

THE CLOSER

Screenplay by

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FADE IN:

INT. BULLPEN - NIGHT

Baseball is beautiful on a cold night. DICK "THE GOOSE" RILEY is warming up in the bullpen, his Sam Elliot mustache, mullet, and beer belly add to his 70's ensemble. He's an athlete; he doesn't look like one, but he's mean, and that's all that counts.

DICK
(to his catcher)
You ever see Citizen Kane?

CATCHER
Huh?

DICK
(over the crowd)
Citizen Kane!

Bullpen catcher TONY "THE FISH" WILLIAMS, once a great catcher, took one too many shots to the knee, and developed a healthy appreciation for the Anheuser-Busch line of products.

TONY
Saw it with Darlene last summer. We liked it, don't know why.

DICK
Remember that thing he says at the beginning. What was it? Shit.

TONY
Rose something, I remember 'cause it made me think, why would some dying guy give a shit about a damn flower?

Various STADIUM WORKERS and TEAM STAFF shuffle around Dick and Tony. They seem calm, almost isolated; they've been here before.

DICK
Rosebud, that's right. And it wasn't a flower, you dumbass, it was a sled he had as a child, it was red, and fast as hell.

TONY
Well, Darlene and I weren't *really* watching that closely.

The BULLPEN COACH, a grizzled old man with a lifetime of baseball and disappointment, spits, scratches himself, then brambles over to Dick.

COACH

You got ten, Dick. It's a close one, don't fuck it up again, or it's both of our asses.

DICK

(ignoring Coach)
That shit makes no sense.

TONY

What do ya' mean?

DICK

Well, how can the whole thing be 'bout this sled?

TONY

I have no idea. I barely remember the opening credits.

DICK

No one was in the room to hear him whisper his final words. Makes no sense.

TONY

What?

Dick walks over to Tony.

DICK

Let's test something. You tell me when you can't hear me anymore.

TONY

Dick were in a stadium.

DICK

It's triple A I can hear my car alarm going off in the parking lot.

TONY

Alright.

Dick starts to back up as he does:

DICK

Alright, Tony, now you just let me know when you can't hear me anymore. I'm going to turn around, can you hear me with my back...

COACH

Dick! What the fuck!? Why aren't you warming up?

DICK

Coach, my arm hasn't been warm in six years... Now if you don't mind we are testing something.

COACH

Testing what how much you can fuck up my career?

DICK

No it's about Citizen Kane. There is no way that anyone heard him. We were just...

Loud cheers take his focus elsewhere. The bullshit is over, it's time to shove. Dick starts out the bullpen.

COACH

(to his back)

The butler heard him dumbass.

(spits)

Don't fuck it up.

EXT. STADIUM - NIGHT

AC/DC's Big Balls is playing as Dick spits, grabs himself, curses under his breath and saunters towards the mound.

DICK

(to himself)

The butler?

He's not distracted, he just doesn't care. Not since his arm died.

DICK (CONT'D)

He was quieter than a church mouse, how could some old coot have heard 'em.

Strike 1.

DICK (CONT'D)
 (chuckling to himself)
 The fucking butler.

Strike 2.

DICK (CONT'D)
 This batter ain't shit.

The batter steps out of the box calling timeout. Dick is pissed you don't step out of his box. Not without his permission.

He steps back in.

DICK (CONT'D)
 Fucker.

Dick hits him as hard as his old arm allows. Right in the back. *Runner on first no one out.*

DICK (CONT'D)
 (staring down the runner
 on first)
 This man was rich, he had money.

He picks off the runner on first, making sure to hit him in the ribs, that's two for the price of one.

DICK (CONT'D)
 He had a successful business and a wife.

Strike 1.

DICK (CONT'D)
 So why the fuck did he care about some damn sled, he probably had tons of 'em.

Strike 2.

DICK (CONT'D)
 If I had that much money I wouldn't care about some damn piece of wood.

Strike 3. 1 out.

DICK (CONT'D)
 (walking back to the mound)
 The Butler. How dumb.
 (cleaning his cleats)
 How simple.

Ball 1.

DICK (CONT'D)
 Fuck... this kid can't hit shit
 Dick. Just groove it.

Whack. Double off the wall. 2nd and 3rd 1 out.

CATCHER
 Time.

Young stud WILLIE "THE FLOP" JOHNSON, runs to the mound. His whole career is ahead of him, he knows it, but more importantly Dick knows it.

WILLIE
 The fuck are you doing Dick? A double to that little shit?

DICK
 You seen Citizen Kane?

WILLIE
 What?

DICK
 The movie Willie, stay with me.

WILLIE
 Fuck you Dick.

DICK
 (mockingly)
 Fuck me?... For asking a question, put the claws away Willie that hurt.

The UMPIRE, the PITCHING COACH, and the INFIELDBERS walk towards the mound.

PITCHING COACH
 Dick, what the fuck was that. That kid can't hit.

Dominican phenom EDUARDO "THE LEG" RUIZ likes Dick, he just doesn't show it well.

EDUARDO
 (thick Dominican accent)
 Oye pito, what the fuck was that?

DICK
 Have you seen Citizen Kane?

WILLIE
Fuck off Dick.

Willie and the Fielders walk away. It's clear Dick doesn't care but they do.

DICK
The movie. I thought we were supposed to be professionals, why can't anyone focus.

PITCHING COACH
(sighing)
Yes... Dick... I've seen it.

DICK
Well how the fuck did anyone hear the last words of some old man.

UMPIRE
There must be a village out there missing an idiot.

DICK
Thanks Jimmy.

EDUARDO
The butl...

DICK
Don't talk to me about butler Eddie.

EDUARDO
The Butler heard. Says so in the movie. Pito.

DICK
We just got to take his word for it?

JIMMY
(shaking his head)
Just lose the damn game Dick, it's getting late.

Jimmy walks away with the Pitching Coach.

DICK
And why the fuck does he care so much about some dumb sled, he's rich.

EDUARDO

¡Dios mío!, Pito. It represents the last time he was truly happy, a representation of his lost innocence... Pendejo.

DICK

Pendejo?... Pito?... Lost innocence?... What the fuck are you talking about Eddie.

EDUARDO

Es tan simple. Wells said it himself "In his subconscious it represented the simplicity, the comfort, above all the lack of responsibility in his home, and also it stood for his mother's love which Kane never lost."

DICK

What the fuck... are you talking about...

EDUARDO

(Walking away)
Uy, qué care-chimba. Estupido Viejo.

RUNNER ON 3RD

Get back on the mound Dick.

Dick circles the mound, spits, grabs himself, curses at the runner on third and gets back to it.

DICK

Now I gotta have some Dominican explain a damn movie to me.

Strike 1.

DICK (CONT'D)

And this truly happy bullshit.

Strike 2.

DICK (CONT'D)

Give me a million bucks I'll show you happiness.

Ball 1.

DICK (CONT'D)
 Fuck... Look at this little shit he
 can't be happy, he gets payed
 nothing.

Ball 2.

DICK (CONT'D)
 Yet he ain't bitching about no bike
 he had when he was a teenager.

Strike 3. 2nd and 3rd 2 outs.

DICK (CONT'D)
 See ya fucker... He just takes his
 dick and moves on, like the rest of
 us.

Dick circles the mound, spits, grabs himself and continues.

DICK (CONT'D)
 The butler really?

Ball 1.

DICK (CONT'D)
 Greatest movie ever, based on a
 whisper.

Ball 2.

DICK (CONT'D)
 Fuck...

Dick steps off the mound he's calm, but still angry.

DICK (CONT'D)
 Come on Dick this kid couldn't hit
 the broad side of a barn.

Ball 3.

DICK (CONT'D)
 FUCK... Not giving up a base to
 this prick.

Strike 1.

DICK (CONT'D)
 The goddamn butler, what a load of
 shit.

Ball 4. Bases loaded 2 outs.

DICK (CONT'D)
 (staring down the runner
 on the way to first)
 Little twink.

Dick cautiously looks towards the dugout and mouths something to himself as he straddles the mound.

DICK (CONT'D)
 Come on Dick your fucking it up
 again.

Ball 1.

DICK (CONT'D)
 Fuck not again.

Ball 2.

DICK (CONT'D)
 Your doing it again Dick, snap out
 of it.

Ball 3.

DICK (CONT'D)
 (suddenly)
 Fuck me I get it.

Dick steps off the mound.

DICK (CONT'D)
 (to Eduardo)
 Eddie I get it. He wants to be a
 kid again, no stress, no rules, no
 worries.

EDUARDO
 Good for you Pito, now can we
 finish, estoy molesto.

Dick steps back on the mound.

DICK
 No rules...

Strike 1.

DICK (CONT'D)
 No stress...

Strike 2.

DICK (CONT'D)
No worries...

Strike 3. 3 outs.

The crowd goes wild, the Infielders meet up and shake hands
the Catcher jogs towards Dick. But Dick's been here before.

No stress.

No rules.

No worries.

DICK (CONT'D)
(walking off the mound)
Ya... I kinda liked it.

FADE OUT.