't mean anything.

BILLY

The players know that.

CATHY

I mean about you.

Nothing from Billy.

CATHY

Casey wants to say hi.

BILLY

Great.

A beat.

CASEY

Hi, dad.

BILLY

Hi, honey.

CASEY

Good luck tonight.

BILLY

Thanks.

CASEY

I can hear the music.

BILLY

It's your music. You gonna watch the game?

CASEY

No, American Idol's on.

BILLY

American Idol! Great.

CASEY

Are you on your way to the stadium?

BILLY

I'm on my way to Visalia, to see a Single-A catcher who eats too much and everyone hates.

CASEY

Dad - turn around. You have to see the game.

BILLY

No, I don't.

CASEY

Turn around.

147 INT/EXT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - DUGOUT/FIELD - EVENING 147

Art posts the lineup and crosses to the plate umpire to give him a copy. We see "Mabry (1B)". Hatteberg will not be playing. *

148 REAL FOOTAGE - EXT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - EVENING 148

The A's roll up an 11-run lead.

149 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - CORRIDOR/ART'S OFFICE - LATER - NIGHT 149

Billy strides through an underground corridor which is echoing with the cheers of 55,000 fans. Comes into the locker room and finds Paul watching the game on the TV - with the sound off - in Art's office.

150 EXT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - FIELD - LATER - NIGHT 150

Billy and Paul emerge from a tunnel to a sight Billy has denied himself for 138 games: The lit-up ballpark with a game in play.

Unfortunately, the idyllic moment, like all Billy's idyllic moments in baseball, is short-lived as Tejada drops a routine double-play throw from Ellis and the Royals get on the board.

Billy looks sick. It's still a rout at 11 to 1, but that's missing the point.

BILLY
I shouldn't be here.

*

151 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - ART'S OFFICE - LATER - NIGHT 151

The TV is silent, but the little banner on the screen reads: A's 11, Royals 5. As Billy and Paul stare at it, Art emerges from the dugout to pull Hudson.

BILLY
It better be Bradford.

152 EXT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - FIELD - SAME TIME 152

It is. Chad Bradford comes off the bullpen mound to relieve Hudson.

153 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - ART'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER 153

Billy and Paul watch Chad take the game ball from Art.

*

154 EXT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - FIELD - SAME TIME 154

Chad drops his little white rock next to the rosin bag. Climbs back atop the mound. Covers his mouth with his glove, closes his eyes and whispers -

155 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - ART'S OFFICE - SAME TIME 155

Watching Bradford on the TV -

PAUL

Is he praying?

BILLY

If we could get him to believe
in the power of the ground ball
as much as the Lord he'd knock a
full point off his ERA.

156 EXT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - FIELD - LATER 156

Chad walks the first batter he faces, Brent Mayne. The crowd grows anxious.

His first submariner pitch to the next batter, Dee Brown, goes awry, almost hitting the Royals' Neifi Perez in the on-deck circle.

He gets behind in the count and loses him. As Dee trots to first, a disgruntled A's bleacher fan hurls a roll of toilet paper into center field as others boo Bradford.

Chad manages to get Perez to hit a slow grounder to Mabry's right, but is late covering and everyone's safe. The bases are loaded and the fans want Chad's head.

In the stands, a woman who must be Chad's mother, puts her hands together to her lips to pray -

The next Royal, Luis Ordaz hits a grounder to Tejada who tries for the force at home and misses. 11-6, bases still loaded, and nobody out.

As Art emerges from the dugout to pull Bradford, he notices the red light on the nearest TV camera. Knowing Billy will be watching wherever he is, he looks directly into in with an expression that says, Happy?

157 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - ART'S OFFICE - SAME TIME 157

Billy looks at Art looking at him on the TV.

As Ricardo Rincon is summoned from the pen and trots toward the mound -

BILLY

What are the odds of winning twenty games in a row? I know you've looked.

PAUL

1 in fourteen million.

BILLY

And the odds of blowing an 11-run lead?

PAUL

About the same. *

158 EXT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - FIELD - LATER 158

Rincon is gone already. Jeff Tam is on the mound now. The Royals' Mike Sweeney up. Time seems to have altered. Slowed down.

159 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - ART'S OFFICE - SAME TIME 159

Billy watches Tam squint for the sign on TV.

BILLY

Don't throw the sinker. He's waiting for it.

Tam throws his "super-sinker" and Sweeney golfs it over the left field wall.

BILLY

Fucking Tam. *

Billy can't take it anymore. Throws a paperweight for the strike that Tam couldn't into Art's framed Optimist's Creed hanging on the wall, and leaves.

160 EXT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - FIELD - LATER 160

The scoreboard: 11-10.

161 REAL FOOTAGE - EXT. OAKLAND COLISEUM 161

The A's closer, Billy Koch, is on the mound now, facing Luis Alicea. Koch winds up and fires and Alicea drives it to left. Byrnes traps it and throws to the plate but it's too late to keep Kit Pellow from scoring from second.

162 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - ART'S OFFICE - SAME TIME 162

Paul listens to things crashing into lockers.

163 EXT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - FIELD/STANDS - LATER 163

Bottom of the ninth. 11 to 11.

ART

Hatte. Grab a bat.

Scott Hatteberg looks sick. Then pulls a bat from the rack and makes the long walk to the plate as Roy Steele's booming voice echoes:

VOICE OF GOD

Pinch hitting, for Eric Byrnes -
Scott Hat-te-berg.

His wife Elizabeth watches him settle into the box. Tara Beane, a couple seats down, watches her. Scott stares at the Royals' closer, Jason Grimsley, and, when the first pitch comes, manages to lay off it.

UMPIRE

Ball!

Scott steps out of the box. Tries to catch his breath. Looks at 55,528 fans looking at him. Steps back in and stares at the point in space he believes the next pitch will leave Grimsley's hand. When it comes, he sees it. Swings. And -

We are back in The Natural - if only for a few moments - as the barrel of Scott's bat finds the ball -

Every head in both dugouts tilts up - every head in the Coliseum tilts up - Elizabeth Hatteberg's head tilts up -

164 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - LOCKER ROOM - SAME TIME 164

Billy - not watching in the locker room - listens to a sudden hush of 55,000 people, a broken bat in his hand -

165 EXT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - FIELD - SAME TIME 165

As Scott hurries to first, praying it's a single, the ball sails over the 362 sign in right center -

The A's pour out of the dugout and bullpen and engulf him as he crosses home plate. He disappears under a sea of green and yellow uniforms -

166 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - ART'S OFFICE - SAME TIME 166

Billy looks in to see the televised version of the celebration on the field that's accompanied by the live echoing sounds of the ecstatic fans. Then at Paul, who is amazingly calm considering what's just happened.

PAUL

Congratulations, Billy. We're now officially lucky as hell.

*
*

BILLY

Hey, like I said, you can be smart and make all the right moves, but sometimes you just gotta have a horseshoe up your ass.

*
*
*
*
*

167 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - LOCKER ROOM - LATER 167

The place is packed with players, players' wives, coaches and news crews. There's no champagne-spraying, but they feel like they just won the World Series. In fact, they've accomplished something much more rare.

Billy feels like they just dodged a bullet. There's something melancholy about how he watches his players - many of whom he plucked from obscurity - as reporters swirl around them. Surely, it would feel better if he were one of them. He decides to leave -

*

168 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - LOCKER ROOM - CONTINUED 168

- where Art Howe is being interviewed -

ART

Down in Anaheim, all they talk about is the manager. Most people don't even know who the General Manager is down there. They just know Scioscia.

REPORTER

People appreciate you here.

ART

Which people? My people? With all the years I've been here, and all we've accomplished - 102 games last year and on a pace to beat that this year - don't you think I might've been offered a long-term contract by now? I haven't.

169 TABLETOP FIGURINES

169

The final standings of the AL WEST, with Oakland in first place. They won 103 games with the lowest payroll in the division.

170 OMITTED

170

171 INT. COACH'S ROOM - DAY

171

Billy has assembled his coaching staff.

BILLY

I'm sure we've all heard opinions about how we should approach the playoffs; should we be changing our game, since we're facing the best pitchers in the league, etc., etc. I've printed out the season statistics for us and the Twins. I'll give you the highlights: The Twins batting average was eleven points better than ours, and their slugging percentage five points better, and yet they scored thirty-two fewer runs. Why? Their team on-base is a little lower than ours, they had twice as many sacrifices, and they were caught stealing twenty times. They squandered outs. We don't do that. We're sticking with what got us here.

172 INTERVIEWS

172

Sandy Alderson quits as Oakland GM and Billy takes over. In his search for an assistant GM, Billy's close friend and former colleague JP RICCIARDI tells Billy about a young Harvard grad named Paul DePodesta, who is working for the Cleveland Indians. Billy calls John Hart and asks for permission to speak with Paul. Hart reluctantly agrees, but says he wants the deal concluded quickly.

*
*

173 EXT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - NIGHT

173

The same shot as at the beginning: the Coliseum from high above, only this time the final game of the division series is being played at home. But still it's silent.

Legend: 5th Game 2002 American League Division Series - A's vs Twins

As we drift over the game - the A's batting in the ninth - we begin to hear the crowd and an announcer -

JOE MORGAN V/O

The flaw in the A's thinking - and this comes from the top of their organization - is their failure to comprehend you have to manufacture runs in the post-season.

*

We descend to field level and move through the A's dugout. Past the faces of the players we've come to know. Thousand yard stares. They must be losing.

JOE MORGAN V/O

You have to steal. You have to bunt. You have to sacrifice. You have to trust in Small Ball - not Billy Ball. The A's wait for the home run. They are still waiting.

174 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - DUGOUT TUNNEL - NIGHT

174

We duck into the dugout tunnel. As we move along it, the sounds change from live to electronic -

JOE MORGAN V/O

They think they've devised a science to win games. They think it resides in a computer.

175 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

175

We continue to move down the dimly-lit cinder-block corridor.

JOE MORGAN V/O

They thumb their nose at fundamentals. At tradition. At Baseball.

176 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - WEIGHT ROOM/LOCKER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

176

We pick up Billy and follow him through the bowels of the stadium. There's no one around.

JOE MORGAN V/O

They're bean-counters in Oakland. That's bean with an "e" at the end.

(MORE)

JOE MORGAN V/O (CONT'D)

They're card-counters at the blackjack table who have forgotten the house always wins. Which is why they're here again - teetering on the brink of elimination.

Billy hears a noise, a rhythmic THUMPING. He heads for it.

He walks into the locker room. The thumping is louder now. He moves to the video room.

Where Paul is beating a chair to death with a baseball bat.

Paul, spent, sees Billy and sets the bat against the wall.

Billy is the picture of calm as he looks at Paul.

BILLY

Paul. What are you doing?

Paul, as his breathing slows:

PAUL

We were better. Now we're just that team that keeps losing game five.

A beat.

*

BILLY

We know what we did.

177 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - BILLY'S OFFICE - NEXT DAY

177

The list of GM's next to the phone. One of them is circled: Steve Phillips, New York Mets.

DENISE

Steve Phillips office.

BILLY

Denise, Billy Beane.

DENISE

Good morning, Mr. Beane.

BILLY

Denise, who's the coolest GM in the game?

DENISE
You are, Mr. Beane.

BILLY

Thank you, Denise. Is he in?

DENISE

I'll get him.

A beat.

STEVE

Hey Billy.

BILLY

Hey.

He punches the speaker button so Paul can hear.

BILLY

So, Steve, what's happening with Bobby Valentine?

PHILLIPS

Between us?

BILLY

He's gone.

PHILLIPS

Tomorrow.

BILLY

I called at the right time then.

PHILLIPS

(pause)

Art?

BILLY

I love Art. I love the man.
His record speaks for itself. But
I can't afford him anymore. His
last year calls for a big
raise....

*

*

PHILLIPS

Have him call me.

*

178 INT. CITATION HOMES - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

178

Schott, Billy and Paul sit at a conference table too large for them, going over a budget Billy has prepared for next season. Regarding a certain line item -

SCHOTT

Why is it no matter what the attendance we have the same number of ushers?

BILLY

We have so few season ticket holders we never know what the attendance is going to be.

SCHOTT

We do by three o'clock.

BILLY

We do?

SCHOTT

We know how many early birds show up. Someone could count cars as they enter the lot. From which we could extrapolate.

BILLY

Three o'clock's a little late to be calling people to tell them if they have to come to work or not.

SCHOTT

Why.

BILLY

Keep them on hold every day?

SCHOTT

You pay them a holding fee.

Billy sort of shrugs, okay. Schott sets the paperwork down. Silence. There's something else to be discussed at this meeting, and they all know it, but Billy isn't sure how to broach it. Eventually -

BILLY

We need to talk about the Red Sox.

This is news to Paul.

SCHOTT

We do?

BILLY

Yeah.

SCHOTT

Well, how am I supposed to react to that? You're under contract, Billy. You extended.

BILLY

I know that, Steve, but can't I just talk to them? I want to see what they have to say.

SCHOTT

You're asking me to let them talk to you?

BILLY

Yes.

Paul's head is spinning.

SCHOTT

Well, I can't do that unless I know Paul is in place as my GM. I'm not letting you take him with you, and I have no idea if he's willing to stay if you aren't here. How do I even know I can come to terms with him, given the extremely disadvantaged bargaining position you're putting me in?

BILLY

Well, I think you'll agree this is a great opportunity for him. I can't believe he's not going to make a deal. And even if he doesn't, you might be able to get Sandy to come back.

*

Paul is frozen. Neither Steve nor Billy are acting like he's even in the room.

SCHOTT

If you want out of your contract, I want their whole team and a lot of cash. We've invested in you.

BILLY

I haven't asked to get out of my contract, Steve, I just asked if I could talk to them.

SCHOTT

And I said I won't give you permission unless I know I have Paul! You can't leave me with a vacant front office.

BILLY

Then talk to Paul.

SCHOTT

I will.

Silence. Billy and Steve stare at each other. Paul just watches them.

SCHOTT (CONT'D)

All right. You know what? I've made it a point never to stand in the way of a man wanting to make more money. They made the call, the genie's out of the bottle. Do whatever you want.

Schott leaves. Paul looks at Billy.

179

EXT. CAR - MOVING - OAKLAND - DAY

179

Billy and Paul in the car. A long beat. Paul looks at Billy, then back at the road.

PAUL

Well, I didn't see that coming.

BILLY

I think you should think about staying. You're one of the architects of this thing, it belongs as much to you as it does to me.

PAUL

Have you thought about what you're going to ask for?

BILLY

I don't know. I haven't even talked to them yet. Why?

PAUL

I think you should raise the bar for all GMs. Look what you accomplished: we went to the playoffs three years in a row with one of the lowest payrolls in the league.

*
*
*
*
*
*

A beat.

*

PAUL

Boston just made that big deal for Cliff Floyd, and I think you should argue that you mean more to the franchise than Cliff Floyd.

*
*
*

180 INT. OAKLAND AIRPORT - DAWN

180

Billy has made it to the front of a long Economy line and presents his driver's license.

BILLY

The seven o'clock to Miami.

TICKET CLERK

How many pieces of luggage?

BILLY

Just the carry-on. Full flight?

TICKET CLERK

Just about.

BILLY

So there's no way you can get me
out of the middle seat and onto an
aisle?

TICKET CLERK

You're in First, sir.

BILLY

What.

TICKET CLERK

You've been upgraded to First Class. If you care to relax in the lounge before the flight it's just to the left of your gate.

181 INT. AIRPLANE - IN FLIGHT - DAY 181

Everyone in Coach is asleep, except Billy. He can't sleep, no matter how comfortable it is. There's an open book on his knee.

182 INT. MIAMI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - LATE DAY 182

Billy heads toward Ground Transportation to catch a cab. Sees a man in a dark suit holding a little sign that says, Mr. Beane.

183 EXT. FONTAINEBLEAU HOTEL - MIAMI - DUSK 183

A limousine pulls up in front of the 5-star Fontainebleau Hotel in the heart of Millionaires Row. A doorman opens the limo door and Billy climbs out.

184 INT. FONTAINEBLEAU HOTEL - MIAMI - DUSK 184

A bellman opens the drapes in a \$700 suite revealing a breathtaking view of the Atlantic. Billy tips him, looks out at the ocean a moment, then pulls the drapes shut and collapses on the bed.

185 INT/EXT. LIMOUSINE - EVENING 185

Billy rides in the back of the same limo.

186 INT. MANSION - BOCA RATON - NIGHT 186

The Red Sox new owner, asset management billionaire John Henry, leads Billy through a grand house.

HENRY

How was your flight?

BILLY

Comfortable.

HENRY

The hotel's okay? Room's okay?

BILLY

It's very nice, thank you.

HENRY

Sorry you can't stay longer.

BILLY

I have to get back for Tara's birthday. I told her your partner is dating Katie Couric, and she was very excited. She's a big fan of hers. We're down to two degrees of separation!

Henry hands Billy a beer from a bar fridge, opens one for himself, and they continue on through the sprawling house.

HENRY

Ever play at Fenway?

BILLY

Yeah. Tom Seaver struck me out on three pitches. He had this motion where he would show you his back, and I would see the name SEAVER and think "Wow! That's Tom Seaver!" Ball went right by me.

HENRY

Sorry.

BILLY

So you've officially hired Bill James.

HENRY

Why it took someone so long to hire this guy is beyond me.

BILLY

Because Baseball hates him.

HENRY

Money buys a lot of things. One is the luxury to disregard what Baseball thinks.

As they sip their beers and look out at the gently swaying palm trees -

Henry and Billy eat dinner in a grand dining room.

188 INT. FOUNTAINEBLEAU HOTEL - DAWN 188

Billy waking up, getting dressed.

189 INT. AIRPLANE - IN FLIGHT - MORNING 189

The tableaux of sleeping Coach passengers again. And those more comfortably asleep in First Class again. And Billy, the only one awake.

190 INT. BILLY'S HOUSE - DUSK 190

Billy is on the phone.

BILLY

One thing I can't do is move to Boston for a year or two and hope there'll be a third.

HENRY

You want a three-year contract? Fine.

BILLY

I'm sorry but even that wouldn't be long enough.

HENRY

Say how many you need.

BILLY

I want to say at least five but I know that's impossi -

HENRY

Fine.

Billy is a bit taken aback. He thought that would be a deal-breaker right there.

HENRY

How much for five years?

Billy considers the most outrageous figure he can think of, and then goes higher -

BILLY

Twelve and a half million.

HENRY

Fine.

Billy, if he's going to get out of this, is clearly going to have to try harder.

BILLY

The real problem is, I see my daughter every other week. Either she flies up from Newport Beach or I fly down there. I can't let that change, so -

HENRY

You can see her every week.

BILLY

Fly back and forth every week?

HENRY

No, I mean don't move to Boston, move to Newport Beach. You don't have to live in Boston to run the club. Buy a house in Newport Beach. See her every day.

Billy is so thrown by this, he doesn't know how to proceed.

HENRY

You belong on the Red Sox, Billy. You belong with Johnny Damon and Nomar Garciaparra and Manny Ramirez and Pedro Martinez. You belong on that team.

191 INT. BILLY'S HOUSE - DAY

191

Billy is on the phone with Casey. The house phone rings constantly.

*
*

BILLY

They said they'll buy me a house right near you. I could see you all the time. I could run the team without having to live in Boston full-time.

CASEY

Wow. When would you move?

BILLY

Pretty soon, I guess.

CASEY

What does Tara say?

BILLY

She's at her parents, so I only talked to her on the phone. She says she's okay with it. But that may be because John Henry got Katie Couric to sing Happy Birthday Tara on her voice mail.

CASEY

That's crazy.

A beat.

CASEY

She waited for two years to get the house you're in.

BILLY

I know.

A beat.

CASEY

You should do whatever you want, dad.

192 INT. BILLY'S HOUSE - DAY

192

Billy, on the phone. Unshaven, tired.

BILLY

I think we have an agreement.

PAUL

Really.

BILLY

Yeah.

A beat.

BILLY

He keeps saying yes to everything.

PAUL

What do Tara and Casey say?

BILLY

They said they'll do whatever I want.

A beat.

BILLY

Have you done your deal?

PAUL

I think so. I sent a fax to Steve.

A beat.

PAUL

We have to figure out what I'm getting for you.

BILLY

I know.

PAUL

I want Shea Hillebrand.

BILLY

Oh, what is that, your GM voice? You can't have him.

PAUL

Why not?

BILLY

They won't let me trade him.

PAUL

What do you mean, they won't let you? That's bullshit. You're the GM. You and I both know you don't like him as a player. You just want to be able to trade him for value. And I want Youkilis.

*
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*
*
*
*

BILLY

Youkilis! Paul, come on.

*

PAUL

Are you going to argue you aren't worth it? You're going to not become GM because of little Kevin Youkilis? He's mine, all mine.

*
*
*

BILLY

You're negotiating against yourself. If you and me don't come to terms, then you won't even have the job!

PAUL

I don't even want the job!

Billy looks off. On the TV, ESPN is reporting that he is going to Boston.

PAUL

You talk to JP?

193 INT. BILLY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

193

It's dark. Probably dawn somewhere on the east coast.
Billy is on the phone. The house phone still rings non-
stop.

*
*

BILLY

Do I love the Red Sox?

JP

I don't know. I've never heard
you say you did.

BILLY

I don't. I've never liked the Red
Sox. So why am I doing this?

JP

You're not doing it for the money.

BILLY

No?

JP

You're doing it for what the money
says. It says what it says to any
player who gets big money: that
they're worth it.

BILLY

The offer says that. The money is
redundant.

JP

You wouldn't be calling me trying
to talk yourself out of it if you
felt good about it. Ask yourself:
what's going to better?

*
*

EXT. BILLY'S HOUSE - PRE-DAWN

*

Billy walks out. He's been up all night. He stands on the
deck and looks out at his yard. It's quiet.

*
*

The silence is broken by a scratching sound. Billy turns
to see that his dog Taggart wants to join him outside.

*
*

Billy lets him out, pets him.

*

He looks at his house and the property surrounding it.
Through the dining room window he can see pictures of
himself and Tara. Vacationing, getting married, out with
Casey...

*
*
*
*

BILLY V/O

I love Boston. It's a unique
franchise, and that's where I told
Steve Schott was the one place I
would leave here to go. But I love
the A's.

*
*
*
*
*

194 INT. BILLY'S OFFICE/OAKLAND COLISEUM - DAY

194

Billy talks on his phone he walks from his car to his
office. The sound of his voice makes it clear he's doing
an interview.

*
*

Legend: December 3, 2002

*

*

BILLY

My fingerprint is everywhere here,
and Steve has been great in the
process of allowing me the
opportunity to talk to Boston, but
I realize I'm fortunate here.

*
*

A beat.

BILLY

I think they understood when I
told them my reasons. That's a
credit to them as people. They
tried to listen instead of sell
me. I appreciated that.

195

INT. BILLY'S OFFICE - DAY

195

Billy and Paul, back in their usual spots.

*

BILLY

It's bad enough I blew up the
deal, now everyone wants to talk
about it.

PAUL

Whenever I complain about that
stuff you say it'll blow over. You
do Rick's deal?

*

BILLY

Yeah. A bit of a conversation, but
yeah. He'll sign.

Billy picks up the styrofoam ball, fingers it. His knee
starts bouncing.

*
*

PAUL

So I think I may have come up with
another classic Oakland A's trade.

*
*
*

BILLY

Yeah?

*
*

Throws the ball to Paul.

*

PAUL

Keith Foulke.

*
*

BILLY

For Billy Koch.

*
*

PAUL

And cash.

BILLY

(interested, very)

Okay. Why?

Paul throws the ball back.

PAUL

Foulke is entering the last year of his contract, they have to pay him six million. His ERA in May was over eight, so they demoted him from the closer spot. His ERA for the rest of the year was under one. He was lights out. He's available because he had one bad month. And he throws strikes.

BILLY

And his out pitch is a change-up, which isn't the manliest of pitches.

PAUL

Another reason he's undervalued.

BILLY

Koch had 44 saves, and ERA of 3.27 and throws 99 mph. He's due for a big raise, no question. He's peaking.

PAUL

Which means, as of today, he's overvalued. Perfect time to move him.

Billy throws the ball back.

BILLY

Think we can get enough cash?

PAUL

I have every confidence you'll get the Cadillac, Billy.

Legend: In 2003, Billy Koch had a 5.77 ERA and 11 saves for the White Sox. Keith Foulke had a 2.08 ERA and 43 saves for the Athletics.

EXT. FREEWAY - DAY

*

Signs indicate Billy is heading once again for Newport
Beach. He puts one of Casey's home-made CDs in the car's
CD player.

*

*

*

As Billy pulls away, TRAIN IN VAIN by The Clash rises... *

CUT TO:

196 EXT. DAVID JUSTICE

196

David Justice at the plate. As he takes ball four and trots down to first, the image freezes -

Legend: David Justice retired after the 2002 season, leaving baseball with a team-leading on-base percentage and the most walks.

197 EXT. SCOTT HATTEBERG

197

Scott Hatteberg, looking comfortable on the infield dirt finally, dives for a line drive - freeze.

Legend: Scott Hatteberg played three more seasons with the A's, then signed with Cincinnati in 2006 - as a first baseman. He retired in 2007.

*

198 EXT. CHAD BRADFORD 198

Chad Bradford goes into his windup from Mars. As his hand scrapes the dirt - freeze.

Legend: Chad Bradford went to the Red Sox in 2005. In 2008, he was traded to Tampa Bay who went on to the World Series with a payroll even lower than the A's.

199 EXT. KEVIN YOUKILIS 199

Kevin Youkilis, in a Red Sox uniform, shimmies at the plate. As he lays off ball four and the umpire points to first - freeze.

Legend: Kevin Youkilis became an All-Star, a Gold Glove winner, and won the Hank Aaron award as the best hitter in the American League in 2008. He was part of the World Series Championship Red Sox of 2004 and 2007, and is still with the club. *

200 EXT. JASON BAY 200

Jason Bay, hitting a game-winning triple for the Boston Red Sox in September 2008. As he's mobbed by his teammates - freeze -

Legend: Jason Bay was part of a three-way trade for Manny Ramirez in 2008 and is the starting left-fielder for the Boston Red Sox.

201 INT/EXT. SHEA STADIUM - NEW YORK - DUGOUT 201

Art Howe sits where no one tells him to stand - on Shea Stadium's home dugout bench in a Mets uniform. Freeze -

Legend: After leaving Oakland, Art Howe managed the New York Mets for two years, making twice the salary the A's were paying him.

202 EXT. JASON GIAMBI 202

Jason Giambi is back at first base in his #16 Oakland A's jersey. Freeze -

Legend: In his last season with the Yankees, Jason Giambi made \$23,428,571. In 2009, he returned to Oakland for \$4 million.

203 EXT. FENWAY PARK

203

A young man with an ivy league shirt and a boyish face sits in the owners box, trying not to be seen. Freeze -

Legend: Red Sox owner John Henry hired 28-year-old Theo Epstein for the General Manager job Billy turned down - and paid him 8 times less what he was offering Billy.

204 INT. PRESS ROOM

204

Paul, the focus of a press conference scrum, looking uncomfortable - freeze.

Legend: Paul DePodesta left Oakland in 2004 to become the General Manager of the Dodgers, where they won their first playoff game in 16 years. He's now Executive Vice President of the San Diego Padres.

*
*
*

205 INT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - SCOUTING ROOM

205

Billy, sitting in the scouting room, silent. Suddenly his leg kicks out and a chair flies across the room - freeze.

Legend: Billy Beane is still the General Manager of the Oakland A's.

The A's returned to the playoffs in 2003 and 2006, but did not advance to the World Series.

*
*

They still do not have a new stadium.

206 EXT. OAKLAND COLISEUM - FIELD - NIGHT

206

The Coliseum's floodlights are still on, but there's no one on the field -

START END CREDITS

TO BLACK