

SIXTEEN INCHES  
BY KEN GREEN

ACT I

SCENE 2

SETTING: A softball field in Waveland Park on the north side of Chicago

TIME: Friday, July 3, 2009

AT RISE: Seven players with matching t-shirts ("The Longballers" and caps - EDDIE, TONY, JIMBO, JIMBO, NO. 2, KALIFA, VAL and RYAN - sit on the bench shouting encouragement to other team members and drinking beer they take out of a cooler near the bench. Occasionally they take shots from a bottle of liquor. The coach of the team, EDDIE, stands and moves closer to the "field" (edge of the stage).

EDDIE

(clapping his hands)

C'mon, batta, be a batta. C'mon, batta batta, little bingo, Bobby, c'mon baby, be a batta

TONY

(clapping)

Let's go, Bobby, make it happen. It's all you, Bobby.

JIMBO

(Clapping his hands)

It's right there, Bobby. C'mon baby, put it right out there, right over their heads, baby.

JIMBO NO. 2

(Clapping)

Be a hitter, Bobby, right down their throat. Make 'em work for it.

EDDIE

Pick your spot, Bobby, wait for your pitch.

TONY

(Stands up and approaches edge of stage and points to his left)

C'mon, Bobby, right over the third baseman head. Look how far back the left-fielders' playin'. Drop it right over his head. Put it right there, baby.

(He walks back to the cooler for a beer)  
Who needs one? Eddie?

(He tosses a beer to EDDIE)  
Jimbo? You good?

JIMBO

Beer me, Tony.

(TONY tosses a beer to JIMBO)

TONY

Jimbo No. 2?

(JIMBO NO. 2 doesn't answer)  
Yo, Jimbo No. 2? Beer?  
(JIMBO No. 2 shakes his head "no" and waves him off)

TONY

Ryan?

RYAN

I'm good.

TONY

Kalifa? You want one?

KALIFA

(waves his hand)  
Naw, I'm cool, man.

TONY

Val? Anything?

VAL

Seriously? Tony, c'mon, you know I don't like that sewer water.

TONY

Well, excuse me, your majesty.

(Takes a beer for himself out of the cooler  
and opens it.)

(to the field) Let's go Bobby, you can do this. The pitcher  
ain't got nothing. Look at her, she's getting' tired. Her arm's  
gone. Knock it outta there, Bobby, be a hitta.

(Takes a long drink from beer can)

RYAN

(Getting pumped up and clapping)

C'mon, dude, you're awesome. You da man! You're awesome, dude, let's do this.

KALIFA

(Standing up and joining the others at the edge of the stage)

Fuck that shit up, baby. Knock the shit outta that ball.

(Points to his left)

Lookit that man on third, he's ready, baby, bring his ass home.

EDDIE

(Snapping his head toward Kalifa)

Hey, take it down a notch, there's kids over there.

KALIFA

(Slightly annoyed and looking around)

Kids? Where? Ain't no fucking kids here.

EDDIE

(Points to his right)

Right there. There's a kid over there.

KALIFA

(Leans forward for a better look then gives a dismissive wave of his hand)

Man, that's YOUR fuckin' kid. He's heard way worse than that from you at seven in the morning.

EDDIE

(Looks closer and then chuckles)

Shit, I guess it is. Yeah, you're probably fuckin' right.

Sometimes his mom and me sound like a police scanner.

(Turns back to look at the game)

C'mon, Bobby, knock the shit outta that ball. Over the fuckin' third baseman's head.

JIMBO

(Clapping hard)

Here it comes, Bobby, she's puttin' it right over the plate.

(Turns to JIMBO NO. 2)

So, Jimbo No. 2, whaddaya say, you still interested in the Monte Carlo? Runs like a fuckin' dream. It's just sittin' on my lot waitin' for ya.

JIMBO NO. 2

Jimbo, I ain't even working right now. How the fuck can I afford a new car?

(turns back to the game and starts clapping)  
It's your pitch, Bobby. Take your swing...Now Bobby, there is it, it's right there.

JIMBO

Not new, used. We got easy payment plans. No job, no credit, no problem. Best used car lot on Western Avenue.

JIMBO NO. 2

Geez, you're as annoying in real life as your fuckin' commercials.

JIMBO

My commercials are annoying? Really? Tell you what: buy a car and you can be in the next one. Like a testimonial to show folks how fuckin' humble and honest I am.

JIMBO NO. 2

You ain't either of those things. And I ain't buying a car 'til I get a job. Not from you or anybody.

JIMBO

C'mon, I got easy payments...

JIMBO NO. 2

Anything more than free ain't easy payments.

EDDIE

(annoyed)  
Hey, Jimbos, both of you wanna pay attention to the game?

JIMBO

(to EDDIE)  
Hey, I'm doing some business here.  
(to JIMBO NO. 2)  
Just think about it. Remember: A man without a car is a man riding the bus.

JIMBO NO. 2

(turns to JIMBO, puzzled)  
The fuck does that mean?

JIMBO

Don't worry about what it means, just remember it.  
(turns to RYAN)

Hey, Ryan. Got a nice Lexus. Only 12,600 miles on it. Smells brand new. Perfect for an up and coming young professional such as yourself.

RYAN

I got a car, Jimbo. The Jeep runs fine.

JIMBO

Jeep? The fuck does anybody need with a Jeep in Chicago? Ain't no mountains here. Closest we got to mountains is Cricket Hill over on Montrose.

RYAN

It snows here, remember?

JIMBO

Hey, don't tell me. I grew up here. I seen snow that come up to my dick.

RYAN

Musta been a lotta snow that year.

JIMBO

You're a young exec. Get yourself something that fits, like a Lexus.

(when RYAN ignores him, JIMBO turns to KALIFA)

Kalifa, my man, what about you? I got a Cadillac just came in and...

KALIFA

A Cadillac? Why the fuck you got to put ME in a Cadillac? What, I'm a black man so I gotta drive a Cadillac?

JIMBO

(apologetic) Nah, I'm just sayin...

KALIFA

Did you see the car I drove up in here today? That's a 2007 BMW 525i Sedan, 24 valve, 3.0 litre engine, 250 horses, 0 to 60, shit moves faster than Milli Vanilli's career, leather seats that feel better than sex and a sound system that'll make you think Beyonce is sitting right next to you. A Cadillac? Man, please...

JIMBO

So I guess it's a "no" on the Cadillac?

KALIFA

Naw, it's not a "no." It's a HELL NO.

JIMBO

(turning to VAL and addressing her in a sing-song manner)  
Hey, Valerie. Val...

VAL

(waving JIMBO off)  
Jimbo, just... no.

JIMBO

You took a cab out here so I know you can DEFINITELY use a new ride. Whaddya like? I got a new...

VAL

If you say Cadillac, you I'm gonna hit you in the nuts with one of these bats.

JIMBO

No, no. That's not you. I got something special for you.

VAL

I don't need a car, Jimbo. I got the el and buses and cabs and everything else. And parking in Edgewater is hard as hell. Don't need a car.

JIMBO

Ain't you living in one of them fancy-ass condos on Sheridan Road with the indoor parking and the valet and shit?

VAL

No, I don't live in one of those fancy-as condos, I live in a regular two-flat. I like riding the bus and the el. I don't need a car.

JIMBO

Yet.

VAL

What?

JIMBO

You don't need a car YET. See, I got one of them Mini Coopers on the lot. You know, one of them real small cars. Real cute car. Very popular with women such as yourself.

VAL

(feigning feminine interest)

Really? Women such as myself? It's small and cute? Do you have one in pink maybe?

JIMBO

Uh, sure, yeah, I can get one of those for you. I can...

VAL

(interrupting curtly)

I don't need a car, Jim, and especially not a cute pink lady car.

JIMBO

(suave)

Hey, a cute lady pink car for a cute lady...

VAL

Are you still trying to sell me a car or is something else going on here?

JIMBO

Well, as a salesman I can be pretty persuasive...

EDDIE

Jimbo, can you give it a rest for a while? We got a game going on.

(turns to field)

Alright, Bobby, be a batta, be a hitter, baby. Keep this inning alive...

(All players are now shouting encouragement, then all moan in disappointment as "Bobby" flies out. All return to the bench.)

Alright, don't worry about it. We still got time, we're still winning. Let's go, don't let 'em score. (to "Bobby") That's all right, Bobby, next time, baby.

(All of the players get up and head out to the field. EDDIE and TONY walk back to the bench. TONY picks up a clipboard with a roster on it and peruses it. His cellphone rings and he answers.)

TONY



Hello?... (nervously) Um, hey, what's up? Nothing, I'm, uh, at the game. What? Yeah, I told you, remember? What? Nah, you wouldn't like it. It's probably not your kind of action. Geez, not right now, OK? 'Cause I can't, OK? Not here...yeah, right, I promised, I know. ... (loudly) No, don't come down! (calmly again) I mean, just wait, OK? ... Look, I gotta go. ... Um, yeah, I ... um, you too.

(he turns off phone)

Um, Eddie, you wanna keep Bobby in there? He's flied out twice in a row now. We can move somebody else to left. Let's see... Jay-Jay ain't got in there yet.

EDDIE

(Drains the last of his beer can)

Nah, leave Bobby in there. He gets better later in the game. Who's up next inning, Tone?

TONY

(Looking at roster)

Uh...Kalifa leads off, Jimbo next, Jimbo No. 2 after him. If any of them get on, it's Ryan.

EDDIE

Sheesh, that fuckin' Ryan. If he couldn't hit I'd throw him off the fuckin' team. God, the way he runs his fuckin' mouth. And about bullshit, too, ya know? How cool his fuckin' iPhone is, some fuckin' TV show, how everything is fuckin' "awesome."

(Imitates Ryan, "frat guy" voice)

"Oh, I had this hamburger the other day, it was fucking awesome...I heard this band the other night, they were awesome...Dude, that t-shirt you're rockin' is awesome.'" Everything can't be fucking 'awesome', amiright, Tony? If everything is awesome, then what is everything else? You hear me, Tone?

TONY

Yeah, that's awesome, Eddie.

EDDIE

Fuck you, Tony.

TONY

(Points out to the field)

Hey, you think Jimbo should play closer the line?

EDDIE

Which Jimbo?

TONY

Regular Jimbo, not Jimbo No. 2. Last time up, this guy at the plate now pulled the shit out of the ball. He's gonna try to go that way again.

EDDIE

Nah, Jimbo's fine. This guy's gonna try to drop it over second base.

TONY

Bull. This guy tried kill the fuck out of the ball. He's goin' deep.

EDDIE

Ten bucks says dink over second.

TONY

Ten.

EDDIE

Bet.

(They shake hands without taking their eyes off the field.

EDDIE yells encouragement to his team.)

C'mon, watch short center.

TONY

Hey Jimbo, be ready out there. Look alive.

(He turns to shout at batter from opposing team at the plate.)

Hey King Kong, go 'head and crush the ball. We're ready. Bet you can't put it over the left fielder's head.

EDDIE

Hey, batta, you betta swing. You need this run. What 'cha gonna do, batta? Betta swing.

(The sound of a softball being hit. TONY moans and curses while EDDIE chuckles. EDDIE holds out his hand and TONY pulls out money, peels off a ten hands it to EDDIE.)

TONY

(Calmly)

Fuck you.

EDDIE

You wish.

TONY

And fuck you a second time.

(Checks the clipboard. His cell phone rings again and he tries to ignore it. EDDIE looks at him, wondering if he's going to answer it.)

Um, we're up two runs, right?

EDDIE

Yeah, two.

(Turns to look at TONY)

Pay attention to the game, will ya?

TONY

(Pissed) Hey, I got other shit on my mind besides softball, alright?

EDDIE

All them phone calls you been gettin' today? Who the fuck are you all of a sudden, Richard M. Fucking Daley?

TONY

That was my...um...bookie. Guy from work. I placed a couple of bets with him.

EDDIE

(skeptical) Bookie. Right. Don't sound like no bookie call I ever heard.

TONY

I know a different kinda bookie, OK? (gets strangely serious) Look, I just got some stuff... I... I might have a ... uh, friend come to the next game, you know?

EDDIE

Yeah, OK, a friend.

TONY

Eddie, I said I got a "friend" who, you know, might come to the next game.

EDDIE

I heard ya the first time. A friend. You got a friend coming to the game. Duly noted. I'll wear clean socks.

TONY

They...he wanted to come out and see the game. Well, see ME at the game. It's ... like, a friend. This, um, guy.

EDDIE

So this guy is coming to see the game. Can he play right field 'cause (suddenly raising his voice) JIMBO IS PLAYING LIKE SHIT RIGHT NOW! CATCH THE BALL, JIMBO!

TONY

Nah, he can't play right. He's, like, this guy who's a friend..

EDDIE

The fuck are you telling me all this? You got a guy who's a friend who wants to come watch the game. Terrific. Can't wait.

TONY

Yeah, but he's like a friend who...fuck it, never mind.

EDDIE

Good, never mind 'cause, you know? The game? We're up by two, top of the fifth, guy on second and first and two outs? We need to win to make the playoffs? Anything else? The weather? The latest news from City Hall? Gov. Ryan's been indicted, you know?

TONY

Why you gotta be a prick?  
(Stands up and walks to edge of field)

EDDIE

You been talking to my wife again?

TONY

(Talking to EDDIE over his shoulder)  
Your wife ain't seen your prick in a long time, not since your kid over there was born.  
(Walks back to bench and goes for the cooler)

Beer?

EDDIE

About fuckin' time. Why else you think we got you out here?

TONY

To pretty up the fuckin' place.

TONY (con't)

(Sifts around in cooler)  
Old Style or High Life? Got some Goose Island too, I think.

EDDIE  
C'mon, Tony, you know me. What do I fucking drink all the time?

TONY  
Alright, High Life, jeez. God forbid you, like, change or anything.

(TONY passes EDDIE a beer and looks into cooler again)  
Little shotski?

EDDIE  
(Looks over at TONY)  
What we got?  
(Turns back to the field and shouts encouragement)  
C'mon, Big K, c'mon, Kevin, don't give this guy anything to hit.  
Be a pitcher.

TONY  
Jager, some Jose, some Jameson...

EDDIE  
(Looks back at TONY)  
No vodka?

TONY  
Not this time. Jager or tequila or whiskey.

EDDIE  
Whiskey.

(TONY hands EDDIE the bottle and EDDIE takes a healthy swig, then picks up beer again.  
EDDIE leaps up suddenly and rushes to edge of the field)  
Aw, ump, c'mon, that wasn't a fucking ball. What the fuck, ump?  
Above the knees, over the plate, that's a strike. It ain't that hard to figure out. Call the fucking game right, OK?

(The UMP apparently replies and EDDIE moves even closer to edge of stage to shout at the UMP)  
What? Fuck you, I ain't gotta shut up.

TONY  
(Walks up to calm EDDIE down)  
Never mind, Eddie, let's finish this game and get to the bar.

(He puts a hand on EDDIE'S shoulder to guide him back to the bench, but EDDIE shakes him off.)

EDDIE

Nah, fuck that, Tony. It's a fucking ball and he knows it. This guy's been calling a shitty game all afternoon.

(He yells back out to the field)

How much they pay you, kid? Here, I'll double it...

(Starts pulling money out of his pocket)

TONY

(Pleading) Eddie, c'mon, be cool.

EDDIE

(Angrily) Shut the fuck up, Tony.

(EDDIE reacts to apparent comments from UMP on the field)

What? So what, throw me out the game. You gonna throw me out the fuckin' park too?

TONY

(Exasperated) Fuck, Eddie, let it go. Let's get out this inning and be done with this. Shit, it's just a fucking softball game.

EDDIE

(Talking to TONY over his shoulder)

Then if it's just a fucking game, go on home, Tony. I'm not letting this 22-year-old dickhead steal this game from me... us.

(Talking to his team on the field)

Everybody come in, get the fuck off the field. C'mon, now. Off the field.

TONY

(Yelling out at team) You guys stay out there! (to EDDIE) Eddie, man, what the fuck? Your kid's over there. Tone it down a little.

EDDIE

(Shouting to his team louder)

Off the field, let's go!

TONY

(Shouting just as loud)

Stay the fuck out there!

(Firmly)

Eddie...

EDDIE

Tony, be quiet...

(to UMP)

What? No, why don't YOU sit down and shut up and...yeah, great, fuckin' come over here. I wanna talk to you, too.

(UMP comes in from stage right, holding his mask in his hand. He stops only inches from EDDIE)

UMP

Look, what the fuck's your problem? Your pitcher threw a ball, it missed the right corner. Deal with it and let's finish the fucking game, alright?

(UMP starts to walk back to the field, but stops and turns back to EDDIE)

And you pull your guys off the field, you forfeit, got it?

EDDIE

(Condescendingly) Look, I'm sure you're the smartest kid in your high school civics class, but you fucked up on that one.

(The UMP stops in his tracks and rolls his eyes skyward. He turns back to EDDIE)

UMP

C'mon, man, I don't need this shit, OK? I call a couple of games a week for thirty-five bucks. I'm working this game by myself, running around to make all calls. So I don't need some drunk asshole yelling at me the whole time. This ain't some grand event, it's just fucking softball, OK? Just a fucking game invented by some fucking guy a long fucking time ago. (pause) And you can't even see the ball from way the fuck over here. The guy walked, alright? Deal with it and sit your ass down.

(The UMP turns to walk back to the field)

TONY

Yeah, alright, ump, it's cool.

TONY (con't)

(Puts a hand on EDDIE'S shoulder again)

Fuck it. Eddie, c'mon.

EDDIE

(Brushes TONY'S hand off his shoulder)

Fuck him...drunk asshole? Drunk asshole? Fuck some 22-year-old kid calling me drunk asshole.

(The UMP hears this and walks back to the bench)

UMP

(calmly)

32.

EDDIE

What?

UMP

I'm 32, not 22. But thanks for the compliment.

EDDIE

(sneeringly)

32. I got socks older than 32

UMP

(looking down at EDDIE'S feet)

I don't doubt that.

EDDIE

Just call the fucking game straight, OK?

UMP

(Points to the beer can in EDDIE'S hand)

Try focusing on the game in the middle, OK?

EDDIE

(starts to step to the UMP)

I'm about to focus my foot on the middle of your...

TONY

(interrupting EDDIE) Alright ump, c'mon, yell "play ball" or something. Let's finish this shit.

(UMP walks back offstage and onto the field)

EDDIE

(angrily) Fuck. Gimme another beer.

TONY

Why don't you wait till we get back to the bar?

EDDIE



What are you, my fuckin' mother? Just gimme the fucking beer, would you?

(Shouting out the field)

C'mon, Kev, get this fucker out. I mean, chick...sorry, lady...woman. Whatever, just get the batter out and let's get outta here. (to TONY) Tony...the fuckin' beer? C'mon, what's the hold up?

TONY

Alright, fuck.

(Hands EDDIE a beer).

You should take it easy, you gotta drive Mikey home, doncha?

EDDIE

(Gulps beer)

His mom's coming to get him.

TONY

Tami? Out here? She ain't been to a game in...what? Years, I guess.

EDDIE

Eh, she said she didn't like all the drinking out here. She though we did more drinkin' than softball.

(slams beer and reaches for bottle of Jager)

Besides, she don't like softball that much no more.

TONY

Too bad. She was pretty fuckin' good. Damn good pitcher.

(Looks around)

She gonna be a pissed to see you a little...fucked up?

EDDIE

Which is why she's coming out to pick up Mikey. She knows we drink out here. I don't drink at home no more so she lets me drink out here.

(Shouting back at the field)

Alright, good out. C'mon, one more, Kevin. C'mon, Big K, one more, get this bum out.

TONY

She still talking about movin'?

EDDIE

(Picks up bottle of liquor again and takes a gulp)

Yeah, she's tellin' me it's time. Says the neighborhood is getting' worse. She's worried about Mikey with all of the little hoodlums running now. Even picked out a place.

TONY

Where's that?

EDDIE

Some cookie-cutter house out in Melrose Park or some shit like that. Been showing me pictures and shit she's downloaded from the internet.

(Drinks beer)

All the fucking houses next to it look exactly the fucking same. If I get drunk out there, I'm coming home to the wrong house for sure.

TONY

(laughs) You do that now.

EDDIE

Yeah, but here, the neighbors just push me out and point me in the right direction.

(turns to shout at field again)

Aw, for fuck sake, Jimbo No. 2, catch the fucking ball.

(stands up to walk to the edge of the stage)

Go three, go three, get the guy at third... aw, shit.

TONY

(slap clipboard on bench)

Fuck.

EDDIE

Shit and fuck

TONY

No big deal. We're still up a run. We can get this last out.

EDDIE

(shouting) Kareem, shift over to the left. Kareem! Hey, Kareem!

(Turns to speak to TONY)

Why the fuck ain't he moving?

TONY

'Cause his name's Kalifa, that's why he's not movin'. He's told you, like, 17 times he won't answer to nothing else but Kalifa.

EDDIE

Oh for cryin'...

(Pleadingly to the field)

MISTER Kalifa, would you be so kind as to check the runner at second since he's taking a big fuckin' lead off the bag? Thank you, Mister KA-LEE-FA.

(Walks back to bench)

Geez, those people always got those weird ass names. What the fuck kind of name is Kalifa anyway?

TONY

First of all, I'm half of "those people."

EDDIE

Yeah, but, you know...

TONY

And if you wanna talk weird ass names, I'll go ask Stanislaus, Alphonse and Shamus.

EDDIE

You're a funny fuckin' guy, you know that? It ain't the same and you know that.

TONY

What's the difference?

EDDIE

Cause them people make those names up. Kalifa, Shaquilla, Jamalquentella...

TONY

Every name was made up at some time, Eddie. And a lot of names sound funny to somebody else.

EDDIE

(Drinking beer)

Who are you, the fucking U.N.?

TONY

Stanislaus...now that's a funny name.

EDDIE

Ain't nothing wrong with Stanislaus. It's a...whachacallit...a traditional name.

(Says the name with deliberation)

Stanislaus...

TONY

(slowly) Stanislaus... (laughs) Yeah, that's a funny ass name

EDDIE

(repeats the name thoughtfully) Stanislaus...

TONY

(thoughtfully) Stanislaus.

EDDIE

Stan's a louse

TONY

Stan The Louse.

EDDIE

(laughing)

Yeah, ok, it's pretty fucked up name, and I'm fucking Polish. I got an uncle named Stanislaus, come to think of it. Makes everybody call him Stan and...

(Gets off the bench and walks to edge of field again, shouting angrily)

Aw, fuck, Bobby, dive for that. It's OK to get your clothes dirty.

TONY

We're only up by one now.

EDDIE

(annoyed)

I know that. They taught math at Queen of Angels, you know.

TONY

They mighta taught it but you weren't there. You and my brother cutting out of classes and wandering the halls, taking advantage of that poor old half-senile nun...

EDDIE

Sr. Muselli. We usta call her Sr. Moose.

TONY

...and telling her you that you and Gene weren't cuttin' class, that you two were out collectin' for ...what the fuck was it again?

EDDIE

The Croatian Children's Soccer Shoe Fund. Your brother Gene came up with that shit.

TONY

Yeah, that sounds like Gene. Croatian Children's Soccer Shoe Fund. Geez.

EDDIE

How the hell were they going to check up on that?

(EDDIE passes the bottle of whiskey to TONY, who takes it and drinks from it. He sighs heavily.)

Yeah, your brother and me did some shit in those days. (pauses) What the fuck am I gonna do out in the fuckin' 'burbs, Tone?

TONY

I dunno know, Eddie. Different than Sacramento and Montrose for sure. You and Tami talk about maybe staying in the city?

EDDIE

(distractedly) Nah, it ends up in a fight every time.

(picks up can of beer, opens it and drinks)

I say I wanna stay, she says wants to go, and - ding! - round one. So I stopped askin'.

TONY

(looking over EDDIE'S shoulder)

Well, you can ask her again. (gesturing) Here she comes now.

EDDIE

(dejectedly) Fuck. (passes beer can to TONY) Hold this beer...

(TAMI enters from stage right. She walks up to EDDIE and TONY and surveys the array of beer cans and liquor bottles on the bench. She picks up the can nearest EDDIE.)

TAMI

(sarcastically) Wow, there's still something in this one. How'd you miss that?

EDDIE

(burps) I was getting to it.

TAMI

(exaggerated exasperation) I married a classy guy here, Tony.

TONY

I tried to warn ya. How you doin', Tami?

TAMI

I'm Ok, Tony. What's up with you?

TONY

Oh, I'm OK. A few problems, you know, nothin' really serious. Well, maybe a little ... somethin' I gotta work out, but that's my problem and..

TAMI

Tony, I really didn't wanna know, I was just being polite is all. I came to talk to this one.

(points a thumb at EDDIE)

TONY

Ok...right, yeah. You two got, um, stuff to, um, talk about and.. (senses TAMI wants him to shut up) Yeah, I'm gonna go ... um ... over there and watch the game and stuff.

(TONY stands up and walks over to the edge of the field and looks out)

EDDIE

I swear, that guy gets stranger every fucking year.

(looks up at TAMI, then at beer on the bench next to him.

He gives her a "what the fuck?" look and picks up beer and drinks hard)

TAMI

It's Wednesday, ya know.

EDDIE

Wednesday. Got it. Day before Thursday, right? See, I ain't that drunk.

TAMI

It's the Wednesday we're supposed to go see the realtor in Melrose Park.

EDDIE

Shit, today's THAT Wednesday? Well, the game's almost over. What time are we supposed to be out there?

TAMI

4:30.

EDDIE

4:30. What time's it now?

TAMI

5:30.

EDDIE

(lightbulb) 5:30? Then we're late, right?

TAMI

(flat sarcasm) We are? Who knew 5:30 came after 4:30?

EDDIE

Alright, alright, take it easy. Can we still make it out there or what?

TAMI

Nah, It's OK. I already called the guy and rescheduled it for next week. This'll be the second time, ya know.

EDDIE

Well, I'm sorry, I've had some stuff to deal with.

TAMI

(looks out at the field)

Yeah, looks real important too. (pause) At least tell me you're winning.

EDDIE

We're up by one.

TAMI

That's it? (walks to edge of field and yells at players)  
Alright, let's go, c'mon, look alive. Hey Jimbo, head's up, this guy looks like he's gonna slice it right to ya. Lookit the way he's holding his bat, be alive out there!  
(she walks back to the bench and takes beer from EDDIE and takes a swig)

EDDIE (playfully)

You wanna coach? Huh? You think you're a better coach than me?

TAMI

Baby, I KNOW I am. Better coach, better pitcher, better player period. I should be out here running this thing, not some old washed-up softball player like you. (playfully slaps cap on EDDIE'S head)

EDDIE

(pause, then sincerity) I'm sorry. I really meant to get out there and sign papers and shit. This game went on longer than I thought. You know I gotta be out here.

TAMI

(puts arm around EDDIE'S shoulder) C'mon Eddie, you know you ain't "gotta" do anything. Tony can sit out here and drink beer and yell dumb shit at grown men running around in the park.

EDDIE

Yeah but I'm the coach.

TAMI

...Of a bunch of guys who get together a coupla times a week to play softball and drink till they can barely run to first. You're not getting paid for this, Eddie, it's just softball.

EDDIE

Oh, so it's "just softball" now. I seem to recall you diving in the dirt and playing to win.

TAMI

(proudly) Yeah, well, I was a natural. (pause) But SOME of us grew the fuck up. SOME of us got kids now. In fact, I think you're one of those people. (looks around) Speaking of which, where's Mikey?

EDDIE

(looking around) He was here a second ago. (yells) Mikey!

(offstage a kid's voice is heard)

MIKEY

What?

EDDIE

Where the hell are you?



MIKEY

I'm over here.

EDDIE

Where the hell's "over here?"

MIKEY

Over HERE.

EDDIE

Well, get your ass over here!

MIKEY

I said I'm already over here.

TAMI

Smart ass just like his dad. (yells) Mikey, get your ass over here!

MIKEY

Ok...Jesus.

TAMI

Wha'd I tell ya about using the Lord's name like that? Now get your goddamn ass over here. (back to EDDIE) See, that's why we gotta move.

EDDIE

What're you talkin' about?

TAMI

(with worry) That. We can't watch him all the time. He's gonna go off on his own and, I dunno, get shot in a drive-by and you'll be out here yelling at the ump about balls and strikes.

EDDIE

OK, first of all, I NEVER yell at the ump. And second: shot in a drive-by? We live in fucking Portage Park. When you ever seen a drive-by in Portage Park? What, Ol' Lady Polovchek gonna come rollin' down the street in her pimped out 1995 Ford Escort and squeeze off a few rounds?

TAMI

The neighborhood's getting rough, Eddie.

EDDIE

What, some guys hanging out in front of the corner store? Big deal. We usta do that too.

TAMI

Yeah, but we at least used to move out of people's way, show 'em a little respect. These guys, it's like they're daring you to make them move off the sidewalk. The other week Wally Bobeck had to tell 'em to move from in front of his own house and they had the nerve to get pissed off at him.

EDDIE

Well, you gotta show em' you ain't afraid of 'em. Tell 'em to fuck off. Tell 'em you'll call the cops. That's all it takes.

TAMI

These punks ain't afraid of the cops. Hell, most of 'em probably already been in prison three or four times already.

EDDIE

So? How many guys we grew up with been to jail?

TAMI

Jail, Eddie, not prison. Big difference.

EDDIE

Not to the guys in Cook County. They say that jail's worse than Stateville.

TAMI

Look, I didn't come here to talk about how horrible the correction system is, I came here to find out why you can't seem to make it out to Melrose Park to close the deal on this house.

EDDIE

I'll make it next time. I promise.

TAMI

No, you won't.

EDDIE

I will.

TAMI

No, you won't. You hate this idea, I know. (pauses and takes EDDIE'S hand) Look, I love you but...(composed sarcasm) I'm just gonna have to forge your signature, I guess.

EDDIE

Hey, you can't do that. It's against the law. Twelfth amendment or some shit like that. I'll have the cops pick you up. (scoff)  
Forge my signature..

TAMI

Got news for you...it wouldn't be the first time I done it. But if you wanna find out for sure, try not showing up next week.

EDDIE

(turns to look at TAMI) What's so great about this house? What's it got, golden fucking stairs and a swimming pool in the hallway...excuse me, foyer.

TAMI

Stop being a dick, Eddie. It's an ordinary fucking house in a good fucking neighborhood.

EDDIE

We already live in a good fucking neighborhood.

TAMI

No, we don't. Our neighborhood's going to shit and if we wanna make any money off of our place, we gotta sell now.

(TONY walks back to the bench)

TONY

Hey, um, sorry to interrupt but they got a man on third and their best hitter's up? You want me to shift some guys around or somethin'? If they get a hit, we're in extra innings.

EDDIE

Nah, this guys gonna pop out to left. He likes to try and kill the ball when he thinks he can drive a guy in. Tell Jimbo No. 2 to be ready.

TONY

Gotcha

EDDIE

(yelling to men on the field)  
C'mon, fellas, let's win this game and get the fuck outta here. Get this last out.

TAMI

How come you can be so decisive on a stupid game but on something involving the future of your kid you drag your feet?

EDDIE

Maybe I'm not bein' indecisive. Maybe I already made up my mind but you're not listening.

TAMI

We're moving, Eddie. (she turns his head toward her) Hey, look at me. Done. Deal. (gives him a peck on the lips)

EDDIE

Yeah, done deal. Right.

TAMI

Eddie, you're gonna let go of this place. You're gonna do it for your kid. You're gonna do it for me. OK?

EDDIE

Ok. You said it's a done deal, so it's a done deal. We're moving. We're leaving the neighborhood. Fine. Now let me finish this game, OK?

TAMI

(mocking EDDIE) "Now let me finish this game, OK?" Don't sound so happy about it. (softening) Look, I know we've been living in the neighborhood a long time. But sometimes you just gotta go. Sometimes, things gotta change. If they don't, they might just get worse.

EDDIE

(sighs, then looks with resignation at TAMI) Yeah, ok, so we gotta change. (takes her hand, squeezes it, then lets go) I'll be there, we'll change, everything'll be super-duper. Next Wednesday, right?

TAMI

Next Wednesday. (pause) I'm taking Mikey home. You can catch a ride or take the el, OK?

(yells to Mikey offstage)

Mikey! Let's go.

MIKEY

Inna minute, OK?

TAMI

Get down from there, you wanna break your neck?

MIKEY

Sure, why not?

TAMI

Don't get smart, ya hear me?

(To EDDIE)

We're having pot roast for dinner.

EDDIE

(cheering to field)

Alright, great catch! Way to go, Jimbo No. 2. Good win, fellas, good win. Fuck yeah!

EDDIE (con't)

(calmly, to TAMI)

Yeah, pot roast, got it. Fine with me. (pause) You got any of them pearl onions you can throw in there?

TAMI

Yeah, I think so. I can throw some in there.

EDDIE

Good. (pause) Sorry.

(reaches out and hold TAMI'S hand for a second as TONY returns to the bench)

TONY

Good call, Eddie. Jimbo No. 2 didn't even have to move. Ball came right at him. One win from the playoffs, baby!

(High-fives EDDIE and goes to high-five TAMI who reluctantly agrees)

TAMI

Good job, Tony. (to EDDIE) See? They can get along fine without your undivided attention.

(Other players enter from field and high-five and celebrate. A few who are acquainted with TAMI greet her as well)

(to EDDIE) I'll see you at home.

(TAMI kisses EDDIE again and begins to head off stage while calling for MIKEY)

Mikey, I said NOW!

(TONY waits until TAMI leaves and speaks to EDDIE)

TONY

Everything cool?

EDDIE

Yeah, everything's cool. We're almost in the playoffs. One more win...

TONY

No, I meant cool with you and Tami. You guys were getting a little loud over here. 'Bout that movin' shit again?

EDDIE

Talk about somethin' else, OK? Didn't you wanna talk about somethin' earlier?

TONY

Nah ...well, yeah...I mean...you know...yeah, I wanted to... you know...

EDDIE

Goddamit, Tony, will you spit it out? Geez, you been hemmin' and hawin' since you were 10. What?

TONY

Look, I just wanted to say, you're like, you know, my brother and stuff, since my brother ain't around no more and, well, I kinda feel like I gotta tell somebody...you know...something...

EDDIE

C'mon, Tony, I gotta be in Melrose Park by next Wednesday. Don't be gettin' deep on me all of a sudden.

TONY

Look, Eddie, I'm... there's a ... I think...

EDDIE

What, Tony?

TONY

I, uh...

(TONY'S cell phone rings again. He answers it and has to shout above the noise and high-fiving and general shit-talking)

What?... yeah, we won. What?...they're celebrating and high-fiving and shit. ...High fiving... HIGH FIVING...It's when you raise your hand and slap it against another guy's...(laughs, then composed again) No, not that...

(TONY doesn't notice that players have quieted down a bit and are listening.)  
Yes, it's called softball and, yeah you use a bat, but it's not... geez, Cesar... (notices others are listening)...ina, um, Cesarina. I gotta go. Yeah, I love you too...(again, realizes others are listening)...um, yeah, the band U2, my favorite. Irish guys, right? Later. Gotta go.

(TONY turns off phone. Team is silent. After a few beats, EDDIE speaks).

EDDIE

(flatly) That was Tony's bookie.

(Walks over to Tony)

Talk later, right?

TONY

Um, yeah, sure, later.

(TONY and EDDIE walk off stage together. Other players slowly begin to walk off as well)