

***MISTER
GRITTY***

"At the End of the Day"

(PILOT)

Written by

Bryan Murphy

SEPTEMBER DRAFT

COLD OPEN

FADE IN:

EXT. AT&T PARK - DAY

**SAN FRANCISCO GIANTS
LAST DAY OF THE SEASON
7.0 GAMES OUT OF A PLAYOFF SPOT**

Aerial view of the most beautiful stadium in Major League Baseball.

EXT. AT&T PARK - FIELD LEVEL - DAY

The crowd roars as the Giants have a rally going: bases loaded in the bottom of the ninth. Two outs. Down 4-1.

PA ANNOUNCER
Now pinch-hitting, number eighteen,
TRIIIIPP RIIIIICHMOND!

The crowd chants "TRIPP! TRIPP! TRIPP!" as their hero, TRIPP RICHMOND, 33, steps into the batter's box. The harsh lines of his face reveal a fast liver.

BASEBALL CARD

**#18 TRIPP RICHMOND - Center Field
Height: 6'2" Weight: 195 lbs Bats: Right
Of note: Dating three women at once (career low).**

Tripp swings at the first pitch and promptly belts it over the left field wall -- **a walk-off grand slam!**

Tripp milks his home run trot. The cheers echo...

INT. AT&T PARK - PRESS ROOM - DAY

Post-game. Flashbulbs and rhubarb from the press gaggle. Enter LARRY LUBESKY, a serious man whose wardrobe consists only of bowling shirts and jeans. His salt and pepper hair coupled with a solid build reminds you of Tony Soprano.

LUBES
All right, let's make this quick.

BASEBALL CARD

**LARRY LUBESKY (aka "Lubes") - General Manager
Height: 6'0" Weight: Prefers not to say Bats: Right
Of note: He's the main character.**

LUBES (CONT'D)

Our goal was to make the playoffs. We didn't. At the end of the day, more teams were better than us. I don't like that we finished behind the Dodgers, either. I feel like I just watched Kim Jong Il sit down to dinner with Jesus Christ.

(then)

Questions?

FRECKLED REPORTER

Lubes, we just saw Tripp Richmond hit a game-winning home run. He's a free agent as of tonight. Do the Giants intend to re-sign him?

LUBES

We'll certainly kick the tires and do our due diligence.

FRECKLED REPORTER

So, does that mean...?

LUBES

Next question.

BEARDED REPORTER

The Giants haven't been to the playoffs in seven years. What needs to change for that to happen?

LUBES

We need to win more games. Next.

OBESE REPORTER

Lubes, what about the new owner, Dianna Flores-Foster? Rumor has it she wants to make drastic changes.

LUBES

I've given my life to this team. Hell, I've been married for eight months and still haven't gone on my honeymoon. Right, Mika?

Lubes looks to his wife, standing off to the side, their suitcases next to her. Her arms are folded; she's pissed.

BASEBALL CARD

MIKA LUBESKY - Wife

**Height: 5'6" Weight: That's rude Bats: Switch
Of note: Really wants to go on their honeymoon.**

LUBES (CONT'D)
 We're flying to Hawaii right after
 this, so, you'll understand if I
 cut it short.

The reporters muster up some applause as Lubes rises. Just
 then, DIANNA FLORES-FOSTER, 49, comes out on stage.

DIANNA
 Actually, if you don't mind, Lubes,
 I'd like to make an announcement.

BASEBALL CARD

DIANNA FLORES-FOSTER - New Team Owner
Height: 5'9" Weight: Hah! Bats: Left
Of note: Sugar magnate. Common billionaire.

Dianna sits down next to Lubes on stage. Lubes is
 understandably bewildered. He looks to Mika, who shrugs.

DIANNA (CONT'D)
 I am Dianna Flores-Foster. I am
 the new managing partner of the San
 Francisco Giants. I would like to
 take a moment to thank Larry
 Lubesky, Lubes as we all know him,
 for his thirteen years of service
 to the team. Second, I want to
 assure Lubes and our loyal fans
 that he will be given the resources
 necessary to finally bring a World
 Series trophy to San Francisco.

She starts the applause. This elicits cheers from the press!
 It's a shock to Lubes.

FRECKLED REPORTER
 So, does that mean...?

DIANNA
 I **guarantee** the Giants will win the
 World Series. This. Year.
 (then)
 I mean after **this** year's World
 Series. The next one.
 (pats Lubes on the back)
 We all believe in you, Lubes. You
 can do it.

INT. STADIUM BOWELS - MOMENTS LATER

Lubes with Mika, who keeps checking her watch.

MIKA

Our flight leaves in three hours.
We still have to go through
security and get drunk so I can
actually **get** on the plane.

LUBES

At the end of the day, I still have
a job to do. I've known Dianna
exactly one week, and she's already
making promises I have to keep.

MIKA

You made wedding vows. Those are
more important than Baseball
guarantees...

Lubes doesn't appear to be on board with that sentiment.

MIKA (CONT'D)

(worried, off his look)
Right?

LUBES

I've got to set her straight.

MIKA

A boss like that? You try to set
her straight, she'll fire you.

LUBES

You think I can't get another job?

MIKA

I think we're going to miss our
flight if we don't leave now!

Now Lubes checks his watch.

LUBES

Give me five minutes.

Lubes strides past her, down the hall.

MIKA

(calling after)
If you're not back by then I'm
leaving with one of the players!

INT. OWNER'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

A shrine to Dianna: An oil portrait hangs above her desk; a
floor to ceiling United Way poster with her helping kids,
pictures with famous people, there's even a bust.

WORKERS are finishing installation of lights and carpets as Lubes enters, noticing the decorations for the first time.

DIANNA (O.C.)
I think that went well. They
seemed **very** excited by my news.

Dianna approaches him from behind a wax figure of herself.

LUBES
Due respect, you can't promise the
fans a World Series. That's nuts.

DIANNA
I always make guarantees. And you
don't want to win a World Series?

LUBES
Of course I do. But Baseball can't
be predicted.

DIANNA
I know a smart person who says
otherwise.

LUBES
I've played the game, I've coached
it and I've been a general manager
for thirteen years. It's true.

Dianna goes to her desk, presses the intercom.

DIANNA
Willy, could you come on in here?
(to Lubes)
I think you're wrong. And I have
someone who will back me up on
this. Right, Willy?

Dianna looks to the doorway behind Lubes. He turns around
and sees --

BASEBALL CARD

WILL FLORES (aka "Flowers") - Son
Height: 5'9" Weight: 160 Bats: Scare him
Of note: Giants fanatic. Math geek. Virgin.

FLOWERS
Wow. Larry Lubesky! It's like I
just stepped inside the TV.
(then)
Can I call you Lubes?

LUBES
Who are you?

FLOWERS
I-I'm Willy, sir.

DIANNA
He's my son, Lubes. And he's the smart person who told me you **can** predict Baseball.

LUBES
This... **kid**?

DIANNA
Don't be a douchebag.

FLOWERS
Mom, it's okay. I'm sure you wouldn't like me telling you there are better ways to run a business.

DIANNA
I pay people to do exactly that. And I'm going to pay you to do the same for Lubes.

FLOWERS
Really?!

LUBES
I don't want some eighteen year old giving me ideas on how to run my team. I might as well start asking guys in the bleachers for help.

FLOWERS
I'm twenty-four, actually.

Lubes glares at Flowers, who cowers.

FLOWERS (CONT'D)
But if you've settled on eighteen, that's okay.

DIANNA
Willy is the new assistant general manager. He's going to help you run the Giants. Or you're fired.

The ultimatum stuns Flowers. Dianna means business. Lubes tries to keep a poker face as he considers his options.

CREDITS.

ACT ONE

INT. LUBESKY RESIDENCE - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Sparsely decorated. More his than hers right now, and from the looks of it, Mika might not care to ever redecorate.

Lubes watches her do so while eating pastrami sandwich.

MIKA

Won't be needing this...

String bikini. She would've looked magnificent.

MIKA (CONT'D)

Hah! Yeah right!

She tosses two boxes of condoms into a nearby trash can.

MIKA (CONT'D)

Who needs sunscreen when you live
in San Francisco and **never leave?**

She holds the sunscreen bottle, pierces Lubes with her glare.

MIKA (CONT'D)

I really hate you right now.

LUBES

I'm not the bad guy here. I'm good
at my job but I suddenly need help?

MIKA

I'm talking about **us**. The least
you could do is apologize for
postponing our honeymoon again!

Lubes puts down his sandwich, goes to Mika.

LUBES

One more week. I'm gonna scare the
hell out of this kid and when he
quits, our lives go back to normal.

MIKA

That sounds bush league.

LUBES

At the end of the day, fear works.

MIKA

Your pastrami breath is terrifying.

Mika walks out of the room. Lubes tries to smell his breath.

INT. GIANTS' CLUBHOUSE - DAY

Lubes leads Flowers into the vacant clubhouse. By now, the players have cleaned out all their gear. Just empty lockers, stacks of helmets and Giants signage.

LUBES

Here's the clubhouse. Sometimes they have Cactus Cooler. You'll be expected to grab one for me.

FLOWERS

There's no way you're serious.

LUBES

Your job is to take things off my plate that might be a distraction. At the end of the day, if there's Cactus Cooler to be had and I don't have it, I'll be plenty distracted.

(beat)

Come on. Meet the manager.

Lubes strolls over to the Manager's Office. Flowers follows.

INT. DUNNY'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Lubes and Flowers enter to find the Giants' field manager, DAN DUNNY, 56 -- grizzled -- whittling something at his desk.

LUBES

Hey, Dunny, what's the word?

BASEBALL CARD

DAN DUNNY - Manager

Height: 6'3" Weight: 205 lbs Bats: R

Of note: Always a string away from tying one on.

DUNNY

Lubey! You ain't in Hawaii yet?

LUBES

Honeymoon is on hold at the moment.

DUNNY

Yeah, it's been crazy 'round here. Say, who's this feller?

FLOWERS

Will Flores, skip. I'm the new assistant general manager.

They shake hands. Dunny looks to Lubes, senses his anger.

DUNNY
 (polite, but cold)
 Welcome aboard, Floresy (floorsy).

FLOWERS
 Well, thanks for not calling me
 Flowers. That's my old nickname.

DUNNY
 Flowers? That don't make one lick
 of sense. Floresy (flor-EZ-ee),
 sure. Florey in a pinch... but...
 no. It's got to be **Floresy**.

LUBES
 Alright, Dunny, go fishin' already.

DUNNY
 You know it, Lubey. If you guys
 need anything, just holler.

Lubes nods, starts to go. Flowers has a thought.

FLOWERS
 Actually, skip, what do you think
 about our free agents this year?
 Who should we keep?

DUNNY
 Boy, I tell ya, you can't go wrong
 with a **man** like Tripp Richmond.
 He's got the grit you look for in a
 ballplayer, he hustles and he plays
 the game the right way. Can't ask
 for anything more.

FLOWERS
 What about our rookies, Max Calhoun
 and Omar Guerra?

DUNNY
 Cally and Guerry? Good kids. They
 still have a lot to learn. But,
 hot dog...
 (suddenly wistful)
 Trippy's a professional ballplayer.
 Can't lie: I love 'im. You
 fellers'd be wise to give him
 whatever he wants.

FLOWERS
 Okay, thanks a lot, Coach.

Flowers stifles his amusement, follows Lubes out the door.

INT. STADIUM BOWELS - SAME

Lubes get a Coke from a vending machine. Flowers looks agitated, no longer scared. Something has emboldened him.

FLOWERS

Was that really our manager?

LUBES

You got a problem, say it. Don't need some smarmy preamble.

FLOWERS

Dunny just dismissed our two best players under thirty so he could **fellate** Tripp Richmond.

LUBES

Veteran players know how to win.

FLOWERS

Every player knows how to win!
Score more runs than the other guy!
(tries to calm himself)
The average age of a World Series-winning team is thirty years old. The average age of a Giants team since you've been the GM is **thirty-one**. In the last five years alone, it's been **thirty-two!** We need to get younger and that starts by cutting ties with Tripp.

LUBES

Tripp Richmond puts butts in the seats and wins games for us.

FLOWERS

He's thirty-four and he's coming off two wrist surgeries.
(then)
We'd be wasting a roster spot.

Lubes takes umbrage with that. And even if he's trying to rattle the kid, Flowers' sharp analysis has rattled him.

LUBES

Show some respect. If you knew Tripp personally, you'd have a different opinion.
(then)
And I'm trading Calhoun and Guerra.

Lubes strides past him, confident Flowers is angry.

EXT. AT&T PARK - FIELD LEVEL - DAY

Lubes walks onto the field from the dugout, Flowers close behind him, still fuming. A field crew takes care of the grass, dirt, etc.

FLOWERS

Calhoun and Guerra are the future.
Trading them is a big mistake.

LUBES

Trading cheap young talent is the easiest way to get more pitching. I'm sure your research and analysis has proven to you that pitching wins championships. Say, how **do** you predict the future? Do you have to wear a wizard hat, like Merlin?

Flowers grits his teeth.

FLOWERS

Computers tell us as much about a player as scouting. Maybe more.

LUBES

Does a computer know why our first baseman just had the worst year of his career?

FLOWERS

Yes. His bat speed declined point four percent.

LUBES

Weird that you memorized that.

FLOWERS

I really want to keep this job.

LUBES

He got bit by a rattlesnake that was about to attack his baby girl.
(then)
Our second baseman --

FLOWERS

Had the worst defensive zone rating in the entire league.

LUBES

Found out his wife was cheating on him. And that she gave him herpes.

FLOWERS

Our catcher's knees are shot, the left fielder couldn't hit Broadway if he had a ticket --

LUBES

He's going blind in his right eye.

FLOWERS

Oh yeah. Any time you have the chance to hold on to a blind man, you've got to do it.

LUBES

He's the best teammate in the league.

FLOWERS

I won't pretend to understand you.

A reporter, AMBER AINSLEY, 20s, whose wild eyes, tell us everything her top-buttoned blouse tries to hide approaches.

AMBER

Still on for our interview tonight?

Willy stares at her, mesmerized.

BASEBALL CARD

AMBER AINSLEY - Sports Journalist
Height: 5'10" Weight: Perfect Bats: Eyelashes
Of note: Do not give her vodka. Not a drop.

LUBES

Why wouldn't I be?

AMBER

Because you've gone on record, to me, only yesterday, saying that you hate interviews. They are, quote, **communist**.

LUBES

At the end of the day, interviews are in my job description.

AMBER

You could always let the new guy do it. Hi, I'm Amber Ainsley, KTVU.

Amber goes to shake Flowers hand, he instead tries a fist bump. It's perfectly awkward, but she goes along with it.

FLOWERS

(flustered)

Oh, wow. That was really dumb.

(beat)

I-I'm Will Flowers -- **Flores**, I mean. Fill Flowers -- dammit!

LUBES

He's impressive, isn't he?

AMBER

Reporters make me nervous, too, and I am one!

FLOWERS

I wish I was your mirror. Or bed.

LUBES

He's dizzy. He's had a lot thrown at him on his first day.

AMBER

Aww, Lubes, you're such a hard-ass. You could try to go easy on him. Don't let him push you around!

FLOWERS

I don't mind being pushed... if you're into that.

LUBES

Yeah, maybe I should go easy on him. After all, his **mom** owns the team. He wouldn't be here if it wasn't for his **mom**. Have you had a chance to interview Willy's **mom**?

Amber whips out a notepad, clicks her pen.

AMBER

You mind if I write this down, Will? My camera guy isn't here yet.

LUBES

No, no. It's okay. Call him Flowers.

Flowers fumes.

AMBER

So, Flowers, what's it like to work for your **mom**?

Flowers boils. Lubes looks mighty pleased with himself.

INT. LUBES' OUTER OFFICE - LATER

Lubes strolls in, confident that he's gained the upper hand. Flowers is in hot pursuit.

FLOWERS

Don't think you can treat me like that and get away with it.

LUBES

Jokes are a part of the Baseball culture. Get used to that.

FLOWERS

Fine, but you completely ignored what I said about trading Calhoun and Guerra. You have no idea what you're doing.

LUBES

I've worked in professional Baseball for thirty-three years. Experience-wise, you don't know a curveball from your asshole.

Lubes' secretary, SUSAN, 30s, gets in Lubes face.

BASEBALL CARD

SUSAN - Secretary

**Height: Too short Weight: Lubes Bats: R
Of note: Put-upon.**

SUSAN

Mr. Lubesky...

LUBES

(growls)
Yes, Susan?

SUSAN

I think it's time we revisited getting you a cell phone.

LUBES

We've been over this. My fingers are too big for the small keypads.

SUSAN

Yes, but in emergencies, it's difficult to get a hold of you.

LUBES

What's the emergency?

SUSAN
Your wife called. She left a very
angry message.

LUBES
Angry how?

SUSAN
You'd like me to read it in front
of Mr. Flores?

LUBES
What's the message, Susan?!

SUSAN
(reads from a Post-it)
I'm leaving you. For good. I have
to. I'm not sorry, either.

Lubes' poker face cracks ever so slightly.

LUBES
Why didn't you call me?

SUSAN
On your phone?

LUBES
When it rains, it pours.

Lubes heads for the door.

SUSAN
Wait! You have an on-camera
interview with Amber Ainsley in
just a couple of hours.

LUBES
(points to Flowers)
Time to cut your teeth. Do the
interview. **Don't** screw it up.

Lubes exits in a huff. Flowers is shocked, but happy.

FLOWERS
Life-changing moment for the win!

EXT. LUBESKY RESIDENCE - DAY

Lubes' Chevy pickup skids to a stop. He jumps out, rushes up
the driveway where Mika is getting into her Kia Sportage.

LUBES

Mika! Mika, come on! Don't add fuel to the fire. Talk to me.

Mika shoots out of her seat, gets in Lubes' face.

MIKA

So now you want to talk? You think some last ditch effort's gonna help you pull this one out? I'm not a baseball team, stop treating me like a moving part.

LUBES

Everything will be back to normal in a week. And then we'll go away.

MIKA

No, we won't. That's what I realized. There will always be... **something**. Players, owners, fans --

LUBES

Agents --

MIKA

Not helping!
(then)

How can we ever be a family with a life like that? I **want** us to be a family. Kids, arguments about what movie to watch, gorging on ice cream instead of sticking to the diet plan we created so that we could stay thin for the sake of our sex life -- something **normal!**

LUBES

This job... it's more than a job. I want to share my life with you. I love you more than Baseball, it's just that Baseball makes me who I am. And you love who I am.

MIKA

But when will I ever get to be with you?

Lubes takes her hand. She warms up to him.

LUBES

One week. I promise.

MIKA

Why does it take drastic measures
to get your full attention?

LUBES

It's the nature of the beast. I'm
very visual. **See** problem, fix it.

MIKA

Well, as long as you're here, I
should show you my other problem.

They exchange a knowing look.

INT. LUBESKY RESIDENCE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Post coitus. Mika's wide awake, TV remote in hand. Lubes is
rolled over, half-asleep.

MIKA

Watch TV with me you big bear.

LUBES

(drowsily)

You turned me out. I'm done.

MIKA

Damn right!

Mika stops surfing on KTVU-2. ON THE TV, Amber Ainsley
interviews Flowers.

MIKA (CONT'D)

Hey, it's the guy you told me to
hate.

LUBES

Almost asleep...

AMBER

(on TV)

How would you characterize your
relationship with Larry Lubesky?

FLOWERS

(on TV)

Well, I mean, we haven't worked
together for very long, but we're
definitely teaching each other a
lot. We're both master and pupil.

LUBES

Good gravy.

AMBER

And any news on Tripp Richmond?
Will he be back next season?

Lubes opens his eyes. Don't poke the bear.

FLOWERS

I mean, ownership wants to field
the most competitive team possible.
Tripp Richmond may or may not fit
into our plans.

MIKA

What!? Tripp's my favorite! He
makes all those diving catches!

Lubes rolls over, shoots beams of hate fire at the TV.

FLOWERS

But I just want to assure our fans
that no matter what happens, we
have Rex Calhoun and Omar Guerra.

Lubes GROWLS and tosses aside the covers like a bear swiping
a human. He grabs for his jeans, jams them on.

MIKA

Wait, where are you going? It's
too late for him to take it back!

LUBES

I must BREAK him!

Lubes throws on his bowling shirt and marches out.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. LUBES' OFFICE - NIGHT

Flowers tries to hold Amber's attention as she and her CAMERAMAN wrap their equipment.

FLOWERS

So, you grew up in Sioux Falls went to college in Hawaii and your first reporting gig was in Alaska? Well, you're definitely cultured.

AMBER

And turning a camera on seems to have infused you with confidence. You could barely string two words together earlier.

FLOWERS

(immediately self-conscious again)

I-I know a lot about Baseball so it's easy to talk about it.

AMBER

Well, Flowers, for a first interview, that was impressive.

She laughs. He smiles. They seem interested in each other.

Lubes BURSTS through the door. He SCREAMS and flips a coffee table, sending note pads and magazines everywhere.

LUBES

YOU'VEGOTALOTOFRRRRRNERVE!

Lubes charges Flowers, but stops upon hearing --

FLOWERS

Hey look, a man holding a video camera!

Lubes halts, but sucks in spit through his clenched teeth, breathing heavily, face beet red.

LUBES

(forces)

Would you... please... excuse us?

AMBER

Are you kidding?

She angles the camera at Lubes.

LUBES

If I revoke your press pass, do you think you'll have a job tomorrow?

Amber sighs, knows he's right. She flashes Flowers a half-smile as support. She and the Cameraman exit.

LUBES (CONT'D)

Do you realize what you've done to the team? You undermined me **and** pissed off our star player!

Lubes punches a hole in the wall. The force knocks a picture off the wall, revealing two old holes.

LUBES (CONT'D)

At the end of the day, **you** may not care about Tripp Richmond, but our fans do! And now **they** don't trust us to keep their team together.

FLOWERS

I'm sorry. Really. Between the camera and lights, Amber Ainsley...

LUBES

Forget it. I don't care what you say. Your words are **useless**.

That lands harder than Flowers expected it to. But that seems to have made him firm up with resolve again.

FLOWERS

If it wasn't for me, my mom would've fired you, so go to hell.

Lubes was not expecting this. He doesn't totally believe it.

LUBES

What are you talking about?

FLOWERS

Lubes, I swear to you, I think you're one of the best amateur talent evaluators out there, but you don't trust yourself anymore. Your willingness to trade young players proves that. My mom thinks the team doesn't need you. I do.

LUBES

So as long as I don't piss you off, you won't tattle on me? Do I look like a puppet?

Lubes charges Flowers, who tries to kick him. Lubes grabs his leg and the two fall to the floor. Lubes pins Flowers.

LUBES (CONT'D)
Now who's pulling the strings?

Lubes swings at Flowers, but his fist only hits the carpet. Flowers slaps Lubes, stumbles to his feet.

FLOWERS
There's more where that came from.

LUBES
You bit off more than you can chew.

Lubes cracks his knuckles, moves towards Flowers.

DIANNA (O.C.)
What the actual **fuck**?!

Lubes and Flowers look to see Dianna standing in the doorway.

INT. OWNER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Dianna sits on the edge of her desk, posing for a PHOTOGRAPHER. Flowers and Lubes try to ignore the shoot.

FLOWERS
It's not that he won't **listen** to my ideas, it's that he doesn't think they are **intrinsically** valuable.

FLASH. FLASH.

LUBES
Look, if I'm going to get in trouble with your **mommy** just for doing my job, then I'm done.

DIANNA
Fine. There's the door.

Lubes heads for the exit. Dianna stands on the desk.

DIANNA (CONT'D)
(to Photographer)
Just my shoes.
(to Flowers, smiles)
This is what you wanted, Willy.

FLOWERS
Yeah, but -- no. Lubes, wait!
(then)
Mom, I think you're being hasty.

Lubes stops, turns around, intrigued.

DIANNA

I'm never hasty. Or mistaken.
Larry's out of line.

FLOWERS

But **I** made a mistake. Lubes
trusted me and I let him down.

FLASH. FLASH.

DIANNA

(to Photographer)

Halten!

(to Flowers)

How can you still defend him?

FLOWERS

I love the Giants, and it's all
because of Lubes. He put together
the 2000 team, the one that made me
fall in love with Baseball. Bonds,
Kent, Burks, Snow... that was the
summer before high school, and
going to games was the only thing
that made me... **happy**.

DIANNA

(genuinely affected)

Me and Dad?

FLOWERS

Whatever. The point is, San
Francisco needs Lubes. I have a lot
to learn. This is still his team.

DIANNA

This isn't why I bought the team
for you.

LUBES

(sotto)

Knew it.

DIANNA

Fine. Larry, I'd like you to stay.
Think you can work for a bitch like
me and teach my son the ropes?

LUBES

I need some guarantee that your son
doesn't get to overrule me.

DIANNA

We just heard him pledge fealty.

She looks at Flowers, a little disappointed.

DIANNA (CONT'D)

It's all yours. I'll stay out of your hair, until I change my mind.

LUBES

At the end of the day, we all want to win. That's what matters to me.

DIANNA

Well, money matters to me, and we're in the midst of a double-dip recession, so, I'll need to up our margins a bit more. I'm trimming ten million from player payroll.

Flowers actually **gasps**. Lubes is shocked, too.

LUBES

You said you'd give me the resources to win a championship.

DIANNA

Willy is your resource. He can find great players on the cheap.

LUBES

He just crucified the face of the franchise on television.

DIANNA

I saw that boner. Fix it.

FLOWERS

Wait. **You** want Tripp Richmond?

DIANNA

I don't care who's on the team, but you don't declare your bargaining stance **before** a negotiation, son.

FLOWERS

How can you **want** Tripp Richmond?

DIANNA

That's all, boys. Figure it out.
(to Photographer)
Fortsetzen!

The photo shoot resumes.

INT. LUBES' INNER OFFICE - NIGHT

Lubes and Flowers brood. Lubes slides a sweaty can of Coke to Flowers across the table. They crack them open.

LUBES

At the end of the day, ownership
only cares about one thing: profit.

FLOWERS

She knows if the Giants win a World
Series it will be the happiest day
of my life, but she doesn't care.

LUBES

That would be the happiest day of
your life? Live more days, kid.

FLOWERS

The Giants haven't won a World
Series since they were in New York.
Winning one should be the happiest
day of **your** life.

LUBES

You don't think I want to win it?
This team is my second family. And
Tripp was drafted by the Giants.
He definitely wants to win it here.

FLOWERS

Tripp's woba and negative U-Z-R
will prevent that from happening.

LUBES

His sexual history is irrelevant.

FLOWERS

Those are statistics.

LUBES

Fans root for players, not numbers.

FLOWERS

That's not true. Statistical
analysis has proven that.

Flowers takes a file folder off Lubes' desk, walks over to a poster of Tripp Richmond. Flowers covers Tripp's face with the folder, leaving only the uniform.

FLOWERS (CONT'D)

Hat and jersey. That's all the
fans care about.

(MORE)

FLOWERS (CONT'D)

Field a team of all-stars who never win and the stadium will be empty. But a team of nobodies who win all the time? The fans will come.

Lubes hands Flowers a different file folder.

LUBES

Results from a season's worth of polling. Question two: "why do you like coming to the ballpark?"

Flowers finds the question, his eyes widen in disbelief:

FLOWERS

Ninety-one percent said, "to watch Tripp Richmond make a diving catch"?

(then)

He has to make all those diving catches because he misreads every ball hit his way!

LUBES

That's not how they see it.

FLOWERS

They also think all you can eat stadium food is a good deal.

LUBES

Well, keeping him isn't your call.

Flowers slumps. He hands Lubes the file.

FLOWERS

I probably should've let you leave.

LUBES

It's like this, kid: if we have to cut ten million dollars of payroll, then we're going to lose other popular players. Most will have to be filled with your cheap finds, but we should probably try to hold on to the face of the franchise, right? Or did I misunderstand you back in Dianna's office?

Lubes is totally right and Flowers accepts this.

FLOWERS

So now what?

EXT. TRIPP RICHMOND'S MANSION - THE NEXT DAY

Tripp answers the door for Lubes and Flowers.

TRIPP

Lubes!

They shake hands.

LUBES

Tripp. This is the new assistant
GM, Will Flowers. Sorry -- Flores.

TRIPP

Okay, okay. Cool to meet you,
Flowers. Come on in, guys.
Savannah just made some brownies.

INT. TRIPP RICHMOND'S MANSION - FOYER - DAY

There's a bronze statue of Tripp diving for a ball right
there in the foyer. Flowers can't help but be impressed.

FLOWERS

They really captured your essence.

TRIPP

Yeah, and check this out.

Tripp pulls off the top of his statue's right cleat to reveal
a digital playback device. He presses a button.

BROADCASTER

(digital recording)

Richmond DIVES AND MAKES THE CATCH!

Tripp presses it again.

BROADCASTER (CONT'D)

(digital recording)

HOW DID HE GET HIS HANDS ON THAT?!

Tripp presses it again.

BROADCASTER (CONT'D)

(digital recording)

IT'S AN ORGY OF DEFENSE!

TRIPP

Love that one.

Tripp reattaches the cleat panel just as SAVANNAH RICHMOND,
25, enters, wearing only an apron over her bikini.

SAVANNAH

Y'all having an orgy out here?

She and Tripp laugh. Flowers chuckles, nervous.

BASEBALL CARD

SAVANNAH RICHMOND - Possible Hippie

Height: 5'8" Weight: 110 lbs Bats: Goes both ways

Of note: Loves San Francisco. Owns very little clothing.

TRIPP

Actually, I think they're here to tell me about the team's plans for next season.

LUBES

And you would be correct. Have to do our due diligence. Kick the tires. See where your head's at.

SAVANNAH

Tripp wants to retire as a Giant.

TRIPP

Not this year, of course!

Nervous laughs from all of them. Definitely some tension.

FLOWERS

Listen, I'm really sorry. I spoke out of turn yesterday. I didn't mean to make it sound like we didn't want you back.

LUBES

I had an emergency come up and had to dump the interview on him at the last second. He choked.

FLOWERS

I-I definitely choked. About as bad as the Giants, last time we made the playoffs, right Tripp?

Flowers quickly realizes his mistake. Tripp looks horrified.

LUBES

We didn't hire him because he could put his foot in his mouth.

TRIPP

Why don't we talk in private?

LUBES

Yep.

(pats Flowers on the back)

Don't talk for the rest of the day.

Lubes follows Tripp, leaving Flowers with Savannah.

SAVANNAH

Well, I guess I should be hospitable and invite you to have a refreshment. Follow me.

Flowers nods and follows her.

INT. TRIPP RICHMOND'S MANSION - HOME OFFICE - DAY

Tripp goes straight to his guitar. Lubes stands at the doorway. As Tripp plucks some chords --

LUBES

I'm not here to make an offer. I just want to see how you're doing.

TRIPP

My doctor says the wrist is good to go. My legs are fresh. I'm ready to win this thing.

Tripp uses the guitar as a cool veneer, but he's desperate.

FLOWERS

Tripp, he's a kid. He thinks any guy over thirty should retire.

Tripp's strumming becomes more incessant.

TRIPP

During my massage this morning I was remembering the first contract I signed. You flew to Minnesota, found me in the middle of nowhere --

LUBES

Why the hell were you out there ice fishing again?

TRIPP

(laughs)

Trying to impress some girl.

LUBES

You said if I caught a fish I'd get your signature.

TRIPP

You made all that effort. I knew you really wanted me on the team.

LUBES

Still do, man. At the end of the day, we're better with you.

TRIPP

My agent says I should ask for more money. I agree.

LUBES

(suddenly concerned)

How much more?

INT. TRIPP RICHMOND'S MANSION - KITCHEN - DAY

Flowers enjoys a brownie and glass of milk with Savannah.

SAVANNAH

I really hope you sign Tripp.

FLOWERS

I'm sure Lubes is pouring it on thick. He really wants him back.

SAVANNAH

You don't like Tripp?

FLOWERS

I... don't know him. As a person.

Savannah takes off her apron, lets it fall to the floor.

SAVANNAH

But as a **ball**... player?

FLOWERS

I-I mean, he's definitely had good years, an above average career...

Savannah touches his face, leans in and kisses him.

FLOWERS (CONT'D)

Mrs. Richmond, your husband's in the other room.

SAVANNAH

Tripp's my brother, dumb ass.

Savannah takes him by the hand, leads him out of the kitchen.

INT. TRIPP RICHMOND'S MANSION - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Suddenly, the hallway morphs into a PSYCHEDELIC TUNNEL OF LOVE. Savannah's laughter ECHOES, a trippy version of "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" reverberates, Flowers sweats.

FLOWERS
Pot brownies? I should've known.

SAVANNAH
Not marijuana... ecstasyyyyyyyyy!

Savannah leads flowers to a CLOUD. She undoes her bikini top, exposing a pair of BASEBALL GLOVES that fly at Flowers.

WINSLOW
(digital recording)
HOW DID HE GET HIS HANDS ON THAT?

SAVANNAH
I **really** want Tripp to stay here.

She moves in on him. They kiss.

BROADCASTER
(digital recording)
Richmond DIVES AND MAKES THE CATCH!

FLOWERS
Wait. Real quick. I'm a virgin.

SAVANNAH
I know. I could smell it on you.

FLOWERS
Is it okay with you if I do this?

Flowers hallucinates that Amber Ainsley is watching them.

AMBER
I'm not your mother.

DIANNA
I am. Go for it!

FLOWERS
Drugs are weird.

Flowers and Savannah go for it.

BROADCASTER
(digital recording)
IT'S AN ORGY! IT'S AN ORGY! IT'S
AN ORGY!

INT. TRIPP RICHMOND'S MANSION - FOYER - LATER

Tripp leads Lubes out.

LUBES
I'll be in touch. Stay by a phone.

TRIPP
I'll be in Detroit this weekend, to
teach at the Baseball Academy.

Savannah enters, now fully clothed, no sign of mischief.

SAVANNAH
Thanks for stopping by.

LUBES
Where's the kid?

SAVANNAH
Out by the car.

Tripp opens the door. They see Flowers sprawled out on the hood of Lubes' truck.

INT. LUBES' TRUCK - DAY

Lubes looks contemplative. Flowers is unconscious, but suddenly snaps to.

FLOWERS
Sign Tripp! Whatever it takes!

LUBES
What the hell's gotten into you?

FLOWERS
(tries to hide his joy)
Nothing. I just... really see the
value in having Richmond around.

LUBES
You and Savannah get along?

FLOWERS
Oh yeah. She's great.

LUBES
Her brother wants fourteen million
dollars a year.

Flowers looks like he just saw the twist at the end of The Empire Strikes Back for the first time.

FLOWERS

WHAT? I take back what I said.

LUBES

He'll get that, too.

FLOWERS

Not from us. We can't afford it.

LUBES

We're gonna have to make it work.
At the end of the day --

FLOWERS

At the end of the day? Enough with
the plain talk! Tripp Richmond
sucks. Move on, Lubes!

LUBES

I agreed to the deal. All he has
to do is sign the contract.

FLOWERS

Where are we gonna get the money?

LUBES

While you were asleep I traded
Baltaine and Serpico. There's ten
million right there.

FLOWERS

Our only strength was pitching and
you just gave it away!

LUBES

We need him. He's a true Giant.
You have to understand loyalty.

INT. LUBES' INNER OFFICE - THE NEXT DAY

Lubes and Flowers watch Amber Ainsley interview Tripp
Richmond on TV.

AMBER

(on TV)

Where did it all go wrong?

TRIPP

(on TV)

I think, at the end of the day, the
Giants just didn't want me as much
as Detroit. Tough to be loyal in
this business, I guess.

Tripp looks right into the camera, maybe a little bit of guilt in his eyes. Lubes has been stabbed in the back.

AMBER

(on TV)

Well, we're going to miss you here in San Francisco. Best of luck.

(then)

Tripp Richmond now a member of the Detroit Tigers. Back to you in studio.

Flowers turns off the TV. Manages to smile.

FLOWERS

Five years, seventy million. Hah. He's an immediate sunk cost.

LUBES

I guess loyalty's an antique now.

FLOWERS

Loyalty is overrated. Let's just win. Sure, our pitching sucks and we don't have any money to work with, but I guess that just means you have to trust me now.

LUBES

At the end of the day, I might kill myself.

Susan enters.

SUSAN

Mr. Lubesky, I have a message from your wife.

(reads from a Post-It)

I'm leaving now. I need Lubes.

FLOWERS

Now there's your loyalty.

Lubes nods. The kid's right.

EXT. SOME HAWAIIAN BEACH - DAY

Lubes and Mika lounge together on their honeymoon.

FADE OUT.

THE END