

PLAY BALL

Written by

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INT. DINING ROOM TABLE - AFTERNOON

A camcorder zooms in through the window, watching JACK (mid 20s) listening to the radio playing the afternoon news.

RADIO HOST

(over radio)

The trials started today on the recent murders that have shaken up this small town. The prime suspect, Jack Grave was seen exiting the courthouse today. Mr. Grave has been charged with the murder of twelve of his former teammates at Tolleson State University...

Jack turns off the radio. He tosses a baseball in the air and catches it. The doorbell rings.

SALLY

(O.S.)

Jack, can you get that? It's the plumber!

JACK

Today, really?

Sally walks up behind him, touching his shoulder.

SALLY

Today was the only day he could do it this week.

JACK

I just got grilled in court all day. Can we just tell him it's not a good time?

The doorbell rings again.

SALLY

(kissing his cheek)

He'll only be here for an hour.

INT. FRONT DOOR

Sally goes for the door.

She and the plumber, DUSTY (mid 20s), have an exchange.

INT. DINING ROOM TABLE

Jack gets a text from an anonymous number. Old photos. The first few photos are intelligible.

Jack scrolls and notices the photos are of the baseball team.

SALLY

Jack, this is Dusty.

JACK

(dismissive)

Hey, thanks man...

Jack continues scrolling.

SALLY

Okay. Well, bathroom's right upstairs.

Sally walks upstairs. Dusty lags behind Sally. Jack scrolls through the photos to find a video.

Jack watches found footage of him and his old teammate tossing a ball. Sally watches on the grass. You can hear distant dialogue, but it's overshadowed by harsh breathing.

JACK

Hey honey! Can you come here for a sec?

No answer.

JACK (CONT'D)

I just got a weird thing sent to me. Can you come here?

No answer.

JACK (CONT'D)

Sally?!

INT. STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS

JACK

(walking to the bottom of the staircase)

SALLY!

Dusty walks out of the room. Cam corder glued to his eye. Bloody wrench in hand.

DUSTY

And here we have Slugger Jack. King
of short stop, but can't get on
base to save his life.

Jack drops the baseball in his hand. Dusty walks down the
stairs.

JACK

What the fu --

DUSTY (CONT'D)

Bottom of the ninth, Jack.
And you're up to bat.

JACK (CONT'D)

Where the fuck is Sally?!

DUSTY

Oooo, swing and a miss.

INT. BATHROOM

Sally is lying on the bathroom floor. Blood everywhere. Her
body's still twitching.

JACK

(struggling, O.S.)
Motherfucker!

CUT TO BLACK.

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - NIGHT

Dusty, holding the cam corder, cuts out the last eye hole of
a pumpkin over Jack's head.

DUSTY

(turns camera to himself)
We're back with Slugger Jack! I'm
here at our old stomping grounds.
The tiger den.
(beat)
Mind if I practice a few curve
balls?

Dusty sets the cam corder on a tripod. He picks up a baseball
and chucks it at Jack's stomach. Jack hunches over from the
pain.

DUSTY (CONT'D)

Ooo, that was a fucking dart! Hot
damn! Maybe they'll put me in for
the season.

(beat)

(MORE)

DUSTY (CONT'D)

But, coach *did* tell me to work on
my follow through.

Dusty picks up a baseball bat and throws it over his
shoulder. He takes a swing at Jack's stomach. Jack coughs
uncontrollably.

DUSTY (CONT'D)

Man, that was a good hit! That's at
least deep left!

Dusty tosses the bat in the air and takes the pumpkin off of
Jack's head.

JACK

(wincing)

Who the fuck are you?

DUSTY

Man, really? The Tolleson Tiger's
star player doesn't remember the
poor kid he used to strip naked and
kick around? Not ringing any bells?

(beat)

Would this help you remember?

Dusty dances like a tiger.

JACK

(coughing)

Dusty Rhodes? Tate the fucking
tiger?

DUSTY

Ding, ding, ding! So good to see
you again. You were one tough
cookie, man.

JACK

That was college Dusty. I know we
were a little rough on you, but
come on. And what did Sally do?!

DUSTY

Who said anything about Sally? I've
been making my rounds to all the
guys. And I finally get to see you.

JACK

You had to kill the whole team to
see me?

DUSTY

Hey, the rest of the team struck out! They just couldn't step up to the plate. Not like you could.

(beat)

God, you were good. I just wish I could see you run those bases one more time. You feel me?

Dusty walks behind Jack. Bends over, unties him.

DUSTY (CONT'D)

Well here's your shot. Time to run on home.

Lights on the field cut out. Jack takes off.

EXT. SUBURBIA - NIGHT

Jack is running home. He's slow. Holding his stomach

Dusty is running behind him. Bat in one hand, camcorder in the other.

EXT. JACKS HOUSE - FRONT PORCH

Jack struggles up the stairs. He tries to open the door. Locked.

DUSTY

(singing)

Take me out to the ball game.

Jack searches for his keys in his pockets.

JACK

(hushed)

C'mon c'mon c'mon...

DUSTY

Take me out to the crowd. Buy me some peanuts and cracker jack.

(he growls over)

I don't care if I never get back!

JACK

Why are you doing this?! What the fuck is wrong with you?!

DUSTY

You ask a lot of questions. C'mon I know you know this next part.

(MORE)

DUSTY (CONT'D)
(barking)
ROOT, ROOT, ROOT FOR THE HOME TEAM.
If they don't win it's a shame.

Dusty taps the baseball bat against each stair step.

DUSTY (CONT'D)
One.
 (tap)
Two.
 (tap)
Three strikes you're out!

Jack shrinks against the door with each tap of the bat.

DUSTY (CONT'D)
(raises the bat)
At the old ball game.

Jack shields his face. Dusty drops the baseball bat. He crouches down and moves the camcorder close to Jack's face.

DUSTY (CONT'D)
You were so close to home, but just
too slow.

Jack inches his fingers to the handle of the bat.

DUSTY (CONT'D)
You're out, and now your eyes are
on me.
 (beat)
Good game, Slugger Jack.

Dusty stands up and walks away. Jack grabs ahold of the bat.

Jack stands up and takes a swing at Dusty's head.

THUD.

The camcorder takes a tumble, but is still recording.

Jack stands over Dusty's body, repeatedly smashing his head in. Blood paints Jack's face.

Red and blue lights flicker over Jack's face.

He drops the bat as he raises his hands.

THE END