

INT. CALIFORNIA ANGELS SOUND ROOM.

METAL MICKEY is standing by a recording machine with his back is to the camera. He depresses a switch and sits down by the desk with a brown bag. He takes out a bottle of whisky from the bag. The camera pans slowly around the room as he opens the bottle.

METAL MICKEY

He takes a swig from the bottle.

My old mate Ollie used to say it's another fine mess. To keep screwing up like this? Self-destruct button of mine as usual working overtime.

Shakes his head and takes another swig.

I was there. Had everything in the palm of my hands but quick as you like I flush my dreams away, s'if it meant nothing. The sheer pain all that time thinking I should've been up there, what could've been. But it's no use looking back. I blew it and that was it. Never thought I'd get another chance - not in a million years. It was all over. Then all of a sudden, right out the blue, I hit the absolute jackpot!

Takes another swig.

So, after all that you'd think I'd take a bit of care, clued up from past errors, you know? Keep my big trap shut eh. But do I learn?

Camera is now facing Metal Mickey who is looking down. He looks up, unshaven, dark circles under his eyes. Taking another swig and looking straight at the camera.

METAL MICKEY

Nah. Not a chance. It's as if I couldn't wait to throw it all away.

CUT TO:

EXT. BERKELEY CALIFORNIA – MAY 1970.

The screen shows a Jimi Hendrix video recorded in Berkeley California, May 1970. Hendrix is in full flow playing the Purple Haze guitar solo.

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODSTOCK MUSIC FESTIVAL – AUGUST 1969.

The screen shows Hendrix at Woodstock with his rendition of the Star Spangled Banner.

CUT TO:

INT. THE DICK CAVETT SHOW - 1969.

JIMI HENDRIX

All I did was play it. I'm American so I played it. I used to have to sing it in school, they made me sing it in school so it was like a flashback, ya know.

DICK CAVETT

This man was in the 101st airborne, so when you write your nasty letters in-

JIMI HENDRIX

Nasty letters! What! What ya trying on?

DICK CAVETT

When you mention the national anthem and talk about playing it in any unorthodox manner you immediately get a guaranteed percentage of hate mail.

JIMI HENDRIX

That's not unorthodox. That's not unorthodox. I thought it was beautiful.

METAL MICKEY

(V.O.)

Send your fucking hate mail?

A large, glass ashtray flies through the air with cigarette butts and ash falling out of it.

METAL MICKEY

(V.O.)

BOLLOCKS!

The ashtray smashes into the television completely obliterating the screen.

CUT TO:

INT. TIM'S HOUSE.

TIM jumps up from the sofa where he is sitting with ALSY, Metal Mickey and STEVE.

BOYS

Shit! Aaah man! Jesus!

Steve and Alsy are cowering on the sofa. There are bottles of booze and ashtrays full up strewn across the table. There is musical equipment in the background.

TIM

My fucking TV! You crazy fucker! What ya fucking done?

METAL MICKEY

Hate mail! Fucking hate mail? The fuck does he know about music, fucking idiot?

TIM

Idiot! How the fuck can you call anyone an idiot you crazy, brainless moron? You're the fucking idiot. Cracked up you.

Looking at his TV.

What the fuck!

METAL MICKEY

Ah man, I didn't mean to hit the TV.

TIM

WHAT! Oh it's not as if there ain't a great, big motherfucking wall there. How the fuck ya miss that? Take the fucking piss now.

METAL MICKEY

Aaaahh, look I'm sorry man. That guy freaked me right out.

TIM

Did he now? You know you better hurry up and get your canister sorted out cos there's something very seriously wrong with you. I know the guy's a prick. Think we don't know that?

Metal Mickey half acknowledges.

So what's the point of ironing out my TV? Look at the fucking thing. It's wasted. Wasted man.

Beat.

Bollocks! I mean thanks a fucking bunch. This is what I get eh. Please, come in, make yourself feel at home. Here sit down have a drink. Have what ya like. Yeah. Nice. Very fucking nice. Oh just in case you ain't too happy with your life at the minute, there's loads of ashtrays to sling around the gaff. Wait a minute, my old man's got a great, big fucking howitzer. I'll bring that round just in case you get the raving hump.

METAL MICKEY

Oh bollocks, fucking bollocks. Look I'm sorry. I'll get you another TV. Tim I'm really sorry mate.

TIM

Fuck it man. I don't want another TV. I couldn't give a shit about the TV. Fuck the TV. Fuck the sorrys. Fuck you. Fuck everyone.

Beat.

Ya like me to do that round your gaff, yeah? Ya like that? Well fuck off back there then. I've had it to here with you. Enough of it!

ALSY

He didn't mean it man. Come on Timmo.

TIM

Come on! You off your head? Fuck all this bullshit.

Metal Mickey gets up and goes to the door. The boys look at him as he leaves.

ALSY

Jesus. He really is losing it. It's sad.

TIM

What's sad is the state of this fucking gaff.

The three guys look around the flat. It is like a bombsite.

INTRO CREDITS. MUSIC: 'SOMETHING YOU'VE GOT,' by JIMI HENDRIX

EXT. A SUBURBAN BACK GARDEN – A SUNNY DAY.

Metal Mickey, aged 8, hits a tennis ball back and forth with a cricket stump against a wall.

METAL MICKEY

(V.O.)

Sir Donald Bradman used to hit a ball, back and forth against a wall when he was a kid. He said it helped his hand-to-eye co-ordination. No one in the history of test cricket achieved a lifetime average higher than 60! Except the Don that is. Batting average 99.94. His achievement is one of the most incredible feats in sporting history.

The camera focuses in closer and closer on the tennis ball as it bounces back and forth from the wall. As the camera moves closer, the sound of the ball gets louder and louder.

CUT TO:

INT. A GYM.

Metal Mickey, now aged 11, is punching a speed-ball in a gym.

METAL MICKEY

(V.O.)

Ali. What a guy. Ali himself said the feat of Sugar Ray Robinson regaining the undisputed World Middleweight title 5 times is a record no one can touch.

The camera focuses in on Metal Mickey who continues punching the speedball.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE SAME SUBURBAN BACK GARDEN - SOME YEARS LATER.

Metal Mickey, aged 15, hits a golf ball back and forth with a cricket stump against the same brick wall. He hit the ball harder, forcing him away from the wall. He suddenly hits the golf ball harder so that it returns with a much higher trajectory. As it is about to pass over him, he pivots 180 degrees and smashes the ball high in the air, in a baseball style.

EXT. PARKWAY MANOR BOYS PLAYING FIELD.

THREE YEARS LATER. House cricket finals. Heathgate vs. Southgate. (Written bottom left corner of the screen).

Camera's POV: Watching the match from a bench are housemasters MR. FABIEN and MR. BUTCHER. It is almost like a flashback from the 1920/30s, the housemasters are very posh, a 'stiff upper lip stuff' manner. A Heathgate batsman hits four runs.

MR. FABIEN

I say that's excellent. Fine stroke, what!

Mr. Fabien applauds the play. Mr. Butcher chuckles with a distinct, deep, coarse voice. Camera shows another Heathgate boundary. They erupt with laughter, applauding again.

MR. BUTCHER

Turning into a mere precession, what.

Scoreboard shows: HEATHGATE'S INNINGS CLOSES AT 165 RUNS.

The teams make come off the pitch. The camera faces the bench with the housemasters.

MR. FABIEN

Clapping enthusiastically.

I say. Jolly good show Heathgate! Jolly good indeed, what. Many were convinced Southgate were going to stroll through this particular contest. Quite the reverse, what. I'm extremely confident they'll be tucking into significant portions of humble pie, what.

Snorts as he finishes speaking.

MR. BUTCHER

Rather. 165 should take some catching. Now we shall see how that Blackmore lad performs under the cosh. Far as I'm concerned much too much has been made of him. Insolent boy, lacking in true qualities.

MR. FABIEN

Most certainly. We'll see if Southgate has any spunk, what.

Mr. Fabien and Mr. Butcher continue chortling as the camera pans to Alsy, Tim, Steve and Metal Mickey who are sitting on the grass, within earshot.

ALSY

Get a load of them. Are they in some sort of time-warp?

STEVE

Don't know about warps, but 'whats' are coming out of their ears.

METAL MICKEY

Putting his pads on.

Yeah and Fabien sounds like he's got a great, big, fucking 'what' stuck right up his gearbox.

TIM

Too right and I bet he fucking loves it.

STEVE

I say what. Would you like to see my 'what' what?

ALSY

Oh I say, that would be rather splendid!

TIM

My word! That's a huge 'what' you have there; most certainly within grabbing distance! Jolly fine specimen, what.

The boys laugh. The camera focuses on Metal Mickey who continues to chat with his friends.

METAL MICKEY

(V.O.)

I think people thought I was a touch big-headed. I dunno about that. I think it's more appropriate to say people were just a bit jealous. Look I was lucky, okay. I discovered what I was good at. Everyone's good at something - the secret's discovering it. I tried to do things well, show a bit of style but ultimately all I ever wanted was to have fun.

Camera shows Southgate going in to bat. Metal Mickey is batting at number 1 in the order. Camera shows him hitting a 3. Camera shows his partner getting dismissed.

Scoreboard shows: SOUTHGATE 3/1.

Camera shows two more batsmen being dismissed.

Scoreboard shows: SOUTHGATE 11/3.

Camera shows Alsy going in to bat. The first delivery hits his pad almost a foot outside off-stump. The bowler and wicket-keeper jump up appealing loudly to the umpire.

METAL MICKEY

Give it a fuckin' rest. You want blood or something?

The umpire puts his finger up to signal 'out'.

METAL MICKEY

WHAT!

ALSY

Aaah fuck off will you! I don't believe that. Jesus Christ!

Scoreboard changes from: SOUTHGATE 11/3 to SOUTHGATE 11/4.

ALSY

How the hell can you give that out? You're a fucking idiot you.

Walking off the pitch disgruntled he passes the umpire.

That ball was missing a mile. Fucking blind you are!

UMPIRE

That was plumb out-

METAL MICKEY

Plumb! You some sort of egg or what? My granddad can make better decisions than that and he's fucking dead. You know, you're not only blind as a bat but you've got the brains of a fucking rocking horse, you sappy bastard. Plumb!

Camera shows next batsman walking into the batting crease and taking guard. The batsman swings wildly and the middle stump goes flying. Camera shows Metal Mickey, mouth open, slinging his bat to the ground in total disgust as the batsman walks off.

Scoreboard shows: SOUTHGATE 11/5.

Metal Mickey faces the first ball of the new over and he drives it for 4 runs. The next ball is pulled for 4. The 3rd drops hopelessly short and is smashed for 6. Metal Mickey tries to whack the 4th ball but is too early on it and under edges for a single.

Scoreboard shows: SOUTHGATE 26/5 MICHAEL BLACKMORE 22 NOT OUT.

Metal Mickey begins to hit the ball all over the field. He looks confident. The Southgate team and supporters look in anticipation.

METAL MICKEY

(V.O.)

It's stupid trying to blast your way out of trouble. Sometimes ya just simply gotta get your nut down and grind it out-

Camera shows Metal Mickey stroking the ball away a few times. He raises his bat.

METAL MICKEY

(V.O.)

-and then before you know it, the momentum changes..... and once that happens slowly but surely you begin to take control. I reached my 50-

Metal Mickey raises his bat again.

METAL MICKEY

(V.O.)

-then I reached my 100. Confidence? Sure sportsmen always say they're confident. What they gonna say? I'm fucking shitting myself! What ya gotta do is leap the 'confidence barrier' and the key to that is having total belief in your ability. You gotta feel and believe that whatever they throw at you, you cannot possibly get beat. Sometimes I'm out there, I slip into a zone where everything seems to be in slow motion and I kinda float. There's no pressure. It's a piece of cake. It's beautiful. I love floating.

Metal Mickey hits the winning runs with a dashing cover drive. He drops his bat and throws both hands in the air, beaming.

METAL MICKEY

YEAH! That's me!

The rest of the Southgate team charge onto the pitch. They hoist Metal Mickey onto their shoulders and carry him off the pitch.

Scoreboard shows: SOUTHGATE 166 RUNS MICHAEL BLACKMORE 125 RUNS.

Metal Mickey is lowered to the ground as his housemaster, MR. MOXON, approaches.

MR. MOXON

That was something special, Michael. Very well done indeed.

The Southgate team lets out a huge cheer. Metal Mickey grins.

MR. MOXON

And it seems you've other admirers too. See these two men coming over? They're from Middlesex County Cricket Club.

METAL MICKEY

Middlesex! YES!

Wild cheers erupt from the Southgate team. Metal Mickey is patted on the back. The two men from Middlesex County Cricket Club, JIM ARNOLD and STEVE RADLEIGH, approach Metal Mickey. The rest of the Southgate team dissipate back to the dressing room leaving Metal Mickey, Jim Arnold and Steve Radleigh alone.

JIM ARNOLD

Hi Michael. I'm Jim Arnold, manager of Middlesex Cricket Club and this is our coach Steve Radleigh.

METAL MICKEY

Yeah I know. It's a pleasure to meet you both.

JIM ARNOLD

That was unbelievable! Think you can repeat that sort of stuff in County Cricket because if so, we'd prefer it if you were on our side.

METAL MICKEY

Oh wow, you're kidding! County cricket? I'm there. YES! Repeat it? Course I can! Gents, let me tell you now - the other counties are bang in trouble.

INT. A LONDON BUS – CONTINUOUS.

Metal Mickey is sitting on a London bus, on his way to Lords cricket ground, St. John's Wood. He is staring out of the window, deep in thought.

METAL MICKEY

(V.O.)

I understood why my teachers disliked my attitude. They knew I could always fall back onto sport but truthfully, my disinterest in class was born of frustration, being unable to learn what I felt was important. That's why my reports were bad. I quickly lost interest in school when the divinity teacher hit me with the line, "how it came to pass." What the hell is that supposed to mean?

EXT. LORDS CRICKET GROUND.

Metal Mickey gets off the bus and walks the short distance to Lords cricket ground.

METAL MICKEY

(V.O.)

What a buzz. Walking through those gates. The home of cricket. I was in a trance. Couldn't believe it. I kept thinking am I going to wake up?

INT. JIM ARNOLD'S OFFICE

Jim Arnold's office door is open. It is small, crammed full of cricket equipment and trophies. He is sat at his desk which is covered in paper. He gets up as Metal Mickey arrives. Camera shows Metal Mickey talking with Jim Arnold, quite animatedly at times.

METAL MICKEY

(V.O.)

We worked a deal. I actually offered to play for free for the remainder of the season but on the condition I played in the first team immediately. What was it to them? The season was almost over and Middlesex were out of the honours. Think about it though; I was unknown. How could I ask for a juicy contract and if I had signed on their terms I'd be locked into a 3 to 4 year deal that could cost me bundles. I figured sacrificing a few quid now might be a good move! But the main reason was simply to play straight away. This way I had the chance to make the sparks fly. The action. That's all I really wanted.

EXT. LORDS PRACTICE NETS.

Metal Mickey and Jim Arnold make their way to the nets where the Middlesex squad are practising. Jim Arnold introduces Metal Mickey to the team. Metal Mickey is handed a bat and a pair of cricket pads which he puts on. Jim Arnold approaches Steve Radleigh who is keenly eyeing Metal Mickey as he faces some balls in the nets.

JIM ARNOLD

What d'ya think?

STEVE RADLEIGH

What I think eh. Well Jim, I dunno what the hell we've stumbled upon cos I ain't never seen a kid like this. Never. So much time, so sure of himself. He's almost frightening!

JIM ARNOLD

Steve, I'm so glad you said that. 35 years I've been in this game, nearly 40. Suddenly this one appears out of nowhere. He's something alright; and you wanna see how he talks. The way he talks.

Camera focuses on Metal Mickey practising in the nets.

JIM ARNOLD

'No messing about. First team action, that's what I want, straight in. All out full frontal assault. No bollocks.' The guy's hilarious.

They laugh.

It was really weird. I didn't know whether to laugh or cry..... Whatever, he plays against Australia on Thursday.

STEVE RADLEIGH

You what!..... Come on..... You're not serious are you?

JIM ARNOLD

Didn't you just say he's the best thing you've seen?

STEVE RADLEIGH

Yeah, don't mean you sling him in at the deep-end. Let him feel his way in. What's the point of throwing him in against the best bowlers in the world. Come on. What's the matter with you? He's only a kid for-

JIM ARNOLD

-Steve, Steve, look stop. I agree with you. You're 100% right. Don't you think I tried to sway him, make him see it our way. Gimme a break! I swear, honestly and I know it sounds crazy but I really felt if I refused, he'd have walked. We could've lost him and I weren't gonna take that chance. What we think right now doesn't really matter. He demanded to play. That's it. He's in.

EXT. LORDS CRICKET GROUND – THE SECOND DAYS PLAY.

A near sell-out crowd at Lords. Fine day. Australia have completed their first innings.

Scoreboard shows: AUSTRALIA 1ST INNINGS 341 ALL OUT.

The Middlesex batsmen take the field. Three Middlesex batsmen lose their wickets.

Scoreboard shows: MIDDLESEX 19/3.

MUSIC: 'EZY RIDER' by JIMI HENDRIX.

Metal Mickey walks out to the crease to loud applause. He takes guard, surveys the field and clips the first delivery around the corner for a single. A large cheer goes up. The Middlesex SKIPPER (captain) goes up to Metal Mickey.

SKIPPER

Shot Mike. Just enjoy it. You've got all the time in the world mate.

Metal Mickey nods. They go back to the crease. They run between the wickets. The skipper hits a boundary. The umpire extends his arm, indicated four runs. The crowd applauds the play. Metal Mickey receives a short delivery, which he hooks for 4 runs. The Australian bowler glares at Metal Mickey who stands his ground.

METAL MICKEY

Got a problem mate?

The next delivery is a bouncer. Metal Mickey hooks the ball 10 rows back into the crowd. The umpire raises both arms raised signalling 6 runs. The crowd goes wild. The captain smiles broadly at Metal Mickey, tapping his bat in awe at the shot. The bowler has his hands on his hips, Metal Mickey has his bat raised up, his weight on his back leg, almost as if nothing had happened. Metal Mickey and the captain meet in the middle of the pitch.

SKIPPER

Fuck me..... What a shot. Fucking unbelievable!

CUT TO:

INT. LORDS PAVILLION.

JIM ARNOLD

Are you watching this guy? I mean is this guy for real?

MUSIC STOPS.

CUT TO:

EXT. LORDS CRICKET GROUND.

UMPIRE

TEA.

Scoreboard shows: MIDDLESEX 90/3. MICHAEL BLACKMORE 46 NOT OUT.

The teams go off the field to rapturous applause. The Lords clock shows: 4 pm.

MUSIC: 'EZY RIDER' guitar track by JIMI HENDRIX (from 'Band of Gypsies' video).

The camera shows Metal Mickey hitting the ball to all parts of the ground.

A new Australian BOWLER comes out onto the pitch to cheers from the Australian fans. His delivery lands about a foot outside leg stump. At first Metal Mickey looks to sweep but in the last second pulls his bat away. The ball hits his pad and is caught by the short leg fielder. The Australian fielders throw their hands in the air appealing.

MUSIC STOPS.

BOWLER

Screaming, arms raised, running towards the catcher.
HOWZAAAAAAATTT!

METAL MICKEY

For Christ sake, don't do it, please. Don't!

The umpire puts his finger up to signal 'out'.

METAL MICKEY

Aahh NO. NO. NOOOOOO!
Metal Mickey walks up the pitch towards the umpire. The Middlesex captain stops him.

METAL MICKEY

How can you do that? I never hit the ball.

SKIPPER

Mike, you can't argue with the umpire. You've got to go.

The crowd groan as the giant scoreboard shows Metal Mickey was hard done by.

METAL MICKEY

See what those bastards done? They knew I never touched the ball.

SKIPPER

Mike, you were robbed but you've got to get off the pitch. Now.

Metal Mickey, close to tears, heads for the pavilion. He looks back round to the umpire.

METAL MICKEY

Useless tosser!

Some Australian fielders laugh as Metal Mickey walks off. He glares at them but they continue. In a fit of rage he smashes the wicket with his bat and the stumps go flying.

CUT TO:

INT. THE MIDDLESEX PLAYERS BALCONY.

JIM ARNOLD

Oh my God! Oh no!

CUT TO:

EXT. LORDS CRICKET GROUND.

Scoreboard shows: MIDDLESEX162/4. MICHAEL BLACKMORE OUT FOR 94.
Metal Mickey walks off the pitch to muted applause, up the steps past the members.

INT. THE MIDDLESEX PLAYERS DRESSING ROOM.

Metal Mickey enters into the Lords Pavilion and walks past a couple of players.

PLAYERS

Great knock Mike. Unlucky mate.

Metal Mickey walks dejectedly to his locker, slings his bat on the bench, along with his batting gloves. He sits down and puts his head in his hands. Jim Arnold walks over.

JIM ARNOLD

You okay?..... Look Mike, its all well and good having talent and that was special out there, very special. But however good you are it means nothing if you behave like that. Get that into your head now.

Half beat

This is your first match for Christ sake, your first outing and you're creating mayhem? What's the matter with you?

METAL MICKEY

What you having a go at me for?

JIM ARNOLD

Oh you don't think I should? Ranting and raving, smashing the stumps, swearing at the umpire. This is Lords! You CANNOT do that. Umpires make mistakes. It happens, happens to everyone, everywhere.

METAL MICKEY

Slinging his batting gloves in his kit-bag.

Mistake! Listen let me tell ya something. If it was simply an error by the moronic twat that you call an umpire, ya know what I'd have done? Ya wanna know?

JIM ARNOLD

What?

METAL MICKEY

I'd've walked off the pitch, no fuss, no bother, end of story. Promise.

JIM ARNOLD

Why didn't you do that then?

METAL MICKEY

Chucking his shirt in his kit-bag.

Why? What you blind? Didn't you see the Watford fucking Gap between my bat and the ball? No umpire in the world should ever give that out. It was the synchronised appealing, those bastards jumping up in the air screaming as if they've got electrodes strapped to their bollocks and I'm robbed of a hundred on my debut. I could've got 200. Why aren't you pissed off about that?

JIM ARNOLD

Because right now I've got a devil's own job thinking how to deal with the press and the men upstairs. We're gonna be swamped. You're sure to be summoned-

METAL MICKEY

Summoned!

JIM ARNOLD

Yes. Summoned, a disciplinary hearing. What do you think? This is standard procedure when anarchy occurs out on the pitch.

METAL MICKEY

So I get read the riot act cos I lose my rag but the cheating which caused me to lose my rag in the first place is totally and utterly ignored. I'm the victim! I'm the one who's taken it up the box and you want me to apologise!

Pulling a face, walking to the door with his kit-bag.

Oh, I'm ever so sorry my arsehole wasn't tight enough for you. You see I've been taking it a bit lately. Next time I'll make sure I bend over the max. Don't believe this and you want me to answer, to them. Bollocks!

JIM ARNOLD

Where the hell are you going? You can't go now.

Metal Mickey walks out.

EXT. OUTSIDE LORDS CRICKET GROUND.

Metal Mickey walks to the bus stop. A MAN approaches and offers his hand.

MAN

May I say that was a great innings.

METAL MICKEY

Thanks. Thanks a lot.

MAN

That was a joke the way they cheated you out of your century mate.

METAL MICKEY

Tell me about it. It's not right and it's killing the damn game.

MAN

Yeah, you're not wrong but it's so difficult to change it.

METAL MICKEY

He stops walking and looks at the man with a frown.

That's exactly what everyone keeps saying 'oh it's too difficult. It's complete bollocks because it isn't. That's what's so annoying.

He carries on walking.

For a start there's absolutely no use for a square leg umpire. He's a waste of space! One umpire on the pitch is adequate. Have him in radio contact with a guy who has all the video evidence and you stop all the shit.

Metal Mickey's voice fades out as the camera pans away, moving upwards, showing the traffic go by as the two walk together. They stop walking as they reach the bus-stop.

METAL MICKEY

Those in control of cricket make geriatrics look clever. There's absolutely no accountability. Why do you think we've become also-rans in international cricket? These fools are only interested in satisfying their egos. They're a joke!

MAN

You're spot on mate. I've been saying it for years.

METAL MICKEY

And they want me to answer to those wankers. Can you believe that? Like being put on the gallows, 'oh hello Mr. Executioner, I do hope it's not too much trouble but you can chop my head off now.' Taking the fucking piss. Anyway, whatever, here's my ride. Gotta go.

Camera shows the bus coming down the road.

MAN

Could I just get your autograph please?

Metal Mickey is pleasantly surprised, puts his bag down and takes the man's pen.

MAN

Thanks a lot. That's great.

INT. TIM'S HOUSE - LATER THAT EVENING.

Alsy, Tim, Steve and Metal Mickey are seated together.

ALSY

Shit man, were you totally flying but what the hell d'ya smash the stumps for? You shouldn't have done that man. Whatever they said. No way.

METAL MICKEY

Look, I know you're not wrong. I see it now but you can't imagine what it's like out there. I was fuckin' buzzing man. I felt like god, I was on top of the world and all of a sudden I'm nothing. Not worth a fucking bar of soap. Those rats deserve Oscars the way they conned the umpire.

Beat. Looking away, pissed off.

Trouble is.....I walked out before the end of play. It pissed the manager big-time.

ALSY

YOU WHAT! You fucked off before the end of the game. You gone in the head or what? You can't do that. You just cannot do that man.

Beat

I don't believe you Metal.

TIM

For Christ sake, he got 94 on his fucking debut, smashing the ball all over the gaff, 'gainst the best team in the world! What ya worrying about? All ya gotta do is phone up the gaffer tomorrow, say you're sorry, it won't happen again, blah, blah, blah and everything'll be as sweet as.

INT. TIM'S FLAT – NEXT MORNING.

Metal Mickey and Steve are sleeping on the sofas in the front room. Steve awakens. He picks up the newspaper by the front door. Glancing at it he walks to the kitchen, past Metal Mickey, going out of view of the camera. Tim enters the lounge.

STEVE
(V.O.)

HOLY FUCKING SHIT!

TIM
Walking in to the kitchen, speaking blearily, half awake.
What's goin on man?

STEVE
Look! Just look at this. Look at this!

Steve hands Tim the paper, Tim's eyes open up wide.

TIM
Ohhhh, FFFUUUUUCKK. Fuck a fucking duck!

Alsy blearily joins them in the kitchen.

ALSY
What's up?
Taking the paper from Tim's outstretched hand.
Oh no. God almighty!

The boys quickly go into the lounge where Metal Mickey is sleeping.

ALSY
Metal, Metal. Wake up for fuck's sake. Wake up you silly bastard!

METAL MICKEY
What's happening? What's going on?

ALSY
Hands Metal Mickey the paper.
Metal, aaaaahh my god. What the fuck have you done now man?

METAL MICKEY
Bleary eyed, taking the paper, he sits up. Reading the back cover, his eyes open as wide as they can.
AAAAAAAAAAAAARRRRRRRRRRRRGGGGGGHHHHH!

Metal Mickey is on the phone, frantically pacing up and down.

METAL MICKEY
Jim, I'm so sorry, really. I didn't know he was a reporter. He followed me to the bus-stop for Christ sake. I didn't know he had a tape recorder.

INT. JIM ARNOLD'S OFFICE / TIM'S HOUSE. SPLIT SCREEN:

JIM ARNOLD

Michael, it's no use. There's nothing I can do. Absolutely nothing.

METAL MICKEY

What do you mean?

JIM ARNOLD

Look here. The tantrum on the pitch, you leaving before the end of play could have been dealt with but this newspaper article was more than the last straw. The men upstairs simply want to wash their hands of you and to be quite honest, I have never seen anyone cause so much trouble in such a short space of time. It's been a nightmare. This morning you were officially sacked.

METAL MICKEY

What! What is that it then?

JIM ARNOLD

Playing for this county, yes. Most definitely. What do you think? Do you actually realise what's going on? I'd never have believed I'd see such an extraordinary talent yet within days I'd be so relieved to see the back of. I mean every so often you get the odd time-bomb but you're in a different league, like a walking grenade launcher.

METAL MICKEY

Aaah come on Jim, it ain't that bad is it?

JIM ARNOLD

Yes! That's what I'm trying to tell you. It bloody well is! I'm sorry.

END SPLIT SCREEN.

INT. TIM'S HOUSE.

METAL MICKEY

Throwing the phone on the sofa, putting his hands on his head.

What! Oh no. Fuck. How the fuck. Aaaaaah no.

The boys look at Metal Mickey with worried expressions.

METAL MICKEY

They've fucking sacked me! Oh my god. What the fuck have I done?

INT. MCC HEAD QUARTERS - DISCIPLINARY HEARING.

Metal Mickey is facing a table in a large sized room, facing a group of MCC officials. The chief BIG WIG is sat in the centre of the table.

BIG WIG

As you probably know, though by reading some of your remarks and observing your actions, perhaps this is somewhat inappropriate, we are desperate to uphold

the finer traditions of the game. We regard this game as one for gentlemen, not brash, loudmouths behaving like drunken louts. What do you have to say for yourself young man?

METAL MICKEY

I am genuinely sorry for what I said. I had no idea I was talking to a journalist and he caught me at a time when my feelings were running high. I was still very upset at the way I was given out.

BIG WIG

Yes. We noticed. Dissent is not tolerated. Breaking one's wicket with one's bat is totally unacceptable. Do you not realise how privileged you were to be making your debut at the home of cricket?

METAL MICKEY

Yes, I do. I know my behaviour was not suitable. I realise that but is dissent worse than cheating? Shouldn't fair play be sacrosanct?

BIG WIG

It's your opinion you were cheated. The umpires' report suggests otherwise. How can you be so sure (you were cheated)-

METAL MICKEY

WHAT! How can you say that? You saw what happened out there.

BIG WIG

Mr. Blackmore, do not interrupt and be mindful of the gravity of the-

METAL MICKEY

This is useless. Please don't. It's pointless. You're ignoring the cause of all this. You're not concerned about cheating.

BIG WIG

Have you quite finished?

METAL MICKEY

No, I fuckin' ain't. Fact is I could go on for hours but I better not cos I feel so sick any minute I'm gonna vomit all over your hallowed carpet. It is hallowed like everything else in this poxy gaff? Come on, fucking get on with it. What's my punishment? Had it up to here with all this crap.

The Big Wig consults the men to his left and right. They nod. Big Wig looks up.

BIG WIG

You are banned from playing county cricket two years. This hearing is concluded. Good day.

Metal Mickey gets up and turns to leave. As he gets to the door he turns back round.

METAL MICKEY

Do you honestly think this is justice? Think I'm bad for the game? Well you lot are destroying it. County cricket's dying. Look at the crowds you're getting. The

game's dead as a fucking dodo! I'd like to know - what's it like to be a bunch of useless tossers? Good fuckin' day to you!

Metal Mickey walks out, slamming the door behind him.

INT. A PUB – LATER THAT EVENING.

Alsy, Tim, Steve and Metal Mickey are sat together in a pub, drinking pints of beer.

TIM

Aaaahh, don't worry about it Metal.

METAL MICKEY

Don't worry about it? What's that supposed to mean? If I'm not going to worry about this then what the hell else is there to worry about? This is the biggest bollock-ache I've ever had in my fucking life.

Waving the newspaper, reading the headline.

Look at the papers. Mayhem at lords, boy wonder or boy blunder? Fucking looks like boy blunder's pissed it. What a fucking joke.

Beat. Shaking his head.

Had no idea. Like a stoopid wally I walked straight into it and the geezer just sucked me in. He couldn't believe his luck when he found a pratt that sang like a fucking bird.....

Beat. The boys look at him as he painfully stares. Quietly.

I gave him my autograph. The dirty rat actually asked for my autograph.

Getting up, seething.

Can you believe the only person I've ever given my autograph to is the guy that totally fucking shafted me? I don't believe it.....Aaah no.

TIM

What a bastard.

Metal Mickey shakes his head, looking totally dejected.

ALSY

Look, two years. Before you know you'll be back on the playing field.

STEVE

Yeah, it'll go quick.

INT. TIM'S HOUSE.

MUSIC: 'CAPTAIN COCONUT' by JIMI HENDRIX.

The boys are jamming in Tim's house. Electrical equipment is all about the place, along with bottles of drink and ashtrays. The camera focuses on each band member in turn who all try and look cool on their respective instruments. Steve serious on keyboards. Alsy bashing on his drums. Metal tries to play guitar with his teeth but the strap unhooks and his guitar falls on his foot. He grabs his foot wincing in pain. Tim is screaming away into a microphone, his eyeballs about to pop out. He is frantically pounding his bass guitar. The camera focuses in closer and closer on him as he pulls the most ridiculous faces. The boys take a break. They look pleased with themselves as they sit down. Tim, sitting next to Metal Mickey, lights up a joint. The boys talk,

laugh and joke with each other as Metal Mickey fiddles with his guitar strap.

ALSY

Blinding session man.

TIM

Sweet as. We're flying. It's only a matter of time.

Pulling a face at Metal, taking a deep drag of the joint.

We'll be bringing the houses down.

ALSY

Too right.

TIM

Looking at Metal fiddling with his guitar strap.

Sling that fucking thing! It's useless man!

Metal Mickey takes a drag of the joint, looks on, stoned. He nods and gazes.

The camera moves across the room. Alsy is asleep on a long armchair, there is a bare light bulb on in the kitchen. Ashtrays full of butts, empty bottles of booze on the table in front of the sofa that Metal Mickey has crashed out on. Musical equipment everywhere. The room looks like a bomb site.

FADE OUT/IN:

The camera shows the boys in a studio trying to look serious as they play their instruments. The camera shows the boys arguing, gesturing and laughing with each other.

FADE OUT/IN:

Tim, Steve and Metal Mickey are in Tim's flat watching TV. Empty bottles are on the table in front of them. Tim and Steve hardly look different. Metal Mickey is unshaven, looking bedraggled, thinner and pale, with longer, unkempt hair as he takes the joint. Metal Mickey takes a few drags. Alsy enters the room with a bottle of beer. He sits down.

ALSY

Ain't heard nothing yet. Surprised man. All those demos we sent. Thought we'd have heard something by now.

TIM

What's the matter with ya? They got loads of tapes to get through. It's no sweat. They're gonna be fighting to sign us. That telephone's gonna be ringing any fucking minute. I can feel it.

CUT TO:

INT. A LARGE OFFICE.

There are several gold discs on the wall. A 40 year old music EXECUTIVE 1 is listening to the demo intently. The demo finishes.

EXECUTIVE 1

Taking the tape out, he looks at his assistant sternly.

What the hell is this crap? I mean are these guys actually serious?

Slinging the tape in the bin. Shaking his head.

What shit.

CUT TO:

INT. TIM'S HOUSE.

METAL MICKEY

Nice one son. Nice one.

TIM

I tell ya, yes, I know it. We're gonna fucking be there!

CUT TO:

INT. ANOTHER OFFICE.

A female music executive is in an office with a junior employee standing by.

EXECUTIVE 2

I've never heard such complete and utter tripe!

The camera shows demo after demo hitting the bottom of a bin.

CUT TO:

INT. TIM'S HOUSE.

Tim is jumping up and down on the sofa, with both fists clenched.

TIM

We're gonna be big man, fucking ginormous!

Pumping his hips and thighs as if fucking upright.

Wembley Stadium here we fucking come!

FADE TO:

INT. A PUB.

The band is performing in a half-filled, smoky pub. The band has just finished a song. The camera focuses on the rather distraught face of Metal Mickey.

METAL MICKEY

Jesus fucking Christ!

The camera pans the rest of the guys who are all trying to look busy but their heads are down. Not too many people in the pub are paying much attention to the band.

TIM

Looking round almost sheepishly.

What are we gonna play now?

The camera focuses in on TWO PUNTERS who are having a drink together.

PUNTER 1

Free pub entertainment. Dunno why they bother with this shit?

PUNTER 2

Yeah, they sure gotta have some front. Can you imagine what it must be like when just about everyone in the gaff thinks you're complete and utter shite? They really stink man.

He laughs.

Yeah. They gotta feel ill.

MUSIC STOPS.

METAL MICKEY

(V.O.)

There was no getting away from it, we fucking stank alright. Felt so bad for the boys. I at least had cricket to fall back on but their dream had been shattered and boy, did they look like lost farts in a gasbag. They had nowhere to go.

CUT TO:

The camera shows the boys lounging around in Tim's flat and then together in a pub.

METAL MICKEY

(V.O.)

You're probably thinking I was wasting my time. You're right. I was! I should have been practising. I should have been working on my game but when you're 20 you just wanna have a laugh, do what you wanna do. You know it all, don't ya. Anyway when my ban was over I thought I'd be able to slot straight back in. It was gonna be a piece of cake.

CUT TO:

EXT. PRACTICE NETS IN A CRICKET GROUND.

Camera shows Metal Mickey batting in the nets, taking wild swings and missing each time, with the balls hitting the stumps. He has a confused, hang-dog look on his face.

METAL MICKEY

(V.O.)

I was gone. Hand-to-eye coordination, timing, technique, all fucked, washed down the fucking Swanee...but what really freaked me was that I'd lost my confidence. My true strength was the belief I had in myself and I actually felt it slowly but surely physically leave my body.

Beat.

You don't have to tell me. The drugs and the booze done me in but I couldn't stop. I think I was kind of hemmed in, trapped, but at the time I didn't give a shit. I really thought I was in control and I could handle it.

CUT TO:

INT. A PUB.

Metal Mickey, Tim, Alsy and Steve are sat in a booth, drinking. The camera focuses on the face of Metal Mickey who knocks back a drink, then another and another. In an adjoining booth FOUR WELL DRESSED YUPPIES are laughing and drinking champagne.

YUPPIE 1

I told him, Joshua, don't do it, don't buy them. Those shares are useless but the idiot buys a hundred grands worth. Now they're worth seventy. What do I care? I made my fifteen hundred quid commission.

They all laugh really loudly.

YUPPIE 2

Since when did he become a stockbroker? You know it really pisses me off when people get ideas above their station. Serves him right!

YUPPIE 3

He definitely isn't cut out for this game. Nice lad but he can't hack it.

Camera shows Metal Mickey, who is clearly eves-dropping on the adjoining booth.

METAL MICKEY

What a bunch of wankers.

TIM

Leave it out Mickey.

Yuppie 1 gets up and goes over to Metal Mickey.

YUPPIE 1

I beg your pardon.

METAL MICKEY

You heard. What! You wanna make something of it?

The other three yuppies get up. Tim and Alsy get up to try and pull Metal Mickey back.

ALSY

Come on Metal. They've done nothing. Don't start now.

Yuppie 1 comes forward. Metal Mickey speedily delivers a straight right jab flush on his nose, he crumples upon impact. As Metal Mickey looks down on yuppie 1, yuppie 4 slams a left hook onto Metal Mickey's left jaw. Metal Mickey falls backward stunned. His friends join in the fracas. The owner of the pub picks up the phone as a mini brawl ensues. The camera shows the police taking Metal Mickey away. Alsy, Tim and Steve look on.

INT. A POLICE STATION – THE CELLS.

POLICEMAN

Sleep it off dickhead!

METAL MICKEY

Bollocks!

Metal Mickey is pushed into a police cell. He turns aggressively only to see the cell door slammed shut. His expression changes to one of despair as he sits down, head in hands.

CUT TO:

INT. TIM'S HOUSE.

Show clips of Metal Mickey taking drugs, boozing and arguing with his friends.

METAL MICKEY

(V.O.)

Talk about fucking going A.W.O.L. My life had become a complete blur. I felt so frustrated and this frustration quickly turned to bitterness and the bitterness began to wreak havoc on my personal life.

The ashtray smashes the TV at the start of the film with Tim and Metal Mickey arguing.

METAL MICKEY

(V.O.)

The last straw was when I smashed my best mates' TV. How could I do that? That was it. I had to get away.

EXT: TIM'S HOUSE.

A new TV is in the porch of Tim's flat. Tim, Alsy and Steve are together. Tim picks up an envelope which is on the TV, opens it and pulls out a piece of paper, reads and looks up.

TIM

He's gone.

EXT. LOS ANGELES – DAY.

MUSIC: 'BACK IN THE SADDLE' by AEROSMITH.

The camera is airborne, giving a panoramic view of Los Angeles in the daytime. Showing in particular Los Angeles airport and the 'HOLLYWOOD' sign in the mountains.

CUT TO:

EXT. LOS ANGELES – NIGHT.

The camera moves through the air, giving a panoramic view of Los Angeles in the night.

CUT TO:

INT. A ROCK AND ROLL CLUB.

The club is packed. Different coloured lights flash through the smoke. The camera pans through

people on a crowded dance floor, through other areas of the club and up to the busy bar. The camera closes in on a pretty barmaid ERIKA. She looks to a customer.

ERIKA

Yes, what can I get you?

Camera shows a fresher looking Metal Mickey.

METAL MICKEY

Orange juice please.

Metal Mickey continues to gaze at the barmaid. She brings him his drink.

ERIKA

That's two dollars.

METAL MICKEY

Cheers.

Erika looks slightly bemused as she turns to another customer. Metal Mickey smiles at her but is quickly distracted by TWO MEN trying to get to the bar.

MAN 1

Go on man, move in there. Quick. Move. Get in there!

MAN 2 tries to squeeze past Metal Mickey who has a bag in one hand and his drink in the other. Metal Mickey looks perturbed as he cannot easily move.

METAL MICKEY

Hold the phone mate. Alright. Let me just, get through, here.

MAN 2 is pushed forward by MAN 1 causing Metal Mickey to spill some of his drink. MAN 2 totally oblivious, simply leans on the bar trying to catch the attention of a barmaid. A bemused Metal Mickey looks at the back of MAN 2.

METAL MICKEY

Oh, so sorry I got in your way. Nothing to worry about though. Only spilt half my drink. Lucky I just managed to get my body in the way so none of it hit the deck. What a result. Couldn't bear anyone slipping over and breaking their fuckin neck.

MAN 1

People are trying to get drinks man. You gotta haul ass round here.

METAL MICKEY

Listen pal, I'm pretty nippy when I wanna be but I ain't no fucking Harrier Jump Jet.

Metal Mickey annoyed, squeezes away. The camera shows Erika looking on.

MUSIC: 'ROCK THE NATION' by MONTROSE.

The camera pans round the club showing various people having a good time. The camera then

shows Metal Mickey sitting down in a corner of the club which is at the end of the bar. He is nodding with the music, looking around contented. Erika comes over to where he is sitting and gives him another orange juice.

ERIKA

Hey. I thought you could use this.

METAL MICKEY

Oh yeah, thanks. That's very kind of you.

ERIKA

No problem. Do you mind?

METAL MICKEY

What? You kidding? Course not. Here, please.

Erika sits. Metal Mickey looks at her. The camera pans round the club.

MUSIC: 'SWEET F.A.' by SWEET.

The camera shows the floor where quite a few rockers are playing air guitar.

ERIKA

Really now? Play for England? That's something. Not every day I get to sit next to an international sports star.

METAL MICKEY

No, no. I didn't say that. It's just I could have been, if things had-

ERIKA

Cutting in.

So if you were that good, what ya doing here?

The camera pans quickly around the club.

METAL MICKEY

Bit fuckin' warm you are.....

ERIKA

Smiling. Lighting up a cigarette.

No. No.... seriously, I'm interested. Where ya been? Tell me.

METAL MICKEY

I've been travelling round, that's all. Seeing places. New York was great. Philadelphia, Niagara Falls was amazing! You been there?

ERIKA

No.

METAL MICKEY

You ain't never been there, really? Ya gotta go.

ERIKA

Why? You been to the Lake District?

METAL MICKEY

God you're mustard you are. Well, then I popped over to Chicago.

ERIKA

Popped did you?

A resigned Metal Mickey looks at a beaming Erika. The camera pans around the club.

MUSIC: 'FAULT LINE by DEEP PURPLE.

Erika finishes off behind the bar and makes her way to where Metal Mickey is sitting.

ERIKA

That's me done..... So, you this serious all the time?

METAL MICKEY

.....Yeah.

Beat. Moving his head to the music. Looking into her eyes.

All the time.

Looking at her seriously. The music builds up. Metal Mickey places his right hand over Erika's head and massages the back of her head and neck. She responds to his touch.

METAL MICKEY

I mean, all the fucking time.

Erika pushes her head back further as Metal Mickey runs his left hand up her right thigh. He runs his right hand down her back slowly as they gaze into each other's eyes. As he reaches the middle and lower part of her back, Erika closes her eyes. She then waves her head back and lifts her right leg over Metal Mickey so that she is sat on his lap, facing him. She slowly brings her head closer to his. Their lips touch, sensuously at first. Metal Mickey places both his hands around the sides of Erika's cheeks and slowly passes them over the sides of her head, back down to her neck as they continue kissing. He then puts his hands up the back of Erika's t-shirt, pushing her whole body as close to him as he can, whilst the kissing gets stronger and stronger.

MUSIC STOPS.

CUT TO:

EXT. RODEO DRIVE - AFTERNOON.

Erika and Metal Mickey are walking along Rodeo Drive. They stop at a café. Erika is reluctant to go inside. Metal Mickey grabs her hand and they go in. The camera shows them seated at an outdoor table eating elaborate ice-creams. Then the camera shows Erika and Metal Mickey walking along Rodeo Drive.

ERIKA

Are you serious? I've got seven years of studying, difficult exams.

METAL MICKEY

Yeah. Successful lawyers are the ones that lie the best. They're great at telling porkies. All they care is if it's a nice earner. Technology. Bring on the lie-detectors; that's what I say.

ERIKA

Oh really? You want your fate decided by a machine?

METAL MICKEY

Sure. Listen, if I was innocent I'd welcome it with open arms. But if I was guilty, I'd be thinking, shit. I'm bang in trouble.

ERIKA

You are the most-

Searching for the correct expression.

-unique guy I've ever met.

METAL MICKEY

Yeah? You're making' all the right moves babe.

ERIKA

Most guys work overtime in the charm department for at least a month or so before showing their true colours, but you....you can't wait to tell me I've totally wasted three years of hard work. Thanks!

METAL MICKEY

Look you wanna study law, go ahead. I don't give a monkey's! All I'm saying is with maths, physics, you learn facts. In your game cash swings it. If O.J. was potless it would have been an open and shut case and if his wife was black he'd have definitely gone down. End of! Whilst the prosecution positively haemorrhaged evidence, all the defence had was a bullshit smokescreen - a copper was racist. Come on. Tell me something I don't know.

ERIKA

Using the O.J case is totally unfair. What you should remember is 99.9% of the time verdicts are right.

Camera shows them looking into a shop window. Erika points at a dress in the display.

INT. DOWNTOWN L.A. – EVENING.

Camera shows Erika and Metal Mickey inside a department store looking at rows of television sets which are all playing an advert for the Dale Washington chat show.

METAL MICKEY

Oh no, not him!

ERIKA

What? Dale Washington? Don't you like him?

METAL MICKEY

You off yer head?

ERIKA

He's hot.

Metal Mickey looks at Erika incredulously but realises she's winding him up. They laugh as the camera shows Dale Washington pointing at the audience, saying 'stay toned.'

INT. METAL MICKEY'S MOTEL ROOM.

Metal Mickey is lying in bed, awake, staring at the ceiling in a happy, relaxed state. His room is bare and shabby. Light is streaming in through the thin curtains.

METAL MICKEY

(V.O.)

I couldn't sleep. Just laid there thinking about her. I had girlfriends in the past, nothing serious. It's just I liked being with the lads, playing sport, doing the usual shit. But I never felt like that.

EXT. ERIKA'S CAR – CONTINUOUS.

Erika is driving with Metal Mickey. She pulls up outside a large pair of metal gates and presses the intercom buzzer. The gates open to reveal an awe-inspiring mansion. Metal Mickey looks bewildered as Erika drives up to the front door where JIMMY is waiting.

ERIKA

Hey Jimmy

JIMMY

Erika, Mike, come on in.

INT. JIMMY'S HOUSE – GAMES ROOM.

MUSIC: 'EVERYBODY' by TOMMY ROE.

There is a large recreation room, complete with a bar, sofas, juke-box, games machines and a pool table. Metal Mickey is playing pool against BILL. Friends watch as Metal Mickey plays air guitar with his cue and is about to approach a shot.

METAL MICKEY

Okay. This one's gonna be drilled, top pocket.

Metal Mickey points the cue at the pocket, gets down and slams the ball in at 90 miles an hour. Camera shows the onlookers pretty impressed. Bill shakes his head, smiling.

ONLOOKERS

Oh wow / Great shot / Man / Great hit.

Metal Mickey swaggers round the table, posing extravagantly as he looks at the balls.

METAL MICKEY

It's all over. It's all done. This one in there, then that one rods in there, rod that one in and it's, it's all done. It's all over.

Metal Mickey gets down to play the shot which he misses badly. He looks anxiously as the balls begin to settle and then quickly realises he's set the balls up perfectly for Bill.

METAL MICKEY

Oh no! The wheels have just fallen off.

BILL

Sure talk a good game. You been getting lessons off Billy Graham?

Bill smacks in the winning pot and then swaggers extravagantly round the table impersonating Metal Mickey's antics. Everyone laughs. Metal Mickey smiles.

MUSIC: REDHOUSE by JIMI HENDRIX.

Camera shows the group on the sofas.

JASPER

It was easy. Before she knew it, boom! She was sitting on my lap, eating out of the palm of my hand.

BILL

Bullshit. She spoke to you is because she knew she was safe. Yeah. No faggot's gonna try anything.

Camera shows Metal Mickey and Erika seated together amused by the conversation.

BILL

What would you do without good ol' K.Y? Yeah? You use it more than toothpaste! All that penetration. In fact, you don't need it. You're ass is so wide, man a cucumber would fly up there.

Camera shows Metal Mickey laughing.

ADDY

Fortunately, the quality of their conversation has hit rock bottom. It can get no worse, I think.

CUT TO:

INT. JIMMY'S HOUSE – HALLWAY.

Jimmy, Erika and Metal Mickey stop are outside a large, plush living room / office.

JIMMY

This is dad's room.

Metal Mickey looks impressed.

JIMMY

Big Vic's away at the moment, on business. He loves action, loves doing deals. He says 'if you ain't doing deals, you're going senile.'

CUT TO:

INT: JIMMY'S HOUSE – GAMES ROOM.

BILL

What d'ya reckon? D'ya think limey lover boy, ya know, d'ya think he's ever, ya know? Sure looks the type.

JASPER

You're sick. Ya do realise you're very seriously sick. Always the same. 'Yeah, he's a faggot. His hole's as wide as the Grand Canyon. He bends over so much he suffers back trouble.' You never stop. You got assholes on the brain. I'm worried about you man, really.

CUT TO:

INT. JIMMY'S HOUSE – THE GYM.

JIMMY

The gym.

They stand in the doorway to an impressive gymnasium.

METAL MICKEY

Wow! The gym; the whole house is unreal..... Ya mind if I have a go?
Walking up to the speedball and punch bag.

JIMMY

Ya know how to use that?

METAL MICKEY

Yeah, sort of.

JIMMY

Sure. Go ahead.

Metal Mickey shapes up to the speedball, looking round smiling. He starts, failing at first but then gets into rhythm, gradually speeding up further and further. Jimmy and Erika look on amazed. The camera switches to Metal Mickey's face, eagerly bashing away. The camera switches to Jimmy as Bill, Jasper and Addy walk in. The camera switches to Metal Mickey who now has his shirt off, dripping sweat, hammering away relentlessly.

JIMMY

Check this out.

ADDY

Oooh. Nice body.

ERIKA

He used to play cricket ya know.

The camera switches to Metal Mickey and slowly close in on his sweating face.

EXT. METAL MICKEY'S MOTEL ROOM – A FEW DAYS LATER.

Jimmy, Bill and Jasper pull up in Jimmy's convertible outside Metal Mickey's motel room. Jimmy sounds the car horn and Metal Mickey comes out.

JIMMY

Hey Bud, we're going to check out spring training. Wanna come?

METAL MICKEY

Getting in the car.

Sure. That's sweet. Alright guys? So what's that all about then?

JASPER

You kidding me? Baseball. Season starts in two weeks.

METAL MICKEY

Is that so?

BILL

Yeah, and Daddy owns the team.

INT. JIMMY'S CAR – CONTINUOUS.

MUSIC: 'HOMET'S NEST' by JIMI HENDRIX.

Camera shows the boys driving to the stadium, having a laugh impersonating the song.

EXT. THE CALIFORNIA ANGELS STADIUM.

Camera pans round the stadium. Hitters take batting practice. The press take photographs. Jasper, Bill and Jimmy throw baseballs to each other near the dugout. Metal Mickey watches the hitters keenly. He then makes his way towards the dugout looking round in awe. He sees a baseball bat and picks it up. He just stares at it, slowly starting to stroke it.

METAL MICKEY

(V.O.)

I-

Beat.

-I mean I'm telling ya.

Almost gasping.

I felt a tingling sensation, fucking careering down my spine, you'll never believe. It was incredible. I knew. At that moment, I swear, I knew, something serious was gonna happen.

Beat. Loudly cutting the air with the bat.

It was as if that bat was waiting for me. It had to be in my hand.

Speaking almost robotically, monotone. He picks up a baseball and starts to hit the ball back and forth against the dugout wall. He fails a few times but starts to get the hang of it.

METAL MICKEY

(V.O.)

Cricket bat was heavier. Cumbersome. You stroke the ball rather than giving an almighty whack as you do with a baseball bat. The balance, the flexibility. This was a hitter's weapon..... I loved hitting!

Jasper is watching Metal Mickey. He gestures towards Bill and Jimmy who stop and watch too. Metal Mickey tries to show off by whacking the ball but misses it altogether.

MUSIC STOPS.

BILL

Yeah, stick to cricket!

METAL MICKEY

Hey Jimmy. Can you throw a few down for me?

JIMMY

What you serious man?

METAL MICKEY

Yeah. Just sling a few down. Wanna check out something.

JIMMY

What, you wanna take me on yeah?.... Okay. Let's get it owwnnnn.

Jasper takes up the catcher's position. Jimmy sets himself and pitches. Metal Mickey is too eager and misses wildly. The ball flies into Jasper's glove. He throws the ball back to Jimmy. Jimmy pitches again. Metal Mickey connects. The ball lands about 250 feet away.

BILL / JASPER

In unison.

Wooaahh! Jeeeesuss Christ.

METAL MICKEY

With a pained expression is looking at the bottom of his bat.
I didn't get hold of that at all.

JASPER

Metal that was fucking awesome man!

METAL MICKEY

That was crap. You mad? Come on Jimmy. Sling some more down.

Bill and Jasper look bewildered. Jimmy looking a bit surprised. He throws a couple more balls to Metal Mickey who swings and misses twice. Jimmy's next pitch is a nice height, slightly inside the strike zone. Metal Mickey pivots and with impeccable timing absolutely creams the ball. The boy's heads swivel to watch the ball cruising deep into the second tier of the stands.

METAL MICKEY

That's better.

JASPER

FUCK!

BILL

Jesus! Looks like it's-

Slowly leaning his head one way. Astonished.

-upper deck!

Totally gob-smacked, they look at Metal Mickey whose face suggests 'that was nothing'. Camera switches to another part of the field, to the California Angels manager RAY COCHRAN and hitting instructor BARNEY MILLER.

RAY

See that Barney? Where in the fuck did that come from?

BARNEY

Can't tell you chief but you could have fried an egg on that mother.

Ray and Barney look around mesmerised. The camera cuts back to Metal Mickey.

METAL MICKEY

Pitch one lower left so I can hit an off drive.

JIMMY

Off drive?

METAL MICKEY

Pointing low to right field.

One I can hit there.

JIMMY

That's a line drive.

Jimmy pitches. Metal Mickey drills the ball. It never rises above 15 feet but it lands deep in right field. The boys look on totally lost for words. Camera shows Ray and Barney who are walking towards the boys.

BARNEY

Wooaah! Sweet hit!

RAY

Damn! He hit that like a goddamn tracer bullet.

Camera cuts back to Metal Mickey.

METAL MICKEY

Yeah! Now I hit that great. That's one of my favourite shots!

The boys look mystified. A forlorn Jimmy pitches. Metal Mickey unleashes a devastating strike getting slightly underneath the ball. As it rises, heads are glued to the ball's trajectory. It lands just over the fence coming down almost straight. Barney is amazed.

BARNEY

What the fuck! Didn't he get underneath that?

RAY

Holy shit! I ain't never...who the hell is this guy? HEY JIMMY! JIMMY! What the hell's goin' on? Who's your friend here?

JIMMY

Hi coach! This is Metal Mickey.

RAY

Metal Mickey eh. What, you related to Babe Ruth or something? Playing in the minors kid?

METAL MICKEY

Minors? What's that?

RAY

Come on, come on, come on. Quit messing. How come no one's snapped you up?

METAL MICKEY

Well I suppose nobody's really had the chance to.

RAY

Pronouncing 'suppose' and 'chance' the English way.

'Suppose'. 'Chance.' Did he say 'chance'?

Looks at Jimmy for confirmation.

He English? Ya kidding.

Looks back to Metal Mickey curiously.

Where d'ya play?

METAL MICKEY

Actually, I don't. Never. In fact this is the first time I've ever held a baseball bat. Feels good. Feels fucking brilliant. I love it.

RAY

S'that so, huh? Well, can't say I'm surprised because I dunno if I've ever seen anyone hit the ball like that.

Laughing, looking at Barney.

May be losing it Barney but the last time I seen hitting like that I think I was watching fucking Ted Williams and Joe DiMaggio.

METAL MICKEY

Yeah? I heard of that Joe DiMaggio. He was the geezer that married Marilyn weren't he?..... Ain't heard of Ted Williams though.

Ray and Barney look at each other smiling in disbelief.

BARNEY

Listen kid, I don't know what the hell you do but whatever it is, I'm telling you now you're in the wrong fucking business sonny.

RAY

So, you wanna try, fancy some batting practise, yeah?

Beat.

Ok, let's get this kid some kit. Come on. Let's go.

Beckoning people on. Nobody really responds.

I don't know what the fuck's going on around here but some of us are starting to look fat and it's beginning to piss me off.

Metal Mickey makes his way to the dug-out. A REPORTER approaches Barney.

REPORTER

What ya got Barney?

BARNEY

Hey Joe. What's happening? You okay?

REPORTER

Yeah, I got this fucking ulcer that's killing me, a serious case of piles and a wife that can't stand the fucking sight of me. Part from that, I'm doin' fuckin great. What's going on? Who's the kid?

BARNEY

Ya really wanna know eh? Well maybe, just maybe, we could have Ty Cobb and Babe Ruth rolled into one. How's that?

Metal Mickey emerges from the dug-out. He looks at his friends.

METAL MICKEY

Hey, I'm Jack Nicholson in One Flew over the Cuckoos Nest! 'It's the World Series decider; I'm at the plate, the pitcher winds up-

Swinging his bat. Screaming.

IT'S A FUCKING HOME RUN!

Metal Mickey impersonates Jack Nicholson's war dance celebration. The boys look on laughing. Ray and Barney watch with pained expressions, as do 90% of the people on the field. Reporters frantically scribble notes and snap pictures.

REPORTER

What HIM?

BARNEY

Did I say Ty Cobb and Babe Ruth?

RAY

Jesus fucking Christ! I just brought a halt to the entire training session so everyone can watch a clown who's never played before. What the fuck have I done here?

Players and reporters are gathered. A pitcher, STEVIE is waiting to throw some pitches.

RAY

Okay, let's go. Stevie, fire some heaters down.

METAL MICKEY

Excuse me. What's a heater?

Laughter breaks out. Stevie pitches. Metal Mickey swings wildly and misses.

METAL MICKEY

Fuck me. That was a bit fucking sharpish!

Laughter breaks out. Ray shakes his head. Stevie looks confident as he delivers the 2nd pitch which is foul tipped backwards. The 3rd pitch is fouled but Metal Mickey gets much more bat on the ball. The 4th pitch and Metal Mickey unloads with stunning bat speed and perfect timing. The pitcher's head swivels sharply as the ball is hit. Everyone watches, mouths open, as the ball goes sailing way back into the seats. There are general murmurings as everyone looks on amazed as the camera returns to Metal Mickey.

METAL MICKEY

Turns to all his doubters, defiantly punching the air.

Get in there my son!

Camera shows Ray and Barney hassled by reporters as they leave the stadium that night.

REPORTERS

Who's the kid? Where d'ya get him from? S'he gonna be playing for the Angels?
Come on coach, he skinned the ball. What's the story?

EXT. ANGELS STADIUM PLAYING FIELD.

All around players practise. Metal Mickey unloads at batting practise watched by Barney and others. The camera switches to the owner of the Angels, VICTOR STEINBERG, his general manager, CYNTHIA JONSSON who are walking with Ray toward Metal Mickey.

VICTOR STEINBERG

That crazy kid of mine! I try to teach him business, finance. Nah, he wants to be a pitcher. Then he wants to be a goddamn rock musician. Now he's playing baseball scout. What ya say this kids name was?

RAY

Michael Blackmore. They call him Metal Mickey.

VICTOR STEINBERG

Metal Mickey eh? You gotta be fuckin' joking? What's he - fuckin cartoon character or something?

RAY

Yeah.

To Metal Mickey.

Hey Mikey. Like to introduce some people to you. This is our owner Victor Steinberg and this is our General Manager, Cynthia Jonsson.

METAL MICKEY

My pleasure. Hello.

VICTOR STEINBERG

So Mike, ya happy? Everything okay? Need anything. Sure. All ya gotta do is holler, okay.

Half beat.

Ya know Barney's been telling me you're the next big thing. How'd you like to be playing for the Angels eh?

METAL MICKEY

That's very kind of you Mr. Steinberg. But ummm, to be quite honest I really haven't had that much time to think about all this. It's such a very big step for me.

Victor Steinberg and Cynthia Jonsson look confused, Ray's about to have a heart attack.

METAL MICKEY

You know I'm really, very grateful for everything. Everybody here has made me feel so at home, but-

Beat. Shaking his head.

I'D LOVE TO PLAY FOR YOU!

VICTOR STEINBERG

Jesus Christ! He's a fucking comedian! Man do I like this kid. Metal Mickey eh, you've got a bit of style son. Fucking had me going there. He had me Ray!

Camera shows Ray and the owner speaking with reporters. It then switches to Barney who has a baseball in his hand and is talking to Metal Mickey who is looking on intently.

METAL MICKEY

(V.O.)

Barney was something else. Baseball man through and through. Did I love him. He told me about the count, balls and strikes, different pitches, when you're likely to receive certain pitches. Hitting was scientific. I love that. And I can't tell you, his face beamed when I told him good hitters must be the ones that are patient. He said he's still trying to teach that to hitters who've been playing for ten years.

INT. CYNTHIA JONSSON'S OFFICE.

Metal Mickey and the General Manager are busy negotiating.

METAL MICKEY

(V.O.)

The next day the GM and I worked on a contract. She thought I was joking when I turned down \$1million over four years. I liked the line in 'Heat' where Robert De Niro told Al Pacino: "I never get involved in anything I can't walk away from in 30 seconds flat." So we arranged a deal where I'd receive huge bonuses if I did really well. I twiggged the phone calls with Steinberg. He thought he was getting me for a steal. Maybe but they were oblivious to the science of hitting. I was sure they were making a big mistake. They should've spoken more to Ray and Barney.

Camera shows the General Manager and Metal Mickey getting up and shaking hands.

EXT. CALIFORNIA ANGELS GROUND.

Erika is in her car. Metal Mickey jumps in. He has a massive grin on his face.

ERIKA

Looks like it went well.

METAL MICKEY

You could say that. I was offered a million smackaroonies over 4 years.

ERIKA

What! WOW! That's amazing!

METAL MICKEY

Yeah. Am I quality or am I fuckin' quality?

ERIKA

Oh my GOD! That's fantastic! I can't bel-

METAL MICKEY

-Yeah. How about that? Shame. I turned it down.

ERIKA

WHAT!.....are you kidding me?..... Why? What's the matter with you?

Beat

So did you do a deal or are you still an unemployed bum?

METAL MICKEY

Nah. I told them, speak to my brief!

ERIKA

You're crazy. No use talking to you. Come on. Where we going?

METAL MICKEY

You know babe, I've been so busy negotiating multi-million dollar deals I ain't got time to ponder over mere trivialities. I'll leave that to you. You see darling, I'm gonna be the next super duper star. I need to rest my brain.

ERIKA

No shit!

METAL MICKEY

Sweetness. How could you? The pain I feel darling, please. Come on babe my gorgeous little nympho. Take us somewhere nice.

ERIKA

Beat. Smiling mischievously.

Okay. I know the perfect spot.

MUSIC: 'THINK' by ARETHA FRANKLIN.

They speed off down the road.

INT. 'SPORTS TODAY' RECORDING STUDIOS.

Screen shows a television programme 'Sports Today', fronted by anchor-man BOB.

BOB

An amazing story's emerging from Edison Field. It appears the Angels have actually signed an unknown 22 year old from London, England. Bizarrely, Michael Blackmore claims never to have played baseball and incredible as this may seem, wait! Sources say he could be a real find. What's the situation down there Brad?

CUT TO:

EXT. EDISON FIELD.

Camera shows BRAD, a reporter for 'Sports Today' at Edison Field.

BRAD

Well Bob, what can I say? The Angels have signed Michael Blackmore and I can confirm, now wait for it, he's never played baseball. It's amazing! Metal Mickey as he's known actually played county cricket in England but no sooner he broke into the big time, he was involved in a spectacular bust-up with the cricket authorities and was unceremoniously kicked out of the game. Curiously, details of the new contract are being kept under wraps but rumour has it this was Mr. Blackmore's wish. I have also been reliably informed he and he alone negotiated his contract. He has no agent and it seems, no intention of ever getting one. For the moment it remains a mystery if the Angels have indeed taken a huge gamble financially. For now though, the big question is, is he still a live wire?

CUT TO:

INT. 'SPORTS TODAY' RECORDING STUDIOS.

BOB

Very interesting Brad. It remains to be seen if the Angels have bitten off more than they can chew.

INT. CYNTHIA JONSSON'S OFFICE.

Metal Mickey switches off the TV. Cynthia Jonsson and Ray look up surprised.

METAL MICKEY

Bitten off more than they can fucking chew? They're at it again! Why they trying to make everyone think I'm some sort of nutter, 'say Brad, do you think this guy's a live wire?' 'Well, Bob, it remains to be seen.' It's the same ol' fuckin' story.

RAY

Take it easy. It's nothing.

METAL MICKEY

Ray, I had murders with the press back home. I'll never forgive those bastards. Now straight away, here, they're trying to do my head in.

RAY

You serious? Listen to me, ain't no telling what's gonna happen but we got a long season and whether you like it or not, they're part of it.

CYNTHIA JONSSON

Mike, the press will dig, they'll probe and they'll piss people off but that's their job. You fight them, they'll eat you. If you're smart, you use them. That's what you've got to do. Use them to your advantage.

Beat.

What about a press conference? Yes? Help clear the air a little. Answer some questions, tell them about yourself. Maybe it'll do some good.

Metal Mickey frowns pensively.

MUSIC STOPS.

INT. A CONFERENCE ROOM – THE NEXT DAY.

Reporters are seated. Metal Mickey and Cynthia Jonsson enter the room and sit at a table.

CYNTHIA JONSSON

Ladies and gentlemen Mr. Blackmore is ready to take your questions.

REPORTER 1

Is it true you are to receive a basic wage of \$1,000 a week, \$250 for every base hit and walk and \$1,000 for every home run?

METAL MICKEY

Good afternoon. Yes, that's right. How d'ya know that?

REPORTER 1

But there are bonuses, aren't there?

METAL MICKEY

Yeah.

Looking down at a piece of paper he is holding.

50 home runs, 1 million. 60, 3 million. 70, 10 million. I get the same bonuses for 100, 150 and 200 RBI's. If I make the all-star game-

Laughter breaks out. Metal Mickey surprised and pissed off looks at Cynthia Jonsson.

REPORTERS

You kidding? Give us a break! What kind of a stunt is this? Come on.

CYNTHIA JONSSON

Don't worry about it Mike. Stay cool. It's okay. You're doin' alright.

METAL MICKEY

Looking at the GM.

Oh yeah? Think it's worth mentioning the other bonuses?

Cynthia Jonsson shakes her head. Calm returns in the pressroom.

METAL MICKEY

Okay, okay. You lot have had your fun now. Are we gonna be serious?

REPORTER 2

Mr. Blackmore, are you not being a bit presumptuous?

METAL MICKEY

Pre- what! Look, I'm happy with my deal. That's what I asked for?

REPORTER 3

But you've never played baseball. Why are you turning down guaranteed money? It just doesn't make sense.

Metal Mickey looks at another reporter with his hand up.

REPORTER 4

You've signed a one year contract. Does this have any reflection on the fact that your cricket career was inadvertently cut short?

METAL MICKEY

S'got nothing to do with it.

REPORTER 4

So why just a year?

METAL MICKEY

Look what difference, one year, five, ten? Any time I wanna sign another contract I can. What's the big deal? Why do you care about this?

REPORTER 5

Sportsmen have been banned for long periods usually for the use of illegal substances. Your two year ban though was unprecedented in that it was for what you said to the authorities. Do you regret that now?

METAL MICKEY

Now hold it! Listen. Listen to me good. Those old farts deserved every bit of verbal they got and they could've got plenty more n'all. I was offered lumps to give my side of the story but I couldn't decide who the bigger tossers were. Them or the press. So I thought bollocks. They can all take a run and jump.

REPORTER 1

It seems, if anything, your anti-establishment stance is as strong as ever. Don't you think you should review your position so-

METAL MICKEY

Interrupting.

Hang on a minute. Hang on. What this, my stance anti this anti that?

Reporter 1 tries to speak.

Listen mate, the only thing I'm anti is bullshit and stroke pulling-

Reporter 1 tries to speak again.

Listen, nah, listen. Look, LISTEN. You've had yours, alright. From now on you just sit there and shut it, RIGHT..... Had enough of all this!

Cynthia Jonsson puts her hand on Metal Mickey's arm, trying to get his attention and calm him down. Metal Mickey simply looks ahead as the reporters start to murmur.

METAL MICKEY

'kin liberty. Aren't I helping you geezers out. I'm giving you my time. Yeah?..... So why the hell am I being grilled here as if I'm Jack the fucking Ripper. I mean what the hell's going on here?

CYNTHIA JONSSON

Mike, please. Sit down, take it easy.

METAL MICKEY

If ball players don't cut it, it's the minors. Ain't the same for you lot though is it? If you have lousy judgement and therefore write bilge, there's always a load of wallies out there who'll believe the bollocks you're coming out with. End result, ignorance flourishes and so the power and responsibility that's given to you is woefully abused. You make me wanna throw up.

Turning to leave. Pointing with a very stern look.

We'll see who's laughing at the end of the season.

Metal Mickey gets up and walks out. Cynthia Jonsson stays to answer more questions.

EXT. CALIFORNIA ANGELS STADIUM.

Beautiful day. Stadium full. Commentary is from JOHN MILLER and JOE MORGAN.

JOHN MILLER

(V.O.)

Hi folks and welcome to the opening game of the season at Edison field. The Texas Rangers will be taking on the California Angels.

Camera shows Ray in the dugout talking to the team.

RAY

Okay. Let's get this season off to a flyer. I wanna see some value for money out there. Come on, let's go and kick some shit!

Camera shows the Texas Rangers batters going 3 and out.

METAL MICKEY

(V.O.)

You may think that I was thinking, 'I'm back. Boy are the fuckin' sparks gonna fly! Can't wait to get out there'..... Nah. Nothing like that! Instead a cold, calculating, machine-like control had come over me where it seemed like everything was in slow-motion. I was ready to float!

Metal Mickey and Barney applaud the team as they make their way back to the dugout. The Angels lead off man grounding out.

MUSIC: 'TIN SOLDIER' by THE SMALL FACES.

JOHN MILLER

(V.O.)

Michael Blackmore all the way from London, England is on deck. And that one's caught in centre field for out number two. Here he comes to the plate and what an ovation he's getting Joe.

Metal Mickey makes his way to the plate. He acknowledges the fans as he settles at the plate, ready for the pitch.

JOHN MILLER

(V.O.)

Here's the first pitch and it's high for ball 1.

Metal Mickey backs off from the pitch and then shapes up for the 2nd pitch.

CUT TO:

INT. COMMENTARY BOX.

JOHN MILLER

And Joe, what a press conference that was? I dunno if I've ever seen anything like that before. It was amazing. The fastball's low for ball 2.

JOE MORGAN

Man did he give it to those guys, not in a nasty way as some people have suggested, he just.....

JOHN MILLER/JOE MORGAN

Looking at each other in unison.

.....gave it to them.

They laugh as the Camera shows Metal Mickey at the plate receiving the third pitch which is in the dirt. Metal Mickey backs off and the camera returns to the commentary box.

JOHN MILLER

Well if he can play ball like the way he handled those fellas, who knows, and ball 3's in the dirt. Not normally the way to introduce yourself to the American public though Joe.

JOE MORGAN

No.

Camera returns to Metal Mickey who backtracks, takes a few practise swings, sets up and leaves the 4th pitch alone.

JONH MILLER

(V.O.)

High and wide for ball 4. That's a walk and 250 bucks Joe, I think!

Joe Morgan laughs as Metal Mickey drops his bat and starts to walk to first base. The camera moves to the commentary box.

JOE MORGAN

You know, earlier today I spoke to Angels hitting coach Barney Miller and he was raving about Mike. It kinda surprised me not because of Mike's inexperience but because Barney never really raves about anybody.

JOHN MILLER

That's right.

JOE MORGAN

Then he mentioned how hitters love to hit and I said, 'well yeah, that's their job'. Barney shook his head and said, 'Not him. His kick is being in the batters box and staying there as long as possible.' Well we've just seen him and I dunno if I can ever remember a player taking four straight balls with his very first at bat.

*Scoreboard shows: Bottom of the 3rd RANGERS 2. ANGELS 1.
Camera shows Metal Mickey coming to the plate.*

JOHN MILLER

(V.O.)

There are 2 outs, a man on 2nd as 'Metal Mickey' comes to the plate. That's his name isn't it? And the 1st pitch is too high for ball 1.

Metal Mickey lowers his bat as the pitch goes by.

JOHN MILLER

(V.O.)

I like that name.

JOE MORGAN

(V.O.)

Ya do?

JOHN MILLER

(V.O.)

Yeah.

Metal Mickey takes a few practise swings and then shapes up. The pitcher throws.

JOHN MILLER

(V.O.)

And the curve-ball misses for ball 2.

Metal Mickey takes a few practise swings and shapes up for the next pitch.

JOHN MILLER

(V.O.)

Well he's playing in his first game. You'd think at least, he'd be out there swinging away.

Metal Mickey lets the next pitch go by.

JOHN MILLER

(V.O.)

And that is ball 3. He's taken seven pitches. Can you believe that?

JOE MORGAN

(V.O.)

Barney was right. This is amazing.

Metal Mickey leans on his back foot. He looks at his bat, held vertically in front of him. He grips and re-grips it and settles in the batters box. The pitcher throws a fastball, a little inside which Metal Mickey pulls powerfully into the left field crowd for a home run.

JOHN MILLER

(V.O.)

And this one's hit powerfully-

JOE MORGAN

(V.O.)

That's gone.

JOHN MILLER

(V.O.)

Oh my! What a shot! That was a laser beam. It flew into the crowd.

As he trots to 1st base Metal Mickey looks round to the dugout and pumps his fist. Everyone is up. Metal Mickey celebrates as he round the bases.

METAL MICKEY

YES! YES! YES!

JOE MORGAN

(V.O.)

His first swing after taking seven straight balls and he hits a no-doubter. Oh man. I don't believe it.

JOHN MILLER

(V.O.)

That was a shot.

Metal Mickey arrives at home base. He looks up at Erika and the rest of the gang who are screaming above the dugout. Metal Mickey laughing, arrives at the dugout.

MUSIC STOPS.

METAL MICKEY

High fives ensue.

That's me. Did I, I mean, did I cream that fuckin' ball or what? That's me, yeah!

Team-mates celebrate. Metal Mickey hugs Barney and then jumps out of the dugout and takes a bow. He kisses his hand and blows it to the crowd. There is a huge ovation.

Scoreboard shows: 8th innings. RANGERS 3. ANGELS 3.

Camera shows the action with Metal Mickey coming to the plate to another huge ovation.

JOHN MILLER

(V.O.)

Well, he's had 3 at bats, walked, a two run blast and a base hit, just like that and now he comes to the plate with the bases loaded.

Metal Mickey sets himself and gets slightly underneath a fastball down the middle of the strike zone. He hits it well and looks up at the ball anxiously.

JOHN MILLER

(V.O.)

That one's hit well, it's going back, back, back and it's GONE. IT'S A GRAND SLAM. How about that! Can you believe this guy?

METAL MICKEY

YEAH oh YEAH. I am the man!

JOHN MILLER

(V.O.)

Fasten your seat-belts folks. Were gonna take off. It's pandemonium.

JOE MORGAN

(V.O.)

Oh man.

Metal Mickey pumps his fist as he rounds the bases. Camera goes to commentary box.

JOHN MILLER

Well, I don't know why he's called the great Metal Mickey. He's SENSATIONAL! A grand slam, a two run shot, a base hit and a walk, 3 for 3 with 6 RBIs. What a guy!

Metal Mickey arrives at home base, his team-mates mob him. Everybody is going nuts. Metal Mickey looks up to Erika again, shakes his head, beaming with his arms open wide. Erika is going mad. He enters the dugout to mad celebrations. The crowd demand an appearance from the Metal. He duly obliges, beaming, both hands in the air and he just laps it up.

INT. RAY'S HOUSE.

Metal Mickey and Erika are seated in Ray's house. Ray is in an armchair.

METAL MICKEY

So I thought no way he's gonna hit me with the double bluff shot. If he comes fastball, I know it's all over - bye-bye.

Ray smiles, nodding in agreement.

ERIKA

Okay, so you're pretty good.

METAL MICKEY

Pretty good? Listen, what you gotta try and understand is hitting is all about knowing WHEN to swing. There's a bit of poker involved here.

Erika sarcastically agrees, making a very serious face.

You got to get ahead in the count. Once you do, it's a piece of cake.

RAY

That's right. Absolutely. How the hell d'ya know all this shit?

METAL MICKEY

What d'ya mean how? It's fuckin' obvious.

ERIKA

Look, it's only a game. The way you go on.

METAL MICKEY

Only a game? You sure? Have a word Ray, please.

ERIKA

He throws the ball, you hit it. What's the big deal? He throws, you hit.

Ray laughs. Metal Mickey looks as Erika pretends to throw and pretends to hit.

RAY

Alright. I've had it for today. I'll catch you guys tomorrow.

ERIKA

Night Ray.

INT. VICTOR STEINBERG'S OFFICE.

Victor Steinberg is on the phone to Cynthia Jonsson.

VICTOR STEINBERG

I get back from Chicago and everyone's on my back. I ain't had time to take a piss. You're supposed to be managing things. What the fuck's going on here? Why are the press hassling me?

INT. CYNTHIA JONSSON'S OFFICE .

Cynthia Jonsson is on the phone to Victor Steinberg.

CYNTHIA JONSSON

I'm sorry Victor but it's been a total madhouse here. Everybody but everybody s'been calling in.

START SPLIT SCREEN:

VICTOR STEINBERG

I know. That's why I am speaking to you.

CYNTHIA JONSSON

Well after the press conference I thought it would be better if Michael kept a low profile, just for a while at least but I didn't expect, I never imagined all this, after the first game.

VICTOR STEINBERG

You didn't expect did you? You know, you better start expecting every goddamn thing. Do you know what he did in England? No. Do you know he could have been a big star? No. What do you know?

CYNTHIA JONSSON

Victor, I don't understand. The stadium's filled to capacity. The whole place is on fire. I thought you'd be pleased. Why are you so-

Beat

Look, everything's going to be just fine. Please. Just trust me.

VICTOR STEINBERG

Listen, I never got to where I am by trusting people. I don't trust my goddamn mother and that kid trying to fool me with his bullshit, care-free attitude. Playing the idiot making everyone think he's all over the place. I don't buy it.

END SPLIT SCREEN.

INT. ERIKA'S APARTMENT – THE KITCHEN.

Metal Mickey is making two cups of coffee while Erika is busy cooking. The phone rings. Metal Mickey places Erika's cup of coffee near her and picks up the phone.

METAL MICKEY

Hello.... Well hello Erika's mummy and how are we today...Good, good.....Why thank you. That's so nice of you. Are you a baseball fan?.....
Oh dear, devastation has just erupted in my heart.....

Erika shakes her head.

That's very kind.....Yes, I do believe I have Friday off that'll be great. I'll look forward to meeting you.

Erika looks round frowning and moves to the phone.

Anyway here's Erika.

ERIKA

Hi mom.....I'm okay, I'm fine.....yeah I heard.....

Putting her hand over the receiver turning to Metal Mickey

What are you doing?

Back to the receiver. Beat

We'll let you know when we hit the road. Thanks mom. See you.

Puts the phone down.

Can't leave you for two seconds, can I?

METAL MICKEY

Why, what's wrong? What's the problem now?

ERIKA

The problem is I don't see eye to eye with my parents. I dread to think what you're gonna be like? My god! It'll be a disaster.

METAL MICKEY

Look I was only trying to be friendly for Christ sake, in fact I wasn't trying - I was doing what I normally do. What ya want me to say 'nah bollocks! What the fuck do I need to come round to your poxy gaff for you sippy cow?'

Erika looks on despairingly

You never said a word. How'm I supposed to know they're bad news. I ain't fucking psychic. Thought you were all sweet. Anyway, so what!

ERIKA

So what? First of all you never give me a chance. You just rush into everything and they're not bad news. They're good people and I love them very much but you will not get on. Trust me on this one.

METAL MICKEY

Aaahh come on. It'll be fine. We could do with a little break anyway. Don't worry about it. I get on with everyone.

ERIKA

Oh yeah, of course ya do. I almost forgot!

METAL MICKEY

Yeah. I'm cool. Sweet as a nut! Didn't ya see what I was like with her on the 'ol dog and bone'?

ERIKA

What I see as per usual is you marching headfirst, totally oblivious of any danger.....and then, when things go wrong, you regret it.

METAL MICKEY

That's a bit strong innit?

ERIKA

No! Example, only today you said how you'd loved to have talked to the press after the game and why not? It was your night and you wanted to talk about the inns and outs of it all and from what I saw with Ray last night, he was genuinely amazed by your analysis and understanding of the game. So it's a real shame you've weren't able to voice these-

METAL MICKEY

Was he? Was he really?

ERIKA

Yes, he was! See, you're not listening. Why do I bother?

METAL MICKEY

No, no, no. Go on. I know what you're saying. I realise I freaked the GM by going into one at the press conference and because of that she pulled the plug on me. That's done now. Alright I made a mistake. Now I wanna sort it. Come on Erika, please. Please. Go on babe.....please.

ERIKA

Just tell her you'd like to do after-match interviews talking baseball but assure her you will not be confrontational, you will not get involved and most importantly, if someone tries to mix it, you will not bite.

METAL MICKEY

Yeah..... that all?

ERIKA

Well, of course if you wanna shoot your mouth off and blow it, fine.

Beat. Exasperated.

Mike, I know what you're like and I love everything about you but whatever you do, please, think of what happened in England. Never forget that. And let me tell you, the press are already gunning for you. You know that, don't you? They cannot wait for you to slip up and I guarantee you, if you do, they'll be right there.

METAL MICKEY

I know that. You're right but sometimes I dunno, I can't help myself.

ERIKA

Well that's not good enough. Whaddya mean I dunno? Make a fucking effort. This is serious shit and I don't want you screwing up. Play ball.

EXT. CALIFORNIA ANGELS STADIUM – THE NEXT DAY.

Electric atmosphere. Camera shows Metal Mickey coming to the plate, setting himself.

JOHN MILLER

(V.O.)

And what a game he had last night. It was simply incred-

The pitcher releases the ball. Metal Mickey unloads with ferocious bat speed pulling the ball, just foul into the upper deck, left field.

JOHN MILLER

(V.O.)

-WOAH! And, that's, just foul. Man, and it did not miss by much. Boy, did he get hold of that one.

MUSIC: 'ROOM FULL OF MIRRORS' by JIMI HENDRIX.

Metal Mickey looks round to the dugout with a rueful smile and shakes his head.

Scoreboard shows: 4th innings. RANGERS 0. ANGELS 0.

Camera shows Metal Mickey at 1st base. The pitcher throws a strike.

The crowd are wild as Metal Mickey dusts himself down. He then comes off the bag and begins bowing to all sections of the crowd. Camera shows Ray and Barney in the dugout.

RAY

He's off the goddamn bag. GET BACK ON THE BAG STOOPID.

Camera shows Metal Mickey looking at the dugout, grinning madly at Ray and Barney, celebrating, pumping the air with his fist, unable to hear them.

METAL MICKEY

YEEAAHH! Am I the dogs' bollocks or what? Come on folks, unload! Gimme some of that applause. Keep it comin'. Thank-you, thank-you.

JOE MORGAN

(V.O.)

He's gonna get thrown out.

The pitcher swirls round, throwing the ball to 2nd base. The 2ND BASE UMPIRE signals out and the fielders make their way off the pitch.

JOE MORGAN

(V.O.)

Now I can honestly say, I HAVE seen it all.

Camera shows Ray shaking his head sighing in disbelief. Barney's hands are on his head.

METAL MICKEY

What the hell's going on?

2nd BASE UMPIRE

This ain't 1st base son. Ya gotta stay on the bag here.

METAL MICKEY

WHAT! NAH! I don't believe it. Hey boss, would the excuse I didn't know the rules help me out here?

2nd BASE UMPIRE

That's real funny kid.

Metal Mickey turns, puts one hand on his forehead and walks back to the dugout. Ray has his hands on his hips looking annoyed. Metal Mickey turns to the crowd pointing at Ray, putting his other hand over his mouth as if to say, "what a naughty boy." Just before he enters the dugout he stops, looks to the crowd and bows. The crowd goes crazy.

JOHN MILLER

(V.O.)

Well Joe, I dunno what the Angels coach Ray Cochran is making of all this but it looks like this kid's something of a one-man show.

MUSIC STOPS.

The camera shows scoreboard 0. 0. bottom of the 9th. Metal Mickey walks out to the plate and sets up. The 1st pitch a curveball clips the strike zone. Metal Mickey tips his helmet.

METAL MICKEY

(V.O.)

What a buzz being a pitcher. It must be fantastic, up there on your own. Sure your defence is there to back you up but at the end of the day it's you against everybody else. You're the man.

The camera shows Metal Mickey receiving another 12 pitches in quick succession.

JOHN MILLER

(V.O.)

Here we go and that's fouled back again.

JOE MORGAN

(V.O.)

This is amazing. Like two gunslingers going at it.

Metal Mickey smashes the 14th pitch.

JOHN MILLER

(V.O.)

He's going back, back and this one iiss OUTTA HERE. This ballgame is over. He's done it AGAIN. I don't believe it!

The ball goes over the centre field wall. Metal Mickey has one hand in the air as he runs round the bases. All the players emerge from the dugout to cheer him home.

JOE MORGAN

(V.O.)

Well that pitch looked like it was a sinker but it stayed up right over the plate and the Metal crushed it.

INT. CALIFORNIA ANGELS DRESSING ROOM.

Players are all around. There is a jovial atmosphere. Barney has Metal Mickey in a bear hug while Ray is giving an interview. The INTERVIEWER leans towards Metal Mickey.

INTERVIEWER

Tell me Mike, what gave you more pleasure? The grand slam yesterday or the home run today?

METAL MICKEY

Grand slams obviously are very special but this home run won it. You can't beat that. Also the pitchers today were really on their game. They both pitched great. I dunno if the umpire's strike zone was a bit tighter here, I don't think it was, no, but it was very tough trying to get these guys away.

INTERVIEWER

You faced 14 pitches in that amazing final at-bat of yours. Amazing! Mike, what are your thoughts when you're in the batters box?

METAL MICKEY

I loved that. That was great weren't it? S'what it's all about. There's a lot of second guessing going on, bit like playing poker. Basically I just try to focus and think about what the pitcher's trying to do.

Beat as he frowns and thinks.

For me it's a cardinal sin to swing and miss specially if the first pitch is outside the strike zone. That's plain daft. A walk's as good as a base-hit, maybe better. Ya gotta make the pitcher graft, get him to throw as many pitches as possible, wear him down. If you do that you're gonna help your team mates but like I said much depends on how the umpire calls it and how the pitcher himself is doing. You gotta weigh it all up, the whole lot.

Metal Mickey looks round to see Victor Steinberg next to him.

INTERVIEWER

Mr. Steinberg. You've been involved with this franchise for, I think six years now. Have you ever seen anything quite like this?

STEINBERG

Yeah. Sure. See it all the time.

Steinberg puts his arm around Metal Mickey's shoulder, moving him away.

VICTOR STEINBERG

This kid here! Nice going son.

Beat.

He kills me. He knows what the hitters should be doing. He knows what the goddamn pitchers should be doing. I mean gimme a fucking break!

Steinberg playfully slaps Metal Mickey's cheek. The camera shows the smiling faces of Ray, Barney, Metal Mickey and Victor Steinberg. The camera stays briefly on Steinberg.

INT. ERIKA'S PARENT'S HOUSE – DINING ROOM.

Erika's parents, MOM and DAD sit at either end of the dinner table. Erika and Metal Mickey sit in the middle of the table. Erika is wearing the dress she saw in Rodeo Drive.

MOM

Ok, lets just take a minute to-

As he starts talking, Erika and Mom bow their heads, Metal Mickey picks up his cutlery and starts to cut his steak.

MOM

Michael, in this house we say grace!

METAL MICKEY

Oh God! I'm sorry!

MOM

So, for what we are about to receive may the Lord make us truly thankful. Amen. Now you may begin.

Looking at Metal Mickey.

They start eating.

MOM

How are your studies going?

ERIKA

Good. I'm thinking of majoring in criminal law.

MOM

I do hope you're not too distracted now you have a new boyfriend.

Erika looks a little peeved.

DAD

C'mon Arlene. Don't go embarrassing Erika in front of Michael. She's a sensible girl. You don't give her nearly enough credit.

MOM

I care for her. She still works in that awful nightclub. I'm concerned that she spend her days studying the evil side of life and then at night she works in a den of inequity. Is there any space left for the Lord?

ERIKA

Mom, please.

There is a short silence whilst they eat.

MOM

I only hope Michael can perhaps show you some sense.

METAL MICKEY

What me? Compared to Erika I've got the brains of a rocking horse. I'm always counting on her to keep me on the straight and narrow.

Mom looks confused. Erika looks up to the ceiling. There is a short silence.

DAD

So your parents are in London Michael?

Metal Mickey with mouth full, nods.

And do you speak to them regularly?

METAL MICKEY

Yes, sure. I miss them a lot. They're great. My dad's always going on about how I should be concentrating on a career rather than gallivanting around all over the place.

MOM

He sounds like a god fearing man.

METAL MICKEY

My ol'man? What him! Not in a million years. Naah! He don't believe in all that.

Mom looks on shocked. Dad wants to chuckle. Erika wants to die. There is a short silence

MOM

Oh you remember the Macmillan's?

ERIKA

Yes. How are they?

MOM

They are very well. You know Sandra got married last spring and last month she had a little baby girl called Tina.

ERIKA

Oh that's nice, I'm really happy for them. Hope they're well.

MOM

The baby was very poorly at first, but she's much better now, thank God. They're having her christened tomorrow morning. You're father and I are invited. You'd both be most welcome to come.

ERIKA

Uh, Mike has to get back to L.A. He has a game tomorrow night.

CUT TO:

INT. A CHURCH – THE CHRISTENING.

The vicar reads a sermon. Camera switches to Erika's parents who are standing with everyone else. Erika's mother looks on happily. The camera slowly pans back revealing Erika and Metal Mickey. The camera focuses on a very frustrated Metal Mickey.

CUT TO:

EXT. FENWAY PARK.

40 games. ANGELS 22 & 18. Metal Mickey 16 HRs. Average .415. 56 for 135. 43 RBIs. (*Written bottom left hand corner of the screen*).

Camera shows Metal Mickey drop his bat and walk to first base with his first two at-bats.

METAL MICKEY

(V.O.)

People said I wouldn't find it so easy on the road. Suppose it's understandable, encountering the odd, hostile crowd. But my life was like one massive, ginormous road trip. What difference? I had far bigger problems with the rules, knowing them at least.

Metal Mickey is at the plate. A pitch goes by.

JOHN MILLER

(V.O.)

Well he's already had two walks and that's ball 1. The pitcher Rob Davis is giving him nothing. I suppose it's understandable.

The camera shows the pitcher releasing the next pitch which is way wide.

METAL MICKEY

Come on. How the hell am I supposed to hit these pitches? Listen mate, just hang on a sec. I'll go see if we got any broomsticks handy.

Turning to the dugout, shouting.

We got any fucking broomsticks back there?

Metal Mickey sets himself. The 3rd pitch nails him in the back. He throws his bat to the ground in disgust. He rubs his back as he looks to an incensed dugout. Turning to the Home Plate Umpire.

METAL MICKEY

What's the story? No one gonna say anything?

HOME PLATE UMPIRE

I didn't like it Mike, but you showed him up bad, otherwise he's in trouble. Good thing to take your walk now.

METAL MICKEY

Okay. Can I call time chief? I'm just gonna go and have a word.

Walks up to Rob Davis.

Ya know, I can't understand. Why d'ya wanna show you got serious asshole trouble pitching like the biggest toss-pot in the world?

ROB DAVIS

Got some fucking lip boy. Careful now. Gonna get you in serious shit.

METAL MICKEY

Oh yeah? Well, I am just shaking in my fucking boots.

ROB DAVIS

Fuck you! Get outta my face you little asshole!

Metal Mickey looks to the dugout bluffing but quickly pivots and delivers a fierce left into the pitcher's stomach who keels over badly winded. He begins to look up only to see an over-arm right crashing onto his left jaw. Rob Davis's torso flops in a heap on the mound. Both dugouts look on in amazement. The Home Plate Umpire throws Metal Mickey out of the game. As he walks off Ray and Barney give him a pat on the back as do all the players.

EXT. FENWAY PARK - PLAYERS EXIT.

Metal Mickey is jostled by reporters who are hurling questions as he leaves the ground.

REPORTERS

Why d'ya hit Rob Davis? / Do you regret what you did? / Are you happy with what you did? / Come on Mike, say something.

The jostling continues as Metal Mickey continues walking toward the car park.

REPORTER

Whaddya say to him?

METAL MICKEY

I told him he was pitching great.

REPORTER

What d'he say to you?

METAL MICKEY

He said, 'I hope you hit a home run'.

REPORTERS

Aaahh come on Mike. / Give us a break. / What d'he really say.

METAL MICKEY

Stops and looks round at them.

Look, in the words of the great Oliver Hardy 'I have nothing to say'.

EXT. EDISON FIELD.

60 games. ANGELS 32 & 28. Metal Mickey 24 HRs. Average .399. 81 for 203. 68 RBIs. (*Written bottom left hand corner of the screen.*) *Metal Mickey is taking batting practise.*

METAL MICKEY

(V.O.)

The club was inundated with calls offering me to do all sorts. Everyone kept telling me I'd make a bomb if I had an agent but I dunno about that. As far as I'm concerned most sportsman are lucky just to be doing what they enjoy but to earn absolute lumps in the process as well! Who needs 10 million a year? It's obscene. Yet some celebrities earn even more by endorsing products they'd never dream of using. It's wrong. I don't like that! Screw commercials and endorsements! I understand anyone wanting security, a life free of stress and worry, but this lust for money makes me sick. As for those agents! The day one of those rats takes a slice of my action is the day I'm a fucking Chinaman.

CUT TO:

INT. GENERAL MANAGER'S OFFICE.

Cynthia Jonsson is at her desk, talking on the phone as Victor Steinberg walks in.

CYNTHIA JONSSON

That's a good idea. Look, I'll get back to you in a minute. Sure.

Puts down the phone and looks up.

Victor really, I think you're worrying for nothing. It's gonna be okay.

VICTOR STEINBERG

S'that so? You know I'm beginning to think that you think too much at the wrong time and don't think when you should be. Like this fucking deal. I must have been mad listening to you.

CYNTHIA JONSSON

Wait a minute, I helped negotiate but you agreed to everything. Okay so he's on a roll but it doesn't mean he'll be breaking records.

VICTOR STEINBERG

Easy for YOU to say. Let me tell you something. The fact he could cost ME 65 mill isn't the problem. You believe that? What stinks is at the end of the season he could just disappear and we got nothing. What happens then? What you gonna say? You gonna pick up some of the tab? Now listen, the networks are going crazy for this kid. They're driving me nuts. We need an exclusive. Offer a hundred grand, something like that. I don't care. Just get him to do it.

CYNTHIA JONSSON

But we've already tried. He doesn't want to. He won't.

VICTOR STEINBERG

I don't give a shit. Try harder, a damn-sight harder.

CYNTHIA JONSSON

He won't do it. Look I don't know why but he's got this thing about chat show hosts. He absolutely detests them.

VICTOR STEINBERG

Bullfuckingshit! What the fuck do I wanna hear what he likes or doesn't like, the little cockroach? Who the fuck does he think he is? Millions of dollars depend on him sticking his stoopid, motherfucking face on TV. Do it or I'll find someone that will.

Victor Steinberg storms out of the office leaving a nervous Cynthia Jonsson pondering.

INT. GENERAL MANAGER'S OFFICE.

CYNTHIA JONSSON

We have a predicament. Our owner has interests with CBS, ESPN and he's under enormous pressure to get you to do an exclusive on TV.

METAL MICKEY

You really want me on TV? I don't get it. What happened to let's just keep a low profile and you were right, all along. We're smack-bang in the pennant race. Everything's great. I thought we've been through this.

CYNTHIA JONSSON

Yes I know but that's not the point. In marketable terms you're an absolute goldmine. You're selling yourself way, way short.

METAL MICKEY

I really do appreciate your concern but I'm fine. Look I'm not trying to be funny but why's everyone making themselves so busy?

CYNTHIA JONSSON

Okay. Michael, right now you can do no wrong but you will find it increasingly difficult to maintain this position. There is no getting away from it. You're a big

star now and the public want to see more, much more of you. Soon they'll demand it and if you don't oblige they'll feel you're actually snubbing them and that's when the press will turn the screw.

METAL MICKEY

Ahh Cynthia, come on.

CYNTHIA JONSSON

Come on what!

Looking at Metal Mickey who shrugs.

You go about your business in your own inimitable way. Refusing an agent and then insisting on a contract where big money is attained only if you're sensational. Everyone, including me, thought you were crazy. What happens? After 60 games you lead the Majors in every batting department. No rookie's ever made this kind of impact and right now you may not be the biggest star but you are the most sought after by a mile. Now this isn't going away. You've got to do this.

CUT TO:

INT. COUNTRY CLUB RESTAURANT. EVENING.

Erika, Addy, Jimmy, Jasper and Bill are seated together in a plush restaurant.

ADDY

He got a million dollars just for making the all-star game? Wow! Well lucky you.
Prodding Erika. They give a girly look to each other.

JIMMY

Listen. He didn't just make the all-star game. He got more votes than anyone by a long way. Many experts believe he could be one of the greatest hitters of all time. It's, it's just incredible.

BILL

Look there's no question he's on a roll. Ya ever consider he don't even know what he's doing? Wait till he realises. He ain't gonna keep these numbers up. No way. It's impossible.

JASPER

He's the best hitter I've ever seen. Ever.

JIMMY

Right. No doubt at all.

BILL

He's asleep. You see what happens when he wakes up.

JIMMY

Bill you're so wrong. My dad was talking to Ray. With base stealing, running they coach him but hitting; they don't wanna go near him.... and get this. Barney overheard him giving advice to a team-mate who was in a slump. Metal was showing him just where he was going wrong. I mean, is that crazy? And let me tell you something - they're listening!

BILL

Well the first time we met I thought he was an asshole and I must admit fame hasn't changed him. He's still an asshole.

ERIKA

So why you here Bill? You like freeloading? You know this act of yours is really not funny anymore. It's become a bit boring.

Bill is about to respond but Metal Mickey returns to the table.

METAL MICKEY

Sweet as a nut eh.

CUT TO:

EXT. ALL STARS GAME.

The camera pans round a packed stadium.

WINK DINKERSON

(V.O.)

Hiya folks! This is Wink Dinkerson on KRUT radio. Today is All Star day and boy I've never felt the electricity, the emotion, the buzz that's going through this city right now. Yesterday was the amazing spectacle of the home run derby and earlier today we got a few words with the winner of the event, Angels new hitting sensation, the great Metal Mickey.

METAL MICKEY

(V.O.)

Why thank you very much. You know I'm just having a ball. Everyone's been terrific. What can I say? I love it here. I love this game. Thank you all.

WINK DINKERSON

(V.O.)

So how do you compare it to cricket?

METAL MICKEY

(V.O.)

That's difficult. I can't really. There's just no comparison.

WINK DINKERSON

(V.O.)

Really? I'm intrigued you say that.

METAL MICKEY

(V.O.)

Why? Why's that?

WINK DINKERSON

(V.O.)

Well being English, cricket's your game, part of your heritage. Baseball is part of

ours. You know, come on, don't you feel there's any sort of connection?

METAL MICKEY

(V.O.)

I'm not so sure what you're trying to get at. I suppose there's a vague similarity in the fact both sports involve hitting a ball as far as possible. The big difference is really in how the games are run. You do it well; we most certainly don't. Baseball has an elected commissioner who can be held accountable. Cricket administrators though are appointed by...I dunno - you tell me. Only time they lose their jobs is when they croak.

WINK DINKERSON

Laughing. (V.O.)

And finally Mike, from where I'm sitting you sure seem to have taken stardom in your stride and that's great man. You're a straight guy.....

METAL MICKEY

Butting in. (V.O.)

Thanks. Thanks a lot. Appreciate it.

WINK DINKERSON

(V.O.)

.....So how would you like to answer your critics?

METAL MICKEY

(V.O.)

You know four years ago I felt untouchable. I didn't realise my brain was in no-man's land. All of a sudden the bubble burst and I hit the ground with such an almighty thud it damn near knocked me bandy. Now, the one thing I ain't gonna be doing is making the same mistake twice. No way. This time my feet are firmly cemented to the ground.

Players are lined up on the field.

ANNOUNCER

(V.O.)

Cheering and whistling of the crowd gets louder and louder.

Batting number 3, leading the majors with 33 HRs. 92 RBIs and a phenomenal 111 for 275, giving him an incredible batting average of .404, the American League's designated hitter, Michael Blackmore.

The crowd go wild as Metal Mickey emerges from the dugout. He puts his hand in the air acknowledging the crowd, walks towards the manager of the American League team, Joe Torre. He shakes his hand, a high five with the first hitter and a hug with the second. The crowd rise to their feet giving Metal Mickey a standing ovation. He steps out and bows, puts both hands to his mouth and blows kisses to the crowd, nodding in appreciation. Camera shows Erika, Addy, Jasper, Billy & Jimmy all cheering in the crowd.

INT. 'THE DALE WASHINGTON SHOW' RECORDING STUDIOS.

Metal Mickey enters the studio. The show's producer, JESSICA OWEN, is busy talking with her assistant JODY. She looks down at her watch in frustration.

JESSICA OWEN

Oh Michael, hi! Nice to see you. Jessica Owen. How ya doing?

METAL MICKEY

Fine thanks.

JESSICA OWEN

Good. Excuse me if I seem on edge but it's a total mad-house here. Dale's late.... as usual. His phone's engaged. Look, I don't want you to think I'm rude but would it be okay if my assistant shows you around?

Jody and Metal Mickey walk away. Jessica Owen frustrated, looks at her watch. At 6.40pm, DALE WASHINGTON appears in the studios nonchalantly, talking loudly on his mobile phone. Tall, slim, well dressed. He is smarmy and very camp.

DALE WASHINGTON

I told him. I let him know who was boss! What an asshole!

Seeing Jessica Owen glaring, tapping her watch.

Yeah, yeah, I know. Look I gotta go. People on my back. Ciao!

JESSICA OWEN

Where the hell have you been?

DALE WASHINGTON

Oh chill out toots! I'm here, okay! Stop stressing. Is that baseball player here yet?

The studio band begin the theme music to 'The Dale Washington Show'. The camera pans around the applauding audience, the band and finally Dale Washington who grins inanely, points to someone in the audience, poses and pulls silly faces. The audience laugh.

DALE WASHINGTON

Good evening folks and welcome. Welcome to the Dale Washington Show. Oh yeah. Tonight we have the most promising, brilliant rising young star of baseball. Please put your hands together. Michael Blackmore.

Metal Mickey walks onstage, does a light hearted impression of Dale Washington making a face and pointing to somebody in the audience. Shaking hands, they sit down.

DALE WASHINGTON

Now first I wanna congratulate you. You're the best. Man, how you do it? I ain't never seen anyone give press conferences like the way you do.

The audience erupt. Metal Mickey nods, smiling. Washington looks pleased with himself.

DALE WASHINGTON

Now I can understand the criticism you levelled at the press and I'm sure many people agree with some of the things you said but why risk opting for such an unusual contract? You the adventurous type?

METAL MICKEY

Yes, I think I am. Life's more exciting if you take chances. In any case how can

players be encouraged with lumpy guarantees? Dishing out long-term contracts I believe is daft because it kills hunger. This would never happen if everyone had performance related contracts and why not? The better you perform, the more you get. Perfect innit?

DALE WASHINGTON

Well, you sure are putting up the numbers.

METAL MICKEY

And does any player have more incentive than me. Just imagine if I'm at the plate with 59 homers and 149 RBI'S to my name and I smack one out the ground. All of a sudden, hello 6 mill! What could be better than that? Having fun, leaving good memories behind. Yeah, that's me.

The audience laughs and applauds.

DALE WASHINGTON.

That would be quite something. However, over here, people happen to believe, I think I'm right in saying, money makes the world go round. Success is measured by how much you ultimately make.

METAL MICKEY

For sure and that's not just here, that's everywhere.

DALE WASHINGTON

Well then. Don't you care about that?

METAL MICKEY

Everyone cares but to what extent. I ain't gonna drive myself round the bend trying to extract every last bean. This mentality where ya gotta dig out as much as you can all the time s'no good. I don't like it.

The audience applauds loudly.

DALE WASHINGTON

Okay. Fine. Do you derive pleasure from making pitchers look foolish?

METAL MICKEY

No. Not at all. Why d'ya say that?

DALE WASHINGTON

Oh come on now. Hitters are supposed to hate pitchers and vice-versa.

METAL MICKEY

Dale, I am competitive as hell but all we're doing is playing a game. Understand what you're trying to say but hates' a little strong. At the end of the day we're all bros. We love each other!

The audience laugh.

DALE WASHINGTON

So, you love Rob Davis?

The audience laugh loudly and for longer.

METAL MICKEY

Yeah, he's smack bang at the top of my Christmas card list!

Half beat, more serious.

What happened between Rob and I was personal. That's over with and I tell ya now, pitchers have a tough job. It's easy being a hitter. I've got eight team-mates helping me out. Any hitter can go 0 for 4 but his team can still win. The pitcher though doesn't have this luxury. If he don't deliver the plug's pulled. No, anyone brave enough to get up on the mound truly deserves respect.

DALE WASHINGTON

Yeah, ya gotta be brave with those right-hooks flying around. Man!

The audience laugh. Metal Mickey looks a little peeved.

DALE WASHINGTON

Well, now, tell us about your cricket career. Weren't you destined to be a star, even though it lasted, your career that is, just two days.

METAL MICKEY

Thanks for putting it like that. Yeah well it's true. What can I say? Two days, two months, two years. What's the difference? What's important is WHY it happened but nobody seems to care about that. All I ever get are remarks insinuating, 'oh look, there's the loony who threw it all away' and all the media ever want to do is to put the boot in.

DALE WASHINGTON

So you blame the press? They were responsible for your demise in England.

METAL MICKEY

Beat. Shakes his head, looking a bit dejected.

Blame? I dunno. They didn't help. Ya know, I really don't get it. How the press hinder the very reason of their creation, to announce news. The very last thing they need are punters sitting on the fence dishing out a constant stream of run-of-the-mill P.R. drivel but that's exactly what happens because whenever someone's brave enough to say anything worthwhile or make a brave prediction, they're ambushed. You speak the truth, straight away it's 'What! What he say? Really? He said that? He didn't say that did he? Oh well, the people down in West Tobago ain't gonna like that one. Man, this could crucify him.' If you're proved right people hate to admit it but when you're wrong, god forbid if you're wrong your arsehole's seriously hung out to dry. It's like Mandingo's just waiting there, ready to drill you.

Camera switches to a surprised Jessica Owen who is watching the show from the wings.

JESSICA OWEN

Go for a break. Go for a break.

Camera cuts back to Dale Washington.

DALE WASHINGTON

Time sure flies when you're having fun. Stay tooned. We'll be right back.

The audience applauds.

JESSICA OWEN

(V.O.)

Okay, were off air. Hey guys, come on. Take it easy now.

METAL MICKEY

What's the big idea? What ya doing? I said-

Dale Washington looks round nonchalantly.

METAL MICKEY

-what the fuck are you doing?..... Listen, from now on, you ask the fucking questions, I'll give the motherfucking answers, otherwise all hell's gonna break loose in one big fucker of a way, I'm telling ya.

CUT TO:

INT. VICTOR STEINBERG'S HOME.

Victor Steinberg is on the phone.

VICTOR STEINBERG

He's fuckin' nuts! Yeah, yeah, maybe you're right. We could'a caught a break. We'll have to wait and see but this situation's a bit fucked up.....I know. I know. I know that. What d'ya want me from me?

Beat, with a fed-up look.

Look, can't you see it? The way he's going.... He's digging his own grave for Christ sake?..... Yeah, yeah, yeah. Catch you later.

Victor Steinberg hangs up and looks at the TV. The camera focuses on his serious face.

CUT TO:

INT. THE DALE WASHINGTON SHOW.

The camera cuts back to Metal Mickey and Dale Washington.

METAL MICKEY

Still got the raving hump with the way they fucked my career. Last thing I need is anyone taking the piss about it, alright.

DALE WASHINGTON

Unconcerned, leans over, looking chillingly at Metal Mickey.

Listen asshole, I've had stars on this show that make you look this big.

Showing two fingers with a small gap.

No puke kid, baseball player, whatever, tells me anything. Got that. You better keep that big fucking mouth of yours shut. Just play ball, capiche?

METAL MICKEY

You fucking what!

JESSICA OWEN
(V.O.)

Okay, we're back on air, 3,2,1.

METAL MICKEY

Listen prick, I ain't the kinda guy you wanna be-

DALE WASHINGTON
Cutting in.

Welcome back folks to our exclusive with Michael Blackmore.

To Metal Mickey.

So, who are the people you most admire?

METAL MICKEY

Errr what! Uhhummmnnn definitely errrr, bomb disposal experts, yeah.

DALE WASHINGTON

Now that is interesting. I can relate to that but it just goes to shows ya. I'd have thought you'd have chosen a musician, like Jimi Hendrix perhaps.

METAL MICKEY

Yeah maybe but how many bombs did he defuse?

The audience laugh.

DALE WASHINGTON

Okay, okay. Let's get it together now. You never wanted to be a bomb disposal expert did you? Weren't you in a band called "The Ugly Rumours"?

METAL MICKEY

No Dale, we were "The Ugly Ducklings".

DALE WASHINGTON

Whatever, either way you never made it....

METAL MICKEY

I never thought we would. We were complete crap! I look back now and think, Jeez! Knocking back the booze, smoking j's left, right and centre. We were all over the gaff. I didn't know where I was half the time. Thing is when I think about it I'm so glad I never ended up in that horrible business, full of such thieving, conniving scumbags..... and just look at the music? I can't believe how bad most of the popular stuff is.

DALE WASHINGTON

Yeah? Like what?

METAL MICKEY

Like rap. How can you even call that music? It's complete and utter garbage. How people actually buy it I'll never know. Look at the Grammy's. 95% of the awards

go to posing pratts. They're not musicians. They're a joke! Whole thing's a joke.

Some members of the audience heckle, some applaud.

DALE WASHINGTON

That's your opinion.

METAL MICKEY

Well of course it is! Whose opinion did you think it was?

Looking behind.

Look, the music industry's run by these awful money-grabbing leaches who don't give a damn about the quality of their product. All they care about is wonga. Musicians that can play get little recognition. It's not right.

Some of the audience applaud.

DALE WASHINGTON

So you took drugs then?

METAL MICKEY

Look the days of me walking round like a zombie are definitely over, alright? Booze, drugs, all that's been knocked on the head.... long ago.

CUT TO:

INT: JIMMY'S HOME.

Erika, Jimmy, Addy, Bill and Jasper are watching the show. All except Bill have worried looks on their faces. Camera focuses on a distraught Erika who has her hands on her face.

CUT TO:

INT: THE DALE WASHINGTON SHOW.

DALE WASHINGTON

I'd like to bet you're not the praying type. You religious?

METAL MICKEY

And if I ain't, s'that bad? What about you - you religious?

DALE WASHINGTON

Aaahhh no. No way Mikey. You ain't gonna get me on that one.

METAL MICKEY

Typical. If a believer goes on TV, he can't wait to thank the lord and spread the word but can an atheist do that. No chance. Anyone who says religion's a figment of man's imagination has probably got a 50/50 chance of being ironed out by some moronic freak. Why can't I say there isn't a shred of evidence for the case of religion and all it ever does is cause trouble?

DALE WASHINGTON

I think you just did.

METAL MICKEY

Yeah, so I did. Good. Look if you want to believe in religion, fine, okay but is it right that children of religious fanatics never have a choice? Why should indoctrination rule? Everyone has the right to think, surely.

The audience applaud.

DALE WASHINGTON

Well it looks like you've blown your chances of becoming a politician.

METAL MICKEY

Great! Terrific. Last thing I want. Power-mad politicians make me puke with all their lies and bullshit. All they care about is re-election and back-handers from Mr. Big Business who simply just has to protect his interests. It's criminal what's going on and it's gonna have disastrous consequences. You wait.

DALE WASHINGTON

Come on now. This is a bit much. Mankind's achieved great things.

METAL MICKEY

I don't deny that but we can achieve much more. We're blowing it. For instance, why have we suppressed the development of solar energy? There's bundles of it, a never-ending supply that's non-polluting and FREE! Why? I'll tell ya. Oil and gas companies simply wanna keep making billions. So what if fossil fuels screw up the environment and the worst thing about it is we know this is going on. Bad enough that world leaders don't give a damn but do we? Our two biggest problems are the protection of the environment and over-population, not quarterly profits! What a joke. It's very worrying. Everyone should be worried.

DALE WASHINGTON

Oh, I'm worried alright. Terrified. Thanks for making everyone so depressed. Man, it sure looks like Armageddon's upon us folks.

Metal Mickey looks perplexed as the audience laugh. The camera shows Dale Washington smiling profusely, shaking his head. The laughter fades as the camera pans the audience.

DALE WASHINGTON

So finally, do you prefer England or America?

METAL MICKEY

England's my home but I love my job, I got a terrific girlfriend, I'm really pleased to be here and I hope America is happy I stay.

DALE WASHINGTON

Turns to the camera.

-that'll reassure all baseball fans! Okay. Right. Thanks to Michael Blackmore for an evening of such interesting conversation. Thanks for being a great audience!

Laughter and loud applause. The band play the theme tune. Jessica Owen and her assistant rush out onto the studio floor. Metal Mickey ponders and then gets up.

JESSICA OWEN

Guys, that was TERRIFIC. Way to go.

DALE WASHINGTON

Oh really. Huh! Glad you're happy. I have to interview these jerks.

METAL MICKEY

WHAT! ARE YOU MAD? You tried to fuck everything up ya fucking prick!
Taking the piss all the time. What a sappy bastard.

Dale Washington's furious. Jessica Owen moves in. Camera shows the audience watching.

JESSICA OWEN

Wait. Look, wait a minute. This show has just blown everyone away. We did it.
We've smashed the ratings record. We did it.

DALE WASHINGTON

You all should appreciate what I had to do out there. I mean I saved that show
man. I saved it.

JESSICA OWEN

I know. You did it. You were great. Just great.

METAL MICKEY

Am I actually listening to this SHIT? I can't believe it. Listen honey-bun, the
reason you had it off tonight was because of ME, not because of this useless,
slimy turd. Armageddon, my fucking asshole.

DALE WASHINGTON

What did you say you little shit. You fuck-

Dale Washington goes for Metal Mickey but is held by Jessica Owen and her assistant.

METAL MICKEY

You heard. Oh yeah? Don't make me laugh.

DALE WASHINGTON

-YOU FUCK! I'll kill ya, you little fucker.

JESSICA OWEN

Dale. Stop it. STOP! DON'T!

Dale Washington breaks free and moves towards Metal Mickey. Quickly on the back foot, into position, Metal Mickey watches carefully and ducks under a wild right hand. Dale Washington swings a left. Metal Mickey ducks again. Dale Washington gathers himself briefly and swings a right hook which Metal Mickey again, easily ducks under. They look at each other briefly. Dale Washington advances. Suddenly with ferocious hand speed Metal Mickey zaps a rasping, straight right jab, flush onto Dale Washington's nose.

DALE WASHINGTON

Stunned, staggering back, his right hand on his nose.
Aaaaaahhhh! Aaahh!

Blood emerges from between his hand.

OH MY GOD! Oh my god!

METAL MICKEY

Does it hurt? Does it? Yeah? FUCKING GOOD JOB!

Dale Washington drops into his chair still clutching his nose. Jessica Owen helps him.

DALE WASHINGTON

He, he, he's broke my fucking nose. I'm bleeding man.

METAL MICKEY

Fucking great. Hope you fucking haemorrhage ya prick.

DALE WASHINGTON

I'm gonna have your ass. I'm gonna get you, YOU LITTLE FUCK.

EXT. THE STUDIO CAR PARK.

Metal Mickey strides to his TVR. Jessica Owen comes running out of the studio after him.

JESSICA OWEN

Mike, wait a minute, please. WAIT. MIKE!

METAL MICKEY

Finally looking round, sighing.

What?

JESSICA OWEN

I need to speak. We gotta have a talk.

METAL MICKEY

Gimme a break will you. I ain't got nothing. Haven't you had enough?

JESSICA OWEN

Mike, please. I'm outta here in five minutes.

Beat. Metal Mickey has a resigned look.

Look, Dale's an asshole. I know it. What do you want me to say? I just wanna talk okay. Come on. I'll buy you a coffee.

INT. A HOTEL BAR.

Camera shows Jessica Owen and Metal Mickey sitting near the bar of an uptown trendy hotel. The table is empty apart from Metal's car keys and a single rose in a small vase. Jessica Owen's body language is consistently suggestive and her behaviour is flirtatious.

JESSICA OWEN

You okay?

METAL MICKEY

Well no. I can't honestly say I am. I didn't want to do that show and I'll tell ya now, straight, no more. That's what we've come here for, yeah... I know. Forget

it, alright? No possible chance. Just forget it.

Beat.

In fact, I don't even know what the hell I'm doing here.

JESSICA OWEN

Oh! Well. I'm so sorry I bothered you. I wish I never troubled you-

METAL MICKEY

-Look, I'm sorry alright. Please excuse me. I didn't mean that, really I didn't. I'm just a bit wound up. I'm sorry.

JESSICA OWEN

It's okay. You think I don't know what it's like when the pressure's on? It's good to get things out the system.

Immediately gesturing to a barman. To Metal Mickey.

You wanna drink? Scotch?

METAL MICKEY

I dunno if I should. I really feel I could use one.

Looking unsure

Mad. Half an hour ago I told everyone I'd given up drinking.

JESSICA OWEN

I won't tell. It'll help ya chill out. Relax.

To the barman.

Two double scotches please.

Metal Mickey looks at the barman making the drinks, then stares at Jessica Owen.

METAL MICKEY

(V.O.)

Sure. The Dale Washington show was a major turning point but this was the defining moment. Booze to steal your brains, an experienced blonde bomber that from every single possible crevasse gushed sex appeal and the fact I was still unaware that when you're in the public eye they own a large chunk of you. It just hadn't sunk in.

The drinks arrive. The camera suddenly assumes a position further away, angled to the table. There is a camera click and the shot freezes momentarily in black and white.

JESSICA OWEN

Well! What can I say? You were great. That was a fantastic show. Now, I don't know you but it's obvious you're different. The way you handle yourself, just listening to you out there talking about things with such.....honesty! You have this passion, this incredible belief that you are right and everybody should be listening to you.

METAL MICKEY

Actually, I don't think that at all. I promise. It's just, I can't help it. It's the way I talk. I know people hate the truth.

JESSICA OWEN

Yes but that's not the impression you give. And the way you get so annoyed if your point of view is dismissed, so disappointed if someone disagrees with you! I've never heard anyone go on like you.

METAL MICKEY

It's not that bad is it?

JESSICA OWEN

Laughing as they drink.

So I'm gonna give it to you straight. No bullshit, none at all.

Moves closer, looking serious.

What you've got to understand is people DID listen. Whether you like it or not, give a damn about ratings or whatever, all the people wanted was to watch and to listen to you talk. That's all. Now, tell me if you think it's wise to ignore something as special as that?

Metal Mickey looks at Jessica Owen and then knocks back his drink. Jessica Owen gestures to the barman. The camera assumes a position further away, but at a different angle. There is another camera click. The shot freezes, momentarily in black and white.

JESSICA OWEN

You're a natural. You can earn millions and it would be a fun venture for both of us. Mike, come on. At least think about it.

The barman brings Metal Mickey another drink.

METAL MICKEY

I try to think about-

Picking up his drink, looks at his glass.

-everything. Number one, don't need the money. Number two, don't need other any pressures. Number three-

Frowning, then gulps his drink down.

I dunno if there is a number three.

Grinning in a drunken manner.

The camera again assumes a position further away, but at a different angle. There is another camera click and again the shot freezes momentarily in black and white. Jessica Owen and a now drunk Metal Mickey are talking, laughing and drinking.

METAL MICKEY

Okay. You know it's been..... fun..... but I really have to split.

Jessica Owen quickly slips his keys off the table.

MUSIC: 'FREE SPIRIT' by JIMI HENDRIX.

METAL MICKEY

Fiddling around with his pockets.

Where'd I put my damn keys? Oh man.

Another camera click. The shot freezes momentarily in black and white and then again, showing Jessica Owen with her arm around Metal Mickey leaving the bar.

INT. HOTEL BEDROOM.

Jessica Owen lets go of Metal Mickey who flops onto the double bed.

METAL MICKEY

Whoooops! Oh no.

JESSICA OWEN

You okay?

METAL MICKEY

Yeah I'm sweet.....well not quite..... bit gone.

Eyes closed, breaking into laughter

I'm completely and utterly.....

Jessica Owen takes her suit off to reveal a sexy white lacy lingerie with suspenders.

METAL MICKEY

Ooooh very, very nice.

JESSICA OWEN

You men are all the same. Look at you - wiped out. Don't suppose there's much left in that tank of yours?

METAL MICKEY

Got it wrong babe. Women are all the same - too quick to jump to the wrong conclusions.

JESSICA OWEN

Oh do we now?

Jessica Owen seductively walks to the bed and kisses Metal Mickey slowly on the lips.

METAL MICKEY

After a while he pulls away.

Jessica, I got a girlfriend. What am I doing.....I can't do.....

JESSICA OWEN

Putting one finger on his lips.

Shhhhh.

Jessica Owen begins to slide her head down Metal Mickey's chest. The screen blacks out. The next morning we see MM alone in the bed still asleep. A window has been opened. It's approaching mid-day. The camera focuses briefly on MM's car keys.

EXT. RAY'S CAR.

Ray is driving with Metal Mickey to the California Angels baseball ground.

RAY

Goddamn phone hasn't stopped. Talk about rising to the bait! What a stoopid asshole. I mean I knew this guy was a bit crazy but this crazy?

Beat

Couldn't believe what I was seeing. Made an opinionated person look like Little Bo fucking Peep. Thought I was watching a goddamn Kamikaze pilot at work.

METAL MICKEY

I was on a fucking chat show. What did you expect me to do? Keep my fucking gob shut? So I give it some verbal. Who gives a fucking toss?

RAY

Don't believe you! All shit's gonna fucking break loose ya idiot, talking bout religion like that. Crazy motherfucker! What the hell's wrong with you? Only time you mention religion is when you wanna fuck it up the ass.

METAL MICKEY

Aaahh come on, you think I slagged off religion there? Gimme a break! I never got outta first fucking gear. I had to hold myself back.

RAY

Aaaahh you call that holding yourself back! Oh I'm sorry - Jesus fucking Christ - he was holding himself back!

Beat. Ray shakes his head.

You know what John Lennon said when the Beatles had the whole fuckin' world?

Pausing to look at Metal Mickey.

He said they were more fucking popular than Jesus fucking Christ.

Open-eyed, nodding.

Yeah.

METAL MICKEY

Did he by fuck?

RAY

Yeah, can you believe that?

METAL MICKEY

Course I believe it. He was telling the fucking truth weren't he? Those fuckers were so popular they could 'ave sold records on the fucking moon.

RAY

Yeah well they burnt them in one big motherfucker of a bonfire!

METAL MICKEY

Oh did they now.

RAY

Yeah they fucking did.

METAL MICKEY

Who?

RAY

Who? How the fuck do I know? Who gives a shit, who? My fucking ass who. All I know is they weren't too happy about it.

METAL MICKEY

Well bollocks to them! Stupid thing to do anyway - burn records! Fuckin' joke! Look everyone's got opinions - no one's forced into believing or even listening. I couldn't give a shit if anyone watches or not, but listen, I ain't no fucking garden gnome. I can't go on TV and sit there like a plum and talk bollocks all night long. In any case, aren't there a million fucking channels on the box? If you don't like the fucking coup then switch the fuck over. Fucking paralysed or something! Fact is you say anything you're gonna piss someone off but I ain't stoppin' anyone. Anyone can say what the fuck they like, that is unless there's a different fucking rule about freedom of fucking speech?

Looking at Ray.

There a different rule about freedom of speech? Is there? Yeah?

The camera shows Ray with a pained expression.

MUSIC STOPS.

EXT. YANKEE STADIUM.

The camera shows Metal Mickey whacking a pitch. Looking up pensively, its touch and go but the outfielder makes an incredible catch. Metal Mickey watches in total disbelief.

METAL MICKEY

(V.O.)

Things started to go seriously pear-shaped. That night I thought I smacked a 3 run homer but the right fielder did a salmon leap and snatched the ball from way behind the fence. I felt like I'd been mugged. Then to add insult to injury, the pitcher goes and nails me. Boy it stung. I was jumping up and down like a blue arse fly. That was it! I saw red and stayed at the plate.

Metal Mickey is hit on his backside. He drops his bat to the ground, walking away gingerly, returning to the plate, rubbing his bum. The HOME PLATE UMPIRE, a true New Yorker, points to first base and gestures for Metal Mickey to go there. The crowd is boisterous. Metal Mickey instead picks up the bat and stays at the plate.

HOME PLATE UMPIRE

Eh? What ya doin'?

METAL MICKEY

Aaaahh this is not right! No way. He can't get out of it like that. I'm staying. Bollocks to this!

HOME PLATE UMPIRE

Ya kidding? What's that supposed to mean, staying! Heard of the goddamn rules? Come on. Get yer butt over to first-

METAL MICKEY

-Rules! Rules! What, he's allowed to aim for my fucking asshole?

The umpire tries to get a word in, pointing.

Where's it say he's allowed to throw the ball half-way up my ring-piece? Damn silly rule if ya ask-

In the meantime Barney's marched out of the dug-out.

BARNEY

-Would someone tell me what the fuck is going on?

HOME PLATE UMPIRE

He don't wanna go to foist. Somethin' the matter with him!

BARNEY

What d'ya mean don't wanna go to first?

Home plate umpire turns away waving his hands in the air, fed up.

Mike, listen, I like you. In fact, I like you a helluva lot, okay. So do me a big, fat, fucking favour and get your ass over to first base!

METAL MICKEY

This is fucking marvellous!

Metal Mickey slings his bat to the ground and makes his way to first base.

HOME PLATE UMPIRE

It's about fucking time you taught him the goddamn rules.

BARNEY

Aahh gimme a fucking break will ya?

Turning to the dugout.

Seeing is fucking believing. (Definitely too old for this.)

INT. THE PRESS ROOM EDISON FIELD.

Camera shows Cynthia Jonsson giving a statement to the awaiting press.

CYNTHIA JONSSON

Over the background noise.

Okay, I will read a short statement. Then I'll take some questions.

Beat. There is quiet.

Though everyone has the right to their opinions, it is unacceptable for any player to air them in public, most especially if those opinions are likely to be considered offensive. We would therefore like to offer our sincerest apologies for any offence that may have been caused by any of Michael Blackmore's remarks. We also deeply regret the very X-rated nature of the language used on the Dale Washington show. The California Angels appreciate and understand many people were extremely upset and offended by what occurred.

Beat.

However no further disciplinary action will be taken. It would not be appropriate for Mr. Blackmore continuously rejected offers to appear on television. Only after repeated requests, largely due to the intense public pressure that had built up, did he finally agree to do the show. Mr. Blackmore has the full support of the club. We now consider the matter closed.

REPORTER

Has there been any outside pressure to discipline Mr. Blackmore?

CYNTHIA JONSSON

As I said, we will not be taking any disciplinary-

The camera continues to show the General Manager talking to the press.

METAL MICKEY

(V.O.)

It was frightening. It happened so quick. Everything was sweet, I was floating and then all of a sudden, I was in a minefield.

EXT. KANSAS CITY GROUND – OUTSIDE THE STADIUM.

Camera shows a crowd of people with banners reading: ‘NOT ANGELS, BUT DEVILS’ / ‘GO HOME’ / ‘METAL MICKEY IS SATAN’.

Metal Mickey is being jostled by reporters who are noisily throwing questions at him. He looks around apprehensively, shaking his head.

EXT. KANSAS CITY GROUND – INSIDE THE STADIUM.

Camera shows Metal Mickey swinging and missing, swinging and missing and striking out, whilst there is a lot of booing. As Metal Mickey walks off he looks up at the crowd confused and upset by the heckling.

INT. CYNTHIA JONSSON’S OFFICE.

Metal Mickey enters Cynthia Jonsson’s office. He closes the door. They look at each other.

CYNTHIA JONSSON

We’ve got problems Mike.

Gesturing at a sack.

METAL MICKEY

What?

Looking back at Cynthia, realising.

Oh no.

CYNTHIA JONSSON

Yes. And it’s coming in thick and fast. There are good ones but some of the bad ones are really nasty. Here, see for yourself.

METAL MICKEY

I don’t believe this. My god!

Placing his hands behind his head. Breathes out heavily.

Why’s all this happening? What have I said to make people so.....

CYNTHIA JONSSON

Many states in the Bible belt don’t want you there and..... there’s genuine

concern for you're safetyit could be at risk in Kansas and Texas.

METAL MICKEY

WHAT!

CYNTHIA JONSSON

Didn't you see the reaction yesterday? It was a nightmare and if I were you Mike, I wouldn't be going around saying what politicians should or shouldn't be doing, that's for sure. Openly accusing business leaders of bribing politicians. Religious freaks! My god! In my wildest dreams I never imagined it would lead to this-

METAL MICKEY

-Aaaah no! Don't gimme that now. You CANNOT do that. How many times did I tell you I don't want to do this? How many times, tell me, please? How many times? Even my mississ warned me of this. She properly marked my card. Now she's gonna do her nut!

Beat. Slapping the palm of his hand with the back of his other hand.

I said it will cause trouble. I said it till I was BLUE in the FUCKING FACE and now you've got the front to tell me what I should or shouldn't be doing. I mean all I heard from you lot is 'come on Mikey, do the show. It'll be great. You'll be terrific.' See what's happened - GRIEF!

Puts his hands toward the sack furiously. Beat.

It's me. I'm the idiot. I'm my own worst enemy.

Beat.

Cynthia. I'm sorry. You're the last person in the world I wanna have a go at. You've been very good to me. I realise all you've ever tried to do is help me. I didn't mean to shout at you, really. I'm sorry.

CYNTHIA JONSSON

It's alright. I know. Your anger and frustration is quite justified.

METAL MICKEY

Fine. Right. How we gonna stop all this?

CYNTHIA JONSSON

I'm not sure. It's not gonna be easy. We'll have to work on it.

Beat as they look at each other pondering.

I never thought it would ever come to this. Such a pity you couldn't see eye to eye with Dale Washington.

METAL MICKEY

What him?

CYNTHIA JONSSON

I just cannot believe that idiot. I know he's not exactly supposed to steer you clear of contentious issues but he should know what can go down and what can't.

METAL MICKEY

Yeah well he fucking went down, didn't he? Fucking good job too. I'll never regret planting one on that arsehole. In fact that was the highlight of my evening. What a Pratt!

CYNTHIA JONSSON

Well, he's already indicated that he could be suing you Mike.

METAL MICKEY

Good. Let him. I got a million witnesses and a million other problems. Last thing I'm gonna do is worry about that egg!

EXT. EDISON FIELD.

Camera shows Metal Mickey striking out three times, looking pissed off as he turns away. That night he's in a posh bar/restaurant with some of his team-mates. He's on his mobile talking to Erika. There's soft music in the background as you can hear Erika saying Metal Mickey

PHONE CONVERSATION WITH ERIKA WHO'S BUSY WITH WORK. SHE TELLS HIM NOT TO WORRY ABOUT THE DIP IN FORM. You hear her saying 'don't worry about it. It will come back.'

METAL MICKEY

'kay baby. Love ya. Miss you. See you soon.

Metal Mickey rejoins his teammates but he looks a bit lost & bored

TEAMMATES

Come on man. 5 games!

One of them gives MM a reassuring pat on the shoulder

Shit man. Try going 25. Then you'll know what a slump is.

MM smiles & nods. Gulps his drink down, nodding for another one. The camera focuses on MM who is not so sure of himself.

CUT TO:

INT: L.A. COURTROOM.

Camera shows a judges gavel coming down

MM looks at Dale Washington. They look at each other. MM is sitting down next to Erika who is busy with paper-work. He slumps into his seat. Erika looks at MM. Camera pans round the courtroom.

ERIKA

(V.O.)

Plain truth, Washington had nothing. It seemed his severely bruised ego swapped places with his brain but don't get me wrong, this case was far from being a gimme. Far as I was concerned, apprehension reigned supreme. We all know how you never know but with Mike it's a whole, new equation. With him just about anything can happen!

JUDGE JUDY

Banging her stick down

Order in the courtroom. Mr. Blackmore.

Erika beckons MM to stand up.

JUDGE JUDY

Am I to understand you're refusing legal representation?

MM

Yes your honour. My girl here is studying law. She'll give me all the help I need.

JUDGE JUDY

Is that so? Your girl eh? Are you fully aware of the implications of your actions?

MM

Yeah. I'll save a nice few quid.

Laughter as the agitated judge bangs her stick. MM looks well pleased with himself. Erika frowns.

MM

Your honour, I was referred to a few highly recommended lawyers and barristers but I soon found myself totally at odds with all of them. I was unable to get them to agree with me.

Camera switches to the slightly taken-aback judge.

JUDGE JUDY

And why was that?

MM

Well, you see I told them precisely what happened between Mr. Washington and me, exactly what was said and everything and errrr, don't really know how to put it..... but basically, they didn't want me to tell the truth.

Laughter and muttering breaks out.

JUDGE JUDY

Order in the courtroom. Order. Mr. Blackmore.

MM

Your honour, I have the utmost respect for the law but I am 100% serious. Everyone of these so-called legal experts advised me in no uncertain terms that if I were to tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth I could seriously jeopardise my position.

JUDGE JUDY

Slightly confused

And?

MM

Well I told 'em bollocks!

Erika looks shocked as an eruption of laughter breaks out. The judge is momentarily frozen. Annoyed, she bangs her stick several times.

JUDGE JUDY

Order! Order! Order in the court! Order!

Calm returns

Mr. Blackmore, let me make one thing absolutely crystal clear. That sort of language is unacceptable in my courtroom. Period. I will not tolerate it. Do you understand me?

MM nods. Erika looks angrily at MM. Beat

Now then. You realise you are forfeiting your right to cross-examine witnesses?

MM

Your honour, I've no need to cross-examine anybody.

The shows Jessica Owen, her assistant and Dale Washington briefly giving evidence in the witness box. MM is now standing there. He is handed the bible and without so much as looking at it he places it down.

JUDGE JUDY

Do you mind please!

Gesturing to the Bible.

MM

Picking the Bible up.

This won't make any difference to what I have to say.

JUDGE JUDY

Whether it does or not concerns me not. This is the way we do things here, okay.

MM

Your honour, do you honestly believe people who swear on the Bible suddenly, miraculously start blurtin' out the truth?

JUDGE JUDY

Enough! You hear me?

The camera shows an astonished Erika putting her hands to her head.

PROSECUTOR

So as he fell backwards into a seat, blood pouring from his nose, you approached him, went up to his face and said and I quote, 'does it hurt, yes? Good. I hope you fucking haemorrhage.'

There is some laughter and some muttering. The judge bangs her stick down.

JUDGE JUDY

Order in the courtroom.

PROSECUTOR

Well Mr. Blackmore?

MM

Yes. I said that. Absolutely. That's right, yes.

PROSECUTOR

And do you deny recent reports that outside these very walls when you were asked if you regretted your actions you said and again I quote, 'yes. Very much so. I am utterly distraught I didn't maim the bastard.'

MM

Look if you want to take everything I say literally.....

PROSECUTOR

Mr. Blackmore will you please just answer the question.

MM

Looking angrily at the prosecutor.

Alright!.....I'm afraid to say that on this occasion, along with the date, the papers actually got it spot on.

Much laughter. The judge bangs her stick again.

PROSECUTOR

You admit you have no regrets, no remorse?

MM

None whatsoever..... Look, he came at me. I warned the wally to back off right.....

The camera switches to the prosecutor who gestures to the judge.

METAL MICKEY

..... what the hell d'ya want me to do..... sit there like a plum!

Laughter. The judge bangs her stick down.

JUDGE JUDY

Mr. Blackmore. For the last time will you simply answer the question? I'm not going to keep repeating myself. Order!

The judge looks at the prosecutor.

PROSECUTOR

No more questions your honour.

JUDGE JUDY

Order! You may leave the stand now Mr. Blackmore.

METAL MICKEY

Hold up! What about me?

JUDGE JUDY

Exasperated

I'm sorry.

METAL MICKEY

Your honour, I've endeavoured to answer all the questions the prosecution has put to me. I merely wish to ask myself a few questions and answer them truthfully.

JUDGE JUDY

You really are full of surprises Mr. Blackmore.

Beat, taking a deep breath

Well, since you have actually saved the court quite some time I'll grant you your wish but no messing round okay?

The camera shows the prosecutor standing up.

PROSECUTOR

Objection your honour.

JUDGE JUDY

Over-ruled!

PROSECUTOR

Your honour may I approach the stand.

The judge nods. The prosecutor makes his way to the stand.

PROSECUTOR

Whispering.

Your honour this is highly irregular.

JUDGE JUDY

Whispering.

That may be so but he's within his rights and before you say anymore just think how bad your case could have looked if he'd have had legal representation, okay.

The prosecutor returns to his seat. The judge nods to MM. MM Nods back. The judge's expression changes to one of surprise and annoyance at MM.

METAL MICKEY

Question: Was it ever your intention to cause physical harm to Mr. Washington? Answer: No. Absolutely not. I totally and utterly detest violence. In this particular situation I was forced to defend myself. - But Mr. Blackmore, your attitude and demeanour certainly gives many people the impression you have rather an aggressive nature. - Answer: Since when was that illegal?

Much laughter. The judge bangs her stick again. Calm returns. MM looks at the judge as if asking if it was alright to carry on.

METAL MICKEY

Look, I understand why some people feel this but I'm powerless to prevent how

the media portray me. I'm simply a no-nonsense guy that can't stand bull-shitters.....

Much laughter. The judge bangs her stick again.

JUDGE JUDY

Okay, that's it! Thank you Mr. Blackmore. Step down please. Order! Order!
MM looks pissed off, scowling as he leaves the stand.

The prosecutor is finishing his closing argument.

PROSECUTOR

.....so the facts are perfectly clear. Mr. Washington was the victim of an unprovoked attack and for this very reason your verdict should be in favour of the defendant.

The prosecutor walks to his seat and sits. The judge nods, beckoning MM who gets up.

METAL MICKEY

Walking toward the jury, looking at them. Beat.

Against my will I have been forced to attend these proceedings. I cannot begin to express the HORROR I feel actually being here, all the inconvenience, all this grief I've had to suffer-

Judge looks up surprised.

.....but I'll get over it. I understand why I'm here.

Beat.

My time though, has been wasted and I will never forgive that. Nothing is more important than time. Money? Anyone can make more money. You spend it, you make more. It's not that important - but time? You never get that back. So I'm gonna cut it short even though I've had to sit here and listen to the biggest load of baloney I've ever heard in my whole, entire life. How I haven't erupted I'll never-

JUDGE JUDY

Mr. Blackmore, will you please get to the point.

METAL MICKEY

Nodding to the judge. Then looking to the jury.

I told you the truth.

MM turns away from the jury and returns to his seat. Erika looks at him contented.

ERIKA

(V.O.)

Mike actually doesn't think he's big-headed. Problem is, he's the only person in the world who thinks that. He's big-headed alright but not in the way most big-headed people are. I can't really explain it. Even so, it still remains difficult to praise him for anything..... but now..... what can I say? I gotta admit, he did great. The jury literally reached its verdict at light-speed. As far as they were concerned Washington could take a walk but up until then, let me tell you, it was all one big worry. I kept playing it over in my mind, always hoping everything would turn out okay and that I'd be so relieved when it was all over.

The camera shows the foreman giving his verdict. Erika happily kisses MM on the cheek and gives him a quick hug. MM doesn't show much emotion as everyone begins to get up and make their way out of the courtroom.

ERIKA

(V.O.)

Relief! What Relief? It was so strange how that feeling was non-existent. It was more like contented confusion! All I could think of was how this seemingly out-of-control person was actually so in control. I was convinced he'd loved to have said, 'fuck you. I'm not going to your court.' How wrong I was but all indications suggested otherwise. I kept telling him 'come on, we gotta prepare for this. It's coming up.' Nothing. If I said anything, 'don't worry bout it. I'll sort it.' Sort it my butt! He did nothing. Not a second. Oh and by the way-

The camera shows Erika looking at MM as they walk towards the exit.

ERIKA

(V.O.)

-he never checked out any solicitors. What nerve concocting the story, telling the judge 'they didn't want him to tell the truth.' I couldn't believe it. My god it was absolutely brilliant. Though many people find his manner offensive, people want to hear him talk. Don't know if it's the way he talks or his outrageous honesty or whatever but Mike definitely has this hypnotic effect when he speaks, especially when he's in an arena.

The camera shows them emerging from the courtroom where a multitude of reporters and photographers jostle. Metal Mickey beams and pulls faces as questions fire in from all directions. He then confidently looks at Erika and smiles and winks at her.

ERIKA

(V.O.)

Then all of sudden it hit me. It was like bang! Wow! Like I froze because I've always felt I pride myself..... how can I put it..... I believe I've always been aware of what's going on, specially round me but this? It completely blew me away. Ya know if someone asked me how Mike felt about having to come to court and all that, I'd have confidently declared his hatred for the system was total.....immeasurable!

Beat.

He loved it! All of it! Every single minute. I suddenly realised he actually enjoyed it out there..... Never in my wildest dreeeeeaaammmmmmmsssss.....

The camera shows Metal Mickey suddenly waking up. He shakes his head, sits up straight & wipes his forehead upwards & then looks at the palm of his hand, wiping the sweat off on his T-shirt. He shakes his head agaim & gingerly gets out of bed.

The camera shows Ray Cochran and his wife LILY COCHRAN at the breakfast table. Ray sips coffee whilst watching TV. Lily is preparing breakfast. Metal Mickey walks in.

METAL MICKEY

Good morning Mrs. C. Hiya Ray. Oooohh that looks great.

Metal Mickey gives Lily a kiss on the cheek. She smiles.

METAL MICKEY

What's going on?

RAY

Aaah the usual shit. The 'A's keep winning.

CUT TO:

INT. ERIKA'S MOM'S HOUSE.

Erika's mom is on the phone.

MOM

Your father and I are furious. I don't want to hear another word. How you've let him lead you astray is beyond me! Can't you see he's a corrupting influence, an evil, blasphemous heathen.

ERIKA

(V.O.)

I'm not listening Mom. I don't want to hear this. Mike may have certain flaws but deep down he's a good guy and I love him. You're wrong about him.

CUT TO:

INT. RAY'S HOUSE.

RAY

These bastards are going on about how your form's taken a dip.

METAL MICKEY

That damn Dale Washington show went and upset all my chemicals. Oh but I'll get it back. Don't worry about that Ray, I promise.

LILY COCHRAN

Well I thought you were just terrific!

CUT TO:

INT. ERIKA'S MOM'S HOUSE.

MOM

You never behaved like this before. He's changed you Erika. What is all this, going out all the time, drinking, smoking, living in sin-

Erika holds the phone, sighing, her eyes to the ceiling.

CUT TO:

INT. RAY'S HOUSE.

RAY

Yeah, yeah. You just keep cutting him slack, making this damn fool right all the time. Look at the papers. Here, another goddamn story.

METAL MICKEY

Tell me something different. They can't wait to spew out any old crap. Anyway since when did you start caring about what the rags say?

RAY

Yeah? Huh! Dunno about me but I don't think your girl's gonna be too happy about this, what with you and that Jessica Owen.

METAL MICKEY

WHAT!

CUT TO:

INT. ERIKA'S FLAT.

MOM

(V.O.)

We did not bring you into this world to throw shame on the family.

ERIKA

Throw shame? Okay mom, that's it. You're not just being unreasonable; What you're saying is ridiculous! This is my life.

Erika's mom has slammed the phone down. Erika looks briefly at the phone, shakes her head and places it down. Erika sits down on the sofa, picking up the newspaper.

CUT TO.

INT. RAY'S HOUSE.

The camera shows Metal Mickey's distraught face reading the newspaper.

METAL MICKEY

Oh no..... Oh no! I don't believe this!

The camera shows Lily looking up anxiously.

METAL MICKEY

Aaaaahh no..... What have I done?

The camera shows Mrs. Cochran looking concerned. Ray shakes his head.

EXT. METAL MICKEY'S TVR.

Metal Mickey drives frantically to Erika's apartment. He has a desperate look about him. He screeches up in out front of the apartment. He gets out the car and rushes to the door. He knocks on the door. Addy opens it, sighs and shakes her head.

INT. ERIKA'S APARTMENT.

Metal Mickey goes into living room. Erika has a mug in her hand. She throws it at him. He ducks, putting his arms up by his head. The mug smashes against the wall.

METAL MICKEY

Jesus! What ya doing? You crazy?

ERIKA

Shouting. She looks for something to pick up and throw.
You bastard! YOU FUCKING BASTARD!

METAL MICKEY

Listen to me. Wait, listen, I can explain.

ERIKA

Screw your explanations.
Picking up an ashtray and throwing it. It smashes against the wall.

METAL MICKEY

Ducking, taken aback.
What ya doing? Erika. Fucking hell. Please, Erika, DON'T.
He grabs her. They struggle.

ERIKA

Aggressively shoving him away, shrieking.
Don't you touch me!

METAL MICKEY

Will you listen to me for fucks sake?
They continue to tussle. She punches him on his back.
Please, Erika, don't. Ohh, stop it. Stop! Erika, stop will you?

They struggle and break free. Erika brushes the side of her head.

ERIKA

Beat. In tears.
How could you do this? I thought you were different. I can't believe..... I must be-

METAL MICKEY

Erika, please just let me explain. It was nothing. Please.

ERIKA

Explain what? How I'm your little bit on the side.
She sits down. Metal Mickey slowly sits down next to her.
And I was ready to stick by you, against my parents, against any shit that came your way. How could you do this? I can't believe it. I can't.

METAL MICKEY

Babe I'm sorry, really I am. I'm so sorry.

Going to put his arm round her

ERIKA

Getting up.

Don't. Don't! Don't you tell me anything. I don't wanna hear. Leave me alone. Go. Get away from me. Please. Go away.

METAL MICKEY

Almost in tears.

Erika, please, don't do this to me.

ERIKA

TO YOU! WHAT D'YA MEAN TO YOU?

Looking to grab something again.

METAL MICKEY

He grabs her.

Ah no Erika, don't. Darling, will you please calm down? Stop.

They struggle. He screams.

WILL YOU FUCKING WELL STOP! Look, you're gonna listen. You've got to listen to me, ALRIGHT. Whatever, for two seconds.

Beat.

Erika please, listen to me. Nobody else is important. I ONLY care for you. Please. I beg of you, forgive me. Please. I know what I did was wrong, I know it!..... Now from the bottom of my heart I promise you, nothing like this will ever happen again..... I promise you.

ERIKA

.....Get out!

METAL MICKEY

What! Aaahh no, come on.

ERIKA

I said get out. GET OUT!

Metal Mickey looks shell-shocked as he turns to leave. He closes the front door. He places his hand on his head and slowly brushes his hand through his hair. He walks away dazed.

EXT. OAKLAND A's GROUND.

100 games: ANGELS 49 & 51. Metal Mickey 36 HRs. Average 0.381. RBI'S 97. (*Written bottom left hand corner of the screen.*)

Camera shows Metal Mickey swinging and missing three times. Ray and Barney look at each other in the dugout. Metal Mickey walks back to the dug-out with a forlorn look. He sits down. Barney comes over and sits down beside him.

BARNEY

What's up kid? What the hell's going on?

Beat. Metal Mickey shrugs.

Look I know you ain't yourself, all the bullshit with that faggot Washington but

this sort of thing happens to players all the time and you don't strike me as the type that rolls over like this. You if anyone knows how to get back at them - you do it out there.

Gesturing at the field.

Come on. What's the matter with you? Snap out of this horseshit. You're all over the place. I can't believe what I'm seeing.

METAL MICKEY

I know Barney, I'm sorry. I know exactly what you're saying. I hear ya.

BARNEY

Well I'm telling you kid, come on! Get yourself together for Christ sake. I mean you showed us things, Jesus, I ain't never seen.

Shrugging, looking away.

METAL MICKEY

Takes a deep breath and breathes out heavily almost seething.

And all I want to do is get outta the gaff but she chases me, that Jessica Owen. Ain't touched a drop, nearly a year but after all the bollocks with that slimeball Washington, I thought bollocks, I'll have one -

Beat.

- then two, then three, then fucking four. Before I knew it I was downing 'em like no tomorrow. Knocked me fucking sparko. Spent the night in the hotel, with her of course.

Seething.

And there just has to be this slippery bastard, this infested rat hiding, snapping away like a hungry croc with his fucking shitty camera, an hour after I tell the whole of America that I've given up drink. Suddenly everyone sees me getting pissed outta my fucking brains. I look like a bigger liar than the fucking Iraqi information minister.

Slapping his hand on his forehead. Putting his head down

But that's not the worst. There's this girl I'm absolutely mad about. I mean Barney, I love her to pieces and now she don't wanna know cos of all this shit. It's done my head in. It's cracked me up man.

BARNEY

Kid, I'm gonna tell ya, whatever happens from now on, I don't give a shit. I knew, the first time we met and I ain't talking about hitting fucking baseballs, I thought this kid's something really special. Unique. I knew it. Straight away. Whatever happens, okay?

MUSIC: 'DON'T ACCUSE ME' by JIMI HENDRIX.

Camera shows Metal Mickey swinging and missing, swinging and missing, swinging and connecting viciously, screaming as he does so. The pitcher swivels his head and looks skyward. The ball is hit ferociously into the upper deck. Metal Mickey has a scathing look as he slings the bat down. Ray and Barney look at each other as if to say 'oh my god'.

EXT. LOS ANGELES - EVENING.

Metal Mickey is driving his TVR.. He arrives outside the apartment of Erika and Addy. He sees the windows are dark. He picks up his mobile and punches the dial. The answer-phone comes on.

Metal Mickey has a resigned look about him. He drives on.

EXT. YANKEE STADIUM.

The camera shows Metal Mickey at the plate swinging and missing. He strikes out.

JOHN MILLER

(V.O.)

And he's struck him out. Great pitch on the outside corner.

JOE MORGAN

(V.O.)

Well I don't know John but a few weeks ago Mike would have jumped all over that pitch. It's crazy but he's definitely in a slump.

CUT TO:

INT. COMMENTARY BOOTH.

JOHN MILLER

I realise what your saying Joe. Right, so we're 107 games into the season and Metal Mickey is hitting .364.

Looking at Joe Morgan who starts laughing.

And he's in a slump! I ain't never heard that. Come on.

JOE MORGAN

Did I say that? Man!

Joe Morgan continues to laugh. John Miller nods. Joe shakes his head, smiling.

CUT TO:

EXT. DUG OUT.

Metal Mickey is sat in the corner of the dug-out, left leg up on the bench staring aimlessly. The camera moves in slowly toward his unchanging expression. In the background you can see Ray talking tactics with his pitching coach.

RAY

He's pitched a great game. What d'ya think?

PITCHING COACH

I'd like him to get the first out in the ninth. Let's see how he goes.

RAY

Yeah, you may be right. I dunno. I'd feel a damn sight better if our bullpen was in better shape.

Yankee stadium scoreboard shows Angels 3. 1. Ahead, bottom of the 9th. The camera zooms in on the Angels pitcher. He shapes up and pitches a ball that appears to catch the outside corner but the Home Plate Umpire calls ball 4. The pitcher looks upset with the call. The hitter walks. The pitching coach makes his way to the mound and signals for the closer.

CUT TO:

INT. COMMENTARY BOOTH.

JOHN MILLER

That's it. The Angels are going to their bullpen.

JOE MORGAN

Well he's not had a great season but his ERA is much better than his record suggests. I'm a bit surprised they're taking him out because the Angels' bullpen's been really struggling lately. I may have taken the chance and seen if he could've pitched through it.....and it wasn't as if he wasn't pitching well.

CUT TO:

EXT. DUG OUT.

The camera returns to Metal Mickey staring aimlessly. His gaze has not altered. His expression suddenly changes when he sees the pitcher sitting down next to him.

METAL MICKEY

What you doing? Is it over? What's goin on?

The pitcher looks a little surprised. Metal Mickey looks over to the mound frowning. The camera shows the Angels closer discussing tactics with the pitching coach who turns round and heads to the dug-out. Metal Mickey totally bemused looks at Ray.

METAL MICKEY

Ya taken him out?..... What ya take him out for?

Ray looks surprised. The pitching coach enters the dug-out. Metal Mickey turns on him.

METAL MICKEY

What ya done? How can you do..... How can you bring that guy in now?

PITCHING COACH

He's our closer. That's his job. What's the matter with ya?

The camera shows the closer throwing his first pitch low for ball 1.

METAL MICKEY

Closer! What's that supposed to mean?

Beat.

Closer! Let me tell ya something. Right now our closer couldn't close a fucking barn door. He's bang out of form. Jesus, you know it! How.....

Beat. Pointing at the starting pitcher.

HE was pitching GREAT. In a game-

Gesturing with his hand toward the Home Plate Umpire.

-where this umpire's strike zone is tighter than a camel's arse in a fucking sandstorm. Whaddya take him out for? I can't believe it!

The camera shows the next pitch high. Ball 2. Metal Mickey shakes his head. Everyone is rendered

speechless by Metal Mickey's outburst. Metal Mickey then turns and sits down next to the pitcher who was taken out.

METAL MICKEY

You pitched great tonight. I dunno how the we ain't scored ten runs in this fucking game. In fact, ya know what, all season you ain't had a break. Every time you pitch we hardly put a run on the fucking board. It's amazing. We've give you nothing.

The camera shows the next pitch wide for ball 3.

METAL MICKEY

Jesus Christ! This guy couldn't see the strike zone even if it was right in front of his boat. He's as blind as a fucking bat!

RAY

Listen here. Right now we're trying to win a pennant godammit. We don't need any of this fucking bullshit, ya hear me now.

METAL MICKEY

Come on Ray. How can you tell me that? I want us to win every game.

The camera shows the next pitch in the dirt, ball 4. The hitter drops his bat and starts to make his way to first base. The camera returns to the dug-out where Metal Mickey is slowly shaking his head. Ray is looking perplexed.

METAL MICKEY

Take him out.

Beat.

Ray, this guy's ready to be taken to the cleaners. Ya gotta take him out right now or this game's gone, I'm telling you. I got a real bad feeling about this. Ya gotta swallow, believe me. Take him out.

RAY

How the fuck can I take him out? I only just put him up there. Do me a favour will ya? That's bullshit! Everyone'll think I've completely lost it!

The camera shows Ray looking apprehensively out of the dug-out.

CUT TO:

INT. COMMENTARY BOOTH.

JOHN MILLER

Well. Now a long ball can win it for the Yankees but boy, has there been some heated discussions in that Angels dugout and it appears Metal Mickey is right in the thick of it. What d'ya make of it all Joe?

JOE MORGAN

Don't know for sure. Maybe he didn't like the pitching change.

JOHN MILLER

Hmmn. That's interesting. Metal Mickey perhaps trying to make his stake to be a pitching coach. Ya never know with this guy.

CUT TO:

EXT. DUG OUT.

They watch the pitcher wind up. He pitches. The hitter blasts it away with an almighty 'crack'. The camera briefly switches to Ray who looks up at the ball with a grimace. The closer looks at the ball going high into the air and drops his head in dismay realising. It's a 3 run homer. Angels lose 4.3. The camera returns to Ray who looks devastated.

METAL MICKEY

Bullshit eh! In five pitches we blow a game that was absolutely in the bag. Fucking bullshit? That's bullshit.

Ray looks at Metal Mickey and then furiously pushes over the big, plastic water bottle in the dugout. It smashes to the floor bursting open. Other players jump out of the way.

MUSIC STOPS.

Ray's face is red with anger. He squares up to Metal Mickey who looks startled.

RAY

YOU JUST SHUT THE FUCK UP, ALRIGHT! **ALRIGHT!**

Ray turns and leaves. Metal Mickey looks on in shock. Realising he's done wrong, he sits down. He watches the players come off the field and make their way to the dressing rooms. He puts his legs up, his back is to the wall and he places his head in his hands. Only Barney is left, seated in the dug-out. Barney closes his eyes, shakes his head and gets up. He makes his way to Metal Mickey and sits down beside him.

BARNEY

Michael, Michael, Michael. Are you trying to turn everybody against you? For a clever guy you sure make things difficult for yourself.

METAL MICKEY

Aaah no. Don't tell me I've blown it with Ray now, please.

BARNEY

Huh! I really don't know anymore. I'll tell ya though, in twenty years I ain't never seen him so angry. Never.....and there was nothing that man wouldn't have done for you.

METAL MICKEY

I know. I love the guy.

BARNEY

Well, you just made him look a complete fool in front of-
Half beat.

-Jesus, the whole damn country. I hope you realise that!

METAL MICKEY

Tears rolling down his face.

Oh no! What have I done? What am I doing? I'm fucking everything up. I'm fucking it. I don't know what the hell's wrong with me.

BARNEY

Alright, alright. Come on now. Let's just get inside. Forget it. Come on. Let's go.

METAL MICKEY

Metal Mickey shakes his head, looking up at Barney crying.

How can I face Ray now?

Metal Mickey curls up into a ball. Barney shakes his head, shrugs, gets up and leaves. Metal Mickey looks totally distraught.

INT. AEROPLANE.

The camera moves along the plane, passing players, finally reaching Metal Mickey who is seated alone, aimlessly gazing out of the window. The camera slowly moves closer to him.

EXT. LOS ANGELES AIRPORT.

It's a damp, rainy night as the team emerge from the airport. They get into various cars. Metal Mickey emerges from the airport, he stops, looks around. Barney is behind him.

BARNEY

You gonna be okay kid?

METAL MICKEY

I'm alright Barney. I'll see ya later, okay.

The camera shows Metal Mickey making his way to his car. He dumps his baggage in the back of the car. He settles into his car and breathes out. He switches the radio on.

MUSIC: 'RIVER DEEP, MOUNTAIN HIGH' by DEEP PURPLE. *(Last two minutes).*

He thinks for a while. He starts up his car and drives. He has a pained expression, almost desperation as he drives. He stops his car. He gets out. It is still raining. Metal Mickey has a brown bag in his hand. He makes his way to his digs.

MUSIC STOPS.

INT: CYNTHIA JONSSON'S OFFICE.

The camera shows Cynthia Jonsson with a piece of paper, pacing up and down.

CYNTHIA JONSSON

I don't know what the hell happened last night and to be quite honest, I don't want to know. What I do know is every time we try to turn things around, something else happens. Now I don't know how you feel about it but I'm gonna tell you, we simply cannot go on like this. There's a limit and we're getting damn near to it.

METAL MICKEY

I know I've been a bit stupid at times but what have I done that's so bad? I don't understand why I'm getting all this flak, all the time.

CYNTHIA JONSSON

Well, I hope you take note that this flak, which incidentally is coming in from every direction, is hitting other targets too, full on..... We're in the real world here - get with it!

Beat.

We've prepared a statement here.

She hands the piece of paper to him. He takes it.

The press arrive in one hour and you are going to read this to them.

The camera shows Metal Mickey looking down at the paper.

METAL MICKEY

(V. O.)

I would like to apologise for my behaviour in the dug-out last night. I understand that my actions were inappropriate and irresponsible. It will never happen again. It was never my intention to cause any bad feelings within the club and I am truly sorry for all the recent problems I have caused. From this moment on-

INT. ANGEL'S PRESSROOM.

METAL MICKEY

-I will be concentrating solely on the task of playing baseball and to helping the California Angels win the pennant. I would appreciate the press and everyone else to give me the chance to do this. Thank you.

The camera slowly moves in on Metal Mickey face. He looks totally worn out, fed up and frustrated as questions start flying in. Photographers click away relentlessly.

PRESSMEN

General calls of:

Did you disagree with the pitching change? What did you say to your coach? What did the coach say to you? Is your current loss of form attributable to all the problems you've been having lately? Have you spoken to Ray Cochran since your altercation?

Gradually fading sound as MM stares ahead.

Is the club going to renew your contract? Do you want a new contract? Why did you say you don't drink?

The camera switches to a journalist.

JOURNALIST

You obviously have a problem with your closer - do you have similar feelings towards any other team-mates?

Suddenly Metal Mickey slams his fist crashing down onto the table. Everything on the table bounces into the air. Everyone looks up shocked. There is silence.

METAL MICKEY

NO I DON'T HAVE A PROBLEM WITH OUR FUCKING CLOSER!

Beat. Cynthia Jonsson drops her head in exasperation. Beat.

You guys just don't lay off! What's the point? What answer can I give you? Is there one I can give that'll make you happy? Is there?...and even if I answer every single question, you'll dig a hole in something I say, won't you?

Half beat

Now I'll tell ya. I love my coach. I love this club. I love EVERYONE and EVERYTHING in it. I don't give a SHIT if you believe me..... but that's the truth...and I'm gonna tell ya something else. I apologise to no one. I take nothing back, ya hear, nothing of what I said before, not a word. NOTHING, ALRIGHT. I DON'T hate ANYONE. I am NOT against any group of people or any race, religion or anything. So from now on do me a favour. Fuck off and leave me ALONE.....and I MEAN, FUCK RIGHT OFF!

CUT TO:

EXT. METAL MICKEY'S TVR.

Metal Mickey has a brown bag in his hand. He gets in his car and drives away. He pulls up outside Edison Field, gets out of his car and walks to an entrance door.

INT. CALIFORNIA ANGELS SOUND ROOM.

The camera shows Ray standing in the doorway of the sound room at the California Angels ground. This is a continuation of the prologue scene. A dishevelled Metal Mickey is asleep in a chair, head back, mouth open, snoring. Ray enters, quietly closing the door. He looks at the half empty bottle of whisky on the table. He notices a light flashing on the tape machine. He goes over to it, rewinds it and then presses the play button.

METAL MICKEY

(V.O.) On tape.

I felt a tingling sensation, fucking careering down my spine, you'll never believe. It was incredible. I knew. At that moment, I swear, I knew something was going to happen. This bat felt it-

Ray forwards the tape. He glances at Metal Mickey who remains asleep.

METAL MICKEY

(V.O.) On tape.

I could see the coach was getting really pissed off. I knew what heaters were but I thought let's have a laugh.

Ray looks at the machine as if to say 'you bastard'. Ray forwards the machine.

METAL MICKEY

(V.O.) On tape.

The science of hitting. They should have talked to Ray and Barney.

Ray smiles as he forwards again.

METAL MICKEY

(V.O.) On tape.

I gotta be sick in the head. Everyone ends up wanting to fucking throttle me.

Ray makes an expression and mutters to himself as if to say 'too right'.

METAL MICKEY

(V.O.) On tape.

Stick me in a room with Santa Claus and I guarantee you within one hour I'd make him so angry he'd turn round and say, 'right, fuck the presents. Bollocks to everyone this Christmas!'

METAL MICKEY

Yeah, Christmas, bollocks.

Ray chuckles. Metal Mickey opens his eyes and rubs his face with his hands, oblivious to Ray. Metal Mickey is hung over. He has dark circles under his eyes and has slight stubble.

METAL MICKEY

Oh god. Aaaahhh! Oh man!

Ray fills a plastic cup with water. He walks over to Metal Mickey and gives it to him.

METAL MICKEY

Whaaaa? What's goin on?

Metal Mickey turns, startled by Ray. He puts his hand on his forehead.

METAL MICKEY

Aaahh, my head! Hello Ray. Aahh no man. Shit.
Taking the water.

RAY

Pulling up a chair.

You okay?

METAL MICKEY

Yeah. Terrific. I'm over the fucking moon.

He brushes his face, rubs his eyes and drinks the water.

I am totally and utterly pissed off with everything. I know I'm partly to blame but I've had enough of it. Feel like I just wanna fuck off back to England Ray.

RAY

Sure, I see it. Understand why you're feeling this way but it ain't the right thing to do..... Look..... I'm sorry I blew up at you, okay. You caught me by surprise more than anything. It just goes to show we're all under a certain amount of pressure. Everyone's got to deliver.

METAL MICKEY

Pressure? Ray, you cannot give me enough of the pressure out on the ballpark. That's what I crave. You know that. Who would you want out there if you needed a clutch hit, tell me? That's my juice.

Beat.

It's the rest of it....and I know I got a short fuse but why do people always push

the buttons that make me go ape-shit?

RAY

Because you do! I mean whaddya think? Do you think people are gonna say 'oh we better go easy on this guy because a couple of his screws are loose? And man you don't just go ape-shit - you bite like a motherfucking Tyrannosaurus. I mean what do you want me to say?

METAL MICKEY

I know. I just can't help it. Fucking mad!..... I'm sorry Ray. The last thing I ever wanted was piss you off. I really am sorry..... Will you let me off?

RAY

Forget it. It's over with. Done. Finished.

Beat. Ray looks down and chuckles.

Man. Did you call it. What a call!..... You know every so often you find a way to lose but this one, Jesus! I can't remember a ball-game which I've been involved in where we had it won god knows how many times! We sure spewed this one up big time.

METAL MICKEY

Man it was a serious fuck-up!

RAY

You know something - the moment you got up in the dug-out, I knew it. I knew taking the pitcher out was a bad call. Then when you were pleading with me to actually take the closer out I felt you were right..... but I just couldn't bring myself to do it. Can you believe that? It would have been the greatest call I ever made. Crazy. I ain't stopped thinking about it.

METAL MICKEY

That was the call.

Ray acknowledges. Metal Mickey shrugs and they laugh.

RAY

You know something, you're in a world of your own - light years ahead of everyone when it comes to the difficult things in life but at complete odds when it comes to the simple things. Just what is it with you?

METAL MICKEY

Story of my life that is.

RAY

Now can we concentrate on winning this pennant? You got some personal problems? Believe me, these things have a way of sorting themselves out and in any case, there ain't no point in worrying bout things ya can't control. So, I don't wanna hear about that asshole Washington, Jessica Owen or any other goddamn broad, right. We on the same wavelength?

Metal Mickey nods.

RAY

Okay. Now grab yourself a shower, freshen up some. Come on, let's go

Pointing at the bottle.

.....and lay off this shit, okay? Come on. Let's get outta here.

They get up. Ray puts his arm around Metal Mickey. As they make to leave the room, Ray looks at the machine and takes the cassette out. He hands Metal Mickey the tape. Metal Mickey looks at it and throws it in the bin. They exit the sound room.

EXT. EDISON FIELD.

120 games: ANGELS: 61 & 59. Metal Mickey 48 HRs. 146 FOR 388. Average .376, RBIs 121.
(Written bottom left-hand corner of the screen).

The camera shows Metal Mickey swinging and hitting, and hitting, and hitting.

Metal Mickey is in the dugout joking with TWO TEAM MATES whilst watching TEAM MATE 3 at bat. Ray and Barney are discussing tactics. Team mate 1 is reaching for more of his chewing tobacco as they look out of the dugout to see Team mate 3 strike out hopelessly.

TEAM MATE 1

Spits tobacco.

Man that was lame.

Spits tobacco again.

METAL MICKEY

Urgh! Fuckin horrible habit. Gobbing all over the gaff. Loads of kids are watching out there. How the hell are you ever gonna become a decent role model?

Team mate 3 enters the dugout and heads towards Metal Mickey and his two team mates.

TEAM MATE 3

Shit man. I feel like a fucking lumberjack.

METAL MICKEY

I can't believe what you're doing! That pitch had a telegram attached to it. How many times do I have to tell you.....ya gotta float.

TEAM MATE 3

I'm trying man, I'm trying.

METAL MICKEY

That's the problem. That's where you're going wrong! Stop fucking trying. You know how to play the game. You focus but be relaxed. That's floating!

Team mate 3 frowns, shakes his head and sits down.

TEAM MATE 2

Like the man says, you got to motherfucking float. You ain't floating man. Shit, you'd sink in a goddamn Jacuzzi.

Metal Mickey goes out on deck and takes a few practice swings. The pitcher throws a ground ball and the batter is out. Metal Mickey makes his way to the plate.

JOHN MILLER

(V.O.)

And that's out number two and here he comes. Well he sure went through a bit of a sticky patch but lately he has been on fire. 2 for 2 tonight with a base hit and a solo blast taking his home run tally to 49.

JOE MORGAN

(V.O.)

He's back, swinging the bat beautifully.
Metal Mickey is at the plate ready for the first pitch. It's a fastball, slightly high and inside the strike zone. Metal Mickey latches onto the pitch, pulling the ball into right field crowd.

METAL MICKEY

Alright! Like it centurion, like it!

The crowd cheer wildly as Metal Mickey trots round the bases, punching his fist in the air. As he arrives at home plate, he jumps on the base. He heads for the dug-out and is mobbed by his team mates. Metal Mickey hugs Ray and Barney. The crowd demand a curtain call. An ecstatic Metal Mickey obliges.

JOHN MILLER

(V.O.)

What an ovation and boy, doesn't he deserve it? Can you believe it! 50 home runs in his rookie year. Simply incredible.

JOE MORGAN

(V.O.)

He has been amazing.

Metal Mickey returns to the plate, ready for the first pitch. He leaves the first pitch alone as it is too low. He goes through the motions of preparing himself for the next pitch.

JOHN MILLER

(V.O.)

And that's ball 1. Do you ever get that feeling Joe, ya know.....

The pitcher winds up for the second pitch which is a fastball. Metal Mickey is focused on the ball and is into his swing. His eyes light up. There is a loud crack. Metal Mickey's body jerks furiously as blood pours from just underneath his left shoulder. He drops his bat and falls heavily to the ground. There is a stunned silence as Metal Mickey's body settles on the ground. Members of the Angels dug-out charge out toward the plate where the catcher and the Home Plate Umpire are kneeling down over him.

RAY

Jesus. Oh Jesus. GET AN AMBULANCE QUICK, GODAMMIT. GET AN AMBULANCE. No. No. Don't move him. Oh Jesus Mike.

An ambulance drives onto the side of the pitch. Paramedics rush out with a stretcher and medical equipment. Metal Mickey is placed on a stretcher and put into the ambulance. It speeds away with sirens blazing.

NEWS BULLETIN 1

(V.O.)

Tragic news is emerging from Edison Field. Michael Blackmore has been shot. He was playing in a baseball game and was actually at bat when the incident occurred. His condition is unknown at the present time though his wounds are said to be very serious indeed. Michael Blackmore has been shot. We'll bring you more as soon as we-

INT. AN AMBULANCE.

Metal Mickey covered in blood, has breathing apparatus on in the ambulance. The paramedics are working frantically trying to stem the flow of blood. The ambulance arrives at the hospital. Metal Mickey is quickly ushered down a corridor surrounded by doctors and nurses. Various instructions are shouted out as Metal Mickey is rushed into theatre.

EXT. THE HOSPITAL.

REPORTER

The man who allegedly shot Michael Blackmore has been apprehended by Police and is now in custody. Apparently he was pounced on by a number of fans as he attempted to escape. Speculation is rife, as you know Mr. Blackmore's strong, forthright views alienated large sections of the public. For many he remained an extremely controversial figure. However there has been a deluge of calls from people expressing horror and outrage with many stating it was high time someone actually got up and spoke the truth. Concern though is now focused at the hospital where we understand he is currently undergoing emergency surgery.

INT. A HOSPITAL CORRIDOR.

Ray, Barney and Cynthia seated in a hospital corridor. They all looked drained and worried. A SURGEON emerges from a door. They get up.

SURGEON

Okay, he's out of surgery but he has extensive internal injuries. His condition is very serious. The next 48 hours are going to be critical.

RAY

He's gonna pull through, isn't he?

SURGEON

At the moment it is impossible to say. I believe his chances of survival are less than 50/50 but he's a fit young man. We're doing all we can. I'm sorry. I really have to go.

The surgeon leaves. The camera shows the worried faces of Cynthia, Ray and Barney.

BARNEY

What kind of a crazy bastard would do this?

The camera shows Metal Mickey in intensive care. He is hooked up to a respirator, drips and various monitors and other medical equipment. The room is silent except for the sound of the respirator and the bleep of the heart monitor. The screen blacks out.

INT. JIMMY'S CAR – CONTINUOUS.

Erika, Addy, Jasper and Jimmy are driving to the hospital. There is silence.

ERIKA

(V.O.)

How did I feel? How d'ya think I felt? I was numb. You never think anything like that's gonna ever happen.

CUT TO:

INT. METAL MICKEY'S HOSPITAL ROOM.

Erika, Addy, Jasper and Jimmy are in Metal Mickey's hospital room.

ERIKA

(V.O.)

Every day I went back to the hospital. Seeing him lying there. Talk about feeling helpless. Nothing I could do but I felt I had to be there. I just kept praying he'd wake up and then..... three days after all the mayhem we walk into the hospital-

Erika and Jimmy enter Metal Mickey's room. They're pleased to see him blearily awake.

ERIKA

(V.O.)

-and he'd come to. I can't for the life of me explain why it was such a surprise. Relief, I dunno. He was hardly himself though, being on so much morphine he didn't know where the hell he was but it was a major step in the right direction.

FADE TO:

INT. METAL MICKEY'S HOSPITAL ROOM.

Erika and Jimmy enter Metal Mickey's now empty hospital room. They look surprised.

ERIKA

(V.O.)

So can you imagine what a shock it was when we arrived at the hospital only to find he'd checked out. I phoned his mobile, the club – nothing.

INT. WARD DESK.

Erika and Jimmy are talking with a nurse, who shakes her head. Erika clicks her mobile and shrugs at Jimmy. The camera shows an empty hospital bed. The screen blacks out.

ERIKA

(V.O.)

After a week or so, the word was that he'd gone back to England. I suppose I could understand Mike wanting to be in control of the situation. That was his style. The last thing he'd have wanted was to stick around with all the press attention and speculation and in a funny sort of way, by ignoring everyone and

disappearing he was getting his own back. Like saying a big fuck you. Can't say I blamed him.

The camera shows Erika turning off her mobile and slumping on her sofa in frustration.

ERIKA

(V.O.)

What did I do then? I sat my pre-law exams. My flatmate Addy went to see her parents in Minneapolis. I'd have done the same but my folks were still mad at me but all I cared about was Mikey. I desperately wanted to speak to him. I kept calling, leaving messages. I didn't know what the hell was going on. It's really weird you know, soon as I realised how much I wanted him back, it was too late.

CUT TO:

INT. METAL MICKEY'S APARTMENT - THE GYM.

The camera shows a modern, rather sparse gym. In the background you can hear someone struggling to lift weights. The camera moves towards the person in the gym and shows a left arm raising a relatively light dumbbell. The door of the gym opens. Alsy walks in holding a mobile, nodding. He puts the mobile to his chest.

ALSY

She's on the phone. Come on man, speak to her.

No response as Alsy sits on a training bench facing a gaunt, sweating Metal Mickey who is trying to lift a dumbbell. He can't and puts it down shaking his head. Alsy gets up, rather annoyed, takes a look at Metal Mickey and walks out the room.

INT. METAL MICKEY'S APARTMENT – HALLWAY.

ALSY

Sorry Erika. I dunno what to say. Not a good time right now.

ERIKA

(V.O.)

Wish there was something I could do. We've got to do something.

ALSY

Well, you know, I've been meaning to ask you. It's up to you, I dunno I was just thinking, maybe it would help, if you want to that is.....

EXT. HEATHROW AIRPORT – ARRIVALS LOUNGE.

Alsy is waiting in the arrivals lounge, looking up at the flights screen, which reads: 'FLIGHT 206 Los Angeles arrived.' He looks about him as a stream of people start to emerge from the doors. He thinks he sees Erika and goes up to her.

ALSY

Erika? Hi.

ERIKA

Hey.

INT. METAL MICKEY'S APARTMENT.

The camera shows Alsy and Erika entering the apartment. Alsy shows Erika to her beautiful, spacious bedroom. She can't help but look round, amazed.

ALSY

If he's not in the gym he's probably in the steam room. Look don't worry. It'll work out okay I'm sure. I'll be next door if you need anything.

Alsy leaves the room. Erika puts some things down on the bed a little nervous, thinking.

INT. METAL MICKEY'S APARTMENT – THE GYM.

Erika enters the gym. Metal Mickey is trying to punch the speedball. She watches as he continuously mis-times the speedball. The camera shows the frustrated face of Metal Mickey. He tries again but fails. Erika moves closer so that she begins to appear in the large mirror. Her face is seen by Metal Mickey. He stops, looking round astonished.

ERIKA

Hi.....Well, if you'd rather I not be here, I'll go.

METAL MICKEY

No, no, no. Hi..... I, I missed you so much I-

ERIKA

I called you but you, you-

METAL MICKEY

Staring as Erika slowly moves to him.

I know. I know you have. I'm really sorry. I know I should've, but I dunno.....can't explain it. I haven't been right. I'm sorry I didn't. Sorry about everythingall the fuck-ups. I don't understand. Just dunno.

Erika puts her arms around Metal Mickey who's face is etched with confusion and anxiety as he looks into Erika's eyes. They hug for a while, they slowly kiss and then hug each other again.

INT. METAL MICKEY'S APARTMENT – THE KITCHEN.

Erika, Metal Mickey and Alsy are seated at the kitchen table eating a take-away meal.

METAL MICKEY

So what did they say about the nutter who tried to do me?

ERIKA

Just some guy from San Diego. Broken home, abused, same old stuff.

ALSY

What, they don't reckon anyone else was involved?

ERIKA

No I don't think so. There was the usual speculation, various theories were put about, you know..... but the only thing I found strange was how the hell this guy managed to get a rifle into the stadium. Nobody talked about that much.

METAL MICKEY

Right. Yeah. How the hell did he do that?

ALSY

And don't you think it's a little funny how it's always seems to be a crazed lone gunman responsible for bumping off controversial people like JFK, Martin Luther King and John Lennon. Pretty convenient eh?

Erika looks up slightly surprised.

METAL MICKEY

Tell me about it. All the planning it takes, the guy who knows how to blow someone away as easy as pie always turns out to be either thick as shit or has got a serious screw loose. No one ever bothers to ask the question 'who the fuck put you up to it, dickhead?'

ERIKA

WHAT! Do you honestly believe there's some sort of conspiracy?

ALSY

Yeah. Sure there is. History's full of it. Anyone that gets too big for his boots always runs the risk of being ironed out-

METAL MICKEY

Whaddaya mean too big for my boots?

ALSY

You know what I mean.

ERIKA

I don't believe you guys. This is laughable.

METAL MICKEY

Oh yeah? Why do you think I fucked off so sharpish?....and you wanna know something.....I nearly pegged it on the journey home. I'm serious. I don't know how I never fucking croaked but there was no way I was gonna just sit there, lying in a bed like an absolute plum, impersonating a fucking lame duck

ERIKA

Look, you're a baseball player. It's hardly comparable to a politician or a human rights activist....and also, why? What did you say on the Dale Washington show? Sure, you attacked big business but you never said anything people didn't already know. You too a swipe at religion. Controversial? Maybe, but for anyone to say, 'we need to kill this guy.' Next thing, you'll be saying is Dale Washington was involved.

Metal Mickey frowns, ponders and pushes his plate away from him. Erika shakes her head.

CUT TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE METAL MICKEY'S APARTMENT.

The camera shows a car driving along the road and pulling up outside Metal Mickey's apartment. Two FBI agents, CASTILLO and FRY get out of the car and press the buzzer.

CUT TO:

INT. METAL MICKEY'S APARTMENT.

Erika looks out of the window. She presses the intercom button.

CASTILLO

FBI ma'am. Could we come in please?

CUT TO:

INT. METAL MICKEY'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM.

Erika is seated with the agents, deep in conversation.

FRY

And has Mike ever talked about what happened?

ERIKA

Yeah. He talks about it a lot.

FRY

What does he say?

ERIKA

To be honest he's very suspicious. I can understand but I'm not so sure.

She looks at them and shrugs, then curiously.

What exactly is this all about anyway? I hope I'm being helpful but I'm not quite sure I see the relevance of all these questions.

FRY

Simply part of our on-going investigation, Ma'am. At the present time we're unable to elaborate. We really need to speak to-

A door shuts interrupting Agent Fry. Camera shows Metal Mickey standing in front of the closed door. He walks over to the FBI agents who get up.

CASTILLO

Mr. Blackmore. F.B.I. Los Angeles. I'm agent Castillo. This is agent Fry. Would you mind if we ask you a few questions?

The camera focuses on Metal Mickey.

INT. METAL MICKEY'S APARTMENT – KITCHEN.

Erika is making tea and coffee. She leaves the kitchen with a tray. As she gets nearer to the living room you begin to hear Metal Mickey and the FBI men talking.

INT. METAL MICKEY'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM.

CASTILLO

Nine and a half million dollars? They paid that to you even though you didn't finish the season. That was good of them.

METAL MICKEY

Yeah but wait a minute. Nothing in my contract said I had to play every game and when the bastard tried to do me, I was averaging .381. Every point over .325 got me \$100000, so I received 5.6 mill for that.

Half beat.

Listen. I know we didn't make the play-offs and 9½ is a bit of a chunk but don't feel too sorry for them. There were 30 odd games left and if I'd a played 'em I guarantee you, I'd a done some very serious damage.

Erika enters the living room. She places the tray down and hands the men their drinks.

FRY

Thank you.

Erika sits down next to Metal Mickey. He kisses her on the cheek.

METAL MICKEY

Thanks babe.

CASTILLO

So you never had any problems within the club.

METAL MICKEY

No. They were great. They always went out of their way to help me.

EXT. METAL MICKEY APARTMENT.

The agents walk to their car.

CASTILLO

(V.O.)

Who in particular?

They get in,

METAL MICKEY

(V.O.)

Ray, Barney, the ground staff, all my team mates. They were great. I miss them a lot. The GM too. They were really good people. I loved 'em all.

CASTILLO

(V.O.)

Thank you. We'll be in touch.

and drive off.

INT. BBC STUDIO.

The BBC Sports Personality of the Year Show is taking place. There is applause as a packed arena of sporting stars are seated. Presenter STEVE RIDER is talking.

STEVE RIDER

The runner-up of the sports personality of the year, Jenson Button.

The applause dies down as Jenson Button makes his way to his seat.

STEVE RIDER

And so, ladies and gentlemen, the winner of the BBC sports personality of the year 2007, Michael Blackmore.

There is loud applause as Metal Mickey makes his way toward Steve Rider. They shake hands. Metal Mickey turns and shakes hands with Lennox Lewis who gives Metal Mickey the trophy. Metal Mickey happily acknowledges the applause. He looks to the microphone in front of him as gradually the applause dies down.

METAL MICKEY

Thanks. Thank you. I'd a pretty good idea I was gonna end up standing here. Wish I could have had a bet on it.

Audience laughs.

It's been really difficult thinking about what I should say. So I come up with this ballgame. I promise, this is a true story. We were playing the Oakland A's. It's the final innings and we're down to our last three at-bats. We're losing 7 nil, the dugout's dead. Everyone's going through the motions, we can't wait to get home. Seems reasonable, you're 7 down, bottom of the ninth, it's all over. Suddenly I said 'look, it's not done yet. Don't give in. Let's go for it. We can win still win this. We've got eight runs in an innings before. Ain't over till the fat lady sings.' Well you should've seen all their faces. The manager looked round as if to say, 'what the hell's this idiot going on about now?'

Laughter. Half beat.

I said, 'look, they're weak because their guard's down. They think the game's over. They're already in the locker room. The last thing they expect is that we're gonna be trying our butts off and one thing you can never beat is the element of surprise.'

Half beat.

Everyone's looking on, listening. Barney our hitting coach nods and says 'Yeah, that's right.' Now the manager's up. Everyone's taking a bit of notice, players are getting in the groove. I said, 'come on, why not try? What's the difference? Make a name for yourself. Get a base hit, a walk. Make something happen. We get the bases loaded, nobody out, they'll get nervous, they could start making mistakes. Before you know it they could be thinking 'what the hell's happened here? This is an absolute nightmare.'

Audience laugh.

Our dugout is transformed, totally. Everyone's fired up ready to go. Should have seen it. Unbelievable, incredible. Total transformation. So out we go to bat and the first guy gets a base hit. Well, I can't tell ya, the dugout's going nuts. 'Go on my son. Way to go. We'll show these guys.' We're cheering as if we're about to win

the world series. The team we were playing thought we'd gone completely nuts!

Beat.

Within two minutes the ballgame's over. We're slaughtered 7 nil.

The audience erupts with laughter. Metal Mickey looks on beaming, shaking his head.

METAL MICKEY

The dugout is dead. I'm next to Ray and he's sort of shaking his head, confused. I know he wants to say something but he can't. He's lost. He don't know what to say. Then he looks at me and we look at each other and everyone in the dug-out just bursts out laughing. It was great.

Audience laugh.

Thanks very much for this award.

Applause breaks out. Metal Mickey holds up the trophy, turning to all the sport stars behind him. He nods acknowledging the cheers.

CUT TO:

INT. METAL MICKEY'S APARTMENT.

Erika enters a different kitchen and makes her way to the patio doors. She is heavily pregnant. There is a TV on in the background which you can hear but as she makes her way onto the terrace the sound of the TV fades out slowly and is replaced by the sound of a ball hitting a wall. This sound gets louder.

ERIKA

How's it going?

Metal Mickey is hitting a golf ball against a brick wall. He stops looking up smiling at Erika. She sits down. He makes his way over and sits next to her. Metal Mickey puts his hand on Erika's bulging tummy and gently strokes it. The camera then moves away from them, making its way back into the kitchen. The camera starts to focus on the TV where there is a news bulletin.

NEWSREADER

In the early hours of this morning the FBI. made several arrests in raids on homes in California and Nevada. These raids are the culmination of a three year investigation into a huge mafia money laundering ring. One of those arrested was the prominent businessman and owner of the California Angels, Victor Steinberg. Speculation has been mounting regarding several financial irregularities that came to light in the wake of Mr. Steinberg's failed attempt to sell the Angels to a Japanese consortium. There is speculation too that drug money as well as casino money could also be involved as well-

FADE OUT.

MUSIC: 'HUMAN HEART' by JIMI HENDRIX. CREDITS.