

REVERSE THE CURSE

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INT. BOSTON - FENWAY PARK - 1920

Grainy newsreel footage of THE BABE hitting a homer.

MITCH (V.O.)

The Red Sox decision to trade Babe Ruth to the Yankees triggered a string of World Series losses that lasted eighty-four years.

INT. CHICAGO - WRIGLEY FIELD - 1945

Newsreel footage of a MAN AND GOAT in the bleachers. The smell (of goat *and* man) causes nearby fans to squeeze noses.

MITCH (V.O.)

When a Cubs fan was ejected from the World Series because of his pet goat, he declared: "Them Cubs, they ain't gonna win no more!" And for seven long decades they didn't.

INT. ANAHEIM - CONSTRUCTION SITE - 1965

Footage of a stadium being built. Construction workers uncover ancient arrowheads in the dirt.

MITCH (V.O.)

Anaheim Stadium was built upon a Native American burial ground. And for thirty-six years the Angels failed to win a series.

INT. BEACON CITY - FAIRWEATHER STADIUM - 1937

A bleacher of Depression era BLUE SOX FANS.

MITCH (V.O.)

Baseball, more than any other sport, is full of alleged curses. Jinxes. Hexes. Some would say excuses. The most infamous being The Curse of The Fairweather Five.

Amid cheering fans are FOUR MEN AND A WOMAN who heckle. One man has a Clark Gable mustache. Storm clouds gather.

MITCH (V.O.) (cont'd)

We all know about the day that allegedly set off a chain reaction of World Series losses lasting

(MORE)

MITCH (V.O.) (cont'd)
seventy-five years and counting.
(overly dramatic pause)
Could this be the year it ends?

Lightning flash! A thunder CRACK echoes into the CRACK of a bat hitting a ball.

INT. FAIRWEATHER STADIUM - TODAY

The city has modified around the intimate stadium, but Fairweather remains the same. No exclusive clubs or Wi-Fi. No retractable roof. Nothing but heartbreaking memories.

MONTAGE - INTERVIEWS WITH BLUE SOX FANS

Video camera POV. Fans speak to an off-screen interviewer.

FACE-PAINTED SOX FAN
The curse is going down, baby!

CUT TO:

GRANDPARENT SOX FAN
I've been waiting my whole life to see the Sox break the curse.

GRANDCHILD SOX FAN
Me too!

CUT TO:

PEANUTS VENDOR
I'm not even supposed to work today but no way I'm missing this.
(to crowd)
Peanuts! Git yer peanuts heeeeeere!

CUT TO:

Sox fans wave signs with sayings like "KEEP THE FAITH" and "NO MORE FEELING BLUE".

SOX FANS
Reverse the curse! Reverse the curse!

CUT TO:

Amidst a sea of blue shirts are a smaller crowd of orange shirts, fans of the opposing team -- THE FIREBIRDS.

FIREBIRDS FAN

I would love it if the Firebirds
bounced back and won the series.

(whispers)

But I also wouldn't mind seeing history
made. Go Sox.

END MONTAGE

The off-screen interviewer steps in. He's MITCH MCCAULGAN,
late 30s, a subtle smart-ass with ambition to spare.

MITCH

History is indeed being made. After
three impressive wins against the
Iowa Firebirds, the Beacon City
Blue Sox are poised to sweep the
World Series in four games.

CRACK! A baseball soars overhead. A Blue Sox outfielder
dramatically catches it. Out! Sox fans jump for joy.

The video camera POV also jumps, due to the off-screen
cameraman cheering. Mitch tries to stay in frame.

MITCH (cont'd)

Thanks to a spectacular catch, the
Sox march onward to victory as we
come to the seventh inning stretch.
This is Mitch McCaulgan for --

The camera POV falls to the floor, recording Mitch's well-
worn blue suede sneakers.

MITCH (O.S.)

What the hell, Tony?! We're live!

Manboy TONY ENRIGHT, who's never stepped on a crack for fear
of breaking his mother's back, has trouble picking up the
camera with his freakishly long fingernails.

TONY

Whoa, I dunno how I dropped that.

MITCH

Gee, Wolverine, think maybe your
claws had something to do with it?

TONY

When I cut my nails, the Sox were
losing. The one time I didn't cut
'em, the Sox won. I haven't cut 'em
since and they haven't lost since.
Obviously the two are connected.

MITCH

Obviously. Wilson's going to flip.

TONY

We're about to win! Carter will be fine with a little camera drop.

INT. PRESS BOX - DAY

Sports reporters from various media buzz about. Monitors replay the camera drop, which is scrutinized by CARTER -- she's mid 50s and gruff with a Hillary Clinton pantsuit.

CARTER

What the hell happened out there?!

Mitch gives Tony an I-told-you-so grin.

TONY

Sorry, Misses Carter. I got excited and --

CARTER

I don't mean you, Enright. We're about to win. We're all excited.

She turns to Mitch, catching him off-guard.

CARTER (cont'd)

I mean you, McCaulgan, and your "some would say excuses" soundbyte. Now half the city thinks you don't believe in the curse.

Tony gives Mitch an I-told-you grin.

MITCH

I don't believe. The Sox haven't lost for seventy-five years because of some ridiculous curse. They've lost because they suck. The curse is just a scapegoat for fans who don't want to admit that.

TONY

I bet you were the kid who told the other kids the truth about Santa.

MITCH

Noooooooooo.

Yes.

CARTER

As journalists our beliefs are irrelevant. Only our viewers' beliefs matter, and to keep them as viewers we can't insult them. Especially if you want the weeknight spot.

MITCH

We're still in the running?

CARTER

It's between you and Hicks. Your exposé on the astroturf scandal was solid.

TONY

I held the camera.

CARTER

But Hicks knows what viewers want. They love his segment on the curse origins. You want the job? Floor me with a segment like that. Go Sox.

MITCH

Go Sox.

Carter walks off. Tony watches her like a lost puppy.

TONY

I held the camera.

INT. FAIRWEATHER STADIUM - DAY - 1937

Newsreel footage. Blue Sox play Tigers in a light rain.

HICKS (V.O.)

...the Sox had the lead against the Detroit Tigers in game four of the nineteen thirty-seven World Series. Victory was close at hand.

Sox fans cheer, except mustached GUS GRAVES and his pals.

HICKS (V.O.) (cont'd)

Gus Graves and company would become known as the Fairweather Five.

They appear to heckle the Sox. Gray clouds turn black.

HICKS (V.O.) (cont'd)
 Some fans heckle their teams when
 they're playing poorly. But why
 heckle when they're playing well?

Rain gets heavy. Lightning strikes the outfield. Fans
 vacate, all but the quintet.

HICKS (V.O.) (cont'd)
 Ultimately the why is unimportant
 in lieu of what followed.

CRACK! Lightning hits the metal bleachers and electrocutes
 the Five.

FADE TO:

SAME - LATER

Rain clouds part, letting sun illuminate the Five who lay
 upon charred bleachers. One pal's Sox scorecard lays nearby.

HICKS (V.O.)
 Doctors did their best but there
 was nothing they could do, save
 listen to a dying man's last words.

Gus mumbles. A doctor leans close to hear. His eyes widen.

HICKS (V.O.) (cont'd)
 "The Blue Sox will never win the
 World Series."

Gus' eyes close. He stops breathing.

The newsreel transitions to HICKS, a smarmy reporter talking
 to the camera. He freezes with a dopey grin.

INT. PRESS BOX - FAIRWEATHER STADIUM - DAY

Mitch freeze-frames Hicks' segment on a monitor.

MITCH
 How many times can you say "final
 words" in one bit? Hicks is a hack.

TONY
 Akbar sucks too. Look at how bad
 the camera work is.

MITCH

At least he didn't drop the camera,
Freddy Krueger.

Tony flips Mitch his middle finger (and creepy middle fingernail). The partners enjoy ribbing each other while eating their Moo goo gai pan.

Tony opens a fortune cookie, reads the fortune, and discards the cookie. Mitch eats a cookie and discards its fortune. That's their dynamic.

A God-like voice booms in from the stadium.

WICKHAM (O.S. HEADSET)

Ladies and gentlemen, boys and
girls, this is Roger Wickham, the
official Voice of Blue Sox Nation.

Mitch and Tony look out the window and up at --

INT. COMMENTARY BOOTH - STADIUM - DAY

A spacious booth that overlooks the entire arena.

Play-by-play commentator ROGER WICKHAM looks down at everyone from his throne. Late 50s. Full of charisma. Always willing to lend a hand, but beware of his other.

WICKHAM (VIA HEADSET)

Please stand and sing along with
me. I think you know the words.

He leads everyone in singing "Take Me Out to the Ball Game".

INT. PRESS BOX - STADIUM - DAY

MITCH

Can you believe he actually refers
to himself as The Voice? Who does
he think he is -- Bono?

Mitch's cell rings Neil Diamond's "Sweet Caroline". We'll hear it every time he gets a call.

INT. MCCAULGAN HOME - DAY

A modest house tastefully decorated for Halloween.

Mitch's wife, AMY -- late 30s, compact and approachable -- feeds their BABY BOY while on the phone. She's the nicest girl you've ever lost a drinking game to.

AMY (INTO PHONE)

Good reporting, hon. My favorite part was Tony dropping the camera.

INTERCUT - MITCH/AMY PHONE CONVERSATION

MITCH

Can't believe he won a Spink Award.

Amy's dad -- MR. BREWER -- enters, shedding a cop uniform and holster. A holster with a gun. No way is Mitch good enough for his daughter. He shares her phone.

MR. BREWER

Is that my no good son-in-law?

MITCH

Hey, Mister Brewer.

Dad joins his hulking sons -- MAC and JACK -- in front of the TV. They wear Beacon City Police T-shirts. No way is Mitch good enough for their sister.

MR. BREWER

Call me Jim for chrissake. And fix your hair. National TV and my son-in-law's hair's all out of whack.

MAC BREWER

Tell him go easy on the makeup too.

JACK BREWER

And zip his fly.

Mitch checks his fly. It's zipped. Amy's relatives laugh and punch shoulders. Mitch realizes they're teasing him. Again.

AMY

Don't mind them. They're just hazing you into the family.

MITCH

They've been hazing for six years but who's counting. Hey, good news. We're still in the running for the weeknight gig.

AMY

That's great. With the pay raise, I won't have to go back to work.

MITCH

Yeah, no more day care.

(beat)

Hey, we don't have to decide now
but, are we going to do the whole
Santa Claus thing with the baby?

AMY

That's out of left field. We don't
even have Halloween candy yet.

MITCH

I'm just wondering, you know, I --

The sing-along ends. Reporters grab their gear and exit.

MITCH (cont'd)

I got to get back to work. Go Sox.

AMY

Go Sox.

INT. FAIRWEATHER STADIUM - DUSK

VIDEO CAMERA POV

Superstitious Sox fans compete for the most superstitious.
One strokes his Rip Van Winkle beard.

SUPERSTITIOUS BEARDED FAN

The Sox been winning on account of
me not shaving since opening day.

One talks with his mouth full of hot dogs.

SUPERSTITIOUS HOT DOG FAN

It's 'cause I been eatin' a
Fairweather Frank every inning.

One shows off her visible-above-the-belt thong underwear.

SUPERSTITIOUS UNDERWEAR FAN

I haven't changed my panties since
play-offs! That's why the curse is
gonna bust wide open.

Mitch addresses the camera with a disgusted expression.

MITCH

Superstitious fans or OCD patients?
You be the judge.

Tony gives the fans a thumbs up (and creepy thumb fingernail). They fawn over them. Mitch leads him away.

MITCH (cont'd)

No more freaks. We got to do something that'll floor Carter.

TONY

How 'bout hot dog vendors? "Let's be frank about Fairweather Franks."

MITCH

That won't wow her. Think bigger.

TONY

Interview the organ player.

MITCH

Bigger.

TONY

Bigger like what? Like reporting from the Fairweather memorial? I can't think that big.

MITCH

That's it!

TONY

Huh? No. Ah-ah. Bad idea, Mitch.

MITCH

No wonder you won a Spink Award!

He takes off with Tony's camera. Tony sighs and follows.

INT. FAIRWEATHER FIVE MEMORIAL - STADIUM - DUSK

In the Firebirds' fan section resides the one empty spot in the stadium -- the Fairweather Five spot.

The scorched bleachers from '37 are walled in with a memorial plaque. Cobwebs and dust cover them.

Mitch grins. Tony frowns.

TONY

No. No way we're staying here.

MITCH

It's perfect.

TONY
It's haunted.

MITCH
What better place to cover the end
of the curse than where it began?
Allegedly. Carter will love it.

TONY
I hate it. No one goes there. They
dare each other to, but no one's
dumb enough to actually do it.

MITCH
What's the worst that --

TONY
Don't say it.

MITCH
What's the worst that could --

TONY
Don't you dare say it.

Tony stares down Mitch. He wins. Beat...

MITCH
What's the worst that could happen?

TONY
Well now anything, jinx! We could
be possessed by demons. Dragged to
hell. A piano could fall on us.

MITCH
Fine. You stay, I'll go.

Mitch struggles to attach a wireless microphone. Tony
attaches it for him. They're like an old married couple.

TONY
You're tempting fate. You want to
make Amy a sports widow for real?

MITCH
Last looks. How's my hair?

Tony pulls out a lucky rabbit's foot key chain.

TONY
I'm rubbing this for you.

MITCH
Thanks. Start filming.

Mitch heads toward the memorial.

INT. COMMENTARY BOOTH - STADIUM - CONTINUOUS

Wickham cracks open red pistachios. Shells fly everywhere.

Next to him sits color commentator JAY RODRIGUEZ, 40ish and all but ignored by Wickham.

WICKHAM (HEADSET)
...we go to the top of the ninth
with Firebirds at bat. Sox in the
lead. Alameda on the mound.

RODRIGUEZ (HEADSET)
Interesting fact about Alameda. He
learned to pitch from --

WICKHAM (HEADSET)
Sullivan steps to the plate for the
Birds. Known for base stealing...

A shell hits Rodriguez in the face.

INT. FAIRWEATHER FIVE MEMORIAL - STADIUM - CONTINUOUS

Sox fans cheer as the Sox strike out a Firebird. Out #1.

Mitch hops the memorial wall and dusts off the bleachers.

MITCH
Hurry up. We only have two more
outs to go.

Tony lowers his camera in defiance.

TONY
If you sit down, I don't film.

MITCH
If you don't film, I sit down.

INT. MCCAULGAN HOME - CONTINUOUS

Amy and family watch the game, on the edge of their seats. A Firebird gets on base.

INT. COMMENTARY BOOTH - STADIUM - CONTINUOUS

WICKHAM (HEADSET)
There's the pitch. Shapiro bunts
and runs to first. Two on.

RODRIGUEZ (HEADSET)
You know, Roger, the Birds have a
history of bunting in --

WICKHAM (HEADSET)
Holy spit, Guerrieo's hit by pitch!
He'll take a walk and bases are
loaded with Firebirds.

Frustrated, Rodriguez removes his headset.

WICKHAM (HEADSET) (cont'd)
The Sox rebound! They're one out
away from breaking the curse.

INT. FAIRWEATHER FIVE MEMORIAL - STADIUM - CONTINUOUS

Wickham's voice bellows over the stadium speakers.

WICKHAM (HEADSET O.S.)
Stepping up is Vázquez, the Birds'
rookie. Struggling in post-season,
he's got to feel the pressure.

Mitch taunts Tony with which seat he'll choose -- maybe this
one, maybe that one.

WICKHAM (HEADSET O.S.) (cont'd)
Strike one for the rook!

Mitch picks a spot. Tony shuts his eyes in fear.

WICKHAM (HEADSET O.S.) (cont'd)
Strike two! Uncork the champagne,
Sox fans.

Mitch sits down and... NOTHING HAPPENS.

Tony opens his eyes. Mitch grins. Maybe there is no jinx.

INT. BASEBALL DIAMOND - STADIUM - CONTINUOUS

WICKHAM (HEADSET O.S.)
Here's the wind-up. And the pitch.
He swings and it's stri --

CRACK! Bat connects with ball.

WICKHAM (HEADSET O.S.) (cont'd)
 He hits! The rookie actually hits!!
 High fly ball deep into left field.

The ball rockets through the air but quickly loses steam.

WICKHAM (HEADSET O.S.) (cont'd)
 Good try, but it's a can of beans
 dropping into the glove of --

Sox players reach for the ball but collide into one another.

The ball hits the glove of another player and bounces out,
 Fred Snodgrass-style.

It shoots through the legs of a Bill Buckner-like baseman.

WICKHAM (HEADSET O.S.) (cont'd)
 It's a comedy of errors out there!

INT. FAIRWEATHER FIVE MEMORIAL - STADIUM - CONTINUOUS

Tony watches in horror as the wild ball ricochets off a foul
 pole. Firebirds slide into home.

INT. COMMENTARY BOOTH - STADIUM - CONTINUOUS

Wickham and Rodriguez watch the Birds rookie score.

WICKHAM (HEADSET)
 Inside-the-park grand slam for the
 rook! He's as stunned as we are and
 the Birds take the lead! But
 where's the ball?

INT. FAIRWEATHER FIVE MEMORIAL - STADIUM - CONTINUOUS

The ball bounces into the stands and rolls. Superstitious
 fans back away from it.

INT. MCCAULGAN HOME - CONTINUOUS

The McCaulgans watch the JumboTron camera track the rolling
 ball, which comes to a stop in front of blue suede sneakers.
 Amy cringes.

INT. FAIRWEATHER FIVE MEMORIAL - STADIUM - CONTINUOUS

The JumboTron camera tilts up from the sneakers to Mitch's face -- exposing him to the world!

INT. COMMENTARY BOOTH - STADIUM - CONTINUOUS

Wickham is speechless. Rodriguez seizes the moment.

RODRIGUEZ (HEADSET)

Roger, that would be Mitch
McCaulgan, sportscaster for local
Channel Six news, weekend edition.
A lifelong Beaconite, Mitch was...

INT. FAIRWEATHER FIVE MEMORIAL - STADIUM - CONTINUOUS

The Firebirds section celebrates, gratefully lifting Mitch on their shoulders, exposing him even more.

INT. PRESS BOX - STADIUM - CONTINUOUS

Carter dryly watches Mitch on monitors.

INT. MCCAULGAN HOME - CONTINUOUS

Amy's stunned. Her brothers punch walls. Dad eyes his gun.

INT. FAIRWEATHER FIVE MEMORIAL - STADIUM - CONTINUOUS

Mitch jumps off the Birds fans' shoulders. Sox fans scream.

ANGRY SOX FAN

You did this. You sat on hallowed
ground!

MITCH

It was a coincidence.

ANGRIER SOX FAN

It was the curse!

Mitch ducks behind Tony, who glares at him.

MITCH

Bottom of the ninth. The Sox can
still win.

TONY

But if they don't, if we're still
here when their three outs come
around, then we're dead.

This registers with Mitch. He and Tony discretely slink away, hiding their faces from the JumboTron.

A Sox batter swings at a curve ball. Strike #1.

The guys quicken their pace from walk to jog!

The batter swings again. Strike #2.

Jog to sprint!!

Strike #3.

Sprint to flat-out run!!!

INT. CONCESSIONS AREA - STADIUM - CONTINUOUS

Sox fans see Mitch and Tony on JumboTron, and then see them run past in real life. The fans chase them.

The guys round a corner, out of breath. They see the press box up ahead. Salvation!

INT. PRESS BOX - STADIUM - CONTINUOUS

Mitch and Tony burst through the door and slam it shut.

The partners sigh of relief, safe with their own kind. Until mics are thrust in their faces.

REPORTERS

- Mitch, why'd you do it?
- Are you a closeted Birds fan?

The partners open the door to escape, only to see rabid fans charging their way. They're trapped in a pickle.

WICKHAM (HEADSET O.S.)

Hit! Right down the baseline...

Everyone's attention returns to the game. A Birds outfielder makes the catch. Out #2. Mitch and Tony dart out a back door. Reporters and fans tear after them.

INT. STAIRCASE - STADIUM - CONTINUOUS

Mitch and Tony race down a staircase. Carter walks up it.

MITCH

Misses Carter, despite what just happened I think we're the best candidates for the weeknight edition. We're hard workers and --

Tony pushes Mitch onward as a mob thunders toward Carter.

INT. MEDIA PARKING GARAGE - STADIUM - CONTINUOUS

The guys enter the cavernous garage packed with news vans. Tony aims his key chain at them, pressing its alarm button.

CHIRP. CHIRP.

The mob storms in, unable to spot the guys scurrying behind vans -- Tony's key chain raised like a periscope.

CHIRP. CHIRP. BEEP!

Tony's van sits at the other end of the garage. Unfortunately its alarm clues the mob into their location.

Mitch runs toward it, slapping cars along the way, setting off alarms that confuse the mob.

The guys converge on Tony's grubby Channel 6 van, illegally parked in a fire zone. The wipers hug a parking citation.

INT. TONY'S NEWS VAN - CONTINUOUS

The radio's tuned to the game.

WICKHAM (ON RADIO)

Game over. Biiiiig loss for the Sox!

Tony guns it out of the garage as the mob hurls junk. Soda explodes against windows, jolting Mitch, but they escape.

EXT. MCCAULGAN HOME - NIGHT

It's the perfect suburban house, complete with tire swing and scarecrow. A welcome sign reads: HOME PLATE HOME.

Tony's van coasts to a stop with headlights off.

MITCH

Thanks for the ride. Nothing makes me feel safer at night than gliding in neutral without lights.

TONY

We got no choice, smart guy. We're in stealth mode 'cause of you.

Tony pulls the citation off the windshield and stuffs it in the glove compartment with several others.

He heaves Mitch's gear out onto the landscaped lawn.

MITCH

This may seem bad now but it'll blow over.

Tony threateningly holds up his talon-like fingernails.

TONY

I'm not the only one with these, you know. I'm just the only one who won't use them. Yet.

Tony drives off, exhaust smoke billowing in Mitch's face.

MITCH

It'll blow over!

INT. MCCAULGAN HOME - NIGHT

Mitch enters. Mr. Brewer and sons are on their way out. Jack "accidentally" shoves Mitch. Brewer gives the evil eye.

MR. BREWER

You're lucky I love my daughter.

They exit. Amy walks in, concerned.

MITCH

I don't want to talk about it.

She notices a cut on his forehead.

AMY

What happened to your head?

MITCH

I don't know, something hit me. A bobble-head I think.

AMY

Sit down. I'll take care of it.

She exits. He turns on the TV. All stations, even his Channel 6, replay the footage of him being chased. A kid flings a mini-bat at his noggin.

MITCH

Nope, it was a mini-bat.

Amy returns with ointment. She tends to his cut.

MITCH (cont'd)

I didn't even touch the ball. I was just sitting there.

AMY

But why were you sitting *there*?

MITCH

I don't want to talk about it. Is the baby down?

AMY

It took forever with my brothers punching walls, but he's asleep.

Mitch glances at fist-sized craters in the wall.

MITCH

I wish you had sisters instead.

AMY

They'd still have my dad's blood.

The doorbell rings. AL and NELLIE, elderly neighbors dressed in Sox blue, come in.

AL

Is it true? Is that you on TV?

MITCH

Well, you know, Al, I am a TV reporter. Hi, Nellie.

Nellie politely waves.

AL

Is that you screwing up the Sox?!

MITCH

Hey, no need to yell.

The baby wakes up crying in the nursery. Amy goes to him.

AL

I've waited seventy-five years for
the curse to end and just as it's
about to, my neighbor mucks it up!

MITCH

Gotta go. I'll get The Today Show
to wish you happy hundredth, OK?

AL

I'm eighty-two, damn it.

MITCH

You'll forget anyway. Bye, Nellie.

Nellie politely waves as he shuts the door. The baby wails.

BABY NURSERY

Blue Sox wallpaper. Blue Sox mobile. Blue Sox nose sucker-
outer. The kid will be a fan whether he wants to or not.

Amy hums a traditional lullaby but it doesn't work. Mitch
enters. He gently rocks his son while singing John Fogerty's
"Centerfield" lullaby-style. The baby dozes off.

Although touched by the moment, Amy remains firm.

AMY

Mitch, what are you going to do?

MITCH

I don't want to talk about it.

AMY

Avoiding it won't make it go away.

MITCH

I don't want to talk about it...
right now.

He kisses her neck. She backs away.

AMY

No. No sweet spot for you until...

He kisses her lips. He's won arguments this way before. She
uncrosses her arms and returns the kiss. He wins another.

INT. TONY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Sox merchandise vies for space with comic books, occult books, UFO models, dreamcatchers. Amid this hoarder's sanctuary glints a Taylor Spink award.

Tony eats cereal in front of a TV, surfing news of the incident. He sees Mitch front and center, and then himself.

TONY

No.

He flips to another channel and spots himself. And another.

TONY (cont'd)

No. No.

All news networks. All sports channels. Tony, Tony, Tony -- in focus for the world to see.

TONY (cont'd)

No. No. No. No. No.

He drops his cereal, splashing chocolate milk everywhere. He speed-dials his cell. A woman (FELICIA) answers.

FELICIA (O.S.)

Felicia's One-Stop Psychic Shop.
How may I predict your tomorrow
today?

TONY

Hi. It's Tony. I'm in trouble.

FELICIA (O.S.)

Love and light to you. Crystal
ball, Tarot cards or tea leaves?

TONY

Whatever works.

FELICIA (O.S.)

That'll be four ninety-five a
minute please. We accept all major
credit cards.

Tony pulls out cards from his wallet.

TONY

Fine. Good. Just tell me what's
gonna happen to me.

INT. CHANNEL 6 NEWS STATION - WILSON'S OFFICE - DAY

The footage of Mitch and the ball plays on a monitor for Carter. The guys watch her watch it. They're kids in the principal's office. Mitch chomps gum.

Carter pauses the video on a dopey shot of Mitch.

CARTER

First rule of journalism: Report
the news, don't become the news.
We've received a dozen calls
wanting to interview you.

Mitch looks wowed.

CARTER (cont'd)

And even more wanting to kill you.

Mitch loses the wowed look.

CARTER (cont'd)

The city already suspected that you
hate the Sox.

MITCH

I don't hate the --

CARTER

Now they're sure of it, and they're
associating McCaulgan's Muff with
this station.

MITCH

McCaulgan's what?

CARTER

McCaulgan's Muff. That's what
Wikipedia's calling it.

MITCH

Someone updated my Wikipedia page?
It's not like I touched the ball. I
was just sitting there.

CARTER

On sacred ground where you
shouldn't have been.

TONY

Just for the record, I told him not
to do it. Mitch, I told you not to
do it.

MITCH
So what now?

CARTER
Apologize. To the city. The fans.
Nip it in the bud before it nips
you.

TONY
Yeah, before it nips you.

Mitch blows a bubble, not taking the situation serious.

MITCH
People may be upset but it'll die
down. We just have to wait it out.

CARTER
Then wait it out somewhere else.
Having you represent the station is
like having a target on our backs.
You're both on paid suspension.

TONY
Both!? But all I did was hold the
camera.

CARTER
Sorry. Can't chance it. Hicks and
Akbar will cover tonight's game.

MITCH
Hicks and Akbar?!

CARTER
They won't get booed out of the
stadium like you guys.

MITCH
We just have to wait it out.

Carter sternly points to the trash. Mitch drops his gum in.

CARTER
Wait it out... somewhere else.

EXT. CHANNEL 6 NEWS STATION - PARKING LOT - DAY

The partners exit. Tony jabs his nails in Mitch's face.

TONY
So close to using these. So close.

MITCH
At least we didn't get fired.

TONY
But we can't go to game five!

Hicks and his equally smarmy cameraman, AKBAR, pass by.

HICKS
Hey, McCaulgan, thanks for the gig.

MITCH
Up yours, Hicks.

AKBAR
Good luck getting the weeknight spot. I'm sure it's in the bag for you guys now.

TONY
Suck it, Akbar, or I'll put you in a bag.

Hicks and Akbar enter the station laughing.

Mitch and Tony stop at the van parked in a bus zone, parking citation under wipers. Tony crams it in glove compartment.

MITCH
So what are we going to do?

TONY
We?! There is no we. There's you and me. And you better make things right so *me* can go back to work. That's bad English but you get the gist. Go Sox.

Tony speeds off. His tires kick up dirt in Mitch's face.

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - SUBWAY STATION - DAY

Mitch exits the subway station and enters his neighborhood. He notices something curious up ahead.

EXT. MCCAULGAN HOME - DAY

Reporters and neighbors are staked outside the house. Mitch approaches. Reporters thrust cameras and mics in his face.

REPORTERS
- Mitch, are you a ball hawk?
(MORE)

REPORTERS (cont'd)

- Are you a spy for the Firebirds?
- Is The Firebird Suite your
favorite Stravinsky concerto?

MITCH

No! No to all. Except that last
one. Hey, step away from the
Wrigley grass.

A reporter steps on the GARDEN OF STADIUM GRASSES: manicured
grass squares with mini-pennants marking stadiums of origin
like Wrigley Field, Camden Yards, Dodger Stadium.

MITCH (cont'd)

My wife got patted down carrying
that through airport security.
How'd you get my address?

Among the neighbors are Al and Nellie. Hank's shirt reads:
MY TEAM WENT TO GAME 4 AND ALL I GOT WAS THIS LOUSY T-SHIRT.

MITCH (cont'd)

Al, what the hell's going on? Hi,
Nellie.

Nellie politely waves.

AL

Seventy-five years is a long time
to wait, damn it.

MITCH

You called the press? You sold me
out?!

Mitch recognizes a shrewd reporter named PEPPER.

MITCH (cont'd)

Pepper, what are you doing here?

PEPPER

My job. Care to comment on your
neighbor's comment?

Mitch glares at Al.

MITCH

No comment.

INT. MCCAULGAN HOME - CONTINUOUS

Mitch steps in, shoving reporters outside enough to close
the door. Amy hangs up the house phone.

MITCH

Why didn't you call me about this?

AMY

I couldn't, phone's been ringing all day. People called.

MITCH

What people?

AMY

People Magazine. They want to do an article on McCaulgan's Muff. That the best they can come up with?

MITCH

It's like Snodgrass' Muff.

AMY

Snod grass muff... ? None of that sounds appealing.

MITCH

Better than Merkel's Boner. How long they been outside?

The phone rings. She answers.

AMY (INTO PHONE)

Yes, he's here. Who should I say is... Who!?

(to Mitch)

The Tonight Show wants you on.

MITCH

The *Tonight* Tonight Show?

AMY

No, tomorrow's Tonight Show.

MITCH

Tell them I'm not interested.

AMY (INTO PHONE)

He's not inter --

MITCH

Wait, how much?

AMY (INTO PHONE)

How much?

MITCH

No, forget it. Not interested.

AMY (INTO PHONE)
Not interested.

She hangs up. Baby cries in the nursery. The phone rings.

MITCH
Divide and conquer.

She goes to the baby as he answers the phone.

IOWA GOVERNOR (O.S.)
Hi, Mitch. This is Governor Porter.

MITCH (INTO PHONE)
Governor Porter of Iowa?

IOWA GOVERNOR (O.S.)
You got it, sport. On behalf of
Firebird fans everywhere, I want to
thank you for your act of bravery
last night.

Mitch wears a dumbfounded expression.

IOWA GOVERNOR (O.S.) (cont'd)
I'd also like to offer you asylum
in our great state since being a
Birds fan in Sox territory can --

MITCH (INTO PHONE)
I am not a Birds fan.

He hangs up. Amy returns with the baby and a new diaper.

AMY
So why are you home early?

MITCH
I kind of got suspended.

AMY
What?! For how long?

MITCH
Till things blow over I guess.

He pops open a beer.

AMY
Why'd you get suspended?

MITCH
Carter wants me to apologize to the
fans.

AMY

Good idea. That's smart.

MITCH

Why do it? I was just sitting there minding my own business.

He sinks into his recliner and clicks on the TV.

AMY

So you're just going to take it easy and wait to go back to work?

MITCH

I'm still getting pay and benefits. This is just temporary.

She clicks off the TV.

AMY

Know what else is temporary? Me staying home with the baby. If you're going to be home anyway, then you can take over and I'll go back to work at the florist.

She hands him the baby and diaper. Mitch smells his son's bottom. Ewww. Mitch dials his cell phone.

MITCH

Misses Carter, it's Mitch.

EXT. CHANNEL 6 NEWS STATION - PRESS CONFERENCE - DAY

Journalists from various media wait before a podium of microphones, notebooks and recording devices at the ready.

BACKSTAGE

Carter touches up her mascara. Mitch peeks at the press.

MITCH

I used to work with half of these guys. It's like a journalism reunion out there.

CARTER

All you have to do is say you're sorry and don't insult the believers. Got it?

He strides past her with confidence.

MITCH

Oh, I got it.

Perhaps too much confidence.

PODIUM

Carter steps to the mics and introduces Mitch like a bailiff announcing a judge. Photographers train their sights on him.

MITCH (cont'd)

I'm Mitch McCaulgan, I... you know who I am. Joe, how are the kids? Pepper, glad to see you somewhere other than my front lawn. I'm here to discuss what's come to be known as McCaulgan's Muff. Guys, there must be a better name for it.

Reporters chuckle. Mitch unfolds a paper and reads it.

MITCH (cont'd)

"'Go Sox' is this city's aloha. It can mean multiple things such as hello, goodbye, I love you. It can also mean I'm sorry."

Carter smiles. So far so good.

MITCH (cont'd)

"I've been a Blue Sox fan my entire life. I bleed blue and I want to see them win as much as everyone else. The Muff was an unfortunate coincidence. If anyone interpreted it as being responsible for the team's ensuing loss then -- on behalf of the players, the fans, and the city -- I am truly sorry. Thank you. Go Sox."

Reporters scribble down notes. Camera flashes FLASH.

Carter looks perplexed, as if she's playing back Mitch's apology in her head. Was it an apology?

Everyone thinks so and that's what matters. Mitch playfully poses for Pepper's lens. Others ask questions.

CARTER

No questions please. No questions.

Carter escorts Mitch away.

WICKHAM (O.S.)
 Surely Mister McCaulgan has time
 for one question.

Carter and Mitch turn to see Roger Wickham in a silk suit.
 Reporters buzz about him and he soaks up the attention.

CARTER
 He'd go to the opening of an
 envelope if it concerned the Sox.
 Just answer his question and we'll
 call it a day.

Mitch nods. He speaks into the microphone bed.

MITCH
 For the Voice of the Sox. Sure.

Wickham extends his hand to his corporate cold ASSISTANT.
 She hands him a pouch of red pistachios.

WICKHAM
 Are you sure it was coincidental?

MITCH
 The incident?

WICKHAM
 Yes. Are you sure the incident was
 coincidental?

MITCH
 It wasn't intentional.

WICKHAM
 I'm not saying it was intentional.

MITCH
 Good, then we agree. Case closed.

Wickham cracks and eats pistachios.

WICKHAM
 But I'm also not saying it was
 coincidental.

Mitch begins to speak angrily until he catches Wilson's
 glare. He forces a smile.

MITCH
 I'm not sure what you're say --

WICKHAM
 It was the curse.

FLASH. FLASH. Gasps amongst the assembled. Mitch discretely twists the slice of paper between his hands.

MITCH

No offense, Mister Wickham but I --

Wickham addresses the crowd like a courtroom attorney.

WICKHAM

The Sox were three games up and on their way to winning a fourth until the incident. I'd say that's evidence enough of being cursed. Wouldn't you, folks?

The jury of reporters nod in agreement.

MITCH

I don't think the team --

WICKHAM

I'm not referring to the team, Mister McCaulgan. I refer to you.

MITCH

If you're implying that I'm cursed, I don't see how that's possible. I have no connection to the Fairweather Five.

WICKHAM

Then why were you sitting in their bleachers?

FLASH. FLASH. Mitch appeals to his peers.

MITCH

I was covering news. Just like you guys are now. Right, Pepper?

No reply from Pepper. She's just doing her job.

WICKHAM

No one's sat in those bleachers since nineteen thirty-seven and the one time someone does...

MITCH

It's a coincidence. I'm not cursed.

WICKHAM

How do you know?

MITCH
Because I know.

WICKHAM
You don't believe in it, do you?

MITCH
I believe... that my beliefs are irrelevant, Mister Wickham.

Carter smiles proudly.

WICKHAM
This entire city believes in the curse except the one person who is cursed. That can't be coincidence.

MITCH
How do you know it exists?

Wickham cracks a pistachio.

WICKHAM
How do you know it doesn't?

Mitch twists the paper so tightly that it rips in half.

MITCH
Because I'll prove it. I'll prove it doesn't exist, which will prove I'm innocent. Then we'll see whose belief is real and whose is absurd.
(afterthought)
Go Sox.

FLASH. Mitch storms off stage. FLASH. Carter shakes her head in disapproval. FLASH. Wickham tosses the empty pouch to his Assistant. He grins. Court adjourned.

INT. CHANNEL 6 NEWS STATION - BACKSTAGE - DAY

Off stage, Carter chews out Mitch.

CARTER
What the hell were you thinking?

MITCH
I didn't say anything negative about the fans' beliefs.

CARTER
No, you did worse. You ticked off the Voice of the Sox.

MITCH

He's in love with his own voice.

CARTER

He's not the only one. Make an enemy of Wickham and you make enemies of every Beaconite around!

Mitch's cell rings. He sees the incoming call, relieved.

MITCH

It's Amy. I should take this. Could be a baby thing.

Mitch moves out of earshot from Carter.

MITCH (cont'd)

Nice save, hon. I was just getting chewed out by --

AMY (O.S.)

What the hell were you thinking?! Paparazzi's everywhere. Your "apology" made everything worse.

MITCH

The baby's doing worse? Is it a fever? I'll be right home.

EXT. MCCAULGAN HOME - CONTINUOUS

Amy, headset on, baby beside her, backs her mini-van out of the driveway, trying not to hit paparazzi. Sort of trying.

AMY

Don't come home. Home isn't home anymore. Home is a vulture's nest.

(to paparazzi)

Hey, keep off my Wrigley grass!

(to Mitch)

How will you prove the curse is fake? Did you think that through?

INT. CHANNEL 6 NEWS STATION - BACKSTAGE - CONTINUOUS

MITCH

He threw up? OK, I'll meet you at the pediatrician. See you there.

He hangs up, thinking his ruse worked, but...

CARTER

So how *will* you prove it's fake?

D'oh. It didn't work.

CARTER (cont'd)

Better figure it out fast. If the Sox lose game five, you'll be the poster child for curses everywhere. And lose the smartphone. Just use it for calls. They could be tracking you.

MITCH

Who?

CARTER

(whispers)

Everyone.

She exits. He stares at his phone, now concerned.

INT. SIP 'N' SURF CYBERCAFÉ - DAY

Patrons sip gourmet coffee and surf the 'net on vintage desktop computers. Artisinal menu. Ironic decor. The vibe is so retro that the hipster clientele feels even hipper.

Mitch, the oldest patron, pays a HIPSTER BARISTA wearing a knit beanie. Barista hands him a receipt.

HIPSTER BARISTA

Here's the Wi-Fi password. Today it's non-ironic. I'll bring you a kale scone when it's ready.

MITCH

Got any blueberry or vanilla ones?

HIPSTER BARISTA

We only serve foraged kale. Say, you look famils. Do I know you?

MITCH

You probably recognize me from Channel Six. I'm their spor... ah, weatherman. Midday edition.

HIPSTER BARISTA

That's rad, daddio.

Mitch sighs -- hipsters.

VINTAGE COMPUTER - MOMENTS LATER

Mitch CLICKS through obituaries for the Fairweather Five.

MITCH

OK, Fairweather Five. Talk to me.

Each obit has text for the death date (OCT 31, 1937) and cause of death (STRUCK BY LIGHTNING). Photos accompany them.

Photo #1 features a businessman smoking a pipe.

Thomas Conant. Age 33. Proprietor of Conant Shipping. Divorced. No Children. Survived by one brother.

Mitch CLICKS to a jolly man waving a Blue Sox pennant.

Sam O'Connor. Age 36. Farmer. Survived by wife, daughter, son.

CLICK. A tomboy woman eats from a Crackerjack box.

Agnes Thorne. Age 28. Bus driver. Fraternal twin of Eddie Thorne. Survived by extended family.

CLICK. A knockabout guy in a fedora steals some Crackerjack.

Eddie Thorne. Age 28. Taxi driver. Fraternal twin of Agnes Thorne. Survived by extended family.

CLICK. The guy with the Gable mustache.

Gus Graves. Age 30. Salesman. Survived by wife and newborn son.

His obit features his infamous quote:

"THE BLUE SOX WILL NEVER WIN THE WORLD SERIES."

Mitch clicks a different search engine, but finds the same info and quote. Different engine. Same quote. Until...

"THE BLUE SOX WILL NEVER WIN THE WORLD SERIES UNL

He focuses on the "UNL" part. Curious...

MITCH (cont'd)

U-N-L? Must be a typo.

...but not curious enough.

Mitch clicks PRINT. Obits slowly emerge from an antique printer. While waiting, he clicks on his Wikipedia page.

MITCH (cont'd)
(surprised)
It really is updated.

THUNK. Startled by a plated scone set before him, Mitch turns and sees Hipster Barista.

HIPSTER BARISTA
Sorry for the wait.

Barista sees the Wikipedia page that features McCaulgan's Muff and Mitch's face.

HIPSTER BARISTA (cont'd)
Hey... you're that frado.

MITCH
No, no. We just look alike.

Mitch glances at the printer, praying for it to go faster.

HIPSTER BARISTA
That's you. You cursed the Sox!

Patrons spin around, revealing Sox clothing. All vintage of course. They're pissed. Hipster-pissed. Mitch gulps.

MITCH
Ok, guys. I can explain every --
(points behind hipsters)
Whoa, is that Zooey Deschanel
giving away Polaroid cameras?

Hipsters excitedly look behind them. Mitch tears off the incomplete print-out and sprints for the exit.

EXT. SIP 'N' SURF CYBERCAFÉ - CONTINUOUS

Mitch blasts out of the café, half print-out in hand. The scone bops him off the head. Enraged hipsters bolt after him.

Mitch runs while speed dialing his cell.

MITCH (INTO PHONE)
Tony, pick up! I'm near your place.
I know you're mad but...

INT. TONY'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Mitch's voice emanates from the answering machine.

MITCH (ANSWERING MACHINE)
 ...I need a place to hide. Stop
 wasting money on that psychic crap
 and pick up the damn --

Tony unplugs the machine. He eats pizza and lowers his TV volume, which runs a low budget ad for Felicia's One-Stop...

FELICIA (ON TV)
 ...Psychic Shop. Located in the
 bloody heart of Warbeck Village.

He returns to his cell phone conversation.

TONY
 Sorry. You were saying about my
 future?

FELICIA (O.S. PHONE)
 You will go... on a great journey.

Never has Tony heard anything more profound.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Angry hipsters pursue Mitch, despite them not running well in skinny jeans. They chase him with single-speed bicycles.

HIPSTERS
 Muff man! Muff man!!

Mitch turns a corner and sees a subway entrance. He dashes down the stairs as hipsters turn the corner. They miss him and keep running. He boards a train.

EXT. DOWNTOWN - SUBWAY STATION - LATER

Mitch exits a subway stop across from a police precinct. Sunglasses on. Jacket collar up. He skims the Fairweather Five obituaries, specifically the surviving family members.

He approaches the precinct, has second thoughts, and turns around. Then he mans up and enters.

INT. POLICE PRECINCT - MR. BREWER'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

MR. BREWER

I can't believe you're the father
of my only grandchild.

Mitch immediately regrets entering.

MITCH

Listen, Jim, I need --

MR. BREWER

Don't call me that. You've lost all
rights to call me by my first name.

Family photos line Brewer's detective's desk, including one
of Mitch. Brewer lays it face down.

MITCH

My bad. Mister Brewer, I need help
to track down some descendants.

MR. BREWER

Does this have something to do with
proving the curse is fake?

MITCH

Maybe.

MR. BREWER

Forget it.

He shuts his door in Mitch's face. Cops hear. Mitch lowers
his head and slinks away.

POLICE PRECINCT - MAIN DOOR

On his way out, Mitch spies Pepper interviewing Mac Brewer
about his cuffed perp. She carries a laptop. Mitch smiles.

Mitch takes cover until the interview ends. He surprises
Pepper on her way out.

MITCH

Pepper. You owe me a favor, right?

PEPPER

Nope.

MITCH

OK, I'll owe you a favor. I need to
borrow your laptop to find some
phone numbers.

EXT. BEACON CITY PARK - LATER

Mitch walks the park while avoiding passersby. He calls phone numbers written on a mini notepad.

MONTAGE - MITCH INTRODUCES HIMSELF

MITCH

Hi, Mister O'Connor. My name's Mitch McCaulgan and --

SAM O'CONNOR DESCENDENT (O.S.)

McCaulgan? The McCaulgan Muff guy?

MITCH

Yeah, but I was just sit --

O'Connor hangs up. Huh. Mitch calls the Conant descendant...

MITCH (cont'd)

Misses Conant-Taché. Hi. I'm Mitch McCau... Macadamia.

THOMAS CONANT DESCENDENT (O.S.)

Mitch Macadamia?

The Thorne twins' descendant...

MITCH

Mitch Mitchell. Looking for Mister Thorne please.

Gus Graves' descendant...

MITCH (cont'd)

Miss Graves, my name is Bob.

MONTAGE - MITCH GIVES REASON FOR CALLING

MITCH (cont'd)

I'd like to ask a few questions about your father Sam.

MITCH (cont'd)

...your great uncle Thomas Conant.

MITCH (cont'd)

...your second cousins Eddie and Agnes Thorne.

MITCH (cont'd)

I'm calling about your grandfather Gus Graves.

MONTAGE - MITCH GETS REPLIES

SAM O'CONNOR DESCENDENT (O.S.)
 Hawaii's the farthest my pa could
 move the family after years of
 hell. Apparently wasn't far enough.

O'Connor hangs up again. Mitch crosses out Sam's obit photo.

THOMAS CONANT DESCENDENT (O.S.)
 I'd rather be related to Hitler
 than the Fairweather Five!

Conant hangs up. Mitch crosses out Thomas' photo.

EDDIE/AGNES THORNE DESCENDENT (O.S.)
 Don't ever. Call here. Again.

Another hang-up. Frustrated, Mitch crumples the obits.

GILDA GRAVES (O.S.)
 Whenever the Sox get to the series,
 you press people track us down.

INT. UPSTATE LAKE HOUSE - DAY

Middle-aged GILDA GRAVES cleans her house while on phone.

INTERCUT - GILDA GRAVES/MITCH PHONE CONVERSATION

GILDA GRAVES
 I give the same answer. Try to
 clear his name. But no one ever
 believes me.

MITCH
 I'll believe you.

GILDA GRAVES
 That's what they all say.

She dusts family portraits, such as one of her grandparents.

GILDA GRAVES (cont'd)
 I would've loved to have met
 Grandpa Gus but never did. Grandma
 talked about him a lot though.

FLASHBACK:

EXT. BEACON CITY - THE GRAVES HOUSE - DAY - 1937

Gus quickly exits. GRANDMA (early 20s) follows, holding their infant son. She also holds Gus' ticket that he forgot.

GILDA GRAVES (V.O.)
 He was a huge Sox fan. He went to every game, even the ones on their wedding anniversary. Grandma was none too pleased with that.

Gus returns for the ticket and thanks his wife with a kiss.

GILDA GRAVES (V.O.) (cont'd)
 Grandpa and his pals were plenty opinionated about the Sox, which led to plenty of arguments.

Gus jogs down the steps to his waiting pals.

GILDA GRAVES (V.O.) (cont'd)
 When they met him for game four, grandma heard them bicker about what it'll take for the Sox to ever win the series.

Grandma watches the quintet walk to nearby Fairweather Stadium, squabbling all the way. She rolls her eyes.

GILDA GRAVES (V.O.) (cont'd)
 Eddie and his sister figured better players. Sam figured better coaches. Thomas thought a new stadium would do the trick.

Blue skies turn gray.

INT. FAIRWEATHER STADIUM - DAY - 1937

Blue Sox play Tigers in the rain. Sox fans cheer.

GILDA GRAVES (V.O.)
 She never heard grandpa's answer but reckoned the quarrel continued at the game.

The Five argue, which resembles heckling. They're oblivious to fans vacating around them.

GILDA GRAVES (V.O.) (cont'd)
 Otherwise they'd have noticed the change in weather.

CRACK! Lightning strikes the bleachers and electrocutes them.

SAME - LATER

Clouds part, letting sun illuminate the Five who lay still.

As a doctor leans close to hear Gus' last words, Crackerjacks blow along the ground in the breeze. So does Gus' ticket.

GILDA GRAVES (V.O.) (cont'd)
Grandma was sure they didn't heckle
the Sox. They had no reason to.

The ticket settles by a reporter with a press pass (DAILY HERALD) in his hat's brim. He picks up the ticket.

INSERT - TICKET, which reads in handwriting: "Go Sox."

END FLASHBACK

BACK TO GILDA GRAVES/MITCH PHONE CONVERSATION

She dusts the "Go Sox" ticket, now aged and framed.

GILDA GRAVES
Just like grandpa had no reason to
say what everyone thinks he said.

Mitch, who doodles on the back of the obits, perks up.

MITCH
Wait a sec. Are you saying that he
didn't say, "The Sox will never win
the series"?

GILDA GRAVES
You don't believe me either. Figures.

He flips over the obits to inspect different versions of Gus' quote from different newspapers -- THE BEACON CITY BEACON and THE DAILY HERALD. One quote ends with "UNL".

MITCH
Maybe it's not a typo.

INT. BEACON CITY LIBRARY - DAY

Patrons search old tomes in the central library. The only sounds are CLACKS and WHRRRS that come from --

THE MICROFILM AREA

Of a handful of dusty microfilm viewing machines, only one is in use. CLACK, WHRRRR, CLACK.

Mitch turns a knob to shuttle through a film strip labeled: BEACON CITY BEACON 1930-1940.

He shuttles to OCT 31, 1937 and reads the page 1 headline:

BLUE SOX PLAY WORLD SERIES GAME 4
TONIGHT.

Not what he's looking for. He shuttles forward to the NOV 1, 1937 headline:

LAST NIGHT'S GAME 4 COMES TO
ELECTRIFYING CONCLUSION!

He adjusts the magnifying screen and zeroes in on Gus' quote:

"THE BLUE SOX WILL NEVER WIN THE
WORLD SERIES."

It matches the obit print-out. He swaps the film for one labeled: DAILY HERALD 1930-1940. He shuttles to OCT 31, 1937:

EXCLUSIVE -- SOX FANS ELECTROCUTED
AT GAME 4!

He zeroes in on Gus' quote:

"THE BLUE SOX WILL NEVER WIN THE
WORLD SERIES UNL

That's all he can read of the quote on the newspaper's bottom corner. A blotchy triangle fills where the rest of the quote should be. What is that?

Mitch's stomach growls.

LIBRARIAN

Shhhhh.

Mitch gives the Librarian a look -- "Seriously?"

Librarian walks away, revealing a bulletin board behind her. It's covered with Halloween decor and ads for events such as:

WORLD SERIES RETROSPECTIVE AT
BEACON CITY MUSEUM OF HISTORY.

Mitch smiles. His stomach growls louder.

LIBRARY PATRONS
Shhhhhhhhh!

INT. BEACON CITY MUSEUM OF HISTORY - DAY

Marble floors, stone statues, bored kids -- your typical metro museum. Mitch finds the exhibition, marked by a banner:

FEELING BLUE ABOUT THE SOX: A World
Series retrospective sponsored by
Roger Wickham, Voice of the Blue
Sox.

Exhibits chronicle every Sox series defeat from the past 8 decades. The Great Loss of 2003. The Near Miss of 1988. The Almost Was of 1965. It's like staring at an open wound.

A PERKY CURATOR gives a tour to a group of sightseers.

PERKY CURATOR
Once the Sox lose the current
series, we'll update the exhibit,
sure to include McCaulgan's Muff.

Mitch silently freaks. He lowers his head and sneaks by.

WORLD SERIES DISPLAY

At the center of the display dwells the curse exhibit.

Mitch passes artifacts encased in glass: a scorecard, beer bottle, and other personal effects of the Fairweather Five.

PERKY CURATOR (cont'd)
...an array of local newspapers
from the era, including rare Daily
Herald archives that survived the
fire of nineteen fifty-four...

Mitch spots the aged newspapers she talks about. He inspects the charred Daily Herald. He finds Gus' quote and blotchy triangle from the microfilm:

"THE BLUE SOX WILL NEVER WIN THE
WORLD SERIES UNL

Mitch deciphers the triangle -- it's the bottom corner of the actual newspaper folded over the quote. Damn.

He examines the glass case. It's locked. He considers the Curator for help...

PERKY CURATOR (cont'd)
 Perhaps we'll get Mister McCaulgan
 himself to dedicate the exhibit.

...but changes his mind.

He gets eye level with the newspaper corner. It's folded at such an angle that can reveal more of the quote if he can see it. Too bad the opaque sides of the case block his view.

However, the back of the case is mirrored.

Mitch sees the folded quote reflected backward in the mirror. He writes the backward letters on his print-out. He holds the print-out up to the mirror that reflects the quote in forward order. It reads:

"THE BLUE SOX WILL NEVER WIN THE
 WORLD SERIES UNLESS
 Article continued on page 5.

He looks for page 5, but -- other than the front page -- nothing remains of the burnt newspaper. He stares at the quote, specifically the word: "UNLESS"

EXT. MCCAULGAN HOME - FRONT YARD - NIGHT

Not as many journalists are staked outside as during the day. The ones present nod off in their news vans.

BACKYARD - GARDEN OF STADIUM GRASSES

With a baby monitor nearby, Amy maintains the garden. She weeds the Phillies' grass, dusts the Rays' astroturf, etc.

Mitch eagerly follows her around, devouring a sub sandwich.

MITCH
 He didn't say "The Blue Sox will
 never win the World Series."

AMY
 He didn't?

MITCH
 No. He said "The Blue Sox will
 never win the World Series *unless*."

AMY
 Unless... what?

MITCH

That's all there was and there's no more Herald to ask, but who cares? Bottom line -- Gus Graves didn't say what everyone thinks he said!

She hands him a water bucket and he gets to work.

AMY

But he said it in other newspapers.

MITCH

The Herald was the only one close enough to hear his dying words. That's why they ran a late edition that night. All the other papers ran their stories the next day after quoting the Herald. Or misquoting. It's like the Casablanca thing.

AMY

You mean the Mandela Effect?

MITCH

No, the Casablanca thing. Humphrey Bogart's most famous line.

AMY

(decent Bogart impression)
"Play it again, Sam."

MITCH

Wrong! He never said that.

AMY

Sure, he did.

MITCH

He didn't. Trust me. I memorized that whole scene for our first Valentines Day, after your dad told me it's your favorite movie.

AMY

It's *his* favorite movie. He was just hazing you.

MITCH

Figured that out after surprising you at the restaurant in my black and white tux.

AMY

Customers mistook you for a waiter.

She laughs. He shakes his head.

MITCH

So what really happens is Ilsa walks in, sees Sam, and says --

(Ilsa impression)

"Play it once, Sam, for old times' sake."

(normal voice)

Sam pretends he doesn't know what she means and Ilsa responds --

(Ilsa impression)

"Play it, Sam. Play 'As Time Goes By'."

AMY

When does Bogart enter?

MITCH

Later. When she's gone, Rick says to Sam --

Mitch launches into his best Casablanca impressions --

MITCH (cont'd)

(Rick)

"You know what I want to hear."

(Sam)

"No, I don't."

(Rick)

"You played it for her and you can play it for me."

(Sam)

"I don't think I can remember --"

(Rick)

"If she can stand it, I can. Play it!"

-- which are the worst Casablanca impressions ever done. However, they're enough to pique Amy's curiosity.

AMY

But everyone always says "Play it again, Sam."

MITCH

Bogie never said it but our collective memory makes us think he did. The more time goes by, the more we believe. Gus' quote is the exact same thing!

AMY

Ahh, yes -- the Mandela Effect.

He shrugs -- "Sure." She takes the water bucket from him.

AMY (cont'd)

Go. You have another press conference to give. But maybe don't include the impressions.

MITCH

(Ilsa impression)

"Kiss me. Kiss me as if it were --"

She kisses him to shut him up.

AMY

No impressions!

EXT. CHANNEL 6 NEWS STATION - DAY

Mitch eagerly delivers his evidence at a second press conference. Behind him stands Gilda, nervously on deck.

MITCH

...Gus Graves never said what we've always thought he said. It's only as the legend grew that we came to think that.

PEPPER

Like the Mandela Effect.

(re: Mitch's shrug)

So if he never said it then there can't be any curse.

ANNOYING REPORTER

But what does "unless" mean? Unless what?

WICKHAM (O.S.)

"The Sox will never win unless they break the curse I placed on them."

The crowd parts to let Wickham through. Cameras FLASH.

Mitch sighs. He covers the mics and whispers to Carter.

MITCH

Why can't he just enter normal like everyone else?

(MORE)

MITCH (cont'd)
 (uncovers mics)
 It could mean that, Mister Wickham.
 Could also mean something positive
 like "The Sox will never win
 unless... I... don't curse them."

Carter and reporters groan. Wickham smirks as he calmly eats pistachios.

MITCH (cont'd)
 OK, that doesn't make sense, but
 the point is the rest of the quote
 could be negative or positive.
 Isn't it time we consider the
 positive? Miss Graves thinks so.

Gilda steps to the podium of intimidating microphones.
 FLASH. FLASH. She's ready to present Gus' framed ticket.

GILDA GRAVES
 I drove through the night to be
 here to vouch for my grandpa's
 character. He loved the Sox as much
 as his own family. Maybe more.
 Funny story. He missed the birth of
 my dad because of a double-header
 against Baltimore, but that's
 neither here nor there.

She nervously babbles, forgetting the ticket.

WICKHAM
 No offense, Miss Graves, but a
 character witness without proof is
 just a character witness.

MITCH
 The newspaper's on display at the
 Beacon museum, Mister Wickham. Your
 own exhibit, in fact. Perhaps you
 should acquaint yourself with it.

The crowd chuckles. Mitch lets out a cocky grin.

WICKHAM
 A one-of-a-kind newspaper
 conveniently missing the second
 half of the article.

MITCH
 The Herald went out of business
 after it burned down.

WICKHAM

Mister Graves mumbled his dying words. He could've been misquoted by the reporter.

MITCH

The reporter didn't misquote him. Everyone else did.

WICKHAM

He could've been misheard by the doctor.

MITCH

I would've corroborated with the good doctor, and the reporter, but they both died in the nineties and I left my Ouija board at home.

Mitch takes the ticket from Gilda and holds it high.

MITCH (cont'd)

If he hated the Blue Sox so much, then why would he write this on his ticket, huh?

FLASH. Cameras snap photos of the ticket with "Go Sox" written on it. Mitch has the press on his side.

WICKHAM

How do we know "Go Sox" means "Go Sox"? You said so yourself in your "apology" that it has different meanings. How do we know in this case it doesn't mean "Go to hell"?

Reporters sway to Wickham's side. Carter rushes to the mics.

CARTER

At this time we'd like to conclude the press conference. Thank you all for coming and --

MITCH

You're grasping at straws, Roger. I've proven there's no curse.

WICKHAM

At best you proved reasonable doubt.

MITCH

And I'm willing to give Gus Graves the benefit of that doubt.

(MORE)

MITCH (cont'd)
 There is no curse. There are just
 scapegoats. Him and me.

Everyone awaits Wickham's response. He shrugs.

WICKHAM
 So I guess we have nothing to worry
 about for game five. If the curse
 doesn't exist then there's no way
 the Sox can lose. Right?

He fully enjoys a crunchy pistachio, which unnerves Mitch.

EXT. BEACON CITY - VARIOUS SHOTS - DAY

Newspapers, smartphones, radio, word of mouth. Every form of
 mass communication delivers the same message: BLUE SOX LOSE
 GAME 5 BY A LANDSLIDE.

WICKHAM (ON TV)
 I wanted Mister McCaulgan to be
 right too, but unfortunately it's
 clear that the curse still exists.

INT. SIP 'N' SURF CYBERCAFE - DAY

Hipsters watch Wickham on The Tonight Show. Hipster Barista
 crushes a kale scone in anger.

WICKHAM (ON TV)
 He doesn't believe in it, the city,
 or its citizens.

INT. POLICE PRECINCT - DAY

Amy's brothers and other cops, along with perps and victims,
 watch Wickham.

WICKHAM (ON TV)
 He thinks we'll be less intimidated
 by the curse if we doubt it exists.

Mr. Brewer, pushing paperwork, snaps his pencil in half.

INT. AL AND NELLIE'S HOUSE - DAY

Nellie helps rickety Al take his meds.

WICKHAM (ON RADIO)
That's like telling a dying patient
they're not dying.

INT. TONY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Empty pizza boxes, closed shades, double locked door -- Tony hasn't left in days. He polishes his freaky fingernails while watching Wickham's interview.

WICKHAM (ON TV)
Denial may help in the short run
but not the long haul. People like
McCaulgan and his cameraman Anthony
Enright -- They would have us
believe otherwise.

Tony blows on his nails, nearly poking his eye when he hears his name.

INT. MCCAULGAN HOME - DAY

Wickham wraps up his speech as if on a campaign trail.

WICKHAM (ON TV)
Blue Sox Nation is in for the long
haul. We may always lose but at
least we'll lose together. As a
team. Because that's what baseball,
and America, are all about.

The studio audience goes crazy with applause. Amy mutes the TV volume and turns to Mitch.

AMY
Can't wait to hear what plan B is.

The phone rings. Caller ID reads: BLOCKED CALL. Amy answers. The caller screams expletives. Amy hands the phone to Mitch.

MITCH (INTO PHONE)
Whoever this is, I'd appreciate you
not talking to my wife like -- Huh?
No, we didn't name our son Firebird.

He hangs up.

AMY
Crazy people on the phone. Crazy
people outside.

She opens window curtains: News vans parked on sidewalks, tents on the lawn, fans picketing with signs.

AMY (cont'd)

It's like Woodstock minus the love.
I can't take it anymore.

RADICAL FANS dress the scarecrow like Mitch, including a Mitch novelty mask. They noose it from a tree next to the cute tire swing.

Mitch loosens his collar.

MITCH

I admit things have gotten a little
out of hand.

AMY

A little? That's your ball.

She points to Radicals who place a baseball labeled GAME 4 on the Garden of Stadium Grasses.

MITCH

For the last time -- I never
touched that damn ball.

Radicals strap fireworks to it. One pulls out a lighter.

AMY

They wouldn't. Would they?

EXT. MCCAULGAN HOME - CONTINUOUS

BOOM! The ball explodes. Bottle Rockets chase reporters. Roman Candles decimate the garden.

Radicals cheer. NORMAL FANS shake heads in disapproval.

INT. MCCAULGAN HOME - CONTINUOUS

Amy, aghast, sees grass, soil, and mini-pennants rain down.

AMY

NOOOOOOOO!!

The explosion wakes the baby in the nursery. She runs to him. Mitch grabs a Louisville Slugger from an umbrella stand.

MITCH

That tears it.

EXT. MCCAULGAN HOME - CONTINUOUS

Normal Fans argue with Radical Fans.

NORMAL FAN

It's fans like you that give fans
like us a bad name!

Mitch emerges, gripping the bat like a Samurai sword.

MITCH

Whoever did that better come clean
or I'll take you all down!

RADICAL FAN

You and what army?

SIRENS SQUEAL. Two cop cars speed to a stop, lights flashing. Mr. Brewer gets out, followed by Mac and Jack.

MR. BREWER

Disperse now or you'll be arrested
for trespassing and illegal
fireworks, as well as endangering
my daughter, my grandson, and...
(stares at Mitch)
...that's it.

Lacking the love, Mitch turns to his brothers-in-law.

MITCH

Thanks, guys. That was a close --

JACK BREWER

We're just doing our job. Thank *her*
for calling us.

Jack points to Nellie, politely watching from her porch next door. Mitch thanks her with a wave.

INT. MCCAULGAN HOME - CONTINUOUS

Mitch returns the bat to the umbrella stand. His cell rings "Sweet Caroline." He angrily answers.

MITCH

I don't know how you got this
number but I'm no terrorist!

CARTER (O.S. PHONE)

I know you're not.

MITCH

Misses Carter. Sorry. Can I call you back? We have a situation here.

CARTER (O.S. PHONE)

I have a situation here. The higher-ups are breathing down my neck and I can't hold them off anymore. I'm sorry but, I have to let you go.

Mitch falls silent. He slowly hangs up. Amy stands behind him, rocking the baby back to sleep.

AMY

Now do you want to talk about it?

That's not a question.

EXT. MCCAULGAN HOME - LATER

The HOME PLATE HOME sign hangs crooked. The lawn's a mess. Tire tracks and crushed flowers abound, but no mobs.

Mac and Jack drive off with Radicals in their cruiser. Mr. Brewer writes a report on the hood of his cruiser.

Mitch loads Amy's luggage into the police car's trunk while she buckles the baby into a Blue Sox car seat.

Mitch kisses his son goodbye and turns to his wife.

MITCH

I'll join you once I clean up here.

MR. BREWER

No. They're staying at my place because nobody knows where it is. If you go, the press will have a field day.

He jabs at a Channel 6 helicopter circling overhead.

MR. BREWER (cont'd)

You had your chance to protect our family. Now it's my turn.

He gets in his car and slams the door shut. Amy gazes into Mitch's eyes.

AMY

Please fix this. I know it's not
your fault but if you don't fix it,
no one else will. Go Sox.

She kisses him on the cheek.

MITCH

Go Sox.

Mitch watches his family drive away. Clouds roll in.

SAME - LATER

Rain falls as Mitch cleans up the yard.

He removes the scarecrow from the tree and stares at the
Mitch mask. It stares back, a grotesque caricature of what
he's become. Mitch has hit rock bottom. Or has he?

WHAM!

A work boot kicks Mitch into the mud, courtesy of Tony.
Now he's hit bottom.

TONY

Everyone knows where I live 'cause
of you! I haven't gone out in days
'cause of you!

MITCH

Hey, you're not the only one. Look
what they did to me.

Mitch shows him the mask.

TONY

Number one best selling mask of the
season. Guess what number two is?

Tony whips out an evil caricature mask of himself.

TONY (cont'd)

I got fired because of you!!

This registers with Mitch. No more jokes. Tony circles him,
fists raised fighting Irish style.

MITCH

What's this? What are you doing?

Tony does a wobbly crane kick a la the Karate Kid.

MITCH (cont'd)
I'm not going to fight you.

TONY
Because you know I'll win.

MITCH
No.

TONY
No, you won't fight or no, I won't win?

MITCH
No, this is stupid. I'm not --

Tony shoves him. Mitch shoves back. Another shove and they fight, slipping and sliding in the rain.

Tony uses his talon fingernails to attack. Mitch uses the squares of stadium grass to defend.

A slash of finger-talons and Mitch goes down. But so does Tony after breaking a nail.

TONY
Ow! Jesus, that hurt.

MITCH
Are you wearing nail polish?

TONY
For protection.

MITCH
You're wearing nail polish!

Tony slashes at Mitch, catching his sleeve. Another nail breaks. Tony yelps in agony.

WHUP WHUP WHUP. The helicopter hovers lower. A woman pilots it as Hicks and Akbar poke their cameras out of the cockpit.

AKBAR
Smile pretty, boys!

FLASH. The boys hide their faces.

MITCH
Let's go inside and talk this out like adults.

TONY
Agreed.

INT. MCCAULGAN HOME - ONE MINUTE LATER

SLAM! Tony rams Mitch into the fridge and they talk it out by fighting like kid brothers, slapping and biting.

A noogie to the head and Mitch cowers in pain.

Mitch inflicts a wedgie so harsh that Tony's tighty whiteys rip. Tony retaliates with a dope slap.

They try to give each other titty twisters but are so exhausted that they tumble back. Winded and weary.

Propped up by opposing walls, they make eye contact.

MITCH

Can't believe you're wearing nail polish.

TONY

Nail protection.

MITCH

Keep telling yourself that.

They both laugh, despite the pain.

MITCH (cont'd)

Hey, for what it's worth, I'm --

TONY

Me too. Go Sox?

MITCH

Go Sox.

They help each other up. Dust themselves off.

TONY

Got anything for lunch?

SAME - LATER

They slurp cereal while holding ice packs to their injuries. Tony eyes Mitch's print-out. He skims the Fairweather obits.

MITCH

Don't bother. I checked every angle.

TONY

Including paranormal?

MITCH

I've checked every sensible angle.

Tony gets up and places his bowl in the sink.

TONY

We're going to Warbeck Village. I know an expert who can help.

MITCH

Warbeck?! No, that's a freak show.

He goes for a spoonful of cereal. Tony yanks away the bowl.

TONY

There's two sides to this curse: The sports side, which you've fully explored, and the paranormal side, which you've fully ignored. Obviously the two are connected.

MITCH

Obviously.

TONY

Who here won a Spink Award, huh?

MITCH

Not for investigative journalism.

TONY

I still won. Besides, you got any better ideas?

Silence. Mitch places his spoon in the sink.

EXT./INT. TONY'S NEWS VAN - SUSPENSION BRIDGE - DAY

Tony's van travels over the boat-filled river, leaving the main part of the city behind.

MITCH

So how do you know this expert?

TONY

Oh, you know, I just do.

The rain stops as the van passes an eclectic sign: WARBECK VILLAGE, EST. 1692.

EXT. WARBECK VILLAGE - MAIN STREET - DAY

British taverns. Gothic graveyards. Wiccan churches. Warbeck is a lifestyle choice, a hybrid of Salem MA and Greenwich Village with one foot in '60s beat culture. Dr. Strange would fit right in, but not Mitch.

MITCH

Where the hell are we? This is worse than the hipster café.

Mitch and Tony exit the van and start walking.

TONY

You've never been here?

MITCH

On field trips as a kid, but I don't remember it being so...

A pair of sexy bohemian women stroll past.

MITCH (cont'd)

...eccentric. Or so crowded.

TONY

Tourists eat this up. Especially so close to All Hallows Eve.

Tourists gaze at them. Mitch lowers his head.

MITCH

We're going to get recognized.

Kids skip by wearing Halloween masks. Pirates and monsters.

MITCH (cont'd)

Hey, you owe me a favor, right?
(re: Tony's "no" look)
Fine, I'll owe you. Give me some cash so we can buy disguises.

Tony opens his wallet. Beat. He closes it.

TONY

I got a better idea.

SAME - LATER

Mitch and Tony walk down the crowded street wearing their Mitch and Tony masks. Nobody recognizes them.

They pass other Mitches and Tonys whose masks are augmented by devil horns, pitchforks, fake blood. The real Mitch and Tony quicken their pace.

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

The guys enter a crooked, less crowded alley. With gas lamps and cobblestones, it's older than the rest of the village.

Every nook's a magic shop. Every cranny a psychic boutique. Tourists get sucked in by signs touting services like Numerology and Clairvoyance.

At the end of the alley stands a boutique unlike the others. Actually, it's a two-story shack with rotted clapboards and chipped purple paint.

Through eerie mist blinks a neon sign: FELICIA'S ONE-STOP PSYCHIC SHOP. Two letters are burnt out. BZZZ. Three letters.

Tony removes his mask -- the Mitch mask, not the Tony mask.

TONY

This is it!

A sandwich board advertises: TAROT CARD READINGS \$40. CRYSTAL BALL READINGS \$50. CURSE BREAKING \$75. WALK-INS WELCOME.

Mitch removes his Tony mask.

MITCH

This is it?

Tony tries to open the door but it's locked. Lights are out.

MITCH (cont'd)

Shouldn't she have known we were coming?

TONY

Droll, Mitchell. So very droll.

Tony notices homemade flyers on a rod-iron table. He takes one. It features a photo of Felicia and text:

BELIEVING IN THE BELIEF BARRIER:
The new book by Felicia, world-renowned curse breaker responsible for 9 broken baseball curses.
Author signing today at Curse-Con.

Mitch scratches his head.

MITCH
Curse-Con?

EXT. WARBECK CONVENTION CENTER - DAY

A hole-in-the-wall venue known only to locals. Tourists walk past like they can't see it. And maybe they can't.

INT. WARBECK CONVENTION CENTER - CONTINUOUS

Mitch and Tony sneak into the candlelit brownstone, which seems larger inside than out. A banner declares: CURSE-CON INTERNATIONAL

MITCH
You have got to be kidding me.

A cloaked GEEK VOLUNTEER hands them programs.

GEEK VOLUNTEER
Welcome to Curse-Con. Great masks.

The guys panic, realizing they didn't put their masks on.

GEEK VOLUNTEER (cont'd)
Very life-like. We don't get many cosplayers here.

The guys sigh of relief. They scan the crowd. Pale skin. Dark clothes. Cryptic tattoos. It's a motley mix of deviants.

MITCH
This one of those haunted houses that charge twenty bucks for a guy in a sheet to yell "boo"?

GEEK VOLUNTEER
Ahh, first timers. Welcome. Would you like me to show you around?

Tony nods yes. Mitch simultaneously nods no.

WARBECK CONVENTION CENTER - SIDE ROOMS - MOMENTS LATER

Vendors sell healing crystals and mystic oils. Smoke from incense burners makes Mitch cough. He and Tony follow Geek.

GEEK VOLUNTEER
Warbeck is All Hallows Eve capital of the world. Every year the Curse Breakers hold their Con here.

A panel of professionals debates the use of ritual altars. A workshop teaches the fine points of voodoo.

GEEK VOLUNTEER (cont'd)

They gather from all over to network, talk shop, complain about the union. They're always complaining about the union. This is the sports curse division.

They pass Sports Curses Illustrated models. Tony doesn't notice due to reading the program.

TONY

Check out the guests. The chick who broke the Angels hex is here!

MITCH

Happy April Fool's Day to you too.

GEEK VOLUNTEER

No joke. She really is here.

Geek points out a Native American woman posing for pictures. She wears an Anaheim Angels jersey.

MITCH

I didn't mean that. I meant --

GEEK VOLUNTEER

There's a lot of Major League Breakers here.

Geek points to a pair of Blues Brothers-like Chicagoans.

GEEK VOLUNTEER (cont'd)

Those guys turned the Black Sox white again after eighty-six years.

A little person fields questions from an audience.

GEEK VOLUNTEER (cont'd)

The Giants have that dwarf to thank for breaking the Eddie Grant curse.

Three generations of Bostonians wear pissah Red Sox hats.

GEEK VOLUNTEER (cont'd)

That old dude almost busted the Curse of the Bambino in seventy-five. His son tried in eighty-six. It took them and the grandson to do it in two thousand four.

Fans ask the Bostonians to autograph Breaker cards (similar to baseball cards), but they refuse.

GEEK VOLUNTEER (cont'd)
It's gone to their heads.

Tony's in awe. Mitch, not so much.

MITCH
Thanks for the tour, Dungeon Master, but we just want to find a Breaker named Felicia.

GEEK VOLUNTEER
What's the last name?

TONY
I think she just goes by Felicia. She's not in the program, but she's world-renowned.

GEEK VOLUNTEER
Doesn't chime a bell. Let's ask a Breaker. They all know each other.

Geek approaches a table of EUROPEAN BREAKERS drinking ale.

GEEK VOLUNTEER (cont'd)
Excuse me. Do you know where these gentlemen can find Felicia the Curse Breaker?

BRITISH BREAKER
Who?

TONY
Felicia. World-renowned. Broke nine baseball curses.

FRENCH BREAKER
Nine? Zat is impressive. I do not know ze mademoiselle, but I would love to meet her.

The others nod in agreement.

MITCH
She wrote a book.

Mitch shows them Felicia's flyer. The Breakers laugh.

BRITISH BREAKER
That Felicia?! Blimey, why didn't you say so?

GERMAN BREAKER

"World-renowned." Gott im Himmel!

The German points to a woman sitting at a folding table, talking on a rotary phone. Mitch appears doubtful.

MITCH

Tony, are you sure we're looking for the right Felicia?

He turns and sees Tony already halfway to her.

INT. FELICIA'S VENDOR BOOTH

Flowing robes and gaudy jewelry make FELICIA seem younger. She'd be the girl next door, if next door lived the Addams Family. She's exuberant, except when doing her day job.

FELICIA (ON PHONE)

You will go... on a great journey.
You will meet The One.

Unlike the other booths, no one stands in line for Felicia. Copies of her self-published book sit next to a sign: \$49.95 \$39.95 \$19.95 + FREE AUTOGRAPH.

FELICIA (PHONE CONT'D)

That'll be four ninety-five a minute. All credit cards accepted.

With paper and pen (topped by a troll doll) she doodles herself as a Major League Breaker.

FELICIA (PHONE CONT'D) (cont'd)

I also break sports curses. But unlike the other Breakers, I subscribe to the theory that --

CLICK. The caller hangs up. Felicia crumples the doodle and sinks into her seat.

NEARBY VENDOR BOOTH

Tony counteracts bad breath with parsley from an herbs display. Mitch watches him watch Felicia.

MITCH

How do you know her?

TONY

Friend of a friend. Of a friend.

He fixes his hair in a scrying mirror and heads toward her. Mitch's eyes widen in epiphany. He catches up to Tony.

MITCH

This the psychic you been calling?
The one stealing your money?

TONY

She's not stealing anything.

MITCH

She's your expert?! I can't believe
you dragged me down here for this.

TONY

I don't know any other experts.

MITCH

You don't even know her!

FELICIA'S VENDOR BOOTH

The guys approach. She puts on her game face and shakes Mitch's hand.

FELICIA

Love and light to you, kind sir.
And to you, kind --

She goes to shake Tony's hand but his nails repulse her.

FELICIA (cont'd)

Good God! You carry a permit for
those things?

Mitch smiles. Envious of a solid put-down.

TONY

I'm Tony. We talked on the phone.

FELICIA

We have?

TONY

Yeah, you predicted I'd go on a
great journey and meet The One.

FELICIA

Of course. Tony. I remember.

Mitch dubiously shakes his head, but Tony's clueless. Felicia unenthusiastically gets down to business.

FELICIA (cont'd)

What do you need -- Past-life regression? Astral projection? I host a pretty mean séance if I do say so myself. Comes with Fondue.

TONY

We want to hire you to break a sports curse.

She perks up.

MITCH

No, we want to ask you about sports curses.

TONY

And then hire you.

MITCH

Maybe.

FELICIA

Either is better than my day job. What kinda curse we talking about?

TONY

Baseball.

FELICIA

My forté. I'll tell you how I --

The Europeans pass by, smirking.

BRITISH BREAKER

Ahh, there she is. We wanted to make sure you blokes found Felicia.

FELICIA

Yes, Colin, they found me. Now if you'll excuse --

TONY

She's gonna break a curse for us. Baseball.

GERMAN BREAKER

Ja? With her Belief Barrier theory.

BRITISH BREAKER

Still holding on to that malarkey, are we?

They snicker. She bites her lip trying to ignore them.

TONY

She's broken nine curses so far.

FRENCH BREAKER

Oui. Zat is technically true.

FELICIA

Thanks, Remy. As I was saying --

FRENCH BREAKER

If you 'ave no interest in breaking Major League curses.

TONY

Huh?

The guys scratch their heads. She takes them aside.

FELICIA

Ignore 'em. They're jealous. European Breakers corner the market on hurling and soccer jinxes but they crave the great American pastime -- baseball curses.

GERMAN BREAKER

Tell them the truth, fraulein. Major League teams are not the only afflicted ones.

Mitch and Tony process this.

MITCH

Are you talking about the Minors?! She's a Minor League Curse Breaker?

BRITISH BREAKER

Minor League. She bloody wishes.

TONY

What else is left?

FELICIA'S NEPHEW runs to her with a plastic trophy. His dirty baseball uniform reads: G & G COLONIAL HOMES

FELICIA'S NEPHEW

Aunt Felicia. Guess what? We just won our town championship!

FELICIA

That's great, Nick. Congrats.

FELICIA'S BROTHER arrives, wearing a suburban coach outfit.

FELICIA'S BROTHER

He wanted to see you right away,
sis. His pitching was great but he
couldn't have done it without you.
Thanks for breaking our curse.

Felicia tries to stop him from talking, but too late.

MITCH

Now you're telling me there's
Little League curses?! Come on.

FRENCH BREAKER

She is ze best Little League
Breaker around. An' ze only.

The Europeans chortle.

FELICIA

Baseball is baseball. I still broke
nine curses.

FELICIA'S NEPHEW

Ten.

FELICIA

Ten. Thank you, Nicholas.

She appeals to Mitch and Tony.

FELICIA (cont'd)

Ever hear of the Haunted Traveling
Team Bus? The Springfield T-Ball
Jinx? The Hex of Howlett and Sons
Aluminum Siding?

MITCH/TONY

No.

FELICIA

Because they don't exist anymore,
thanks to --

She points thumbs at herself.

TONY

Hmm. She does have a point.

MITCH

Forget it. We're not paying
seventy-five bucks an hour for a
Little Leaguer. No offense, kid.

The Nephew sticks out his tongue. Mitch faces the Europeans.

MITCH (cont'd)
 How much you guys charge for MLB
 curses? Ballpark figure.

EUROPEAN BREAKERS
 - My hourly is three hundred.
 - Industry standard's three twenty-
 five. Plus expenses.
 - Twenty thousand flat rate.

MITCH
 That's... a bit out of our league.
 We'll just do it ourselves.

He hustles Tony along, taking the book with them.

FELICIA
 Not so fast. That'll be forty-nine
 ninety-five for the book please.

She holds out her hand. Mitch looks outraged at the price.

FELICIA (cont'd)
 (sing-song)
 It includes a free autograph.

INT. TONY'S NEWS VAN - SUSPENSION BRIDGE - NIGHT

Mitch skims the autographed book as he and Tony drive back
 to the city. A parking citation flaps under the wipers.

MITCH
 I'm only trying this once. Then all
 our bases are covered and we can
 get back to serious investigating.

TONY
 Fine. Where do we get a talisman?

MITCH
 A what?

TONY
 I saw it in the book. Look it up.

Mitch flips through chapters for Bowling Curses, Hockey
 Curses, Field Hockey Curses. He stops on Baseball and reads.

MITCH

"When performing a curse reverse incantation, odds of success are increased with something connected to the curse's origin. These objects are known as talismans."

TONY

Where we gonna get something like that at this time of night?

INT. BEACON CITY MOTEL - ROOM 1415 - NIGHT

Gilda packs her luggage. There's a knock at the door. She opens it to find Mitch and Tony.

MITCH

Sorry to bother you, Gilda. Going somewhere?

GILDA GRAVES

Home. The press conference didn't exactly go well -- public speaking makes me babble like a brook, you know -- and the aftermath of game five is giving me flashbacks. You tried everything you could and that'll just have to be enough.

TONY

Actually, he didn't try everything.

MITCH

Hey, do you mind?

(to Gilda)

If you're willing to stick it out a bit longer, we have one more way to try clearing your grandpa's name.

She stops packing. Curious.

MITCH (cont'd)

But first we need to borrow something of his.

INT. FAIRWEATHER STADIUM - NIGHT

A moonlit low fog, the thick Vincent Price kind, rolls across the field and creeps into the stands.

FAIRWEATHER FIVE MEMORIAL

Tony shines his cell phone flashlight on Gus Graves' 1937 ticket while Mitch removes it from its frame.

MITCH

The book says we have to make a pentacle.

TONY

Pentacle or pentagram?

MITCH

What's the difference?

TONY

I dunno.

Tony draws a pentagram around the memorial with baseline chalk. Mitch sets the ticket on one of the pentagram points.

MITCH

Alright, here goes nothing.

He recites the incantation from the book. He has trouble pronouncing it, but even more trouble taking them seriously.

MITCH (cont'd)

"Tarámi nîktu khalis klatu nîktu."

He finishes. They stare at the ticket. Nothing happens.

MITCH (cont'd)

It didn't work. Shocker.

TONY

It won't work if you don't take it serious.

Tony recites the spell like a great wizard. Again they stare at the ticket and again nothing happens.

MITCH

OK, Dumbledumb, are you convinced we wasted fifty bucks?

TONY

This time we both do it and you gotta believe it'll work. It says to close your eyes.

He closes his eyes and grabs Mitch's hand.

MITCH

It says hold my hand too?

TONY

We gotta focus our auras! Do it.

Mitch closes his eyes. He and Tony recite the incantation. Again and again. Faster and faster.

Tony's finger-talons dig into Mitch, who opens his eyes.

MITCH

Ow! Watch your --

Mitch sees fog swirl around the ticket. Purple energy crackles. He shivers from sudden coldness. Tony peeks.

POOF!

A blinding light leaves behind a latent image, like after a camera flashes your eyes. In that image looms --

THE FAIRWEATHER FIVE

Semi-translucent and semi-frozen in the moment before they were struck by lightning. The ghosts argue.

THOMAS CONANT GHOST

...the Sox deserve a new stadium.

They flicker like a bad TV signal. Static clouds some dialog.

GUS GRAVES GHOST

...Sox will never win the World Series unless they...

Mitch makes eye contact with Gus' ghost. He sees through him.

Suddenly a dome of swirling energy surrounds the spirits. The flickering gets worse. The dome consumes them.

FOOP!

A force blast knocks the guys back. Fog returns to normal. Residual energy crackles into the ground.

Mitch's jaw hangs open in disbelief. No, not disbelief. Belief.

INT. TONY'S NEWS VAN - OPEN ROAD - NIGHT

Tony and Mitch drive like terrified bats out of hell.

MITCH

Shit! Shit! Shit!

Tony rubs his rabbit's foot.

TONY
Holy shit! Holy shit! Holy shit!

Mitch grabs the foot and rubs it faster.

TONY (cont'd)
Damn. I can't believe I saw them.

They make the sign of the cross in unison. Tony does the same on his dashboard Jesus bobble-head.

MITCH
Believe it because I saw them too.

TONY
Did they see us?

MITCH
You were right. The city was right.
Everyone was right but me.

TONY
I may have been right but I didn't
think I was *that* right. Now what?

EXT. WARBECK VILLAGE - FELICIA'S ONE-STOP PSYCHIC SHOP - DAY

Felicia arrives with coffee as a gust of wind whips up. It blows her book flyers from the rod-iron table.

She frantically collects the flyers and puts them back on the table. Beat. She drops them into a garbage can.

FELICIA
World-renowned. Yeah, right.

Across the alley, outside a costume shop, are Mitch and Tony masks for sale. The real Mitch and Tony step forward. They've been hiding amongst the masks.

They rush Felicia into her shop, accidentally spilling coffee on her jacket.

INT. FELICIA'S ONE-STOP PSYCHIC SHOP - CONTINUOUS

Tony wipes Felicia's cup and returns it to her. He wipes her jacket but she pulls away.

FELICIA

Thanks, but it's suede. I'll clean
it myself.

She passes through beaded curtains to the bathroom, leaving
the guys to glance around the New Age shop.

Tony admires photos of Felicia with her Brother and Nephew.
Also photos of Little League teams with kid-scrawled notes:

THX FOR BREAKING OUR CURSE, MS FELICIA... WE COULDN'T HAVE
WON WITHOUT YER HELP... NICK HAS A COOL AUNTIE.

FELICIA (O.S.)

What do you guys want now? There's
no return policy on the book.

MITCH

It worked.

FELICIA (O.S.)

What worked?

Mitch notices something odd about a crystal ball -- finger
holes in the back. He picks it up. It's a bowling ball.

MITCH

The spell. A little bit anyway.

TONY

We need your help to make it
totally work.

She emerges from the beads, wiping her hands.

FELICIA

What do you mean it worked?

MITCH

We did what your book said and
poof -- ghosts.

FELICIA

Poof?

TONY

Ghosts!

She takes a sip of coffee.

FELICIA

What ghosts? What curse is this
anyway?

MITCH
The Fairweather Five.

She chokes on the coffee, spilling all of it this time.

FELICIA
I thought you guys looked familiar!
I'm usually more observant but it's
hard to tell with half the city
wearing your faces. You get a piece
of that action?

MITCH
No. If we did, we could afford the
MLB Breakers. No offense.

She paces anxiously, having not heard Mitch.

FELICIA
Fairweather Five. Wow. That's big
time. Why didn't you tell me?

MITCH
What's the big deal? You said so
yourself baseball is baseball.

FELICIA
Baseball *is* baseball. But then
there's Fairweather. Even if you
can afford the big shots, they
can't do it. Every Breaker worth
his black salt has swung at that
curse and every one has struck out.

TONY
We'll pay seventy-five an hour.

She paces faster and mutters to herself.

FELICIA
Fairweather is unbreakable. It's
the Everest of sports curses.

MITCH
We'll pay a hundred.

FELICIA
What if I fall on my face in front
of the big shots? What if I --

TONY
Two hundred. Plus expenses!

FELICIA

Deal.

She snaps back to normal and talks under her breath.

FELICIA (cont'd)

Wow, can't believe that worked.

She gives Mitch a bear hug. Tony moves in for a hug but she backs away from his nails.

FELICIA (cont'd)

Sorry, pal. Not till you give Edward back his Scissorhands.

Mitch envies another solid put-down.

FELICIA (cont'd)

We have to get more talismans.

MITCH

We used one and it didn't work.

He holds up Gus' ticket.

FELICIA

Because you only used one. There's five Fairweather ghosts, so we need one talisman for each of them. I thought you read my book?

MITCH

I skimmed.

Tony slaps Mitch and takes the ticket.

TONY

One down, four to go.

FELICIA

I know where to get another.

INT. WARBECK CONVENTION CENTER - SEMINAR - DAY

The Europeans conduct a seminar on MLB talismans. Several are labeled on a cart: STEVE BARTMAN'S HEADPHONES, JAPAN'S COLONEL SANDERS STATUE, and THOMAS CONANT'S TOBACCO PIPE.

AUDIENCE MEMBER

...so the more connected a talisman is to a curse, the better your odds are of breaking it?

FRENCH BREAKER

Oui. Zat ess why Bartman's soda cup did not work -- he bought it at ze game. But his personal headphones did work and we broke ze curse.

The Europeans signal CLOAKED VOLUNTEERS to remove the cart. They wheel it backstage by a supply closet.

The closet door creaks open, exposing Geek Volunteer and Snob Volunteer. No cloaks. Hands tied. Mouths taped. The cloaked volunteers are really Mitch and Felicia.

MITCH

Perfect. Let's get out of here.

FELICIA

Just one more thing.

She removes her hood and lets loose a high-pitched whistle. The Europeans cover their ears in agony.

FELICIA (cont'd)

Listen up, snobs! I'm moving up to the Majors so screw you and watch out! Love and light to all.

She spins on her heels and strides off, leaving Mitch with the dazed crowd. He spots the Dwarf Breaker.

MITCH

I really like what you did with the Giants.

EXT. WARBECK CONVENTION CENTER - TONY'S VAN - DAY

Mitch and Felicia run out of the Con and into Tony's getaway van. She shoves the pipe into her purse.

MITCH

Two down, three to go.

TONY

Where to now?

EXT. BEACON CITY MUSEUM OF HISTORY - DAY

The trio inspects the Blue Sox exhibit, browsing artifacts as if shopping for jewelry.

TONY

What about Eddie Thorne's beer
bottle?

FELICIA

Not personal enough.

The Perky Curator gives same tour as before.

PERKY CURATOR

...and as you can see, we're
already working on the McCaulgan's
Muff display for future exhibits.

Curator motions to a future exhibit kiosk with artwork that
features Mitch and Tony. Tony sees this and cringes.

Felicia points the guys to Sam O'Connor's Blue Sox pennant.

FELICIA

Sam O'Connor brought this to the
game. It's his childhood pennant
and the most personal choice here.

TONY

Great. Let's take it.

FELICIA

This isn't Curse-Con. You can't
just wheel it away.

She points out alarm systems and security guards.

TONY

She's right. We're gonna have to do
it superspy style. First we rappel
through the skylight.

MITCH

Then hack into security cameras...

Felicia taps them on the shoulder and gestures to a sign:
ITEMS ON LOAN FROM ROGER WICKHAM, VOICE OF THE BLUE SOX.

MITCH (cont'd)

Or we could ask permission.

TONY

That could work too.

EXT. WICKHAM'S OFFICE - DAY

The palatial skyscraper is like the entrance to Oz, except grander. Big contrast to Tony's junkbox van, which pulls up.

Felicia's irked by Tony parking in a handicapped spot. They head into the building, the guys donning their masks.

FELICIA

I'm pretty sure Wickham already knows who you are. I'll carry them if you promise not to park like that again, Tony.

Tony nods. She jams the masks in her purse.

TONY

You think Wickham will go for this?

MITCH

Sure. We're on the same team now.

INT. WICKHAM'S OFFICE - DAY

Opulent. Framed psychology degrees. Photos of Sox events with Wickham smiling in the center. The real Wickham looks as if he saw a ghost. Or heard a ghost story.

WICKHAM

Sorry, can't help you.

He moves about the office, packing a suitcase. His Assistant trails him with a travel itinerary.

ASSISTANT

...you land at eight twenty-five. A limo will take you to the hotel...

Mitch and Tony look confounded. Felicia's behind them.

MITCH

Why not?

ASSISTANT

Mister Wickham's on the road for game six and you're making him late, so if you'll excuse us.

MITCH

All you have to do is give the museum permission to give us the pennant.

FELICIA
It's one call, Mister Wickham.

WICKHAM
And you are... ?

FELICIA
Felicia.

He gazes as if he recognizes her. She shifts uncomfortably.

WICKHAM
Felicia. Charmed. And you believe
this will break the curse?

FELICIA
This and a few other things, yes.

WICKHAM
That pennant's worth a lot of money.

MITCH
We'll return it. Promise

Wickham seems to consider it until his Assistant interrupts.

ASSISTANT
Game starts at seven thirty but you
have dinner with Selig at five...

WICKHAM
Tell him four. I'll need time for
my pre-game vocal exercises.

He massages his throat muscles like a soprano warming up.
Mitch's tactics aren't working so Tony tries his own.

TONY
Who's your decorator? I love what
they did.

He admires national crisis pictures adorning the walls --
FDR rallying troops after Pearl Harbor, George W rallying
New Yorkers at Ground Zero.

WICKHAM
Tess, give Mister Enright the name
of our decorator please.

Tony leafs through his wallet.

TONY
How about collateral for the
pennant?

(MORE)

TONY (cont'd)
I can leave my driver's license,
passport, CostCo card. I got a
Spink Award at home. Want it?

WICKHAM
You have a Spink?

TONY
Why does everyone find that hard to
believe? Regardless, it's yours.

WICKHAM
Thanks, but I have three of my own.

He motions to a bookcase full of awards.

WICKHAM (cont'd)
There are some ESPYs and Ford Frick
awards there as well, Felicia.

He looks her over. Likes what he sees. Tony gets jealous.

FELICIA
Thanks, I'll check them out.

She turns to the bookcase to avoid him, feigning interest in
his awards for Fairweather Curse-related topics.

Something catches her eye. Tucked behind sports books is her
Belief Barrier book. She looks proud of her one sale.

MITCH
Roger, is this a power thing? I
know we've had our differences.

WICKHAM
Have we? I hadn't noticed.

Near the bookcase, Felicia finds a World Series display with:

- Sam O'Connor's torn scorecard.
- Agnes Thorne's faded Crackerjack box.
- Eddie Thorne's fedora atop a dummy head.

MITCH
Are you enjoying this, Roger? You
relish that I'm asking for help.

WICKHAM
I wouldn't say relish, but I do
find it ironic.

MITCH

You want me to apologize, I'll
apologize. For real this time.
Nothing else matters anymore
because we're on the same team.

WICKHAM

What team would that be?

MITCH

We both want to end the curse and
the pennant is how to do that.

Wickham considers how defiant they are. Mitch in particular.

WICKHAM

I heard about your wife and child
moving out for safety. Scary stuff.
Iowa's governor offered you asylum.
You should take it. Forget the
curse and protect your family.

Though condescending, Wickham has a point and Mitch knows
it. Mitch ponders it while Felicia fiddles with her purse
near the display. Mitch stops pondering.

MITCH

I'm protecting my family by not
forgetting the curse. You're just
protecting your rep.

WICKHAM

Excuse me?

MITCH

I'm a Sox fan. A true fan. If you
were too, you'd help your city.

ASSISTANT

Alright, enough is enou --

WICKHAM

Don't ever underestimate my loyalty
to this city or its ball club. It's
because of that loyalty that I'm
saying no. You're right, I am
protecting my reputation. I'm also
protecting this city's. If it gets
out that I helped you only to see
you fail, we'd be a laughing stock.
The answer is no. Now please leave.

MITCH

It doesn't make sense. Why won't --

WICKHAM
Tess, call security.

Assistant dials the phone. Felicia grabs Tony and Mitch.

FELICIA
Mister Wickham, thanks for your
time. Your Frick awards are very
impressive.

She winks flirtatiously on her way out. Wickham enjoys it.

INT. TONY'S NEWS VAN - DAY

The trio drives away.

TONY
We got no choice but to steal it.

MITCH
Superspy time.

FELICIA
Not true.

Ignoring her, they plan a heist involving air ducts and
laser grids. It'll never work.

FELICIA (cont'd)
Hey, Ocean's Two. Forget the
museum. I have better.

From her purse she pulls out the scorecard.

FELICIA (cont'd)
Sam O'Connor's pennant is more
connected than his scorecard, but
this'll have to do.

TONY
Fantastic! Three down, two --

She also pulls out the Crackerjack box and fedora.

FELICIA
(re: Wickham's display)
I'm not the only one with a one-
stop shop.

INT. WICKHAM'S OFFICE - DAY

Wickham and the Assistant exit with luggage. A moment later he returns for pistachios. On his way out, he passes the World Series display and does a double take at:

-- The scorecard replaced by a Bed, Bath & Beyond coupon.

-- The Crackerjack box replaced by a box of Tampons.

-- The fedora dummy head turned backwards.

He turns the dummy around and jumps back, frightened by TONY'S SEVERED HEAD!

OK, it's just the Tony mask.

Wickham inspects the "fedora". It's the Mitch mask folded into a hat. Wickham fumes.

EXT. FAIRWEATHER STADIUM - DAY

In the otherwise empty stadium a grounds crew mows the outfield, rakes the infield, etc. It's a living.

FAIRWEATHER FIVE MEMORIAL - CONTINUOUS

Up in the stands are 3 crew members in ill fitting uniforms.

TONY

How much you think that ride-on
mower costs?

MITCH

Get your head in the game.

Felicia and Mitch unload the 5 talismans -- pipe, scorecard, Crackerjack box, fedora, and "Go Sox" ticket.

Tony sweeps in front of them with a broom. Mitch snags it.

MITCH (cont'd)

I'll block us from the grounds
crew. You help her.
(to Felicia)

Tony's the only reason this worked
even a little bit last time.

TONY

I'm sort of a weekend warlock.

She's sort of impressed. She gestures to Tony's pentagram.

FELICIA

The pentagram should be a pentacle.
Encircle it and we'll begin.

Tony circles the pentagram with baseline chalk while she positions a talisman on each of the 5 pentacle points. Mitch keeps an eye on the crew while sweeping.

MITCH

This works, the Sox win game six?

Felicia opens the book, marked by a troll bookmark.

FELICIA

You sound like my nephew's team
before I broke their curse. We're
not doling out supernatural
steroids. We're just lifting what's
been holding them back. After that
it's up to them.

(recites incantation.)

"Tarámi taramîs nîktu käiphôs..."

Tony recites his part.

TONY

"Metêptah ä khalis klatu nîktu..."

It's like a duet with one handling lyrics and the other the chorus. He holds her hand.

TONY (cont'd)

We have to focus our auras.

She withdraws from his claws.

FELICIA

Focus on a manicure instead.

Mitch throws his hands up in defeat -- Where does she get these top-notch put-downs? The incantation gets faster. The talismans Kirby-crackle.

TOUR GUIDE (O.S.)

Excuse me. What's going on here?

It's a bored tour group led by a by-the-book TOUR GUIDE. He spots the chalk pentacle.

TOUR GUIDE

There are no baselines in the
bleachers. Why are you putting
baselines in the bleachers?

TONY

We're not putting base --

TOUR GUIDE

Is that the sign of the devil?

MITCH

Yeah. What the hell, right? Some grafitti artist broke in last night and did it. Artist, my ass. Should be locked up for desecrating such hallowed ground.

The guide eyes Mitch suspiciously, then moves along.

TOUR GUIDE

Built by lumber magnate Francis Fairweather, the stadium turns one hundred this April.

Felicia and Tony restart the spell.

The talismans crackle. The dust that Mitch has been sweeping begins to spiral. The trio shivers.

POOF!

The Fairweather Five materialize. Imprisoned in pre-death moments, flickering on and off, threatening to disappear.

Felicia adjusts the talismans like "rabbit ear" antennae on a TV. The ghosts' signal stabilizes. They argue.

EDDIE/AGNES THORNE GHOSTS

...eed better players.

SAM O'CONNOR GHOST

No, they need better coaches.

THOMAS CONANT GHOST

I stand by what I said at Gus' house, damn it -- the Sox deserve a new stadium.

GUS GRAVES GHOST

I stand by what I said. The Blue Sox will never win the World Series unless they...

More flickering. More adjusting.

GUS GRAVES GHOST (cont'd)

...believe they can.

The trio takes it in.

TONY

That's it? That's what he really said? That's not a curse.

MITCH

Exactly! This proves indefinitely that it doesn't exist! Except that... we're...

He stares at the shimmering spirits as it slowly sinks in.

MITCH (cont'd)

...standing in a pentagram performing an exorcism on ghosts.

Now he's underwhelmed.

TONY

Pentacle. Not pentagram.

MITCH

I don't get it. If Gus didn't create the curse, then it shouldn't exist. Right?

FELICIA

Unless someone else created it.

TONY

Who?

MITCH

The Firebirds! No, scratch that. They've only been around half as long as the curse.

FELICIA

Doesn't matter who because I'm shutting it down.

(recites from book)

"Blatu nîktu e käiphös --

A sudden dome of semi-opaque energy surrounds the ghosts. Swirling like creamer in coffee, it begins to consume them. One vanishes.

FELICIA (cont'd)

What the... ?!

Felicia performs counter-spells, straining to keep the other ghosts from fading.

FELICIA (cont'd)
 Why didn't you tell me about this!?

MITCH
 Tell you about what?

The dome grows thicker and more opaque. Felicia struggles but can't sustain the ghosts anymore. They flicker out. She watches in awe as the dome follows suit.

FELICIA
 By the power of Grayskull.

FOOP!

A force blast knocks Felicia back, as well as the talismans. They blow toward the edge of the memorial section.

The guys scramble after them and nab all but the ticket. It floats down onto the field -- in the path of the lawn mower.

MITCH
 I'll get it!

Too late. The ride-on mower runs over the ticket, shredding it to pieces that scatter in the wind.

Mitch looks shocked. Tony shows the remaining talismans.

TONY
 Four out of five ain't bad.

MITCH
 Try explaining that to Miss Graves.

Felicia snaps out of her daze. She does a happy dance.

FELICIA
 WOO-HOOOOOOOOOO!!!

The grounds crew hears her yell. So does the tour group. Both close in on them. The guys seize Felicia and take off.

INT. TONY'S NEWS VAN - STREET - DAY

The trio speeds away. The radio's tuned to the World Series.

WICKHAM (ON RADIO)
 ...live from the Firebirds own
 stadium where they close out the
 eighth inning with two more runs.

Mitch gives the talismans to Felicia to hold in her purse.

MITCH

What was that little happy dance
all about back there?

FELICIA

The Belief Barrier. It exists!

MITCH

The what barrier?

FELICIA

Belief Barrier. It's the dome of
energy surrounding the ghosts.
Seriously, what did you buy my book
for if not to read it?

Tony slaps Mitch upside the head.

FELICIA (cont'd)

Most curses are purposely cast by
professional magic users. Some are
accidentally cast by amateurs
dabbling in the mystic arts. A rare
few, the really powerful hexes, are
born of their own accord. At least,
that's always been my theory, which
I could never prove until now.

MITCH

Wait a sec -- you mean a curse can
create itself?

FELICIA

Sort of. But it needs help to get
going. It's like a hypochondriac
believing they're sick when they're
not. Believe long enough and hard
enough and they'll become sick.

MITCH

Like a self-fulfilling prophecy?

They stop at a red traffic light across from a beer garden.

FELICIA

Yeah. The more you believe, the
stronger the curse barrier gets.

TONY

So who's the hypochondriac? Who
believed in the curse enough to
create it?

BEER GARDEN PATRONS (O.S.)

- Mother puss bucket!
- Come on, not again.

Upset fans watch game 6 on TVs at the garden.

BEER GARDEN PATRONS

- We're never gonna beat the curse!
- It's hopeless.
- I'm done with the Sox.

They sag their shoulders and drown their sorrows. Despair sets in. Felicia faces the guys.

FELICIA

The question isn't who believed.
The question is who didn't.

The light turns green and they continue driving.

WICKHAM (ON RADIO)

...of the ninth. It's last ups for
the Blue Sox, which feel more like
last rites.

They're too into mystery-solving to notice the radio.

MITCH

Of course! It makes perfect sense.
Gus Graves never cursed the Sox.

FELICIA

He doesn't even come from a
paranormal background.

MITCH

But because his dying words were
misquoted, everyone thinks he did.

FELICIA

A few defeats snowball into many.

TONY

Everyone looks for an excuse.

MITCH

A scapegoat. And the curse was it.

FELICIA

From day one fans were unknowingly
believing it into existence. And
those beliefs have strengthened the
barrier ever since.

TONY
 Years of series losses can
 strengthen one hell of a barrier.

MITCH
 Doesn't help that Wickham's always
 spreading his propaganda and...
 (beat)
 Holy shit!

His gears begin turning.

TONY
 Holy shit what?

MITCH
 It's him. It's Wickham! Why else
 would he be buying up all the
 Fairweather Five artifacts?

The others clue in.

TONY
 To put on display for everyone to
 see as an exhibit.

FELICIA
 And no one to use as a talisman.

MITCH
 Millions listen to the Voice of the
 Sox. Millions believe in the curse.

TONY
 But how would he know about the
 barrier?

FELICIA
 He read my book! I saw it in his
 office. He actually bought my book.

They sit in silence, absorbing everything. The radio snaps
 them out of it.

WICKHAM (ON RADIO)
 Sox lose game six in a huge shutout
 and the Birds tie up the series!
 The curse is alive and kicking,
 folks. Alive and kicking.

The trio exchanges glances. Beat. Tony stomps on the gas!

EXT. BEACON CITY MUSEUM OF HISTORY - DAY

The only parking spot on the street has a fire hydrant.
Tony's van screeches to a halt in front of it.

MITCH

But why would he do it?

Tony covers the hydrant with an overturned trash barrel.
Mitch doesn't notice, but Felicia's outraged.

TONY

Doesn't matter why he's doing it as
long as we undo it.

They dash up the museum steps.

MITCH

We only need to replace Gus'
talismán, but snag everything you
can. We're not taking any chances.

TONY

We finally get to play superspy?

Mitch nods yes. Tony rubs his hands in excitement.

INT. BEACON CITY MUSEUM OF HISTORY - DAY

The trio sprints to the exhibit but are stunned to see...
no exhibit.

Workers roll up the FEELING BLUE ABOUT THE SOX banner.
Artifacts are gone. Perky Curator oversees the dismantling,
though without her exhibit she's no longer perky.

MITCH

This is supposed to run another week!

PERKY CURATOR

It would've if not for an anonymous
tip about a possible theft. Wickham
pulled his items to be safe.

Mitch spots Curator's clipboard, which clips a "BE ON THE
LOOKOUT FOR" bulletin. It features a photo of the trio from
Wickham's security camera -- Felicia stealing the artifacts.

Mitch nudges Tony and Felicia toward the exit.

PERKY CURATOR (cont'd)

Hold it. I'd like a word with you.

The trio high tails it out of there.

PERKY CURATOR (cont'd)
Security!

EXT. BEACON CITY MUSEUM OF HISTORY - CONTINUOUS

The trio runs down steps two at a time.

MITCH
Your book says a talisman increases
our odds but a curse can still be
broken without one, right? It's
just more difficult?

FELICIA
Theoretically yes, but not with the
Belief Barrier. To break that we'd
need a hundred talismans.

TONY
Or zero belief.

Tony's comment resonates with Mitch.

They approach the van, now being chained to a tow truck.
Felicia slugs Tony in the shoulder.

A cop writes a citation while his partner removes the barrel
from the hydrant, their backs turned.

TONY (cont'd)
Officer, this is a mistake. I had no
idea there was a hydrant under --

The cops turn around. It's Mr. Brewer and his son, Mac.

MR. BREWER
Why am I not surprised, Mitch? Why?

MITCH
This isn't what it looks like.

MR. BREWER
Really? This isn't you and your
pals illegally parked?

MITCH
Yeah, but --

MR. BREWER
In a van with nineteen unpaid
citations?

Mitch slugs Tony in the other shoulder. Perky Curator and security catch up to them. She shows Brewer the bulletin.

PERKY CURATOR
Officers, arrest these people. They
were going to rob the museum.

MR. BREWER
My son-in-law, the klepto.

Mac frisks them. He takes Felicia's purse, not realizing it's full of talismans. The Channel 6 copter circles above.

MITCH
You have to let us go, Mister
Brewer. We can break the curse.

MR. BREWER
First you want to prove it doesn't
exist. Now you want to break it.

MITCH
Because it *does* exist!

MR. BREWER
How you going to break it?

MITCH
With disbelief. My fort e.

MR. BREWER
What the hell you talking about?

Even Tony and Felicia look confused.

MITCH
Listen up. Here's the plan...

Mitch pitches his plan to everyone. Due to the sound of the tow truck lifting the van, only they hear his scheme, but it's easy to see his passion for it. A true believer.

The van reaches tow position as Mitch wraps up his pitch.

MITCH (cont'd)
...It can work. Trust me.

Tony and Felicia nod in agreement. The truck driver likes it too. As for the others --

PERKY CURATOR
That's completely absurd.

MR. BREWER
I agree. Cuff 'em.

Mac takes out handcuffs. Mitch kicks the truck's lift mechanism. The van drops to the pavement, diverting the cops.

Mitch nabs the purse from Mac and flings it to Tony.

MITCH
You guys get back to the memorial
and get ready. Go!

TONY
No, I'm with you. We started this
together, we'll finish it together.

Tony flings the purse to Felicia. Around the horn.

FELICIA
Go Sox.

TONY
Love and light.

Tony distracts museum guards to let Felicia escape.

The cops cuff the guys. Mac stuffs Tony in the cruiser and goes to help the tow truck driver.

Brewer tries to stuff Mitch in, but he resists.

MITCH
Toss me in jail, Mister Brewer.
Take me out of your will. Just let
me try the plan first!

MR. BREWER
You were never in my will.

MITCH
Mister Brewer, wait. Jim!

Son-in-law faces father-in-law like a man.

MITCH (cont'd)
You trusted me to marry your
daughter. Now trust me to fix this.

Beat. Brewer stuffs Mitch in the cruiser. The Curator grins.

INT. MR. BREWER'S POLICE CRUISER - CONTINUOUS

Brewer drives away. Mitch notices him take a wrong turn.

MITCH

Isn't the precinct the other way?

Brewer tosses keys to the guys.

MR. BREWER

We're not going to the precinct.
We're going to the airport.

Pleasantly shocked, Mitch unlocks the cuffs.

INT. IOWA - A POSH RESTAURANT - DAY

Bud Selig and other MLB notables enjoy a gourmet meal with Wickham, who seems preoccupied.

EXT. BEACON CITY AIRPORT - DEPARTURES - DAY

A cop car squeals to a stop, lights flashing, the Channel 6 copter in pursuit. Mitch shakes Brewer's hand.

MITCH

Thanks. The siren was great!
(Bogart impression)
"Jimbo, I think this is the
beginning of a --"

MR. BREWER

Don't make me regret this, ass wipe.

Brewer peels out and drives off.

MITCH

Baby steps, baby steps.

Mitch and Tony run into the terminal.

INT. BEACON CITY AIRPORT - DAY

The guys briskly pass travelers who start to recognize them.

MITCH

Where's the masks when we need 'em.

TONY

Follow me. I know what I'm doing.

Tony pilfers shoe polish from a busy shoe shiner.

INT. BEACON CITY AIRPORT - TICKET COUNTER - DAY

TICKET LADY types on her keyboard, processing two seats.

TICKET LADY
How would you like to pay for your
tickets, sir?

Tony wears sunglasses and an unnaturally smooth goatee.
Mitch has a smooth mustache that resembles Gus Graves.

Tony pulls a credit card from his wallet, thumb over name.

TONY
Can I swipe it through the machine?
I always wanted to do that.

TICKET LADY
No. I'll also need drivers licenses
or passports for both of you.

TONY
Umm, I don't have mine with me.

TICKET LADY
You can't pass through security
without photo ID, sir. And I just
saw your license in your wallet.

TONY
You saw that? Wow, those are some
quick eyes. Call you Quick Eyes.

She's not flattered. She checks his license. Recognizes him.

TONY (cont'd)
I know what you're thinking but I'm
not that guy. We just happen to
share the same first name. And last
name. That guy's a nut. Unhinged!
Stay away if you know what's good --

Mitch kicks him. Tony comes back down to Earth.

TONY (cont'd)
I'm just looking out for you, Quick
Eyes.

He winks at her. She's still not flattered.

She holds up the license photo (which has a goatee), in
front of his face. A TV behind him runs the news.

PEPPER (ON TV)
 ...a fanhunt is on for McCaulgan
 and Enright, now wanted for...

Ticket Lady sees Tony on TV, followed by Tony in real life,
 followed by Tony in the photo.

Real life Tony sweats, causing his goatee to melt. Ticket
 Lady rubs the goatee off the license. It's shoe polish.

TICKET LADY
 Sir, please wait here a moment.

She signals a TSA officer. Tony panics. Mitch sees the
 Channel 6 copter land outside. He pushes Tony toward it.

EXT. BEACON CITY AIRPORT - HELIPAD - DAY

Hicks and Akbar exit the copter with their video camera.

HICKS
 How poetic would it be to get the
 weeknight job off of a McCaulgan
 scoop, huh? Come on, let's get him.

They rush into the terminal, passing Mitch and Tony behind
 luggage carts. The guys rush to the female PILOT.

MITCH
 Becky. You owe me a favor, right?
 No, course not. What was I
 thinking. I'll owe you a --

PILOT
 Yes, I do.

MITCH
 You do what?

PILOT
 Owe you a favor. For that time you
 helped me with that thing. What do
 you need?

Mitch looks flabbergasted. He and Tony climb in.

HICKS (O.S.)
 Stop! That's our copter!

Hicks, Akbar, Ticket Lady and TSA exit the terminal. They
 run after the rising copter but are too late. Tony pokes his
 camera out the cockpit.

TONY
Smile pretty, boys!

FLASH. The copter zips away. Hicks angrily kicks a suitcase on a luggage cart. Ow! It's harder than it looks.

INT. CHANNEL 6 HELICOPTER

The guys high-five each other. Tony suddenly remembers...

TONY
What about the fifth talisman?
Felicia doesn't have the ticket
anymore.

MITCH
She'll have to find something else
connected to Gus Graves.

TONY
What else is there?

INT. BEACON CITY MOTEL - ROOM 1415 - DAY

Gilda packs her luggage. Again. There's a knock at the door. Many knocks. She opens it to find Felicia.

FELICIA
Love and light to you, Miss Graves.
Mitch sent me.

GILDA GRAVES
Oh. You must be here to return
grandpa's ticket.

FELICIA
Not quite.

She takes Gilda by the arm and hurries off.

GILDA GRAVES
I have to stop opening this door.

INT. MR. BREWER'S HOUSE - DAY

Police paraphernalia and Sox memorabilia gussy up the manly home, as do family photos. Mitch photos are turned around.

Amy tries to put the baby to sleep with a lullaby. It doesn't work. She tries "Centerfield" lullaby-style. It works. She's pleasantly surprised.

The phone rings.

MITCH (O.S.)
Happy Halloween. Any trick or
treaters yet?

AMY (INTO PHONE)
Mitch?! What's all that noise?
Where are you?

INT. HELICOPTER - FARM LAND - DAY

The Pilot speeds over corn fields as the guys hold on tight.

INTERCUT - MITCH/AMY PHONE CONVERSATION

MITCH
I'm in traffic.

AMY
What's this about you and dad
having a heart to heart?

MITCH
That's what he called it? Awwww.

AMY
What was that? You're breaking up.

MITCH
Signal's fading. Come again?

AMY
Huh?

MITCH
What?

They can't hear each other over the copter noise.

AMY
Go Sox.

But luckily he does hear this.

MITCH
Go Sox.

And she hears this. Husband and wife share a smile as the
copter flies into the sunset.

EXT. IOWA - FIREBIRDS STADIUM - NIGHT

Built in the 2000s, the huge ballpark has all the modern traits one expects, including a ridiculously corporate name like the Bank of America 3M Tampax Sweet 'n Low Pavilion.

It also has a helipad for VIP guests.

WHUP WHUP. The Channel 6 copter lands. Mitch and Tony hop out. Wickham's Assistant spots them from a distance.

EXT. FIREBIRDS STADIUM - VIP ENTRANCE - NIGHT

A burly DOORMAN lets celebrities enter after checking names off a list. Most wear Halloween costumes.

Two ghosts approach, i.e. Mitch and Tony wearing bed sheets with eye cut-outs.

TONY

This is never gonna work.

MITCH

Better than fake facial hair.

They blend with some VIPs and are just about in when...

DOORMAN

Not so fast.

The ghosts stop. They turn and see Assistant near Doorman.

DOORMAN (cont'd)

What's your name?

MITCH

We're with them.

DOORMAN

I still need your name.

MITCH

Bob... Macadamia.

Doorman gives "Bob Macadamia" a look, then checks his list. Assistant surveys the ghosts. Staring into their eye holes. The guys avert her gaze.

ASSISTANT

You supposed to be ghosts?

TONY

No. Bed sheets. Duh.

Mitch kicks Tony's shin. Assistant sees blue suede sneakers.

ASSISTANT

Interesting choice of footwear.
Very unique. I've only seen one
other person wear them.

She grins and tears off the sheets -- exposing the guys!

CELEBRITIES

- Hey, is that... ?
- Looks like them.

The mob crushes in on Mitch and Tony. The partners cringe, prepared for the worst, but instead --

CELEBRITIES (cont'd)

- Honored to meet a true hero.
- Can I have your autograph?
- I named my son Firebird too!

Handshakes. Kisses. Slaps on the back. WTF? Iowa Governor exits a limo dressed as Mitch, augmented by angel wings and halo. He gives the real Mitch a hug.

IOWA GOVERNOR

Welcome, sport! Glad to see you
took up my offer of asylum.

Someone pulls a Birds jersey down over Mitch's head. Someone else plops a hat on him embroidered: MCCAULGAN'S MIRACLE

TONY

Hey, I held the camera.

They hand Tony a Tony bobble-head with mini claw fingernails. It's official -- the guys have entered The Twilight Zone.

IOWA GOVERNOR

You're in the land of milk and honey
now. Whatever you want, you name it.

Mitch and Tony exchange grins.

INT. FIREBIRDS STADIUM - PRESS BOX

CRACK! The Firebirds slam a homer. Iowa fans go crazy.

WICKHAM (HEADSET)

Going, going, and it's gone to
souvenir city!

RODRIGUEZ (HEADSET)
 Fun fact: This is the first Series
 game played on Halloween since --

WICKHAM (HEADSET)
 Another run scored by the Firebirds
 as they continue the greatest
 comeback in sports history.

Jay Rodriguez sighs. He's still overshadowed by Wickham.
 Wickham's Blue Sox Bluetooth rings. He answers.

ASSISTANT (O.S. BLUETOOTH)
 Sir, he's here.

WICKHAM (VIA BLUETOOTH)
 Who's here?

Cheers rise up from below. Wickham looks down and sees --

INT. FIREBIRDS STADIUM - THE STANDS

Firebird fans wave "McCaulgan's Miracle" signs and Tony
 bobble-heads. They part like the Red Sea as their saviors
 parade by on the shoulders of the Governor's aides.

Mitch may not be *the* God but he has definitely become a God.

INT. FIREBIRDS STADIUM - PRESS BOX

The Governor enters with Mitch and Tony.

IOWA GOVERNOR
 Sorry to intrude, Roger, but I
 asked Mitch what I could do as
 gratitude for his miracle and guess
 what he chose?

WICKHAM
 I... really don't know, governor.

IOWA GOVERNOR
 You. He doesn't want a street named
 after him. Doesn't want the key to
 the city. All he wants is to try
 your job for an inning.

WICKHAM
 Broadcast the game?!

MITCH

We'd love to know what it's like
for the Voice of the Sox to work
his "magic".

Mitch shoots Wickham a knowing glance.

WICKHAM

Governor, I can't do that. The
FCC --

Governor gives Wickham's headset to Tony and Mitch.

IOWA GOVERNOR

Have fun, boys. Beers after the
win, Tony?

TONY

Sure thing, Dave.

Governor exits. Mitch cracks and eats one of Wickham's red
pistachios, mockingly surprised by how good it tastes.

MITCH

Not bad.

Wickham's a deer caught in headlights.

EXT. FAIRWEATHER STADIUM - ENTRANCE

Wanted posters mark the gate with Felicia's mug shot. Stadium
guards block the entrance. They listen to the game via radio.

Felicia hides around the corner with Gilda.

GILDA GRAVES

Are they going to let us in?

FELICIA

No, but don't worry. I called in a
distraction.

A van pulls up driven by Felicia's Brother. Her Nephew and
Little League team leap out with trick or treat bags.

LITTLE LEAGUE TEAM

- Candy, candy, candy!
- What time's the tour?
- I'm gonna be your boss someday.

Guards are overwhelmed with annoying kids. Felicia gestures
to the team while sneaking Gilda into the stadium.

FELICIA
They owed me a favor.

INT. FIREBIRDS STADIUM - PRESS BOX

Tony adjusts audio levels. Wickham addresses Mitch, staying out of earshot from Rodriguez.

WICKHAM
Whatever you're trying to do, it won't work.

MITCH
Whatever you're doing, it's going to stop.

WICKHAM
There are bigger things at play here that you wouldn't understand.

MITCH
I understand perfectly. You're selling out the Sox.

WICKHAM
Why would I sell them out?

TONY
Fame. Fortune. We don't know. You're the twisted one.

MITCH (VIA HEADSET)
Attention Blue Sox nation --

WICKHAM
Do that and it'll be on your head when Beacon City crumbles.

Beat. Mitch covers his headset microphone.

MITCH
OK, I'll bite. What do you mean?

WICKHAM
America always unites in times of crisis. Great Depression, Pearl Harbor, Nine Eleven. The curse is no different.

TONY
Pretty sure it's a bit different.

WICKHAM

Not the end result. Beacon City didn't live up to its name when I moved to town. Nobody talked to their neighbors. Everyone was out for themselves. Until the curse.

Only Wickham sees Assistant and JumboTron cameraman outside.

WICKHAM (cont'd)

Fans put aside their differences for a common cause. It brought out the best in all of us. If you go ahead with your plan, you'll be breaking more than a curse. You'll be breaking an entire community.

Mitch ponders Wickham's theory. There's some logic to it. To Wickham's delight, Mitch seems ready to surrender, until --

MITCH (VIA HEADSET)

Blue Sox Nation, your attention please. We are --

Wickham reclaims his headset and signals Assistant, who bursts in with cameraman.

WICKHAM (VIA HEADSET)

Ladies and gentlemen, we have celebrities amongst us. Mitch McCaulgan and Anthony Enright, the ultimate Firebirds fans!

TONY

We're not Birds fans!

WICKHAM (VIA HEADSET)

Oh no?

Assistant shoves Mitch in front of the camera, divulging his Firebird ensemble via JumboTron. Sox fans are outraged.

WICKHAM (VIA HEADSET) (cont'd)

You cursed the Sox because secretly you've been a Birds fan all along!

INT. BEACON CITY - VARIOUS SHOTS

Beaconites watch game 7, united in their hatred of Mitch.

INT. MR. BREWER'S HOUSE

Amy's brothers punch holes in the walls. Mr. Brewer burns the slowest slow burn in history. Amy withers.

INT. FIREBIRDS STADIUM - PRESS BOX

Mitch yanks off his Firebirds jersey. Tony chucks his bobble-head (though he kinda wants to keep it).

MITCH

We're not Birds fans. That's a lie!

Wickham hails security guards to grab them.

WICKHAM (VIA HEADSET)

Get them out of here. Maybe now the Sox have a chance of winning.

Sox fans cheer his actions. He adores it.

INT. FIREBIRDS STADIUM - THE STANDS

The guards toss the guys out of the press box and into the:

BLUE SOX FAN SECTION

Sox fans, ravenous with hatred, chase the guys. They nab Tony, but Mitch escapes. He tries to rescue Tony.

TONY

I'll catch up. Go, go!

Tony breaks free of the fans and leads them away from Mitch, toward the grounds maintenance room.

Mitch flees in the other direction, right into the:

FIREBIRDS FAN SECTION

Birds fans are ravenous too, but in the opposite way. They chase him like he's all 4 Beatles rolled into Justin Bieber.

Mitch rounds a corner, realizing too late it's a dead end. He sweats as Birds fans close in. Suddenly -- BING -- an elevator opens behind him. Carter steps out.

CARTER

McCaulgan, what are you --

He pushes her back in, shuts the door. He composes himself.

MITCH
So about that weeknight job.

INT. FIREBIRDS STADIUM - THE FIELD

WICKHAM (O.S. HEADSET)
-- brings us to the seventh inning stretch. Normally I'd lead everyone in our favorite song, but tonight we have a special guest. Make some noise for Mister Neiiiiiiil Diamond!

Guards escort smiling NEIL DIAMOND to the pitcher's mound.

INT. FIREBIRDS STADIUM - ELEVATOR GOING DOWN

Mitch sees Neil walk toward a microphone stand on the field. Mitch's eyes ignite. He stops the elevator.

MITCH
Misses Carter, despite what I'm about to do I think you should re-hire us. Or at least Tony, if he survives. None of this has ever been his fault. Go Sox.

He bolts out. She doesn't know how to react.

INT. FIREBIRDS STADIUM - THE FIELD

Neil sings "Take Me Out To The Ball Game". Players and fans remove hats, cross hearts.

Mitch races across the field toward Neil. Security guards dart after him. They're about to catch him when...

TONY (O.S.)
Yahoooooooo!!!

Maintenance doors pop open and out launches Tony on a ride-on lawn mower!

He guns it for Mitch who jumps on the seat behind him.

MITCH
Thanks, partner.

INT. FIREBIRDS STADIUM - PRESS BOX

Wickham stops singing, trying to figure out the commotion.
He peers through binoculars.

BINOCULARS POV

Tony mows by Neil as Mitch snags the singer's wireless mic.

INT. FIREBIRDS STADIUM - THE FIELD

Tony speeds around the baseball diamond, chopping grass that
shoots into the guards' faces. Mitch addresses the fans.

MITCH (VIA MICROPHONE)
Mitch McCaulgan here, live from
game seven. Sorry to interrupt,
Mister Diamond. I'm a big fan.

Neil flips Mitch the finger.

MITCH (VIA MICROPHONE) (cont'd)
McCaulgan's Muff, McCaulgan's
Miracle. Depending on your beliefs,
you either love me or hate me.
Mostly hate. But this isn't about
me. It's about the Curse of the
Fairweather Five. I can end it but
not without the help of Blue Sox
fans everywhere.

Firebird fans stop cheering. Governor looks betrayed.

ANGRY BIRDS FAN
Thought you were a Birds fan!

Firebird fans boo and fling junk. Ice cream belts the back
of Mitch's head. Now everyone hates him.

MITCH (VIA MICROPHONE)
I love the Sox. Always have.

TONY
Ditto!

ANGRY SOX FAN
Why should we believe you?!

MITCH (VIA MICROPHONE)
This is all about what you believe.
The curse exists because we believe
in it and it can end if we stop
believing.

(MORE)

MITCH (VIA MICROPHONE) (cont'd)
 We have to believe to disbelieve.
 All of us. Don't believe in
 yourself. Don't believe in the
 curse! What good did belief ever do
 anyone anyway?

TONY
 Ditto!!

Fans of both teams don't know how to react.

INT. FIREBIRDS STADIUM - BLUE SOX DUGOUT

A SOX VETERAN elbows a freckle-faced SOX ROOKIE.

SOX VETERAN
 This could very well be the worst
 pep talk in sports history.

INT. FAIRWEATHER STADIUM - FAIRWEATHER FIVE MEMORIAL

Gilda sets her smartphone on the memorial wall and finds game
 7 coverage online. Felicia notices the pentacle missing.

FELICIA
 Damn grounds crew.

She pulls vials from her purse for her and Gilda. They pour
 salt to form a new pentacle in the foggy empty stadium.

INT. FIREBIRDS STADIUM - PRESS BOX

Mitch stands on the back of Tony's mower to better be seen.
 Wickham chuckles at the ridiculous sight.

MITCH (VIA MICROPHONE)
 I need you to not believe in it.
 Show me. Show the world you don't
 believe. Clap your hands if you
 don't believe in the curse!

Silence. Not a single clap. Maybe a cricket chirps.

WICKHAM (VIA HEADSET)
 Thank you, Mitch, for that one-of-a
 -kind rally. Now if you'll kindly --

Tony takes Mitch's microphone.

TONY (VIA MICROPHONE)
 Don't listen to the Voice of the
 Sox. Listen to your own voice!
 Listen to my pal. He knows what
 he's yapping about.

Stadium guards catch up and yank Tony off the mower. He
 flings the microphone to Mitch who leaps into --

THE STANDS

MITCH (VIA MICROPHONE)
 How about the wave? Do the wave if
 you don't believe. Come on, do it
 now. We can bust this curse open.

Amidst a sea of adult naysayers, one brave kid does the
 wave. Followed by another. And another.

MITCH (VIA MICROPHONE) (cont'd)
 Yeah, that's what we need! But we
 need more. We need everyone!!

A few teens join in, as do some adults. They create more of
 a ripple than a wave but it's a start.

INT. FIREBIRDS STADIUM - PRESS BOX

Wickham stops chuckling.

INT./EXT. BEACON CITY - VARIOUS SHOTS

The museum, police precinct, Sip 'n' Surf café, Warbeck
 Village -- most of the fans do the wave.

Some are into it like Amy. Some, like Mr. Brewer, don't do
 it at all.

INT. FAIRWEATHER STADIUM - FAIRWEATHER FIVE MEMORIAL

Felicia sets the talismans on 4 of the 5 pentacle points.

FELICIA
 Gilda, it's time.

No answer. She turns and sees Gilda staring at the bleacher
 where Mitch sat, as well as her grandpa.

GILDA GRAVES
 This is my first time here.

FELICIA

Hopefully your next time will be
under better circumstances.

She positions Gilda on the 5th pentacle point.

INT. FIREBIRDS STADIUM - THE STANDS

More fans do the wave. Mitch dashes around the circumference
of the stadium, rousing the crowds. He won't give up.

MITCH (VIA MICROPHONE)

That's it. Show the curse who's
boss. Stop believin'. Hold on to
that feelin'. Stop believin'. It
goes on and on and on!

Neil Diamond scratches his head at the Journey reference.

NEIL DIAMOND

Should've done Superbowl halftime.

He shrugs and joins the wave.

INT. FIREBIRDS STADIUM - PRESS BOX

Wickham cranks up his headset volume and speaks rapidly.

WICKHAM (VIA HEADSET)

Top of the seventh. Blue Sox at
bat. If they don't start scoring
now, it's lights out.

Players resume the game. A Sox batter hits a single.

WICKHAM (VIA HEADSET) (cont'd)

One man on base. Next up is...

Wickham spots the field audio board controlling Mitch's mic.

WICKHAM

Tess, unplug his mic.

His Assistant doesn't hear him. She's busy doing the wave.
He removes his headset, takes off. Rodriguez seizes the day.

RODRIGUEZ (VIA HEADSET)

Strike two on a curve ball. First
pitcher to throw a curve was...

INT. FAIRWEATHER STADIUM - FAIRWEATHER FIVE MEMORIAL

Felicia performs the incantations. Gilda shivers.

POOF!

From out of swirling mist materialize the Fairweather ghosts. They flick on and off, nearly disappearing into static.

Felicia adjusts the pipe and fedora talismans. Ghosts still flicker. She adjusts Gilda. Ghosts stabilize.

INT./EXT. BEACON CITY - VARIOUS SHOTS

More fans eagerly do the wave, including Amy's brothers.

AL

One out for the Sox but two
whippersnappers on base!

Mr. Brewer holds out, though he seems less angry.

INT. FIREBIRDS STADIUM - THE STANDS

Mitch paces the wave like a rabbit leading a dog race.

MITCH (VIA MICROPHONE)

Don't be afraid anymore. Cast aside
your superstitious shackles.
They're holding you back!

INT. BEACON CITY - VARIOUS HOMES

Superstitious Bearded Fan shaves his Van Winkle beard.

Superstitious Hot Dog Fan stops eating hot dogs.

Superstitious Underwear Fan puts on clean underwear, much to the relief of her husband.

INT. FAIRWEATHER STADIUM - FAIRWEATHER FIVE MEMORIAL

In the vacant stadium, Gilda stares at Gus' ghost.

GILDA GRAVES

Grandpa?

He nods. They stare at her in wonder, each happy to finally meet the other. He flickers abruptly as the energy dome swirls into being. It separates them.

FELICIA
The Belief Barrier!

The dome grows thicker and more opaque. Two ghosts vanish. Felicia recites counter-spells to stabilize the others.

INT./EXT. BEACON CITY - VARIOUS SHOTS

Beaconites may not share the same location, but they share the same voice.

AMY
Two outs. Bases loaded...

HIPSTER BARISTA
...A hit would change the game...

Sox Rookie steps up, nervously gripping a bat.

EXT. FAIRWEATHER STADIUM

Mist seeps out of the stadium. Energy spirals above it. The Little Leaguers stop bugging the guards and they all watch.

INT. FIREBIRDS STADIUM - AUDIO BOARD

Wickham elbows his way to the audio board. Technicians, busy doing the wave, don't notice him shut off Mitch's microphone.

No one hears Mitch anymore. He looks worried. Elsewhere, Tony looks worried. Wickham, however, is elated. Until...

BLUE SOX NATION
Reverse the curse! Reverse the curse!

Mitch and Wickham switch emotions upon realizing fans do the wave without guidance!

Carter admires Mitch and Tony's handiwork. Very impressive.

CARTER
Go Sox.

INT./EXT. BEACON CITY - VARIOUS SHOTS

All of Blue Sox Nation does the wave. All of them believe to disbelieve, even Mr. Brewer.

MR. BREWER
Big swing and a miss! Strike one.

INT. FAIRWEATHER STADIUM - FAIRWEATHER FIVE MEMORIAL

Felicia sweats under the strain of the dome. Another ghost disappears. Only Gus remains. A blast knocks Felicia back.

FELICIA

It's... too strong.

Gilda notices something about the dome. She points.

GILDA GRAVES

Look. The barrier stopped growing!

Felicia sees the dome stop. It then shrinks and becomes translucent. It dissipates, unveiling all Five ghosts.

INT. FIREBIRDS STADIUM - THE STANDS

The wave has become a tsunami of disbelievers. Mitch stops running, winded but entranced by everyone. Security nabs him.

RODRIGUEZ (O.S. HEADSET)

Strike two! It's all or nothing.

INT. FIREBIRDS STADIUM - THE FIELD

The Firebirds pitcher winds up the pitch. The Sox Rookie chokes up on the bat.

INT. FAIRWEATHER STADIUM - FAIRWEATHER FIVE MEMORIAL

With the barrier destroyed, Felicia recites the incantation.

BZZZZSSS!

A rift opens above the ghosts with lightning zigzagging through. As three of the Fairweather Five ascend into the rift, they smile for the first time in 75 years.

Gus gratefully nods to Felicia. He faces his granddaughter.

GUS GRAVES GHOST

Go Sox.

GILDA GRAVES

Go Sox.

Gus joins his pals in the rift. It closes. Wind dies down. The empty stadium is quiet again. Gilda wipes away a tear.

INT. FIREBIRDS STADIUM - THE FIELD

Pitcher releases a mean fastball. As ball approaches plate -- BZZZZZ -- darkness. All power turns off! Gasps followed by silence.

INT./EXT. BEACON CITY - VARIOUS SHOTS

Beaconites watch black on their screens like mission control losing contact during Apollo 13's reentry. And then CRACK!

Everyone hears bat hit ball. The ball screams through the air, sight unseen.

INT. FIREBIRDS STADIUM

Power turns on. The ball soars. Stitches become unstitched. It's back, back, and over the wall. Homerun!

INT./EXT. BEACON CITY - VARIOUS SHOTS

Blue Sox Nation unites in pure bliss! Everyone we've come to know goes crazy. Even Nellie who finally breaks her silence.

NELLIE
WOOOO-HOOOOOOOOOOOOO!!!!

Al covers his ears.

INT. CURSE-CON

All Breakers celebrate. Except for the dumbstruck Europeans.

FRENCH BREAKER
Sacre bleu!

INT. FIREBIRDS STADIUM

The stunned Sox Rookie rounds the bases, following his fellow base runners to home plate home.

Everyone rejoices except Wickham.

Tony meets up with Mitch. Both are joyous and relieved.

The CRACK of bat against ball echoes as the Sox continue their comeback. The guys soak up the moment of bliss. Beat.

FIREBIRD FANS (O.S.)

- There they are!
- They cursed the Firebirds!
- Get 'em!!

The guys glance behind them and see --

A FURIOUS HORDE OF FIREBIRD FANS

-- including the governor and celebrities. They come gunning for our heroes, trampling Wickham along the way.

WICKHAM

AHHHHH!!

Pistachios crush under their feet. Mitch and Tony high-tail it out of there.

TONY

Once. Just once! I'd like to go to a game and not get chased out.

MITCH

Ditto.

TRANSITION TO:

EXT. BEACON CITY - VICTORY PARADE ROUTE - DAY

Grey skies turn blue as fans line the street 20 people deep. They're on rooftops, hanging out windows, climbing trees.

Newsstands sell out of Beacon City Beacons headlined with: HELL FINALLY FREEZES OVER!

Strangers high-five each other. Young ones help old ones. There's a sense of community unlike ever before.

From kids on parents' shoulders to firefighters atop a fire engine ladder, everyone angles for the best view of --

THE PARADE

A motorcade of open vehicles rolls around the corner with Sox players and coaches waving. Champagne corks pop. Confetti rains down. Happy Hipsters chant...

HIPSTERS

Curse reversed! Curse reversed!

FRONT OF MOTORCADE VEHICLE

Riding atop are Tony and Felicia who bask in the adulation. Girls are dressed like her. Guys shake bobble-heads of him.

Tony moves in for a kiss with Felicia. She flinches.

FELICIA

Not until you get a mani --

He holds up his finger-talons, which have been cut down to normal size. She smiles and lays a big wet one on him.

BACK OF MOTORCADE VEHICLE

No one gets more love than Mitch, who shows off the Commissioner's Trophy. Even the players applaud.

SIDEWALK

Cheering among the crowd are Nellie, Al and Hank's newfound smile. His shirt reads: MY NEIGHBOR WENT TO GAME 7 AND ALL I GOT WAS A LOUSY CHAMPIONSHIP.

Near them are Amy and baby. Mitch blows a kiss. She catches it like a ball, kisses it, and lobs it back. He pretends it hits him in the heart like Cupid's arrow. They giggle.

MOTORCADE

Motorcycle cops escort the rolling rally, led by Mr. Brewer and sons. They try to be professional but boyish grins rule. Brewer gets emotional. He nods to Mitch, who nods back.

MOTORCADE VEHICLE

Tony and Felicia reunite with Mitch. They share a group hug.

MITCH

Did you get a call from Carter?

TONY

Did you get a call from Carter?

MITCH/TONY

Congratulations, Channel Six News
weeknight edition partner!

Felicia poses them for a photo with her camera phone. FLASH. It rings. She answers.

FELICIA (ON PHONE)

Felicia's One-Stop Psychic Shop.
How may I predict your ... Who's
this? ... You want me to what?!

The guys exchange curious looks as she finishes her call.

FELICIA

That was Curse-Con. Apparently they
want to close out the convention
with a seminar on the Belief
Barrier featuring world-renowned
Curse Breaker --

She points thumbs at herself. The guys clap.

MITCH

That's great! Congrats.

TONY

You're gonna do it, right?

FELICIA

Meh. We'll see.

The trio gazes out over the city. Over the fans. The
community. The enormity of it all.

TONY

I can't believe we actually did it.

MITCH

Believe it.

FADE TO BLUE

THE END