

LEFTY

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD PARKING LOT - DAY

A 1980's MIDDLE CLASS CAR (Plymouth or Ford) sits in a parking lot.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

OMAR, 40's, mustache, 80's eyeglasses, simple clothes, sits in the driver's seat.

OMAR

Ready?

ALI, 7 years old, sweet face, baseball cap, sits in the passenger seat.

ALI

I really don't want to do this.

OMAR

Don't be scared, it will be fun.  
Baseball is America.

OMAR (CONT'D)

America is baseball.

ALI

America is baseball.

OMAR (CONT'D)

That's right. Here, I got you something.

Omar reaches into the backseat for a SPORTS STORE PLASTIC BAG, pulls out a brand new BASEBALL GLOVE. Ali's eyes light up as he holds it.

OMAR (CONT'D)

C'mon, let's go try it out.

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - DAY

COACH WYATT, mustache, aviator sunglasses, wristband, wearing gym coach shorts, holding a light beer, shakes hands with Omar.

COACH WYATT

Welcome to the team. What's your name little dude?

ALI

I'm Ali.

COACH WYATT

Okay Ali. Let's see you throw it.

Coach hands Ali a baseball, walks back 5 feet or so, still holding that beer. Ali has the ball in his right hand and chucks it - awkward, feet all wrong, throwing motion clunky - ball veers off to the side.

COACH WYATT (CONT'D)  
What in sam-hell was that?

OMAR  
He never played before.

COACH WYATT  
Well, I can see that. Hey Ali, try with your other hand, will ya?

Coach rolls another ball back over. Ali puts the ball in his left hand. Throws it with a natural throwing motion. The ball sails clear over Coach Wyatt's head.

COACH WYATT (CONT'D)  
Well, whaddya know? Kid's a lefty.

Coach hands the baseball glove back to Omar.

COACH WYATT (CONT'D)  
You still got the tags on, better exchange it for the other hand.

OMAR  
I see.

COACH WYATT  
Hey Omar, you want a beer?

OMAR  
I don't drink.

COACH WYATT  
No sweat.  
(to Ali)  
Okay, kid, we're gonna call you Lefty.

EXT. BASEBALL INFIELD - LATER

Ali runs around the bases with the other little kids, a smile on his face.

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD PARKING LOT - LATER

Ali and Omar walk back to the car.

ALI  
I liked it.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

Omar nods a little as he starts up the engine.

ALI

You don't throw like a girl, baba.  
I can show you how, if you want.

OMAR

(in Arabic)

I don't throw like a girl. Nobody  
talks to me like this. Who said I  
threw like a girl? Who was it? That  
coach?

ALI

Dad, why are you yelling?

OMAR

I'm not yelling.

ALI

Sometimes when you speak Arabic you  
sound like you're yelling.

OMAR

Forget it.

Ali stares forward. Omar looks at the boy, pulls away.

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD DUGOUT - DAY - TIME JUMP 10 YEARS

Ali, now 17, sweet face all grown up, sits on the bench - his  
team is up to bat.

OMAR (O.S.)

Nervous?

Ali looks over. Omar (mid-40's now), on the other side of the  
dugout fence.

ALI

Of course I'm nervous.

OMAR

It's just the one last bottom of  
the inning, yes?

ALI

Yeah, I have to pitch out the  
bottom of the 9th.

OMAR

What do you want for dinner after?  
Fast food?

ALI

Jesus, dad, I don't know.

OMAR

Okay, okay. Do you know how many US  
Presidents were left-handed?

Ali stares at his dad. Omar smiles back as NANCY, Ali's mom, 40's, white, comes over to take Omar away.

NANCY

(to Omar)

Get out of here, will you?

(to Ali)

You go out there and you give 'em  
hell, you got it?

ALI

Okay, mom.

Nancy pulls Omar away. Ali spits out some sunflower seeds. A final out is called to end the top of the 9th, Ali stands, resets his cap, grabs his glove.

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - MOMENTS LATER

A LEFT-HANDED PITCH SLOW MOTION. The ball sails way above the catcher's mitt, over the ducking head of the umpire.

UMPIRE

Ball!

The Catcher stands, as does the Umpire, who removes his mask annoyed, puts his hands on his hips - reacting to the wild pitch, gives a new ball to the catcher.

At the pitcher's mound, Ali, tries to reset, head down, frustrated.

HIGH SCHOOL COACH arrives at the mound. Catcher, shortstop and others join, form a circle around Ali for a meeting.

HIGH SCHOOL COACH

Relax, will ya? It's only state  
finals with 2 outs, for crissakes.  
Loosen up. Jesus, I need a beer and  
an antacid. You guys want to end  
this thing or what?

PLAYERS  
(all together)  
Yeah, coach. C'mon Lefty, you got  
this.

Coach and the team disband, leaving Ali/Lefty at the mound. The bleachers are filled with families and kids, Nancy sitting up proudly, clapping a bit. Omar stands a little far off, pacing, nervous.

Ali breathes slowly, settles in, leans down, nods at the sign from the catcher, takes a slow breath, winds up and throws. Fastball right into the catcher's mitt.

UMPIRE  
Strike One!

Ali gets the ball back from the catcher. Leans down, shakes "no" to the sign, then nods, winds up and throws another fastball.

CLANK of the aluminum bat, the ball goes high to left field. Ali watches it in horror. The ball slowly bends further left, over the foul line, over the fence.

UMPIRE (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Foul ball!

Omar wipes away sweat with a handkerchief, buries his hands in his pockets as he watches. Ali gets a new ball, uses his right foot to kick away at some dirt around the pitcher's mound. He resets, leans forward for the sign, nods. He sets up, winds up.

His wrist flicks, slow motion, as he lets go of a curve ball - a thing of beauty. We can see the laces at it breaks, as the hitter swings and misses.

UMPIRE (CONT'D)  
Strike three!

Game over. The players swarm the pitcher's mound, jumping up and down, hitting Ali over the head with their mitts, hats thrown in the air. Ali can see his mom and dad over the ruckus. Omar lets out a powerful fist pump.

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD PARKING LOT - LATER

Sunset as Ali, Omar and Nancy sit on the hood of the car eating/drinking fast food.

PLAYERS  
(way off in the distance)  
Ali! You coming or what?

Ali waves, he'll be right there.

ALI

I'm gonna go celebrate with the  
team. Thanks for the food.

OMAR

Throw a little before you go?

Ali nods.

They stand 20-30 feet apart. Ali throws it to Omar, who  
catches it. Omar winds up, a lefty himself, the ball leaves  
his hand - a thing of beauty. The sound of a ball hitting  
Ali's mitt.

BLACK.

THE END.