

The WHIZ of a baseball breaks the air to a baseball mitt slapping it closed.

A television blares a Seattle Mariners baseball pre-game broadcast in a living room.

TV ANNOUNCER
Nothing but blue skies above here
at Safeco Field.

EXT. LAWN - DAY

A FATHER (52) and SON (17) play catch in the yard. The lawn, manicured and green like a baseball field, shines in the sun.

The father adjusts a Seattle Mariners cap then throws a baseball, hard, that whizzes through the air.

The son's mitt slaps closed. He shakes his hand in pain.

SON
That hurts.

FATHER
I still got it.

SON
No you don't.

FATHER
You couldn't hit it.

SON
When I was twelve.

FATHER
You couldn't hit it now.

SON
I don't really care.

The father waves the glove to encourage the son to throw the ball back.

SON (CONT'D)
This isn't going to change
anything.

FATHER
Please, I feel good today. Just a
little longer.

The son considers it.

FATHER (CONT'D)
We may not have another chance.

SON
You're going to lay that one on me?

FATHER
Didn't you like baseball?

SON
I couldn't even make all-stars and
you were my coach.

FATHER
Not everything comes easy. It takes
work.

The son throws the ball back.

SON
Don't you think I know that.

The father throws another fastball.

The ball slaps the son's mitt. The son throws the glove down
along with the ball. He winces in pain as he shakes out his
hand.

SON (CONT'D)
I'm done with this shit.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The son races into the house then to his room with a slam of
the door behind him.

The father follows. He knocks on the bedroom door.

FATHER
I'm sorry. Can we just sit and talk
at least?

The father lightly touches the door then steps away.

EXT. PORCH - DAY

The father relaxes on the steps. He works the baseball in
different pitch grips then snaps it into a mitt.

SON
What grip was that?

FATHER
Fastball. Two seam.

He shows the grip to his son but then hides the recent bruise and needle mark on his hand with a sleeve.

SON
I never perfected that pitch or a curve.

The father grips the ball for a curve.

FATHER
You just needed to get the edge of the seam and snap your wrist down.

The father demonstrates the action but winces in pain.

SON
Are you ok?

FATHER
I'm fine.

The father massages his arm.

Silence fills the space between them.

The son reviews his father like he wants to say something but holds back.

TV ANNOUNCER
King Felix is off to a great start.

SON
Who are the M's playing?

FATHER
The Rays. I still have tickets.
Want to go?

SON
Catch was enough baseball for me.

FATHER
One time? We can make a day of it.

SON
I've always wondered. Why baseball?

FATHER
You don't see it?

SON

See what?

FATHER

There's just an art about it.

SON

It's just a game.

FATHER

Don't you love any sports?

SON

Not my thing.

FATHER

Soccer? Football?

SON

Playstation. Call of Duty.

FATHER

Aren't those called Esports now?

SON

Only if you can make money from it.

FATHER

You could be good at it.

SON

Just being good doesn't cut it.

FATHER

You could at least try.

SON

Why bother.

FATHER

You know, you don't have to be great at everything.

SON

Ya right.

FATHER

I'm not great at anything and look at me.

SON

Exactly.

FATHER

You know. The difference between a hall of fame player and an everyday one isn't far off.

SON

Only millions of dollars.

FATHER

I'm serious.

SON

I don't need to hear this.

FATHER

One more hit every twenty at bats.

SON

What are you talking about?

The father walks into the yard.

EXT. LAWN - CONTINUOUS

The father grabs a bat from the ground and steps into an imaginary batter's box. He takes a couple practice swings.

FATHER

The average ballplayer gets five to six hits every twenty at bats.

SON

Why would I care?

FATHER

It just takes one more.

He swings like he makes contact with the ball for a homerun. The crack of a bat echoes in the yard.

FATHER (CONT'D)

It's the difference between hitting over three hundred or below two fifty. One can put you into the hall of fame. The other back in the minors.

SON

Isn't there more to it?

FATHER

There is. WAR. I think that's what they call it.

SON
WAR?

FATHER
Wins above replacement.

SON
What's that mean anyway?

FATHER
It measures the value of a player
against a replacement.

SON
That sounds like they're just
making shit up.

FATHER
No. It's a real thing. It's like
what impact YOU have on a team.

SON
YOU watch it on TV.

The father reflects on his words.

FATHER
What do you think my replacement
value would be?

SON
You're not a ballplayer.

FATHER
Not what I was asking.

SON
I know.

The son rushes back inside.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

The father watches the Mariner's baseball game on the television.

His cell phone pings a reminder about a doctor's appointment.

TV ANNOUNCER
This could be a NO-NO in the
making. The King keeps mowing them
down as the King's Court goes
crazy.

A quick glance at the phone and with a disappointed shake of his head the father turns off the television. He steps to the son's bedroom door and knocks.

FATHER
Hey, let's take a drive.

SON (O.S.)
Only if I can get a slushie.

EXT. CAR - DAY (TRAVELING)

The hum of the road fills the space.

The son notices as they pass the convenience store on the corner.

SON
The 7-11 was over there.

FATHER
I know.

SON
Kidnapping me?

FATHER
I just want to spend time with you.

SON
I'm at YOUR house aren't I.

FATHER
That's not what I mean.

SON
Tell me what you want.

FATHER
I just want to talk to you. Tell me about school. Something. Anything.

SON
School's fine. It doesn't start till September anyway.

FATHER
You're not excited about Senior year?

SON
I'll be excited in June.

FATHER

I loved my senior year.

SON

Of course, you'd say that.

FATHER

You should enjoy the moment.

SON

We all can't be class President or
Captain of the baseball team.

FATHER

I'm not asking you to be.

SON

You won't be able relive your glory
days through me.

FATHER

You should be living your own.

The son listens but focuses on the hum of the highway.

FATHER (CONT'D)

I just want you to put your effort
into something. It's ok to fail.
It's why I like baseball. Baseball
players fail all the time.

SON

So you want me to be a failure now?

FATHER

I just want you to learn to get
back up if something knocks you
down.

The son scoffs.

FATHER (CONT'D)

I get that we can't be perfect. I'm
not going to sit here and say I am.
But, every so often, something
magical happens.

SON

I'd like to see that happen.

The son turns away to stare out the window.

Safeco Field comes into view.

SON (CONT'D)
I told you. I didn't want to go to
a game.

FATHER
It's almost over anyway. What's a
couple of innings?

EXT. SAFECO FIELD - DAY

The brick and steel building with a wide-open retractable roof rumbles from the excitement of the crowd. The crescendo of cheers can be heard from the street.

MONTAGE:

The father shows the tickets at the entry as other excited fans scurry to get in.

They walk the main entry steps.

The son admires the chandelier adorned with white baseball bats.

The son drinks from a huge lemonade.

They walk the main level as the Sun basks the field in brightness.

The palpable murmur of excited fan.

END MONTAGE:

SON
Where are we sitting?

FATHER
One-sixteen. First row.

EXT. SAFECO FIELD - SECTION 116 - DAY

They find a spot in the front row.

Other fans squeeze in with them to get closer to the field to watch.

The sea of yellow shirts highlights Section 148 - 149 and chant "K" with every two strike count.

SON
What's all the excitement about?

FATHER

Look at the scoreboard.

SON

So, it's one nothing.

FATHER

Look again.

SON

We're in the top of the seventh.

The son recognizes the manual scoreboard in left field.

SON (CONT'D)

Wait... They haven't got a hit yet.

FATHER

Exactly.

The crack of the bat silences the crowd but then erupts with the second out of the seventh inning.

SON

Ever seen a no hitter?

FATHER

Never. But, this is my dream come true.

SON

How so?

FATHER

To be at the game with you.

SON

Get over yourself. You kidnapped me. And, It's not going to happen. He's still got two innings left.

FATHER

This day could be perfect.

SON

You're dreaming. Nothing's perfect.

The son rushes from his seat, through the line of fans, then up the stairs.

The father turns dejected in his seat.

EXT. SAFECO FIELD - MAIN LEVEL WALKWAY - DAY

The son watches a TV next to other fans.

FAN

This could be the twenty-third perfect game ever.

SON

Ever?

FAN

Yeah, over a hundred years of baseball and only twenty-two games have ever been perfect. Why are you watching it from here?

SON

Why are you?

FAN

I wish my son was here to see this.

A moment of realization overtakes the son as he races back to his seat as the crowd erupts for the second out of the ninth inning.

EXT. SAFECO FIELD - SECTION 116 - DAY

The son pushes back through the aisle to his father.

Standing room only as fans record the moment with their phones.

The father, seated and emotional, doesn't notice the son pushing through the aisle. He removes his hat. A wig falls off with it as the drop of his sleeve reveals needle marks from chemo. The father's scalp, with only a few patches of hair left, glows like a halo in the Sun.

The son reaches his father as the last out is recorded.

Players rush the field and the crowd screams with excitement.

The father and son embrace in both quiet celebration and reconciliation.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

SUPER: 13 years later.

The son, now (30), admires the photo on a mantel of him and his father at the Perfect game on August 15th, 2012.

FATHER (V.O.)
One more hit.

Next to the photo of his father is another one of a young boy.

SON
I get it.

GRANDSON
Daddy!!

The grandson (7), the boy in the photo adorned in Seattle Mariner fandom, rushes to hug him. With a whirl, he's lifted into the air.

The grandson reaches for the photo.

GRANDSON (CONT'D)
Is that grampa?

SON
That was him. He loved baseball.
Are you ready for your first game?

GRANDSON
YEAH!

The son sets the grandson to his feet then grabs a mitt and ball from a table.

SON
Let me teach you how to play catch.

FADE OUT.