

BIG NATE

Ep. 217 "FIELD OF NIGHTMARES"

Written by

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CAST

NATE
FRANCIS
GINA
CHAD
ZEFF
WINK SUMMERS
PRINCIPAL NICHOLS
MRS. GODFREY
DEE DEE
ARTUR
COACH JOHN
TEDDY
CHARLIE BENEDICT
HILLARY
HAMSTER HANK
KIM
RANDY
TEAM 1 – DEE DEE, RANDY, TEDDY, BRINTCH, SPENCER
SPENCER
BRINTCH
SQUASH PIECES
STUDENTS
TRICK DINGER
CHARLIE
BUSINESS WOMAN
BIRDIE
FANS
PLAYERS
TEAM 2 – HILLARY, KIM, CHAD, GINA, HAMSTER HANK

COLD OPEN

EXT. P.S. 38 BASEBALL FIELD - AFTERNOON

NATE and fellow BASEBALL TEAMMATES, DEE DEE, TEDDY, RANDY, CHARLIE BENEDICT, BRINTCH, SPENCER (and TWO INCIDENTALS), play against another MIDDLE SCHOOL TEAM. It's the bottom of the 9th, P.S. 38 is down by 3, and the bases are loaded.

CLOSE ON: WINK SUMMERS, announcing from the sidelines.

1	WINK SUMMERS	1
	<dramatic> We've got ourselves a nail biter, friends! The P.S. 38 Bobcats are down by three, bottom of the ninth, two outs. The bases are loaded and... (uncomfortably) so is my bladder. Team captain Charlie Benedict steps up to the plate...	

REVEAL: Wink stands inches away from home plate, standing on a BOX CRATE right next to GODFREY, the umpire.

2	MRS. GODFREY	2
	Would you stop breathing on my neck?! You're not even supposed to be over here! <elbows Wink>	

3	WINK SUMMERS	3
	<elbowed> Watch the kidneys, granny!	

Wink takes his microphone and backs away...

4	WINK SUMMERS (CONT'D)	4
	If the Bobcats can pull off a win, they'll play in the Rackleff County Championship for the first time in history! All eyes are on Charlie...	

ANGLE ON: CHARLIE BENEDICT up to bat, razor focused...

NEW ANGLE ON: Nate at third base. But for some reason, he doesn't seem excited about the potential victory...

5	NATE (TO CAMERA)	5
	<snort> "All eyes are on Charlie." Yeah, because he's CAPTAIN. <beat> Can you imagine if I were captain?	
	(MORE)	

NATE (TO CAMERA) (CONT'D)

We're talkin' off the charts,
historic levels of awesome!

<CRACK>! Charlie makes contact, in a BIG way --

6 **WINK SUMMERS** 6

It's a high fly ball! It's going...
going...

7 **NATE** 7

(turns to cam) But no... all that
glory, is for Charlie Benedict.

8 **WINK SUMMERS** 8

GONE! It's a grand slam!!

Nate and the other P.S. 38ers trot the bases, crossing home
plate. FANS in the bleachers <GO NUTS>. PS. 38 WINS!

9 **WINK SUMMERS (CONT'D)** 9

P.S. 38 WINS THE GAME!!!! THEY ARE
GOING TO THE CHAMPIONSHIP, FOLKS!
He did it! Charlie Benedict did it!
And just in time!

Wink throws down his mic and bolts for the bathroom. COACH
JOHN flips TABLES and karate chops WATER COOLERS in his
excitement.

10 **COACH JOHN** 10

OH YEAH! That's what I'm talkin'
about!

Fans rush the field to hoist Charlie onto their shoulders.
They carry him across the school grounds, chanting his name.

11 **FANS** 11

CHARLIE! CHARLIE! CHARLIE!

The fans continue their chant onto the PLAYGROUND. Nate
follows them unenthusiastically.

12 **NATE (BACK TO CAMERA)** 12

Look, I'm stoked we won...but how
come CHARLIE had to be the hero?
Why not ME? I'd love to get all
the glory for once. <Sigh> But
that would take a freaky miracle.

The fans cross the BLACKTOP, but accidentally drop Charlie,
who promptly gets sucked into the soft cement. AGAIN.

13 **CHARLIE** 13
 <dropped sound, impact> AHHHHHH!
 Not again! Help!!!

Fans **<GASP>**. Coach John dives after Charlie who sinks lower and lower...

14 **COACH JOHN** 14
 GRAB MY HAND! NEVER LEAVE A FALLEN
 COMRADE BEHIND! <STRUGGLES>

He tries to pull Charlie up, but it's no use. Charlie is gone. His TEAM CAPTAIN HAT floating on top of the cement. Coach John takes Charlie's hat (NOTE: it reads "CAPTAIN.")

15 **COACH JOHN (CONT'D)** 15
 <weepy> There will never be another
 like him. <Beat, holds up hat>
 Okay, who can fit in this hat?

16 **CHARLIE (O.S., UNDER CEMENT)** 16
 I'm still here! I can hear you!

Nate slicks back his hair (which bounces right back). Snatches the hat from Coach John, putting it on.

17 **NATE (TO CAMERA)** 17
 Boy, do I love me a good freaky
 miracle!

SMASH TO TITLE CARD: "FIELD OF NIGHTMARES"

MAIN TITLES.

ACT ONE**INT. P.S. 38 - HALLWAY - NEXT MORNING**

Nate walks on air through the halls, sporting the Team Captain hat. He's flanked by Dee Dee, Teddy, and FRANCIS. STUDENTS high-fiving them as they pass. Francis awkwardly weaves away from their hands.

18	STUDENTS	18
	Yeah, Nate! Team captain! / Go get 'em, Nate! / Bring home that trophy!	
	Nate waves to his fans and turns to Francis who does not look particularly happy.	
19	NATE	19
	What's wrong, Fran-Fran? Am I sensing some...JEALOUSY?	
20	FRANCIS	20
	What? NO!	
21	NATE	21
	C'mon, Francis. We all know you hate sports because of..."the incident."	
22	TEDDY	22
	I believe the scientific term is "ball-a-phobia".	
23	DEE DEE	23
	I thought it was "ball-itation", hesitancy around balls.	
24	FRANCIS	24
	Would everyone stop saying "balls"!? Yes, I've abandoned sports, but that decision had NOTHING to do with--	
25	NATE	25
	Balls?	
26	FRANCIS	26
	I'm eliminating the possibility of head injuries to preserve my brain for SCIENCE!	
	(MORE)	

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

In fact, I have a meeting to discuss the future of my brain right now! I'm interviewing potential college advisors.

Nate, Dee Dee and Teddy have stopped paying attention, now signing AUTOGRAPHS for their adoring fans (other students).

27

NATE

27

<signing a CUTE GIRL's hat>
And is that April with an 'A'?

Francis storms off with a **<FRUSTRATED GAH!!>**.

INT. P.S. 38 - COLLEGE PREP OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Francis sits in a makeshift "College Prep Office" which is just the janitor's closet set up with a DESK and two CHAIRS. Across from him is TRICK DINGER, a sleazy college admissions scammer/used car salesman-type who leans back in his chair.

28

TRICK DINGER

28

Name's Trick Dinger. My prices are steep, but I'm worth it. I'll guarantee a college acceptance.

29

FRANCIS

29

But I haven't even given you my list of extracurriculars yet.

Francis holds up a SCROLL.

30

TRICK DINGER

30

Burn it. All that matters are the sports you play.

31

FRANCIS

31

What? That can't be true. I don't even play sports!

Trick shuffles through his BRIEFCASE, pulls out a series of PHOTOS of Francis ROWING, CHEERLEADING, and BULL RIDING.

32

TRICK DINGER

32

You do now.

33

FRANCIS

33

Whoa whoa whoa. I'm not lying to get into college! As a scientist I have an oath of integrity to uphold-

34 **TRICK DINGER** 34
 <interrupts> Science? Who cares
 about science??

35 **FRANCIS** 35
 Who cares about SCIENCE!? (calls
 out) NEXT!

Trick <SHRUGS>, takes his stack of photos and **EXITS**, passing a BUSINESS WOMAN on her way in. She has a HEADSET, bluetooth earpiece, and THREE PHONES in her hands, all of which are <RINGING SFX>. She talks into each one while Francis waits.

36 **BUSINESS WOMAN** 36
 Sir, your son is an all-star
 triathlete. He can cherry-pick any
 college he wants. Please hold.
 <switches over> What? No, that's
 not a joke, that's my fee. Deal
 with it!

Francis clears his throat <AHEM>. She finally looks at him.

37 **BUSINESS WOMAN (CONT'D)** 37
 Okay, kid, you're client fifty
 eight out of eight thousand
 today...let's get down to brass
 tacks. What sports do you play?

38 **FRANCIS** 38
 None. But-

She immediately gets up and heads for the door.

39 **BUSINESS WOMAN** 39
 <frazzled, into phone> Sorry, that
 was some kid who doesn't play any
 sports. Total waste!

In walks ZEFF. Francis looks perplexed.

40 **FRANCIS** 40
 Zeff? What are you doing here?

41 **ZEFF** 41
 Saw your ad, little man! Thought I
 might be of... <suave> assistance.

He hands Francis the NEWSPAPER with his "SEEKING HIGHLY EXPERIENCED COLLEGE ADVISOR" ad circled in red. And then a copy of his HEADSHOT.

42 **FRANCIS** 42
No offense but did you even
graduate high school?

43 **ZEFF** 43
 <Psh!> I have a PhD in the school
 of LIFE, brutha. Just lookin' for a
 part-time job to bring in a little
 extra cha-cheese. Got my eye on
 some tasty throwing stars. Little
 suckers sting, man. <CHUCKLES>

44 FRANCIS 44
 <weirded out> Right, well, here's
 my list of extracurriculars.

He hands Zeff the scroll, which unfurls to the floor, and out the door. We hear COACH JOHN slip and fall outside.

COACH JOHN (O.S.)

Gosh darnit whose scroll is this?!

46 **ZEFF** 46
 <reading> ¡Frijoles frescos, amigo!
 That means cool beans en Español.

47 **FRANCIS** 47
I don't think that's how you say--

ZEFF

--So what sports do you play?

49 **FRANCIS** 49
Gah! Isn't anyone impressed by my
extracurriculars?! Or my 5.0 GPA?
I competed in the NUMBERDOME!

50 **ZEFF** 50
Competition! Righteous! Colleges
love sports.

51 **FRANCIS** 51
No! I stopped playing sports.

52 **ZEFF** 52
Aw man. Why'd you go and do a thing
like that? Don't you wanna go to
college?

53 **FRANCIS** 53
 <screams> Ahhhhhh!

54 **ZEFF** 54
 Alright I'm gonna be real with you
 because I like you, Craig. This
 mathlete mumbjo jumbo? Useless. But
 don't you worry, I'm sure we can
 find one sport you can play.

55 **FRANCIS** 55
 <sighs> Fine, I'll try. Just as
 long as it doesn't involve...balls.

EXT. P.S. 38 BASEBALL FIELD - AFTERNOON

Coach John and Nate are hitting balls at practice. NICHOLS comes by to check in.

56 **PRINCIPAL NICHOLS** 56
Howdy-ho! How's "*el capitán*"
doing? Ready to win that trophy?

57 **NATE** 57
You know it! And it has nothing to
do with my quest for personal
glory.

Nate swings and misses.

58 **NATE** (CONT'D) 58
 <sheepishly> Heh. Practice swing.

59

59

PRINCIPAL NICHOLS

Now listen, Nate. No pressure,
but...P.S. 38 has never made it to
a baseball championship before.
Or...<stifling a sob>...ANY
championship! <starts crying
openly> Awww, we're PATHETIC!
Nate, this is our only chance to
redeem our one hundred year history
of FAILURE!! Our entire legacy
rests on your shoulders!
Generations of Rackleffians are
counting on you! But no pressure!
No pressure! Okay, happy Tuesday!
Remember: no pressure!

Nichols zips off as Nate turns to camera and **<GULPS>**.

EXT. PARK - AFTERNOON

Francis and Zeff hold RACQUETS on either side of a NET.

60 **ZEFF** 60
Welcome to badminton! A refined sport for civilized dudes like vous... <points to himself> ...and moi. <points to Francis> Just gently hit the not-ball-shaped birdie over the net.

Zeff volleys the BIRDIE to Francis, who focuses. From his POV, the birdie turns into a RABID, LAUGHING BASEBALL WITH RAZOR TEETH.

61 **BIRDIE** 61
 HAHAHA!

[illegible]

He ducks and covers. Zeff looks around, baffled as the birdie slowly drifts to the ground next to a cowering Francis.

63 **ZEFF** 63
I can see this is gonna take work.
Challenge accepted!

INT. WRIGHT HOUSE - NATE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Nate sleeps fitfully, tossing and turning.

DISSOLVE TO:

NATE'S DAVID LYNCH-ESQUE NIGHTMARE - SAM KOJI HALE STYLE

Nate stands in the outfield. Dee Dee pitches to the opposing team's batter. <CRACK!> Wink comes on over the mic.

64 **WINK SUMMERS (V.O.)** 64
It's an easy pop fly to Nate
Wright! This will change P.S. 38's
legacy from failure...to TRIUMPH!
All he has to do is CATCH IT!!

Sweating like crazy, Nate positions himself under the ball as it descends in slo-mo. It falls into his glove...AND THEN FALLS OUT! HE DROPS IT!

65 **NATE** 65
GAAH!

66 **WINK SUMMERS** 66
Oh, NOO!!! He dropped it! Nate
Wright dropped the ball!

Charlie Benedict rises from the soft cement dripping cement goo.

67 **CHARLIE BENEDICT** 67
Nice goin', Captain Butterfingers!

Nate looks down at his hands, they're each a stick of BUTTER.

68 **NATE** 68
<SCREAMS> Guys?! A little help??

He drops the bat and looks to the field. His teammates are texting, blowing gum bubbles, running in circles, tripping, missing dozens of fly balls. Meanwhile, the OPPOSING TEAM gets handed the TROPHY. They <LAUGH MOCKINGLY> at Nate.

69 **PRINCIPAL NICHOLS** 69
P.S. 38 should have won! Now we'll be losers FOREVER!

To soothe himself, Nichols begins eating Nate's butterfingers, turning them into stumps.

70 **PRINCIPAL NICHOLS (CONT'D)** 70
Mmm, butter. Does anyone have some corn?

71 **CHARLIE BENEDICT** 71
Oops. Guess I should have said "Captain Butter Stumps"! <WARPED MANIACAL LAUGHING>

72 **NATE** 72
No!!!

BACK TO:

NATE'S BEDROOM

Covered in flop sweat, Nate bolts upright in bed still <SCREAMING>.

73 **NATE (TO CAMERA) (CONT'D)** 73
<Calming, determined> I'm gonna lead my team to victory if it's the last thing I do. AND I'M NEVER EATING BUTTER AGAIN!

END ACT ONE.

ACT TWO**INT. P.S. 38 - CLASSROOM - DAY**

The next day, Nate addresses his team from a PODIUM.

74	NATE	74
	Listen up, Bobcats: In one week, we are facing the most important day of our lives! <crickets> (off their blank expressions) The CHAMPIONSHIP!! Come on, guys!	
75	TEAM 1	75
	<Yes! Of course! Oh right! WALLA>	
76	NATE	76
	Thus, to ensure my victory, uh, OUR victory, we will be implementing a little concept I call the Three D's: Discipline. Discipline. And DISCIPLINE.	
77	DEE DEE	77
	That's just one "D" three times.	
78	TEDDY	78
	Bruh, we're already in the championship!	
79	NATE	79
	Silence! All questions must be submitted in writing.	

INT. P.S. 38 - KITCHEN

The team is peeling a mountain of POTATOES with their fingers.

80	NATE	80
	PEEL! PEEL! PEEL! Put your backs into it!	
81	RANDY	81
	But my fingers hurt! I keep scraping my SKIN off!	
82	NATE	82
	Know what those mangled fingers mean-- DISCIPLINE!	

91 **RANDY** 91
Are you trying to get us killed,
Turdler? Some of us are only
fifteen!

92 **TEDDY** 92
Dude, you're fifteen?

93 **RANDY** 93
NO!

Randy shoves Teddy onto the rope. The team anxiously follows,
wobbling the whole time as gators snap their jaws menacingly.

94 **DEE DEE** 94
<calling back> I really don't see
what this has to do with baseball!

95 **BRINTCH** 95
Nate?? I think the rope is fraying!

96 **NATE** 96
Is it the rope? Or your ego? Wha-
cha! Surrender to the
discipleaaaaaan!

The rope snaps! We freeze frame as they are mid-fall. Nate
looks to camera, the chicken still tucked under his arm.

97 **NATE (CONT'D)** 97
On second thought, it may have been
the rope.

The chicken <**SCHREECHES**>. Then lays a bunch more eggs.

INT. HOSPITAL - HALLWAY - DAY

The entire team lays on GURNEYS in full body casts/braces.
Nichols anxiously rocks in a corner. Nate and Coach John pace
in a panic.

98 **PRINCIPAL NICHOLS** 98
P.S. 38 is CURSED! Our starting
lineup is in intensive care!!

99 **NATE** 99
Uh...maybe they can delay the game
until everyone heals!?

100 **COACH JOHN** 100
"Healing" is for SOFTIES! In my
day, we didn't let a few boobos
stop us!

Nichols grabs Coach John by the collar.

101 **PRINCIPAL NICHOLS** 101
We'll never win that trophy now!
P.S. 38 is mired in a morass of
mediocrity! What'll we do, John?

102 **COACH JOHN** 102
Maybe it's time you and I headed
for that island paradise we always
talked about.

103 **PRINCIPAL NICHOLS** 103
Uh...we've never talked about an
island paradise.

104 **COACH JOHN** 104
Then who did I marry in Vegas?

Nate interrupts them.

105 **NATE** 105
Snap out of it, guys! This
championship, and my glorious yet
selfless victory, can still happen!
We just need to find some
replacement players. Question
is...WHO?

INT. P.S. 38 - EMPTY CLASSROOM - AFTERNOON

Francis and Zeff hold SQUASH RACQUETS, facing a wall. Zeff
holds an actual SQUASH, explaining the rules.

106 **ZEFF** 106
Okay, bud, this game is called
squash. Little more hardcore than
badminton, BUT it has a funny name.
Now go ahead, whack that non-ball
against the wall.

107 **FRANCIS** 107
<looks at squash> This is really a
sport?

108 **ZEFF** 108
'COURSE it is! Why else would they
make a vegetable that goofy-
lookin'?

109 **FRANCIS** 109
Botanically speaking, squash is a
fruit. But okay...I can do this!

Francis winds up and SMACKS IT! The squash EXPLODES into a million tiny pieces that all <LAUGH> at Francis...

110	SQUASH PIECES	110
	HAHAHAHA!	

Francis runs away **<SCREAMING>**. Zeff looks at the exploded squash curiously.

111 **ZEFF** 111
Huh! Wonder if we were supposed to
peel it first?

EXT. P.S. 38 BASEBALL FIELD - DAY

GINA, CHAD, KIM, ARTUR, HILLARY, HAMSTER HANK (INSIDE THE HAMSTER BALL) and TWO NEW INCIDENTALS chatter on the field.

112 **GINA** 112
This will look so good on my
college applications, everyone
knows colleges go NUTS for sports.

113 **HILLARY** 113
This is so exciting! I thought I
had to be ATHLETIC to be an
athlete!

A ball comes flying in and nails Hillary on the head.

114 **ARTUR** 114
I have never before been part of
team. In Stylgravia, all sports are
played in solitude to encourage
self-discovery. This is why we play
with no clothes on.

Artur whips off his clothes as we whip to: the gang cringing and covering their eyes.

115 GINA/HILLARY/HAMSTER HANK/CHAD 115
Eww! / Gross! / Someone put a
barrel on him! / <GIGGLES>

Nate appears and immediately shoves a BARREL over Artur.
Note: Artur will be in a barrel for the rest of the episode.

116 **NATE** 116
All right, everyone, listen up! I
can't believe I'm saying this, but
you are the last remaining hope for
P.S. 38 to win the championship.
(MORE)

NATE (CONT'D)

This is your moment, Bobcats! Get out there and make me a hero!

SMASH CUT TO: <CRACK!> Kim hits a slow ground ball that dribbles past Nate. She stands motionless in the batter's box.

117 **NATE (CONT'D)** 117
Kim! After you hit the ball, you have to RUN!

118 **KIM** 118
I'm not a runner. I'm a dancer.

Kim dances her way up the baseline. Hamster Hank tries to tag her, one arm out of his bubble, but loses control of his hamster ball and goes flying across the field.

119 **HAMSTER HANK** 119
WAHHHHHHH!!! SOMEBODY HELP!

Nate <SIGHS>.

EXT. P.S. 38 BASEBALL FIELD - LATER

Nate's at the mound, Chad steps up to bat.

120 **NATE** 120
Okay, Chad, I'm gonna lay it in nice and easy. Keep your eye on the ball.

The wind picks up and nearly blows off Nate's hat. Chad licks his finger and holds it up to the wind.

121 **CHAD** 121
I don't have to keep my eye on the ball! With biological sonar, I know exactly where it's going!

122 **NATE** 122
Biological so-what now?

123 **CHAD** 123
Biological sonar. Or echolocation. Y'know, like a dolphin. I've started adding fresh-squeezed dolphin musk to my morning cat milk. Adds a real zing.

Chad makes a series of <HAPPY DOLPHIN NOISES>. The others look impressed. Nate face palms. Gina writes down something in a NOTEBOOK.

124 **NATE** 124
Gina, what are you doing? There's
no writing in baseball.

125 **GINA** 125
Excuse you, brainless, I am taking
notes.

She waves the journal at him. Nate **<SCOWLS>**.

126 **NATE** 126
Lose the notebook, Gina, and take a
lap. Chad! Batter up!

CUE: MONTAGE. NATE'S NEW TEAM PRACTICES AS WE INTERCUT WITH FRANCIS TRYING OUT DIFFERENT SPORTS...

--BATTING PRACTICE. Nate catches. Hillary pitches the ball to him so slowly, a TURTLE outruns it. In the outfield, Chad leaps into the air like a dolphin and catches the ball with his mouth. He makes **<HAPPY DOLPHIN NOISES>** and dives into a BUCKET OF WATER. Artur hits a ball but his barrel falls down. The team **<CRINGES>** as he blushes and rolls away at top speed. Kim twirls the bat like a baton. Gina holds a RADAR GUN, furiously taking notes on Hillary's pitching instead of hitting the ball. Nate bangs his head onto the dugout wall.

--FRANCIS TRIES CURLING. On a blacktop he rolls a LARGE ROCK towards a painted TARGET as Zeff ROLLERBLADES down with a BROOM, sweeping furiously. Francis holds his breath excitedly as it curls right towards the target. But then, it abruptly curls back around towards him, picking up speed. Francis runs away **<SCREAMING>** as the rock sprouts a 2D FACE and **<LAUGHS>**. Zeff chases after Francis as he crosses CURLING off the list.

--THE TEAM JOGS AROUND THE BASES. Kim dances instead of runs. Chad flaps across the ground like a dolphin. Hillary is painfully slow, the same turtle outrunning her. Gina zig zags all over the field, attempting to scribble notes in her notebook, then gets mowed over by Hamster Hank.

--FRANCIS TRIES ULTIMATE FRISBEE. Zeff winds up and throws a FRISBEE to Francis. He might actually catch this one! Then from Francis' POV, the frisbee turns into Zeff's THROWING STARS that **<LAUGH>** at Francis as they speed towards him. Francis ducks and runs away **<SCREAMING>** once more. Zeff crosses another sport off the list.

INT. P.S. 38 - COLLEGE PREP OFFICE - DAY

Francis, distraught, collapses in a chair.

127 **FRANCIS** 127
It's hopeless! I've failed at EVERY
non-ball sport. I'll never get into
college.

Zeff pulls out a CLIPBOARD and PEN.

128 **ZEFF** 128
I'm also a crisis hotline counselor
in training. Unload your burdens,
brother.

129 **FRANCIS** 129
<hesitates> I suppose there's no
harm in telling you. Believe it or
not, only one short year ago, I was
on my way to becoming a baseball
hero.

EXT. PARK - DAY - FLASHBACK - 1 YEAR AGO

A happy FRANCIS plays baseball with his Little League TEAM.
He's up to bat.

130 **FRANCIS (V.O.)** 130
I was having a great game. I
already had two hits, and now I was
up with the game tied and the bases
loaded.

NATE stands eagerly at third base. Gives a thumbs up. Francis
swings. <CRACK!>

131 **FRANCIS (V.O.)** 131
I swung my bat and then, I ran.
Crowd went crazy. Cheering me on.
I'd done it! Won the game. (darkly)
Or so I thought.

Francis rounds the bases only to find that no one is moving.
Instead they are staring at him. Smiling. Pointing.

132 **FRANCIS (V.O.)** 132
Something was wrong. They weren't
cheering...they were LAUGHING!

133 **PLAYERS** 133
HAHAHAHA!

134 **FRANCIS (V.O.)** 134
Then, I saw it. The ball. In the
catcher's mitt.
(MORE)

141 **ZEFF** 141
Hey, you may receive a
questionnaire in five to seven
business days asking how I did.
All "fives" gets me a free hot yoga
workshop!

EXT. P.S. 38 BASEBALL FIELD - DAY

The team sits around the dugout listening to Artur tell a
story. Unaware that Nate is approaching.

142 **ARTUR** 142
...And then, entire village was
attacked by angry chinchillas
making revenge for traditional
Stylgravian holiday game, "Find And
Eat Baby Chinchilla."

143 **CHAD/KIM** 143
<HORRIFIED GASPS>

Nate boils, finally losing it.

144 **NATE** 144
Okay, THAT DOES IT!

145 **ARTUR** 145
Ah! Captain Nate! Please have seat
for story climax.

146 **NATE** 146
No! The championship is days away
and none of you are ready! Artur,
enough with the Stylgravian horror
stories. Kim, this isn't dance
class. Chad, you're not a dolphin.

147 **CHAD** 147
We don't know that.

148 **NATE** 148
Gina, get your nose out of your
notebook. And Hillary, you're
slower than a sloth in a sack race.
PICK UP THE PACE!!!

The team is silent, finally listening to Nate.

149 **NATE (CONT'D)** 149
Y'know what? Never mind. Here's
what's gonna happen: I'll put you
right where I need you.
(MORE)

NATE (CONT ' D)

Don't try to win, don't even MOVE.
I'll win the championship for us!

CUT TO:

EXT. THE FIELD - MOMENTS LATER

Nate pitches the ball for Hillary from the mound and quickly ZIPS back to Artur at home plate, where he holds his arms and SWINGS for him. <CRACK!> Together, they hit a high fly ball to the outfield. Nate flips Artur onto his side and immediately begins rolling him around the bases.

150	ARTUR	150
	Hoo-hoo! I am the luckiest barrel boy in the world!	

Gina interjects from the outfield.

151 **GINA** 151
I thought there was no I in TEAM,
dorkus!

152 **NATE** 152
Proper spelling is for losers!

Chad goes for the ball but Nate stops him.

153 **NATE** (CONT'D) 153
N-n-n-no. Up you go, Chadwick.

He tosses Chad on top of the barrel with him. They jog on the rolling barrel hitting the bases when Chad sees a GIANT POTHOLE. His eyes widen in fear.

154 **CHAD** 154
Nate! <slo-mo> Watch out for the
<dolphin sounds>!

The barrel hits the pot hole. Chad jumps off the side but Nate falls frontwards. He does one revolution on the barrel then is shot high into the sky.

```

155          NATE (O.S.)
          <SCREAMS>
155

```

CUT TO BLACK. OVER BLACK, we hear **<BONES CRACK>** as we...

END ACT TWO.

ACT THREE**INT. WRIGHT HOUSE - NATE'S ROOM - DAY**

Nate is in an IRON LUNG. He struggles to drink a GLASS OF WATER through a CHAIN OF LONG STRAWS. Gives up.

156 **NATE** 156
 Ugh. After I live out the rest of
 my days in this human fish bowl, my
 gravestone will say: "Here lies
 Nate Wright: Not a Champion."

157 **GINA (O.S.)** 157
 And that's what it was all about,
 wasn't it.

Nate looks out, <SCOWLS>. Gina barges into Nate's room.

158 **GINA (CONT'D)** 158
 I thought you just broke your leg.

159 **NATE** 159
 My dad has a small but impressive
 iron lung collection. <beat>
 Wait, what are you doing here?

Gina smiles angelically and pats his iron lung.

160 **GINA** 160
 I brought a little *memento* from our
 time together.

She puts her NOTEBOOK down on top of Nate's iron lung, with the pages showing, then leaves. Nate stares up at the pages. He tries to ignore it, but can't. It's right in his eye line.

161 **NATE** 161
 Why would I want a momento of any
 time spent with...

From the other side of the door in the hall, Gina <LOUDLY CLEARS HER THROAT>.

162 **GINA (O.S.)** 162
 Just READ it, pinhead!

163

NATE

163

<eye roll> Fine. <then reading>
*When Kim dances on the basepaths
she confuses the defense and steals
bases easily...Chad's batting
average when using echolocation is
.965...Artur's barrel reaches
speeds of 15 MPH and disables all
opposing players in his
path...Hillary's super-slow pitches
disrupt batters' timing, making her
virtually unhittable...*

A 2-D LIGHTBULB appears over Nate's head. <BING!!>

164

NATE (TO CAMERA) (CONT'D)

164

Check it out: a lightbulb moment!
Guess who just got a completely
original and unique idea without
any help or inspiration from anyone
else!?

CUT TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR: Gina rolls her eyes.

165

NATE (CONT'D)

165

Yup, I just might be able to make
this team a winner after all!
<beat> Ugh, wait. With me stuck
in this tin coffin, we're still one
player short.

166

GINA (O.S.)

166

<COUGHS> FRANCIS! <COUGHS>

167

NATE

167

<GASPS> I've got it! FRANCIS! Wow,
I am full of genius ideas today.

From the other side of the door, Gina smiles.

EXT. POPE HOUSE - FRONT STEPS - DAY

Reaching a stick through his iron lung, Nate rings Francis' doorbell. Francis answers without a word. He is looking ROUGH. His hair is a mess, he's wearing pajama pants, drinking a JUICE BOX, and eating Beardy Yum Yums.

168

NATE

168

Francis! We need to talk.

169

FRANCIS

169

Francis the failed athlete can't
come to the door right now.

(MORE)

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

I'm fast-food Fred. Would you like fries with that?

170

NATE

170

I don't have time to care about whatever's going on here. I need you to play baseball.

171

FRANCIS

171

Baseball ruins lives so this is my future now. How about we super-size that drink?

172

NATE

172

What if I told you I have a fool-proof, one hundred percent non-mockable way for you to play baseball?

173

FRANCIS

173

Please pick up your order at the window.

174

NATE

174

I'll take that as a yes.

EXT. P.S. 38 BASEBALL FIELD - DAY (CHAMPIONSHIP GAME)

A crowd forms in the bleachers, including Nate's old injured teammates. Kim, Chad, Artur, Hillary, Gina, Hamster Hank and co. stand solemnly near the dugout watching the OPPOSING TEAM warm-up. Godfrey (in umpire attire) strolls up to our crew.

175

MRS. GODFREY

175

Two minutes 'til game time, miscreants! If you can't fill the 9th spot in your lineup, you'll have to forfeit!

176

KIM

176

What are we even doing here? Our own captain doesn't believe in us. We stink.

Hillary nods in agreement.

177

GINA

177

Wait! Just give it a little more time. <sotto> Where are you, Nate...

She anxiously looks around for Nate. Finally, Francis, forlornly comes in carting Nate across the field.

Gina gives a huge **<SIGH OF RELIEF>**. When Nate approaches his team, they're silent. Arms folded.

178 **HILLARY** 178
Can we hurry up and forfeit now?

179 **NATE** 179
We aren't forfeiting, Bobcats.
We're playing!

The team looks confused.

180 **HAMSTER HANK** 180
But we don't have enough players
with you in your...freaky
contraption.

He gestures to the iron lung.

181 **NATE** 181
Really? My freaky contraption?

182 **HAMSTER HANK** 182
It's a lifestyle choice, okay.

Nate rolls his eyes, then jerks his forehead towards Francis.

183 **NATE** 183
This is our ninth player. And, our
new catcher.

184 **FRANCIS** 184
<sheepish wave> Hey, guys...

Kim still has her arms crossed, not ready to forgive Nate...

185 **KIM** 185
I thought you said we were weirdos
who can't play baseball.

186 **NATE** 186
I stand by that first part. You
guys are pretty weird.

187 **TEAM 2** 187
<Insulted grumbling>

188 **NATE** 188
...But I didn't understand at first
what each of you brought to the
team! Your weirdness makes us
BETTER! I'm sorry, guys. A good
captain LISTENS to his team, and I
didn't.

(MORE)

NATE (CONT'D)

I was too busy being a glory hog.
It took losing the use of my body
and being encased in a pre-World
War 2 life support system for me to
see that.

189 **CHAD** 189
Lucky.

190 **NATE** 190
Kim. I want you to dance harder
than you've ever danced before.
Chad, it's time to activate your
inner dolphin.

191 **CHAD** 191
<BARKS "AFFIRMATIVE" IN DOLPHIN>

192 **NATE** 192
Artur, be the best nude barrel boy
you can be. And Gina? I want you to
do what you do best...

Nate pulls out her JOURNAL from inside the iron lung.

193 **GINA** 193
Ew! It's all sweaty!

194 **NATE** 194
Yeah, sorry about that. (to team)
Now, get out there and play the
weirdest and most awesome game of
baseball this town has ever seen!

The team lights up and cheers!

195 **TEAM 2** 195
<CHEERS> / WOOHOOO!

They scatter and take the field.

THE FIELD - MOMENTS LATER

Nate and Francis stand in the dugout.

196 **MRS. GODFREY** 196
Okay you ingrown hairs! <pulling
mask on> LET'S PLAYYYY BALLLLL!

197 **NATE** 197
<holding a list> Alright, Francis!
You're up first.

198 **FRANCIS** 198
First?! Maybe this was a terrible
idea, Nate. I don't know if I can
do this!

199 **NATE** 199
Buddy, buddy! Do you trust me?

200 **FRANCIS** 200
Hmmm, based on our shared history,
much of which involves mental
trauma or physical injury? Let me
think about that -- NO!

201 **NATE** 201
<pulls Francis in close, sotto> You
won't have to even hit the ball! I
have a plan.

Godfrey steps in.

202 **MRS. GODFREY** 202
CHOP CHOP, MISTER POPE!

Francis nods nervously and walks out to home plate with a
bat. The OPPOSING PITCHER winds up. As they're about to
throw, Nate pulls a POCKET MIRROR out of his iron lung and
shines it in the pitcher's eyes. The pitcher **<GASPS>** as the
ball leaves their hand. We track the ball as it hits Francis
right in the gut.

203 **FRANCIS** 203
OOOF!

204 **MRS. GODFREY** 204
HIT-BY-PITCH! Batter, take your
base!

Nate give Francis a thumbs up.

205 **FRANCIS** 205
<sotto, in pain> This is your plan?

206 **NATE** 206
You got on base, didn't you?!

Francis walks to first base, doubled over holding his
stomach. Wink announces from the sidelines again.

207 **WINK SUMMERS** 207
Francis Pope gets hit by the pitch
and walks to first base as we
officially start the Rackleff
County Championship game!

BEGIN SEQUENCE of Nate's team using their "skills." NOTE: As P.S. 38 succeeds, we see the scoreboard popping off.

208 **WINK SUMMERS** (CONT'D) 208
Up to bat is Gina Hemphill-Toms!

--Gina holds her radar gun with one hand and the bat in the other. The OPPOSING PITCHER throws the ball, but Gina steps out of the way and checks the radar gun.

209 **GINA** 209
That pitch was five miles per hour
slower than your last! You're
already losing steam, dorkus!

The pitcher begins to **<SOB>**. A MOM comes on the field comforting her child, giving Gina a pointed look. Gina jogs to first base, pleased with herself.

210 **MRS. GODFREY** 210
Gina, I'm awarding you first base
for your devastating observational
skills.

```
--Chad stands ready to bat. Another PITCHER winds up...
```

211 **CHAD** 211
This is for all the dolphins who
never had a chance.

We watch in slo-mo as the ball leaves the pitcher's hand. Chad narrows his eyes and studies it.

212 **CHAD** (CONT'D) 212
 <LOUD DOLPHIN NOISES>

STILL IN SLO MO: the SOUND WAVES travel from Chad's mouth, they bounce off the ball, and travel back towards him. Chad cups his hand to his ear as the sound waves wash over him. He adjusts his position ever so slightly, swings, and crushes a home run. P.S. 38 fans **<CHEER>** and hold up signs.

--QUICK SHOT OF THE SCOREBOARD: TIME LAPSE TO SEVERAL INNINGS LATER.

--Francis up to bat again. He looks sheepishly to Nate who nods at him. The pitcher winds up as Nate whips a TSHIRT CANON out of his iron lung. <BOOM!> The t-shirt hits the pitcher in the face and the ball hits Francis' right shin.

213 **FRANCIS** 213
GAH!

Francis hops to first base again, holding his shin.

--Artur stands at second base being guarded by the OPPOSING TEAM's SECOND BASEMAN. <CRACK!> Kim hits the ball and Artur drops into the barrel and rolls to third faster than any player can catch him. As he hits home, he plows Godfrey over.

--Hillary pitches so slow the OPPOSING BATTER falls asleep standing up, not even swinging at the ball. It sails straight past into Francis' catcher's mitt.

214 **WINK SUMMERS** 214
STRIKE THREE! THAT'S ANOTHER
STRIKEOUT FOR HILLARY AND HER
FAMOUS CHANGEUP, THE "CREEPING
DOOM"!!

--Francis up to bat again. Nate whips an AIRHORN out of his iron lung <AIRHORN SFX>. The ball hits Francis left shin.

215 **MRS. GODFREY** 215
Oh for Pete's sake! What is this,
target practice?

Francis falls to the ground and inches like a snail to first base.

--Kim cracks a line drive, dancing her way across the bases. She dodges tags with twirls and spins, players fall to the ground missing every time. She ballet leaps onto home plate.

216 **MRS. GODFREY** (CONT'D) 216
SAFE!

217 **WINK SUMMERS** 217
And that's another run for the
Bobcats, thanks to Kim-Can't-Catch-
Her-Cressly!!

EXT. P.S. 38 BASEBALL FIELD - EVENING

The sun has started to set as we ANGLE ON THE SCOREBOARD.

218 **WINK SUMMERS** 218
Well, folks, this
very...VERY...strange game has come
down to this: Bottom of the ninth,
two outs, the score is tied...and
Francis Pope steps up to the plate!

Francis steps up to the plate. He looks to Nate, just off to the side in the dugout. Nate winks, they've got this! But Godfrey steps between them.

219 **MRS. GODFREY** 219
I know what you're up to, Nate
Wright and it's *not* going to work
this time. I'm confiscating your
accoutrements!

She lifts the iron lung over her head and shakes out a CANON, AIRHORN, NUNCHUCKS, FULL LENGTH MIRROR, MARACAS, KAZOO, RAINSTICK and more. She pockets the nunchucks and throws the rest O.S. Francis turns to Nate, panicked.

220 **FRANCIS** 220
What are we going to do now?!

221 **NATE** 221
 There's only one thing left to do.
 You're going to have to hit the
 ball.

222 **FRANCIS** 222
You said I could trust you!

223 **NATE** 223
Francis, you can do this. Just
focus on hitting the ball like I
know you can. I'll take care of the
rest.

224 **FRANCIS** 224
But...They're all gonna laugh at
me!

Nate takes a deep breath.

225 **NATE** 225
 (heroically)
No, they're all gonna laugh at ME.

Something like "HEROES" by David Bowie begins to play as Nate reveals a RED BUTTON labelled "EMERGENCY" on his iron lung. He smashes it. Nate is launched from the iron lung, soars through the air and <SMASHES> right through the scoreboard. He's lodged into it, his butt facing the crowd.

The crowd <GASPS>, all eyes on Nate. Quickly their surprise turns into delight as the crowd erupts in <UPROARIOUS LAUGHTER>. Francis sees everyone laughing. Even though it's at Nate, he still imagines them all turning into <LAUGHING> BASEBALLS that begin to stare at him now.

226 **FRANCIS** 226
 (to himself)
 I can do this.

Godfrey rolls her eyes and yells at the pitcher who is
<GIGGLING> at Nate.

227

MRS. GODFREY

227

GET YOUR HEAD BACK IN THE GAME AND
THROW THE DANG BALL!

The pitcher, scared by Godfrey, winds up. Francis concentrates. The pitcher throws. We see the BALL come towards Francis, <LAUGHING>. Francis narrows his eyes at it and swings just in time--<CRACK!> We track the ball as it slams right into Nate's butt and pushes him through the board. He lands on the other side with an <OOF>. The crowd begins to crack up laughing again. A smile spreads across Francis' face as he runs the bases. He crosses home plate in a glorious fashion.

228

WINK SUMMERS

228

That's it, folks! P.S. 38 wins!
Unbelievable! An incredible moment
for Francis Pope, and a horribly
embarrassing one for Team Captain
Nate Wright.

The stands <ERUPT IN CHEERS>. The team meets Francis at home plate, tossing him in the air again and again. Francis grins. Godfrey, Nichols and Coach John hug, realize that's weird for them, and quickly go in different directions. Nate, wobbly, stands up from the other side of the fence. He and Francis make eye contact and give each other a thumbs up. Francis is carried O.S. by fans as Nate collapses with a <CRUNCH SFX>.

229

NATE

229

Ok, I think I need real medical
attention!

INT. P.S. 38 - HALLWAY - TROPHY CASE - LATER

Nichols gleefully places P.S. 38's first TROPHY inside. It has everyone's name engraved on it. Nate (now in a LEG CAST with CRUTCHES) and his friends all look at it proudly.

230

PRINCIPAL NICHOLS

230

Nate my boy, you did it, even if
you couldn't have all the glory for
yourself. P.S. 38 finally has
something to be proud of now.

231

NATE

231

Just glad to be part of the team,
big fella. It's not about me, it's
about <leans in, reading the names
on the trophy> Hey!

(MORE)

NATE (CONT'D)

They spelled my name wrong! There's no "G" in Nate! We gotta get that fixed!

232

FRANCIS

232

Thought it was enough to be part of the team.

233

DEE DEE

233

<Looking closer> They also put two "O's" in Pope. And they forgot the "E".

234

FRANCIS

234

WHAT?!

235

NATE

235

Francis Poop. Has a nice ring to it.

236

FRANCIS

236

I guess it doesn't really matter. The important thing is, I conquered my ball-a-phobia!

Chad appears.

237

CHAD

237

Francis! Will you sign my baseball?

Chad flips the ball to Francis, who freaks out and ducks out of the way.

238

FRANCIS

238

GAAH!

The ball shatters the trophy case and then bounces away. The camera follows the ball as it rolls down the stairs, out the door, and onto the playground. It comes to rest by the SOFT CEMENT, which begins to bubble. <BUBBLING SFX> followed by Charlie's voice.

239

CHARLIE BENEDICT

239

Hey, is the game over? Did we win? Can anyone hear me? Don't forget, I'm still the captain! Hello? HELLOOOO???

Charles voice trails off as we FADE OUT.

END OF SHOW.