

Legendary Pictures

'42'

written by
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White - March 14, 2012
Blue Revised - April 7, 2012
Pink Revised - April 19, 2012
Yellow Revised - April 24, 2012
Green Revised - April 27, 2012
Goldenrod Revised - May 9, 2012
Buff Revised - May 29, 2012
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A1 WHITE A1 *

Fills the screen. Falling from the top of frame to the bottom. Pluming off into dust. White, white, white. We move toward it even as it recedes, always out of reach. Finally we pop out wide and high to reveal...

The white is chalk. An old BLACK GROUNDSKEEPER lays down the right field line on a baseball diamond.

'42'

1 INT. BRANCH RICKEY'S OFFICE - MONTAGUE ST, BROOKLYN - DAY 1 *

Blinds closed. Dust motes in the air. A large GOLDFISH TANK bubbles. BRANCH RICKEY at his desk. Two photos on the wall: Abe Lincoln & Leo Durocher. CHALKBOARDS covered with 100's OF NAMES, every player in the Dodger organization.

CLYDE SUKEFORTH and HAROLD PARROTT sit across from Rickey who stares at them. Sukeforth stares back. Parrott nervous.

RICKEY

Gentlemen, I have a plan... As of now, only the Board of Directors and my family know.

Sukeforth and Parrott exchange a look.

SUKEFORTH

A plan's always good, Mr. Rickey. And you always got one.

RICKEY

My wife says I'm too old, That my health isn't up to it. My son says that every one in baseball will be against me. But I'm going to do it.

Parrott looks to Sukeforth who keeps his eyes on Rickey.

SUKEFORTH

Do what, Mr. Rickey?

RICKEY

I'm going to bring a Negro ballplayer to the Brooklyn Dodgers.

PARROTT

With all due respect, sir, have you lost your mind? Imagine the abuse you'll take from the newspapers alone. Never mind how it'll play on Flatbush. Please, Mr. Rickey.

Rickey looks dismissively at Parrott, over to Sukeforth.

RICKEY

There's no law against it, Clyde.

SUKEFORTH

There's a code. Break a law and get away with it, some people think you're smart. Break an unwritten law though, you'll be an outcast.

RICKEY

So be it. New York is full of
Negro baseball fans; every dollar
is green. I don't know who he is,
or where he is, but he's coming.

CUT TO:

2 EXT. RICKWOOD FIELD - BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA - NIGHT 2

The big Birmingham Black Barons CATCHER behind the plate as
Kansas City Monarchs JOHN SCOTT stands at bat. The catcher's
attention on the RUNNER DANCING off first. Stomping a foot,
feinting, hard to see clearly in the glare of the lights.

CATCHER

Where'd you learn to move like
that, runner?! At dime a dance
night?! Stay quiet!

INSERT: Birmingham, Alabama. April 8, 1945. *

On the first pitch the runner takes off. The catcher fires to
second. See it from his POV as the runner slides in "SAFE!"

A foot on the bag, the runner dusts off, heckles the catcher:

RUNNER

Is that the best you got?! Huh?!
I'm going to steal nine, ten bases
today! You better start counting!

The catcher frowns. Standing, we see he is a big, big man.

CATCHER

(Alabaman)

Where's your shortstop from?

JOHN SCOTT

(Louisianan)

California.

CATCHER

He's got a mouth on him.

Shaking his head, the catcher gets back in his crouch,
signals the PITCHER. On the wind-up, the Runner is off
again. The catcher fires to THIRD: "Safe!"

RUNNER

You got a rag arm, catcher!

CATCHER

Steal home! You'll find out what
kind of arm I got!

RUNNER

Okay, I'm coming!

The Catcher looks over at Scott who chuckles.

CATCHER

California, huh?

(Scott nods)

Well California here he goes, if he comes down here.

The Catcher gets back down in his squat. Signals the pitcher: fastball. Scott digs in, ready. The runner dancing off third. Here comes the wind-up...

The Runner takes off even as the pitcher fires it in. The Birmingham Catcher receives it. As the Runner slides --

The Catcher intentionally drives his glove, the ball and both hands into the runner's face -- WHALLOP! Sound drops as we're knocked flat senseless along with the runner.

ON HIM now as he tries to push himself up from the dirt. A close look at JACK ROOSEVELT ROBINSON. A born battler, he shakes out the cobwebs, finally lurches to his feet, looks to the UMPIRE. He never heard the call.

JACK

What was I?

The umpire passes one hand over the other: *Safe*. Jack looks over at the catcher, gives him a pointed look as he goes --

The catcher shoves him in the back. Jack turns, shoves back. As the two men wrestles each other to the ground --

CUT TO:

3 INT. BRANCH RICKEY'S OFFICE - MONTAGUE ST, BROOKLYN - DAY 3

Rickey and Sukeforth going through stacks of FILES on the desk. A black ballplayer's picture is clipped to each. As Rickey reviews one, Sukeforth tries to hand him another. *

SUKEFORTH

Josh Gibson. Oh boy can he hit.

RICKEY

No.

SUKEFORTH

No?

Rickey won't take the file; the answer is no. *

SUKEFORTH

Alright. Roy Campanella.

Sukeforth holds it out; Rickey won't take it. *

RICKEY

A heck of a player. But too sweet,
they'll eat him alive.

SUKEFORTH

(holds up file) *

Satchel Paige then.

Parrott enters carrying an armful of files. *

RICKEY

Too old. We need a man with a
future not a past. *

(holds up his own
file) *

Here. Jack Roosevelt Robinson. *

As Parrott sets them on the desk, they start to slide off,
spilling to the floor. Helpless to stem the tide, Parrott
looks down, surrounded by black faces... *

RICKEY *

(flips through file)

A four sport college man, out of
UCLA. That means he's played with
white boys.

(scans file)

Twenty-six years old, now with the
Kansas City Monarchs. Batting over
350 even as we speak. 350! And he
was a commissioned army officer! *

SUKEFORTH

He was court-martialed. A trouble
maker. He argues with umpires. A
quick temper is his reputation.

Rickey is obviously keen on him. *

PARROT *

What was he court-martialed for? *

RICKEY *

For refusing to sit in the back of
a military bus. *

(checks the file) *

Ft. Hood, Texas. The driver asked
him to move back. The MPs had to
take him off. *

*

SUKEFORTH

Do you see? *

RICKEY

I see he resents segregation. If *
he were white, we'd call it spirit! *

PARROT

If he were white, sir, we wouldn't *
be looking for him. *

Rickey ends the debate... *

RICKEY

Robinson's a Methodist. I'm a *
Methodist. God's a Methodist. We *
can't go wrong. Find him. Bring him *
here. *

CUT TO:

4 EXT. FILLING STATION - INTERSTATE 24 - DAY 4

A BLOODHOUND watches as a BUS pulls into a SERVICE STATION, the tires RING the bell hose. A million miles easy on this road rumbler. The BANNER reads: KC Monarchs.

Insert: Interstate 24, Missouri - August 24, 1945.

The DRIVER steps off. The fellas follow, getting off to stretch their legs. Hot and tired. A WHITE ATTENDANT saunters out. The driver steps over to meet him.

ATTENDANT

Fill her up?

DRIVER

Yes, sir.

The attendant starts unscrewing caps on two 50-GALLON TANKS.

ATTENDANT

Where you all headed?

DRIVER

Chicago.

As the attendant shoves down a pump, starts filling, Jack steps off. He spots and heads for a restroom. White Men Only lettered on the door. The attendant roused as he sees.

ATTENDANT

Hey! Where you going, boy!?

Everyone looking over as Jack stops.

JACK
I'm going to the toilet.

ATTENDANT
Shit, boy, c'mon. You know you
can't go in there.

Jack does a slow burn, then suddenly strides toward the attendant. The air rife with tension.

JACK
Take that hose out of the tank.

ATTENDANT
Huh?

DRIVER
Robinson --

JACK
Take it out. We'll get our ninety-
nine gallons of gas someplace else.

The attendant blinks. He takes a look from Jack to up and down the deserted highway. No business in sight.

ATTENDANT
Okay, use it. But don't stay in
there too long.

Jack heads back. The Driver, the players, a bit stunned.

CUT TO:

5 INT. WHITE MEN ONLY REST ROOM - FILLING STATION - DAY 5

Jack splashes water on his face, rips a paper towels from the dispenser, pats his face dry. He balls the wad up, squeezes it in his fist before firing it into the trash. He considers his reflection in the mirror. As he regards himself, we hear the SERVICE BELL ring outside. *

*

CUT TO:

6 EXT. FILLING STATION - HIGHWAY 24 - DAY 6

A car has pulled up. The driver talks to several players. They look over as Jack exits. The driver is Clyde Sukeforth.

SUKEFORTH
Are you Jackie Robinson?

CUT TO:

7 OMITTED 7 *

8 INT. BRANCH RICKEY'S OFFICE - MONTAGUE ST, BROOKLYN - DAY 8 *

Blinds closed. Jack sits across the desk from Rickey. Sukeforth sits a little further back. Rickey is staring at Jack. Bushy eyebrows flared, light gleams off his glasses.

INSERT: August 28, 1945. Brooklyn. *

Jack doesn't know what to do, looks to Sukeforth. Finally...

RICKEY *

Do you have a girl?

JACK

Excuse me?

RICKEY

A man needs a family relying on him. It insures he'll behave responsibly. Do you have a girl?

JACK

I think so.

RICKEY

You think so?

Jack looks to Sukeforth who smiles placidly. Back to Rickey.

JACK

I don't make much money. Between the army and now baseball I've been away a lot. And Rae, Rachel, she wants to finish school. Considering all that, I say I think so.

RICKEY

Do you love her? Rachel?
(Jack confused)
Don't you know?

JACK

Yes, sir, very much.

RICKEY

Marry her.

What? Rickey stands, walks to a window. Jack looks at Sukeforth who raises a hand as if to say: *Give it a chance.*

RICKEY (CONT'D)

Baseball's a hard life; a man needs a good woman by his side. You don't want the only person waiting for you at home to be a catcher.

Sukeforth chuckles at that. Rickey fingers open a slat on the blind and peers out. Jack looks hard at him.

JACK

Coach Sukeforth here said you were starting a new Negro League. That doesn't make sense to me.

MR. RICKEY

It doesn't, huh? Are you calling us liars, Jack?

JACK

What's this about, Mr. Rickey?

RICKEY

This is about baseball.

Rickey opens the shade. Sunlight floods in. Rickey follows it to the chalkboard, to the list of players under Montreal.

RICKEY (CONT'D)

I see you starting in the spring with our affiliate in Montreal. If you make it there, we'll try you down here with the Dodgers. The white Brooklyn Dodgers.

Jack looks to Sukeforth who nods: *Yes, you heard right.*

RICKEY (CONT'D)
I'll pay you \$600 a month and a
\$3,500 bonus when you sign the
contract. Is that agreeable?

Believe it or not that's a lot of money to Jack on this day
in time. This is all becoming a bit overwhelming.

JACK
Yes, sir. That's fine.

RICKEY
There is one condition. I have a
pile of scouting reports. I know
you can hit behind the runner, that
you can read a pitch. The question
is can you control your temper?

JACK
My temper?

RICKEY
Yes your temper! Are you deaf?!

Rickey furious, the avuncular old man gone. Jack sits there,
fists now balled. Rickey to Sukeforth like he's not there:

RICKEY (CONT'D)
He looks proud. Willful.

SUKEFORTH
He'll need to be.

Rickey looks back to Jack who is as angry as he is confused.

RICKEY
I want to win! I want ballplayers
who can win! Are you one of them?!

JACK
Yes.

RICKEY
A black man in white baseball.
Imagine the reaction. The vitriol.

Rickey strides forward, gets in his face.

RICKEY (CONT'D)
The Dodgers check into a hotel. A
decent good hotel. You're worn out
from the road and some clerk won't
give you the pen to sign in.
(Southern drawl)
We got no room, boy, not even down
in the coal bin where you belong.

Jack looks like he wants to tear Rickey apart.

RICKEY (CONT'D)

The team stops at a restaurant.
The waiter won't take your order.

(adopts a new voice)

Didn't you see the sign on the
door? No animals allowed.

(looming)

What are you going to do then?
Fight him? Ruin all my plans?
Answer me, you black sonofabitch!

JACK

(masters himself)

Do you want a ballplayer who
doesn't have the guts to fight
back? Is that what you want?

RICKEY

I want one who has the guts not to
fight back! There are people who
will not like this. They will do
anything to get you to react. If
you echo a curse with a curse, they
will only hear yours. Follow a
blow with a blow and they will say
a Negro lost his temper; that the
Negro does not belong. Your enemy
will be out in force, but you can
not meet him on his own low ground.
We win with hitting, running and
fielding, nothing else. We win if
the world is convinced of two
things: that you are a fine
gentlemen and a great ballplayer.
Like our Savior, you must have the
guts to turn the other cheek.

Jack considers Rickey. Rickey looks worn out.

RICKEY (CONT'D)

Can you do it?

Jack poised at what will be his Rubicon. He crosses.

JACK

Mr. Rickey, you give me a uniform,
you give me a number on my back,
and I'll give you the guts.

CUT TO:

9 INT. HALLWAY - ISUM HOUSE - LOS ANGELES - DAY 9

A phone RINGS on a table. RACHEL ISUM steps in, 23, possessed of style that you can only be graced with.

RACHEL

Hello?

CUT TO:

10 INT. LOBBY PAYPHONE - 215 MONTAGUE STREET - BROOKLYN - DAY 10

Jack in a PHONE BOOTH, the lobby busy beyond.

JACK

Rae, I'm in Brooklyn.

INTERCUT THE FOLLOWING:

RACHEL

Brooklyn? For what?

JACK

I don't want to say on the phone. In fact, I'm not supposed to tell anyone.

She can hear the tingle in his voice.

RACHEL

Jack? *

JACK *

I'm here, Rae *

RACHEL *

What's going on? You're supposed to be playing in Chicago? *

JACK *

We've been tested you and me. Our loyalty, our faith. We've done everything the right way. Me trying to make money. You finishing school. Separated by the war, now by baseball. We don't owe the world a thing. Only each other. *

She's actually getting a little scared now. *

RACHEL

Jack, what are you talking about? What happened?

JACK

The Brooklyn Dodgers just signed me to play ball up in Montreal. It might lead to bigger things. To something wonderful.

RACHEL

What does it mean? For you and me?

JACK

Rae. Will you marry me?

RACHEL

Absolutely. When?

JACK

Now.

RACHEL

(laughing)

Jack, I don't think we can get married in a phone booth.

CUT TO:

11 OMITTED

11

11 A INT. HALLWAY - THE CLARK HOTEL - LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

11 A

Jack rounds a corner in a TUXEDO, the bow tie undone. Rachel follows in her WEDDING GOWN. They look beautiful.

RACHEL

Did my mom look happy? *

JACK

Yes.

They reach the door. Jack gets out a key to unlock it. *
Rachel looks nervous, steps back across the hall. *

RACHEL

Did my gram look happy? *

Swinging the door open, he looks at her. The air charged. *

JACK

Everyone looked happy. I've never seen so many people looking happy.

RACHEL

Did Jack Robinson look happy?

(soft)

What if I can't make you happy?

He steps over, aware of her shyness. *

JACK

Too late. You already do. It's
you and me, Rae. *

RACHEL

Until the wheels fall off. *

(uncertain)

The world is waiting for us.

JACK

It can wait one more night

(kisses her) *

Are you coming, Mrs. Robinson? *

RACHEL

(kisses him back) *

I'd follow you anywhere, Mr.
Robinson. *

He picks her up, carries her over the threshold. As the door
clicks shut behind them...

CUT TO:

12 INT. BRANCH RICKEY'S OFFICE - BROOKLYN - DAY

12

The shades closed; we're scheming again. WENDELL SMITH sits
across from Rickey who stares back intently. Bespectacled,
32, Smith covers baseball for the Pittsburgh Courier.

RICKEY

Who's the best shortstop you ever
saw?

SMITH

Rabbit Tavener.

RICKEY

Rabbit Tavener? And you call
yourself a sports writer?

SMITH

Yes, a sentimental one. I'm from Detroit. He was the Tiger shortstop when I was a boy. How about you? Who's your best?

RICKEY

Pop Lloyd.

SMITH

Not Honus Wagner?

RICKEY

Wagner is number two. And Rabbit Tavener would not break my top 25. Where do you suppose Jackie Robinson will end up on that list?

SMITH

He won't break it. He doesn't have a shortstop's arm. Robinson belongs on second base.

RICKEY

Alright then, where would he rate at second?

SMITH

If he was playing now he'd be the best second baseman in the majors.

RICKEY

High praise. He'll have to be the best in the minor leagues first.

SMITH

What are you saying, Mr. Rickey?

RICKEY

I'm saying it's going to be a very interesting spring training. A lot of players are coming back from the war and with gas rationing over, we can train down in Florida again.

SMITH

Daytona Beach?

(Rickey nods)

You're aware in the past six months a black boy was lynched in Madison, Florida and a black man down in Live Oaks?

RICKEY

Those towns may as well be a million miles from Daytona.

SMITH

Live Oaks is 150 actually.

RICKEY

I spoke to the Daytona mayor. He assures me there'll be no trouble.

But Rickey doesn't sound so sure. They consider each other.

RICKEY (CONT'D)

Mr. Smith, are you a Communist?

SMITH

I'm a Democrat. Why do you ask?

RICKEY

I have a business proposition. What's your salary at the Courier?

SMITH

Fifty dollars a week.

RICKEY

I will pay you an additional fifty dollars a week plus expenses if you will attend spring training with Jackie Robinson. You will watch over him, help him to avoid the harm that could come if he were to do or say anything out of turn. You will act as his chauffeur, you will secure accommodations for him wherever the team may be, help him find restaurants, etc...

SMITH

What's in it for me? Besides the fifty dollars and a whole lot of aggravation?

RICKEY

Unprecedented access for any reportage you feel appropriate. What do you say, Mr. Smith?

SMITH

I say yes, sir. If a Negro is good enough to stop a Nazi bullet in France; he's good enough to stop a line drive at Yankee Stadium.

RICKEY

Ebbets Field actually, but yes, I agree. The world is ready.

CUT TO:

13 OMITTED 13 *

14 INT. BALLROOM - THE WALDORF ASTORIA HOTEL - NIGHT 14 *

Over 500 guests: journalists, players and politicians all listen politely as a SPEECH drones to an end.

INSERT: New York City. 23rd Annual Baseball Writer's Association Dinner February 3, 1946.

SPEAKER

As our former President Herbert Hoover remarked in his tribute to our national pastime: 'The rigid voluntary rules of right and wrong, as applied in baseball, are second only to religion in strengthening the morals of the American people.'

Polite applause as the speaker steps off. The clapping more enthusiastic as the lights dim on all but an impromptu set: plantation house columns. Hoots as a BUTLER appears wearing satin knee breeches and a MONTREAL ROYALS jersey. He holds a ring like a lawn jockey, a WHITE MAN in BLACK FACE. The laughs get louder as he peers out with exaggerated wide eyes.

BUTLER

Lordy, lordy, it's looking like da massa will be late dis ebning.

As the LAUGHS from the audience subside, a sportswriter dressed as a COLONEL enters from stage right.

COLONEL

Robbie! Robbie!

BUTLER

Yassuh, Massa Kunl. Here Ah is.

Huge LAUGHS as he struts and dances his way over.

COLONEL

Jackie, you woolly headed rascal.
How long yo' been in the family?

BUTLER

Ebber since Massa Rickey done bots
me from da Kansas City Monarchs.

COLONEL

(aside to audience)

Rickey that no good carpetbagger!
What could he be thinking!

Huge LAUGHS from that one. Two people enjoying it we'll
recognize later as HERB PENNOCK and BOB COOKE.

BUTLER

Ah came near bein' killed last
night, Kunl.

COLONEL

How's that, Jackie boy?

BUTLER

Ah was comin' up a dark street and
three men was behind me. And they
tried to do me with a baseball bat.

COLONEL

You don't say?

BUTLER

Yes, suh. Ah recognized one of
dem. Ah'm gonna hab him arrested.

COLONEL

But I thought you said it was dark?

BUTLER

It was. But I know he played for
the Philadelphia Baseball Club. On
account of he struck at me three
times and never hit me once.

That brings the house down. Check out their laughing faces.

CUT TO:

15 EXT. LOCKHEED TERMINAL - BURBANK - DAY 15

A gleaming American Airlines DC-3 angled up on the tarmac.
PASSENGERS climb the portable stairs and disappear inside.

INSERT: February 28, 1946. Burbank, California

CUT TO:

16 INT. TERMINAL - BURBANK - DAY 16

Jack and Rachel are being seen off by FRIENDS from the wedding and his mother MALLIE. Jack is in a natty suit with Rachel in a beautiful coat. *

MALLIE

You knock the cover off that ball.

JACK

I will, Mama.

Mallie hugs Jack and then kisses Rachel.

MALLIE

Look after each other.

RACHEL

We will.

She reaches in her bag, brings out a cardboard SHOEBOX; it's ever so slightly greasy at the bottom.

MALLIE

Take this. It's chicken.

JACK

They have food on the plane, Mama.

MALLIE

You never know what might happen.
I don't want you getting there
starving and too weak to hit.

Rachel gives Jack a subtle but emphatic look: No.

CUT TO:

17 EXT. LOCKHEED TARMAC - BURBANK - DAY 17

Jack escorts Rachel to the plane, the shoebox in hand.

JACK

I couldn't tell her no.

RACHEL

I know she means well; I just don't
want to be seen eating chicken out
of a box like some country bumpkin.

Jack runs his hand over her coat.

JACK

No one's going to mistake you for a
bumpkin in this.

RACHEL

Well, they'll know I belong on that plane or wherever I happen to be.

CUT TO:

18 EXT. DC-3 - DAY (STOCK FOOTAGE) 18

Descending toward a runway. Landing gear coming down.

CUT TO:

19 INT. TERMINAL - NEW ORLEANS LAKEFRONT AIRPORT - DAY 19

A WOMAN exits the lady's room, passing a SIGN: White Only. REVERSE to show Rachel looking at it like she's been slapped. Jack joins Rae from the TICKET COUNTER, with the chicken box.

INSERT: New Orleans Lakefront Airport.

JACK

The flight to Pensacola leaves in an hour... You okay?

RACHEL

I've just never seen one before.

JACK

(follows her look)

We're not in Pasadena anymore.

A sudden momentum carries her forward.

JACK

Honey... Rae --

He takes a step after her, stops as she disappears inside. *
Jack unsure what to do. He looks around. Looks back. He *
doesn't need this right now. *

20 OMITTED 20 *

21 OMITTED 21 *

22 INT. AIRPORT COFFEE SHOP - DAY 22 *

A black BUSBOY reacts as a bickering Jack and Rachel enter. *

JACK *

I promised Mr. Rickey we'd stay out
of trouble. *

RACHEL *

Did you promise him we wouldn't go
to the bathroom? You've done it. *

JACK *

Before I promised. *

RACHEL *

It was just a toilet. You'd think
the commodes were made of gold. *

The busboy watches as Jack and Rachel slide into a booth. As
Jack reaches for a MENU, here comes the COOK. *

COOK *

You folks can't sit here. *

JACK

Excuse me?

COOK

It's white only.

Jack looking to Rachel; it's equanimity time. Not easy.

COOK

I'll sell you some sandwiches. But
you gotta take 'em to go.

Jack looks to the busboy, back to the cook.

JACK

No. You hang onto those.

Mastering himself, Jack slides out. Drilling the cook with a
look, he offers his hand to Rachel as she slides out as well.

CUT TO:

23 OMITTED

23

24 INT. TERMINAL - NEW ORLEANS LAKEFRONT AIRPORT - DAY 24

Seen from on high. Jack and Rachel, sitting on a bench, two little figures as passengers move along the concourse. They sit a bit apart from each other, the world a wedge.

CUT TO:

25 EXT. RUNWAY - PENSACOLA AIRPORT - NIGHT 25 *

SMOKE PINWHEELS as the wheels of a BOEING 247 touch down.

INSERT: Pensacola, Florida. Later that day.

CUT TO:

26 INT. BOEING 247 - TARMAC - NIGHT 26

Jack and Rachel worn out among eight other passengers. As the door is opened, FOUR of the eight get up and disembark. After a beat, FOUR NEW PASSENGERS board and take their seat.

JACK

Just a hop to Daytona now.

As Rachel nods, an AIRLINE EMPLOYEE boards, MISS BISHOP. She makes her way over. She spots who she's looking for.

MISS BISHOP

Jack Robinson? Come with me.

She starts away without explaining, looks back at them a bit impatiently.

MISS BISHOP

Come on now. Both of you.

CUT TO:

27 INT. TICKET COUNTER - PENSACOLA AIRPORT - NIGHT 27

The shoe box sitting on the counter, Jack in mid discussion with Miss Bishop. Rachel just behind Jack. *

MISS BISHOP *

We have to lighten the plane.
There's some bad weather east of here. A heavy plane's dangerous.

RACHEL

(low)

Tell her you're with the Dodgers. *

Jack would rather not play that card.

JACK

When's the next flight?

MISS BISHOP *

Tomorrow morning. But it's booked.
So someone'll have to cancel.

Jack and Rachel unaware as a WHITE COUPLE are ushered out a door and onto the tarmac behind them.

JACK

Look, I'm with the Brooklyn Dodger organization. I've got to get down to Daytona. I'm supposed to report to spring training in the morning.

MISS BISHOP *

We'll do our best to get you down there by tomorrow afternoon, but it might be the day after.

RACHEL

Jack --

He follows her gaze to where the white couple get on the plane they got off. Jack wheels on Miss Bishop, furious. *

JACK

You gave away our seats! Get us back on that plane!

Miss Bishop picks up a PHONE, holds it in Jack's face. *

MISS BISHOP *

Do you want to call the Sheriff?
Or should I?

CUT TO:

28 EXT. BUS STATION - PENSACOLA - NIGHT

28

Closed. A line of EMPTY BUSES; the BANNER on one: Daytona Beach. Across from it Rachel sits at one end of a BENCH, her fur pulled around her. Jack at the other, staring off into the night. Finally, he reaches down, picks up the shoebox. He pulls out a DRUMSTICK, considers it, then takes a bite.

JACK

Mama knew...

He holds it out to Rachel. She slides over, takes it, takes a bite as well, smiles at him. He smiles back.

RACHEL

It's good.

CUT TO:

29 EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - DAYTONA BEACH, FLORIDA - DAY

29

*

LEO DUROCHER hitting fungoes. One after the next. PEE WEE REESE and EDDIE STANKY both settle under the same ball.

REESE

I got it! I got it!

STANKY

I got it! I got it!

They both back off at the last second and it drops to the ground between them. Durocher chuckles.

DUROCHER

That's what spring training's for, boys! Sort out our differences!

He hits another. This time to the outfield where veteran DIXIE WALKER gives chase, finally gives up on it.

DUROCHER

C'mon, Dixie, get after it!

WALKER

(laughing)

I'm old!

DUROCHER

I'm gonna squeeze one more year out of that worn out body of yours!

WALKER

If you could, skipper, my wife would sure appreciate it!

DUROCHER

Keeping the women happy! That's what it's all about!

29 A EXT./INT. CONVERTIBLE - DAY 29 A *

Rickey drives a dirt road through the training field singing "Two Sleepy People" along with the radio: Passing BROOKLYN DODGERS, MONTREAL ROYALS & ST. PAUL SAINTS on either side. *

Durocher hits another as Rickey pulls up. *

RICKEY

How are they looking, Leo? *

DUROCHER

Rusty, Mr. Rickey. But we'll get 'em oiled up and ready in no time. You find your lost sheep yet?

Troubled, Rickey shakes his head 'no'. As he does, Harold Parrot hurries over. He's the Dodgers travelling secretary.

PARROTT

Jackie Robinson's on a bus leaving Pensacola.

RICKEY

A bus? Harold, how in blazes did he end up on a bus?!

BOB BRAGAN, in his catching gear, passing by with pitchers RALPH BRANCA and KIRBY HIGBE. Higbe asides to Bragan: *

HIGBE

Why don't they just put him on a watermelon truck? *

BRANCA

What's the matter with you guys?

BRAGAN

Not a thing, Branca, but we ain't just two pretty faces either.

CUT TO:

30 EXT. GREYHOUND STATION - DAYTONA BEACH - SUNSET 30

Wendell Smith stands waiting as a BUS pulls in.

The big air brakes hiss. The doors open and the PASSENGERS disembark. First a DOZEN WHITE FACES, then a DOZEN BLACK. Last but not least, Rachel and Jack. They look exhausted.

SMITH

Jackie Robinson... Mr. Rickey sent me to meet you. Wendell Smith. Pittsburgh Courier. I'm going to be your Boswell.

JACK

My who?

SMITH

Your chronicler, your advance man.
Hell, even your chauffeur.

(tips his hat)

Mrs. Robinson.

RACHEL

It's Rachel.

SMITH

Man, you two look wiped out.

JACK

(sharp)

You got a car? Get us out of here.

CUT AHEAD TO: *

31 EXT. SMITH'S BUICK (PARKED) - DAY 31 *

Jack and Smith carry the luggage. Smith's excited being
around Jack even if he is grumpy. As Smith unlocks the
Buick, Rachel considers a segregated pair of water fountains. *

SMITH

You ever been down South before,
Rachel?

RACHEL

First time. We have our problems
in Pasadena, but not like this. *

SMITH

Mr. Rickey says we follow the law.
If Jim Crow and the state of
Florida say Negroes do this and
that, then we do this and that.

RACHEL

(softly)

My life's changing right in front
of me. Who I am, who I think I am.

CUT TO:

32 EXT. THE HARRIS HOUSE - DAYTONA BEACH - DAY 32

Black neighborhood. The Buick stops at a nice looking house.

SMITH

Joe and Duff Harris live here. He
gets out the black vote, does a lot
of good for colored folks.

(MORE)

SMITH (CONT'D)

Mr. Rickey set it up himself.

(imitates Rickey)

If we can't put the Robinsons in the hotels, they should stay someplace that represents something.

Jack and Rachel exchange a look, the place seems nice.

SMITH

Brooklyn plays downtown; Montreal a few blocks from here. You'll stay with the Harrises except for a few days at the end of the week. The whole Dodger organization is going to Sanford, about 45 minute away. You'll stay here though, Rachel.

*
*
*
*
*

RACHEL

Where are the other wives staying?

SMITH

There are no other wives. You're the only one Mr. Rickey allowed to spring training.

As the HARRISES step out on the porch, wave hello...

CUT TO:

33 INT. STAIRWAY - THE HARRIS HOUSE - DAY 33

MRS. HARRIS leads Jack and Rachel up the stairs to a door at the top. Mrs. Harris opens it.

MRS. HARRIS

I call this the love nest. I hope you like it.

RACHEL

I'm sure. Thank you.

As Jack enters, Mrs. Harris starts back down.

MRS. HARRIS

Dinner's at five.

Rachel enters, closes the door behind her --

34 LOVE NEST 34

-- And accidentally knocks Jack onto the bed. She lands on top of him. The room is impossibly small. It barely holds their luggage and the BED they're on. As they look around:

JACK

It's a joke, right?

RACHEL

I like it. The love nest.

She kisses him. He's starting to like it, too.

RACHEL

Remind me dinner's at five.

JACK

I'll try to remember...

As the kisses become more urgent...

CUT TO:

A35 INT. SMITH'S BUICK - DAYTONA TRAINING FACILITY - DAY A35 *

Smith pulls up alongside the team buses, looks across at Jack who is just a little nervous. *

SMITH *

The first day of Spring Training. *
My Pittsburgh Courier readers need *
to know how it feels. *

JACK *

It's okay. *

SMITH *

That's not exactly a headline. *

JACK *

(brusque) *
That's all I got. *

SMITH *

Look, Jack, right now it's just me *
asking you. But you get on that *
field and it's going to be the New *
York Times and the Sporting News. *
You should think about it. *

JACK *

If they ask something, I'll answer. *

SMITH *

Alright, but you know when you're *
at the plate, you want to feel like *
you see the pitch come in slow? *
Well, you want to see the questions *
come in slow, too. *

Jack just looks at him. Gets out. Smith sighs. *

35 EXT. PLAYING FIELD - DODGERS DAYTONA FACILITY - DAY 35

As PLAYERS (Brooklyn, St. Paul & Montreal) warm up, practice, Rickey sits on the bench, angry as he reads a NEWSPAPER.

Harold Parrott hurries over, something urgent on his mind. Rickey on a rant; Parrott can't get a word in.

RICKEY

Listen to this, Harold. Whenever I hear a white man - yours truly - broadcasting what a Moses he is to the Negro race, then I know the latter needs a bodyguard.

(Parrott tries to interject)

It is those of the carpetbagger stripe of the white race - me again - who under the guise of helping, in truth are using the Negro for their own selfish interest, thereby retarding the race!

Parrott tries to interrupt again, but Rickey is furious.

RICKEY

The minor league commissioner of baseball said that! I pay part of his salary! You wouldn't stab me in the back like this, would you?

PARROTT

(finally)

He's here, Mr. Rickey.

RICKEY

Why didn't you say so?!

36 PLAYING FIELD

36

Jack crossing toward them in his Montreal Monarchs uniform carrying a glove and a bat. 200 white players clocking him.

He's surrounded by REPORTERS and PHOTOGRAPHERS. It's the cue for most of the batting and fielding and chatter among the Dodgers, Royals and Saints to come to a stop.

Higbe forgets Bragan is throwing him a ball. It clocks him in the chest.

Reese and Stanky passing a medicine ball. *

REESE

That's him, huh?

STANKY

Take a wild guess.

Flash bulbs go off in Jack's face. Questions like punches. *
Shouts of 'Jackie' and then... *

REPORTER ONE

Jackie, do you think you can make it with these white boys?

Jack looks off to where Smith watches, back to the reporter. *
See the questions slow. He answers with measure. *

JACK

Sure, I had no problem with white men in the service or at UCLA.

REPORTER TWO

What'll you do if one of these pitchers throws at your head?

JACK

(thinks a beat)

I'll duck. *

That gets some laughs. *

REPORTER THREE

Jack, what's your natural position?

ROBINSON

I've been playing shortstop.

REPORTER THREE

Are you after Pee Wee Reese's job?

Jack looks over to where Reese watches with Stanky.

*

JACK

*

Reese plays for Brooklyn. I'm
worried about making Montreal.

*

*

REPORTER ONE

Is this about politics?

JACK

It's about getting paid.

Jack doing beautifully.

*

Smith breathes a sigh of relief...

*

MANAGER CLAY HOPPER

In a Montreal uniform, Hopper's too old to be a ballplayer. He stands with Dixie Walker the Dodger right fielder.

HOPPER

(Mississippi twang)

Well, when Mr. Rickey picks one, he sure picks a black one.

WALKER

He's fine with me, so long as you keep him up in Montreal.

HOPPER

Here comes the old man to save him.

They watch as Rickey pulls Jack from the press. He leads Jack directly toward Hopper. As Walker excuses himself...

WALKER

Good luck, Hop...

RICKEY

Clay, I'd like you to meet Jackie Robinson. Jackie, Clay Hopper, manager of the Montreal Royals.

Hopper shakes his hand as they exchange greetings.

HOPPER

We ain't doing much today. Just throwing the ball around and hitting a few. Why don't you toss a few with those fellas over there?
(calls over)
Hey, Jorgensen!

A kid in a Montreal uniform looks over. SPIDER JORGENSEN.

HOPPER

Meet Jackie Robinson.

CUT TO:

37 EXT. PARKING LOT - DODGER DAYTONA FACILITY - DAY

37 *

The end of the day. Buses leave by team, the Dodgers and the farm clubs. White faces look down as they pass a tired Jack, who walks through the lot toward Wendell Smith and his Buick.

Higbe and Bragan call out from the door of the Dodger bus.

HIGBE

Hey, Rook! Did you hear about the redneck shortstop?

BRAGAN

He thought the last two words of
the National Anthem were *Play Ball!*

Jack forces a smile, but the joke comes off a bit harsh. And they seem like they're laughing at him as...

HIGBE

How about the shortstop making all
the errors, tried to kill himself
by jumping out on the highway?

BRAGAN

A bus just missed him. Drove right
between his legs!

As the bus passes by, Jack sees the impassive faces of Dixie Walker, Reiser, Stanky, Pee Wee Reese and finally 20-year-old Branca. Branca smiles, offers an awkward little wave.

SMITH

Between his legs, good one. He
must've read a joke book. If he
can read.

*
*
*

Jack just gets in the car. Smith sighs, drum rolls the hood
of the Buick.

*
*

SMITH

Hi, Wendell, how are you...? Well,
looks like I got a long drive to
Sanford.

*
*
*

CUT TO:

38 EXT. PORCH - THE BROCK HOUSE - SANFORD - LATE AFTERNOON 38

MR. BROCK comes out the screen door carrying a tray of tall drinks. He sets them on a table, watches and waits as Smith and Jack get out of the Buick, start up the steps.

MR. BROCK

Jackie, I'm Ray Brock. Welcome to
Sanford Florida! The day belongs
to decent minded people.

They shake hands. Brock looks to Smith, obviously knows him.

MR. BROCK

Wendell, good to see you.

(to Jack)

My wife's inside cooking. You know
what she asked me this morning?
She asked me, what do you serve
when a hero's coming for dinner?

Jack's humble, embarrassed, doesn't know what to say.

JACK

I'm just a ballplayer, Mr. Brock.

MR. BROCK

Tell that to all the little colored boys playing baseball in Florida today. You're a hero to them.

The look on Jack's face says that's a heavy burden.

MR. BROCK (CONT'D)

Sit down, have something to drink. My special rum and coke.

JACK

No thank you, sir, I don't drink.

MR. BROCK

A ballplayer who doesn't drink? That's a new one on me.

SMITH

I'll have one. I'm a stereotypical reporter through and through.

JACK

Mr. Brock, do you have a desk? I'd like to get a letter to my wife.

MR. BROCK

Of course, this way.

As Mr. Brock leads Jack ahead, Smith sips his drink.

CUT TO:

39 EXT. PRACTICE DIAMOND - SANFORD - DAY

39

Rickey and Montreal manager Hopper stand by the dugout watching a spring game versus St Paul. Jack's playing second. They watch him closely as they talk.

HOPPER

He's getting by on a quick release, but his arm's too weak for short. Second base is his spot.

RICKEY

I agree. And I'll state another obvious, Clay, I need the players to act like gentlemen around him.

HOPPER

Uh huh.

The MAN on first takes a lead.

RICKEY

To treat him as they would any other teammate.

HOPPER

Uh huh.

RICKEY

To be natural, to impose no restrictions on themselves. To all work together in harmony.

WHACK! The hit & run is on. The man on first runs on the pitch as a LOW LINE DRIVE shoots for the gap between 1st and 2nd. Robinson turns himself inside out to dive on his belly and catch it before it hits the ground.

He spins himself around, pivots on a knee to throw the runner out before he can get back to first. Rickey is astounded.

RICKEY

That was superhuman.

HOPPER

(chuckling)

Superhuman? Don't get carried away, Mr. Rickey, that's still a Nigger out there.

Rickey takes a moment to process. It's Hopper's light admonishing tone that really halts him. Finally...

RICKEY

Clay, I realize that attitude is part of your heritage; that you practically nursed race prejudice at your mother's breast, so I will let it pass. But I will add this: you can manage Robinson fairly and correctly or you can be unemployed.

They both look over as Jack comes off the field toward them.

HOPPER

Attaboy, Jackie! Way to turn two!

CUT TO:

40 EXT. FRONT PORCH - THE BROCK HOUSE - SANFORD - NIGHT 40 *

Smith and Mr. Brock are sitting on the porch sipping rum and cokes. A quiet evening.

MR. BROCK

I hope Jackie sleeps alright.
Chasing baseballs in the sun all
day, I'd be in my grave. How are
they treating him out there?

They watch as a CAR slows, parks across the street.

SMITH

Okay as far as I can see.

A MIDDLE-AGED WHITE MAN, LUTHER exits the car and starts
toward them. *

MR. BROCK

(frowns)

You find good people every place
you go. Even here in Florida...

LUTHER *

(stopping below)

Is he in there?

SMITH

Who is it you're looking for?

LUTHER *

Nigra ball player.

The air suddenly alive with danger.

SMITH

He's asleep. Maybe you better come
back in the morning.

LUTHER *

I ain't comin' back. Other fellas
is comin'. They ain't too happy
about him stayin' here in Sanford.
Playin' ball with white boys.

(a long beat)

Skedaddle, that's what I'd do.
If'n they get here, and he's still
here, there's gonna be trouble.

He turns and walks away. As they watch, a phone rings...

RICKEY'S VOICE

Yes, Wendell, what is it?

CUT TO:

41 INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAYTONA BEACH - NIGHT

41

Rickey in his pajamas in his hotel room. On the phone.

RICKEY

I see... Yes, I understand. Wake him up and get him out of there. Put him in the car and start driving for Daytona Beach. Now. And, Wendell, under no circumstance tell him what this is about. I do not want him to get it in his head to stay there and fight.

CUT TO:

42 INT. BEDROOM - MR. BROCK'S HOUSE - NIGHT 42

Half dressed, Jack sits on the edge of his bed, feeling bad. Through his open door, across a hall, we can see Smith in his room. Passing in and out of view packing his own things.

JACK

I was just getting loose.

Smith sticks his head in the door.

SMITH

Don't just sit there. Pack your duds. We're blowin'.

A phone RINGS somewhere. They hear Brock answer, then:

MR. BROCK'S VOICE

Wendell?!

Smith leaves the room. Hold on Jack, despair as he listens.

SMITH'S VOICE

Yes, Mr. Rickey, I'm with him now... We're pulling out for Daytona in five minutes, soon as he gets his bag packed... Yes, yes, it's just one of those things.

'One of those things.' As Jack's head hangs a little lower.

CUT TO:

43 INT./EXT. BUICK - MAIN STREET - SANFORD - NIGHT 43

The street deserted, sidewalks rolled up. Jack angry and silent in the passenger seat. Smith jumpy behind the wheel. They stop as a PICK-UP stops ahead outside a BAR where:

A DOZEN WHITE MEN in shirtsleeves exchange words with the boys in the truck. To Jack it looks like a typical small town bull session. To Smith it looks like something else.

*

The white men look over at the two black men. One steps over, motions: *roll down the window.* *

JACK *
I wonder what he wants? *

SMITH *
To run us out of town. *

JACK *
What are you talking about? *

The man close now. As Jack cranks down the window, Smith floors it. The Buick SCREECHES away, SWERVING around a CAR coming the other way. *

JACK *
What the hell, Wendell?!

SMITH *
Man came by while you were asleep. *
(checks mirror) *
Told us more men were coming. Maybe *
those boys. Mr. Rickey said to get *
you to Daytona Beach a-s-a-p. *

JACK *
Why didn't you say so? *

SMITH *
Mr. Rickey was afraid you wouldn't *
leave, that you would fight. *

As it becomes clear, Jack starts to LAUGH.

SMITH *
What the hell are you laughing at? *

JACK *
I thought you woke me because I was *
cut from the team. *

Jack LAUGHS harder. Wendell LAUGHS as well. As it fades, Jack looks back over his shoulder. Jesus...

CUT TO:

44 EXT. CITY ISLAND BALLPARK - DAYTONA BEACH - DAY 44

A stadium SIGN boasts Brooklyn Dodgers vs. Montreal Royals.

Daytona Beach's black community is turning out to see Jackie Robinson. Hundreds of people line up, mass at the: Colored Entrance. In their Sunday best. Families. Couples. The old. The frail. Young boys chase after each other. One MOTHER stands on her toes to spot her son.

MOTHER

Ed! You stay where I can see you!

13-year old ED CHARLES turns, waves his baseball glove over his head so she can see him. Then to no one in particular:

ED

I'm thirteen years old.

WHITE PEOPLE enter at several gates around them.

CUT TO:

45 CLOSE ON BRANCH RICKEY - THE DODGER DUGOUT 45

He sits watching as the segregated bleachers in right fill with BLACK FANS. All else is white. Rickey pops a PEANUT in his mouth, confides to someone alongside him we don't see.

RICKEY

I've spoken to the mayor. I've explained how much money we'll spend in Daytona. But still, when this fine young Negro man steps on that field today, he and the Dodgers will technically be breaking the law. A law which says white and black players cannot enjoy the same field at the same time. Does that make sense to you? Does Jim Crow make any sense when placed against the words of the United States Constitution? When placed against the word of God?

POP OUT to reveal he sits beside the DODGER BATBOY, so short his feet don't touch the ground. Rickey offers his peanut bag. As the batboy takes one...

RICKEY

I'll tell you, it does not make sense to me.

CUT TO:

46 OMITTED

46 *

47 OMITTED 47 *

48 OMITTED 48 *

49 EXT. ON DECK CIRCLE - CITY ISLAND BALLPARK - DAY 49

Jack swinging two bats to get loose. Watches as the Montreal BATTER hits a LINE DRIVE which -- Pee Wee Reese nearly leaps out of his socks to bring down. Wow...

As the CROWD claps in appreciation, Jack takes a deep breath.

PA ANNOUNCER

Now batting the second baseman --
Jackie Robinson!

Jack wincing as he steps forward to both cheers and boos from the white sections. As a 'go home, coon' drifts over -- A BIG OVATION from the black section in right drowns it out.

COLORED SECTION - RIGHT FIELD *

Rachel sits with Smith. They react to some of the INVECTIVE coming from the white section. *

RACHEL *

Jack's got a thick skin. He'll be okay. *

SMITH *

How about you? *

RACHEL *

(shrugs) *

I better get one in a hurry. *

INFIELD *

Higbe watching from the mound as Jack steps into the batter's box. Two well wishing voices from the infield stands.

SPECTATOR ONE

Come on, black boy, you can make the grade!

SPECTATOR TWO

They're giving you a chance! Do something about it!

Jack heartened at the words. Concentrates as Higbe's first pitch is fired. High and tight, Jack jerks out of the way.

Bragan, behind the plate, chucks the ball back, grins up at Jack who does not look down at him as he settles back in.

ED CHARLES

The 13-year-old holding his hands together in prayer.

ED

Please, God, let Jackie show them
what we can do.

HOME PLATE

Here comes the next pitch. Even tighter. Jack nearly hit.

UMPIRE

Ball two!

Jack glaring, crowds the plate more. Bragan shows *1*, taps his right thigh signalling outside. Jack watches it sail, doesn't bite. The umpire: "*Ball Three!*" Higbe's fun slipping away as he can't find the strike zone.

HIGBE

Come on, Rook! Ain't you gonna
swing at something?!

Jack takes a practice swing, waits as Bragan sets up right over the plate. Here comes the pitch. Low. "*Ball four!*"

RACHEL & SMITH

A big, over-reacting CHEER from the Colored section.

SMITH

It's just a walk.

RACHEL

Who can blame them?

HIGBE

Looks ill-tempered over to first where Jack gives the same look back as he sidesteps an enormous, defiant lead off the bag. Higbe incredulous. Did he just do that?

DUROCHER

(from dugout)

Well throw over there for crying
out loud!

Higbe fires to LAVAGETTO at first. Jack dives back in time.

*

Higbe gets the ball back, settles. Jack takes a lead, but a modest one this time. Here come the pitch -- And Jack goes. *

You knew he was fast; but not this fast. Bragan's throw to Pee Wee is late and high. Pee Wee throws back to Higbe. *

Higbe sets. Bragan gives him a sign. Jack takes a lead. On the wind-up, Jack goes. Bragan stands -- it's a PITCH OUT. *

Bragan fires to third and Jack is caught in a RUN DOWN. It seems like half the team gets involved with Higbe finally getting the ball by third and Jack ducking under the tag. *

Safe! A BUZZ goes through the stadium now as people start to realize they are not watching something or someone ordinary. *

RICKEY

Watching from a seat behind third.

RICKEY

Thataway, Jackie! Thataway!

HIGBE & JACK

Higbe looks home for the sign, Jack dancing off third, pounding his right foot toward home. He feints hard home. *

Higbe steps off the rubber. Jack stays where he is. *

HIGBE

Hell! You're supposed to go back to third when I step off! Don't you know nothing?!

He throws over. Jack back to the bag. Higbe gets the ball back, looks in. Jack bouncing, pounding off third. His movements carry violence within them. Like a piston exploding in an engine. *

Higbe into his motion, stops his delivery, accidentally drops the ball to the ground. The umpire signals BALK, points Jack home. Higbe is furious. *

ED CHARLES - IN THE COLORED SECTION

CHEERING, joyous. His mother joins in, happy despite...

MOTHER

I don't understand. What happened?

ED

It's a balk, Mama. The pitcher can't start toward home and then stop. Jackie scores.

MOTHER

But he didn't do anything.

ED

Oh, mama, yes he did, he discombobulated the man.

DUGOUT

Durocher looks to Branca, impressed.

DUROCHER

He didn't come to play; he came to kill.

Durocher starts out to the mound to talk to Higbe.

DIXIE WALKER

Watching from right field, the black crowd still cheering. He walks over toward the open bullpen where Casey stands.

WALKER

This really how it's gonna be some day? Baseball?

CUT TO:

50 EXT. SCOREBOARD - BALLFIELD - DAY

50

Montreal vs. Indianapolis. THE STANDS are half filled. The COLORED SECTION is packed solid, accentuated by the many empty seats in the sections on either side of it.

INSERT: De Land, Florida.

No score, top of the first as -- Jack drops a BUNT down the line. The FIRST BASEMAN fields, throw to the SECOND BASEMAN covering. Too late. Only Jack doesn't stop.

Realizing the SHORTSTOP isn't covering the bag, Jack bolts for second. The second baseman has to wait on the throw and when he makes it -- The UMPIRE signals safe. A bunt double!

Spider Jorgensen settles in the batter's box. The pitch. Crack, Jorgensen laces a single to left.

Jack motors to third where Sukeforth is WAVING him home. We're with him at hip level as he tears down the basepath. The CATCHER bracing for the throw - they COLLIDE - he's SAFE! *

As Jack gets to his feet, however, a Jim Crow POLICEMAN steps up to meet him, grabs him by the shoulder.

POLICEMAN

Git offa this field now!

JACK

What!? Why?

POLICEMAN

It's against the law is why. No niggers don't play with no white boys. Git off or go to jail.

Jack shrugs the policeman's hand off his shoulder. That sends him reaching for his nightstick and --

Sukeforth is there to get between them.

JACK

You swing that thing you better hit me between the eyes with it.

POLICEMAN

Is that so?

The CROWD BOOING. The black section especially.

HOPPER

(arrives from dugout)

Hey, hold on, what'd he do wrong?

POLICEMAN

We ain't havin' Nigras mix with white boys in this town. Ya'll ain't up-states now; they gotta stay separate. Brooklyn Dodgers ain't changing our way of living. Where are you all from anyhow?

HOPPER

Greenwood, Mississippi.

POLICEMAN

Hell, man, you oughta know better.
(a dangerous beat)
Now tell your Nigra I said to git.
You think I'm foolin'?

Hopper looks desperately to Jack who just stands there.

RACHEL'S VOICE

What did you do?

CUT TO:

51 EXT. STREET - DAYTONA BEACH - HARRIS NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY 51

Jack and Rachel out walking. He's been telling the story.

JACK

I said okay, Skipper, tell him...
Ah'm a-gittin'. Sho'nuff, ah is.

RACHEL

You didn't?

JACK

I did. Then I took a long shower.
 We lost 2 to 1.

She takes a few exaggerated steps to amuse him.

RACHEL

Ah'm a-gittin', ah'm a gittin'.

He laughs, takes her hand. He's going to kiss her.

JACK

You're not getting away from me.

RACHEL

(looking past)

Jack...

A white man bee-lines them from across the street, looks like a real CRACKER. Jack on guard, gets in front of Rachel.

JACK

Get back, Rae. Go back.

Cracker stops square across from him. Jack's fists balled.

CRACKER

I want you to know something.

JACK

Yeah, what's that?

CRACKER

I want you to know I'm pulling for
 you to make good. And a lot of
 folks here feel the same way. If a
 man's got the goods, he deserves a
 fair chance. That's all.

(tips his hat)

Ma'am.

As Cracker walks away... Rachel takes Jack's hand.

CUT TO:

52A EXT. PLAYING FIELD - DODGER DAYTONA FACILITY - DAY 52A *

Rickey leans against his car watching a GROUNDSKEEPER push mow the infield grass. Jack, in street clothes, joins him.

JACK

You wanted to see me, Mr. Rickey?

Rickey nods, consider the field a moment.

RICKEY

Bermuda grass grows so well here.
I wish we could get it to grow like
this in Brooklyn.

JACK

I like the way it smells when they
mow it.

RICKEY

Me, too. *

Rickey consider the field a moment, then Jack. *

RICKEY

Jackie, it's my pleasure to tell you that you've earned a spot on the Montreal Royals. When they head north Tuesday for opening day against Jersey City, you'll be on the train.

Jack trying to hold down his excitement.

JACK

I won't let you down.

RICKEY

I know that.

JACK

If you don't mind, I've got to go tell my wife.

RICKEY

Give her my regards.

Jack about to head off when he looks back..

JACK

Why are you doing this, Mr. Rickey?

RICKEY

I'm an opportunist. With you and the Negro players I hope to bring up next year I'll put together a team that can win the World Series. And the World Series means money.

Jack studies him a beat, not quite buying it.

RICKEY

Don't you believe that?

JACK

I don't think what I believe is important. Only what I do.

RICKEY

Agreed. Therefore, run the bases like the Devil himself. *

(MORE)

RICKEY (CONT'D)

Worry those pitchers so they come apart. Sometimes they'll catch you, but don't worry about that. Ty Cobb got caught plenty. Just run as you see fit. Put the natural fear of God into them.

CUT TO:

53 EXT. DAYTONA BEACH TRAIN STATION - DAY

53

Ed Charles and his TWO FRIENDS follow Jack and the Montreal PLAYERS as they walk toward the TRAIN waiting on the tracks. Jack is one of the last to board. He's almost through the door when something stops him. He looks back at Ed.

A beat. Ed slowly raises his hand and waves. Jack smiles, does the same, then disappears inside. The WHISTLE blows and the train starts out of the station. On impulse Ed starts to trot out after it. Staying close. His friends follow.

TRAIN TRACKS

The train picks up speed. The boys start to run. Arms pumping, feet flying. One boy drops off. Then the other.

But Ed still runs. Chasing after that train carrying Jackie Robinson. Finally, he stops, heaving for breath, watching the train disappear around the bend. A lonely beat. Then --

Ed gets down on his hands and knees. He sets his ear on the rail, closes his eyes. A thrum comes off the rail. A huge smile spreads. He straightens, shouts back to his friends:

ED

I CAN STILL HEAR HIM!

From somewhere, as *the National Anthem* ends...

CUT TO:

54 EXT. ROOSEVELT STADIUM - DAY

54

INSERT: April 18, 1946 - Roosevelt Stadium, Jersey City.
Opening day of the International League Season.

A COLOR GUARD march away to REVEAL:

*

HOME PLATE UMPIRE

PLAY BALL!

30,000 FANS pack a stadium built for 24,500. Bunting and flags everywhere. 1000s of black fans are here (segregated only financially in New Jersey).

CUT TO:

55 EXT. HOME PLATE - ROOSEVELT STADIUM - DAY 55

Jack steps up to some BOOING, but much more APPLAUSE. He looks ready to beat the world.

INSERT: First inning.

CROWD VOICE

Come on, Jackie, this fella can't pitch!

Speaking of the pitch, here it comes. Jack tops a WEAK GROUNDER to short. As he's thrown out by a mile...

56 WENDELL SMITH & RACHEL 56

Sitting up off third. His knees knocked together to hold his TYPEWRITER on his lap. Nothing to write about there. He looks over at Rachel who puts her hand over her mouth.

SMITH

You okay?

RACHEL

I think I might be sick.
(standing)
Excuse me, Wendell.

He watches as she starts out, looks to the field.

SMITH

I'd be sick at a swing like that, too.

CUT TO:

57 INT. REST ROOM STALL - ROOSEVELT STADIUM - DAY 57

Rachel exits looking stricken. She steps over, splashes a little water from the sink up into her face. An OLDER BLACK WOMAN watches sympathetically.

OLDER WOMAN

Are you alright, honey?

RACHEL

I'm sick. I don't know why.

The older woman rolls off a piece of paper towel for her.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

Thank you.

OLDER WOMAN

When did you have your monthly last?

Rachel looks over, taken aback. But then...

RACHEL

I'm late.

OLDER WOMAN

It may be that you're pregnant.

The older woman offers a little smile, leaves her there.

INSERT: Third Inning.

P.A. ANNOUNCER

(echoing)

Now batting. Jackie Robinson.

CUT TO:

58 HOME PLATE 58

Jack steps up to bat. The JERSEY CITY GIANT PITCHER looks to the Montreal RUNNER at first, glances over his shoulder at the Montreal RUNNER at second, then focuses on home.

59 SMITH 59

His hands resting on the top of his typewriter.

SMITH

Come on, Jackie. Come on, batter.

60 RACHEL 60

Emerging up the runway. The field opening up before her. There's Jack standing down there. The sight of him settles her. As she puts a hand gently over her belly...

61 THE PITCHER 61

Grimaces for something extra as he fires a high fastball --

Jack UNLOADS. All heads turn to watch it sail -- high into the left field bleachers, banging hard off the scoreboard.

62 SMITH 62

Nearly drops his typewriter, pushes his hat back as he watches Jack start his home run trot. Smith laughs. Joy.

63 DUGOUT 63

Hopper can't believe his eyes. Softly to himself:

HOPPER

I'll be damned...

64 WE'RE WITH JACK 64

As he runs the base paths. Over it, a TYPEWRITER CLATTERS.

SMITH (O.S.)

*Robinson jogged around the bases,
his heart singing...*

The crowd loves it as he continues toward third where Sukeforth is clapping for all he's worth.

SMITH (O.S.) (CONT'D)

*And our own hearts beat just a bit
faster, and the thrill ran through
us like champagne bubbles...*

65 CLOSE ON RACHEL 65

Watching him head for home, shaking hands with the two men he batted in. Pride & joy in her eyes.

RACHEL

Oh, Jack... Oh Jack...

CUT TO:

66 CLOSE ON RACHEL 66

Suddenly in pain, face beaded in sweat.

RACHEL

Jack! Jack!

INSERT: November 18, 1946. Pasadena, California.

She is in labor and we are in Huntington Memorial Hospital. A CRY. The DOCTOR holds up a slick, wailing NEWBORN.

DOCTOR

It's a boy.

As Rachel holds out her arms for him...

CUT TO:

67 INT. HALLWAY - MATERNITY WARD - PASADENA - NIGHT 67

Jack at the glass looking at JACKIE JR. Jack's eyes shine as he regards his infant son. It's quiet. Jack's voice soft.

JACK

My daddy left. He left us flat in Cairo, Georgia. I was only six months older than you are now. I don't remember him. Nothing good, nothing bad. Nothing.

(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)

(a beat)

But you're going to remember me.
And I am going to be with you until
the day I die.

The stakes just got raised...

CUT TO:

68 INT. YMCA GYMNASIUM - DAY

68 *

THIRTY prominent BROOKLYN NEGRO leaders, representing a cross section of civic responsibility, sit on folding chairs before a dais where HERBERT MILLER making an introduction.

MILLER

As all of us know a young Negro
second baseman played north of the
border last season...

INSERT: Brooklyn YMCA. February 5, 1947.

In back: TWO DEACONS in the back whisper over a SPORTS PAGE.

DEACON ONE

Look here what he did.

(reads)

Led the International League in
batting: .349, in stolen bases: 40,
runs scored: 113. Plus batted .400
in the Minor League World Series.

DEACON TWO

Last season doesn't matter. The
International League, it doesn't
matter. What matters is this year.
What matters is Brooklyn.

DEACON ONE

Shhh... Here he comes.

As Herbert Miller introduces...

MILLER

I present the general manager of
the Brooklyn Dodger baseball club,
Mr. Branch Rickey!

Warm APPLAUSE as Rickey steps up. As it settles...

RICKEY

Good evening. I have something
very important to talk with you
about tonight. Something that will
require courage from all of us.

(a beat)

(MORE)

RICKEY (CONT'D)

I have a ballplayer on my Montreal
team named Jackie Robinson.

The start of applause. Rickey motions for it to stop.

RICKEY

He may stay there or he may be brought to Brooklyn. But if Jackie does come up to the Dodgers, the biggest threat to his success, the one enemy most likely to ruin that success, is the Negro people themselves!

There is shocked silence in the room. Rickey notices a group of KIDS watching from a raised running track, soldiers on: *

RICKEY

I say it as cruelly as I can to make you all realize the weight of responsibility that is not only on myself and the Dodgers, but on Negroes everywhere. For on the day Jackie enters the National League, if he does, I have no doubt every one of you will form parades and welcoming committees. You'll strut. You'll wear badges. You'll hold Jackie Robinson days and Jackie Robinson nights. You'll get drunk, fight and be arrested.

This is too much. People are slackjawed. Rickey powers on.

RICKEY

You'll wine and dine him until he is fat and futile. You'll symbolize his importance into a national comedy and yes, a tragedy! So let me tell you this!

(pounds his fist)

If any group or segment of Negro society uses the advancement of Jackie Robinson in baseball as a triumph of race over race, I will regret the day I ever signed him to a contract, and I will personally see that baseball is never so abused and misrepresented again!

Is he done? An embarrassed smattering of applause. Mostly shock and stares. As Rickey stands there uncomfortably...

CUT TO:

69 INT. HALLWAY - YMCA - DAY

69 *

Rickey stands waiting; giving that speech has worn him out. The door opens and Miller looks in on him.

MILLER

I question your bedside manner, Mr. Rickey, but they've agreed to set up a committee of self-policing. We'll call it the 'Don't Spoil Jackie's Chances' campaign.

RICKEY

Thank you, Mr. Miller. I'm sorry; the spotlight will be on us all.

CUT TO:

70 INT. BEDROOM - BEVERLY HILLS HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT 70

The silhouette of stately palms through the window. A PHONE RINGS. A figure fumbles through silk sheets for the receiver. It's LEO DUROCHER, a WOMEN in bed alongside him.

INSERT: Beverly Hills. February 16, 1947.

DUROCHER

Yeah?

RICKEY'S VOICE

Hello, Leo, what are you doing?

DUROCHER

I'm bowling. Wait, I'm snowshoeing in the Alps. I'm trying to sleep, Mr. Rickey. It's still dark out.

CUT TO:

71 INT. BRANCH RICKEY'S OFFICE - EARLY MORNING 71

It's very early in New York. Rickey on the phone.

RICKEY

Another spring training is upon us. In Panama. I need to know your attitude toward Jackie Robinson.

72 INTERCUT THE FOLLOWING: 72

DUROCHER

I don't got an attitude toward him.

The girl rolls over to look at him. She is the actress LORRAINE DAY and she is stunning. As Durocher regards her...

RICKEY

Eight times in the Bible we're told to love our neighbor. It's one of God's most repeated commands.

She puts her hands on him. (Durocher addressing Rickey.) *

LORRAINE *
 (softly) *
 Hi... *

DUROCHER *
 I don't know much about the Bible. *

LORRAINE *
 Me neither... *

DUROCHER *
 But I didn't go to school just to *
 eat my lunch either. I'll play an *
 elephant if he can help us win. To *
 make room for him, I'll send my own *
 brother home if he's not as good.

LORRAINE *
 (in his ear) *
 What are you going to do with me? *

DUROCHER *
 We're playing for money, Mr. *
 Rickey. Winning's the only thing *
 that matters. Is he a nice guy?

RICKEY
 If by nice you mean soft, no, not
 particularly.

DUROCHER
 Good. He can't afford to be. Nice
 guys finish last.

LORRAINE *
 What about nice girls? *

She starts to kiss him. It's hard to concentrate.

RICKEY
 So you have no objections to him?

DUROCHER
 None whatsoever. Can I go back to
 sleep now?

RICKEY
 Yes. Oh -- and Leo?

DUROCHER
 What?

RICKEY

The Bible says a thing or two about adultery as well.

DUROCHER

I'm sure it's got a lot to say about a lot. Good night.

Durocher hangs up the phone, looks to her.

*

DUROCHER

What am I gonna do with you?

*

*

LORRAINE

Leo, I thought you knew...

*

*

As she kisses him...

*

CUT TO:

73 EXT. PEPPER STREET - PASADENA - DAY

73

Jack stands out front kissing Jackie Jr. good-bye as a CABBIE muscles his LUGGAGE down the walkway to a waiting TAXI. Jack kisses Mallie and hands off the baby. Mallie carries the boy inside leaving Jack and Rachel alone to say goodbye.

RACHEL

Promise me you'll write.

JACK

When did I ever not write?

RACHEL

I want you to know I'm there for
you. Even if it's words on paper.

He's sees she's raw, takes her in his arms with the baby.

JACK

Rae, you're in my heart.

She sighs, rests her head on his shoulder.

RACHEL

You're getting close now. The
closer you get, the worse they'll
be. Don't let them get to you.

JACK

I will not. God built me to last.

He kisses her. She kisses him back.

RACHEL

See you in Brooklyn in eight weeks.

JACK

It might be Montreal.

A certainty grips her. She passes it on to him. *

RACHEL

It's going to be Brooklyn. I know
it is.

Power in her words. He nods, looks off toward the taxi.

JACK *

I've got to go, Rae. *

She nods. They kiss, embrace a last time. He starts away
down the walk. She watches. Something not quite right. *

A tug as Jack stops, looks back at her. Fighting back her
emotion and then impelled forward, she runs to him. They
come together. She practically disappears in his arms. They
do not want to be apart. *

CUT TO: *

74 INT. DINING ROOM - THE TIVOLI HOTEL - DAY

74

Durocher eats heartily. Rickey's food is untouched.

DUROCHER

It's a pipe dream, Mr. Rickey.

RICKEY

Pipe dream? What do you mean by pipe dream?

INSERT: Panama City, Panama. March 18, 1947.

DUROCHER

I mean it ain't gonna happen. The Dodgers are never gonna demand Robinson be brought up from Montreal. Ball players are conservative.

RICKEY

A team full of tough war veterans? Immigrants' sons? Boys from impoverished parts of the country?

DUROCHER

It - ain't - gonna - happen.

RICKEY

You really believe they won't accept him? Once they see how he plays, how he can help them win.

DUROCHER

I'm not saying they won't accept him: I'm saying they won't ask for him. I'm saying Robinson's good medicine, but they're not gonna like the taste. I'm saying bend over, boys, and get ready, this one might hurt a little.

(another forkful)

Boy, this is good fish.

CUT TO:

75 KIRBY HIGBE - IN HIS TIVOLI HOTEL ROOM

75

As Higbe (South Carolina) finishes WRITING something on a piece of hotel STATIONARY, Bragan (Alabama) looks to Dixie Walker (Alabama) and Dodger pitcher HUGH CASEY (Georgia).

BRAGAN

Why do you think Rickey's got us playing spring games in Panama?

(MORE)

BRAGAN (CONT'D)

He wants to get us used to Negro crowds. He wants more of them than us. He's hoping it'll get us more comfortable being around Robinson.

Higbe clears his throat, reads what he's written:

HIGBE

We, the undersigned Brooklyn Dodgers will not play ball on the same field as Jackie Robinson.

Higbe signs it. He hands the pen to Bragan who adds his own name. Casey signs with a flourish. Casey holds out the pen to Walker who doesn't take it right away. An odd beat.

CASEY

If you wanna make your mark, Dixie, we can witness it.

Everyone laughs; it loosens Walker up enough to sign.

CUT TO:

76 HOTEL ROOM DOOR

76

Higbe KNOCKS as Casey, Bragan and Walker crowd behind him.

STANKY'S VOICE

C'mon in!

STANKY'S ROOM

The boys enter. Eddie Stanky sits in a chair stripped to the waist, soaking his right elbow in a BUCKET OF ICE.

STANKY

What's goin' on?

HIGBE

Got a petition goin' on, Stank.

BRAGAN

To keep Robinson up in Montreal where he belongs.

*

STANKY

Oh... Did Pee Wee sign it?

HIGBE

Ain't asked him yet. What difference does it make?

STANKY

None, just wonderin'.

Stanky looks to Walker who looks away.

STANKY (CONT'D)
(re: his right arm)
Can't sign now. I'm indisposed.
Could I catch up with you later?

CUT TO:

77 PEE WEE REESE

77

Standing in the door to his room. Looking out at the glum faces of Higbe, Bragan, Casey and Walker.

REESE
Look, it's like this. I got a wife, a baby, and I got no money. I don't want to step in anything.
(to Walker)
Skip me, Dix, I'm not interested.

WALKER
What if they put him at shortstop?

REESE
(shrugs)
If he's man enough to take my job, I suppose he deserves it.

HIGBE
(laughs out loud)
The hell he does!

WALKER
He does not have the ice water in his veins for big league baseball.

REESE
So let him show what he's got. Robinson can play or he can't. It'll all take care of itself.

*

CUT TO:

78 CARL FURILLO

78

The very son of immigrants Rickey was talking about. From Pennsylvania no less.

FURILLO
Give me the pen.

Higbe grins, hands it over. As Furillo signs...

CUT TO:

79 INT. LEO DUROCHER'S ROOM - THE TIVOLI HOTEL - NIGHT 79

Durocher lays staring up at the palm shadows on the ceiling. Finally, the phone rings. He answers.

DUROCHER

Yes, Mr. Rickey. *

RICKEY'S VOICE

Have our friends in the press gone to sleep yet?

DUROCHER

We are the only people awake on this entire isthmus, Mr. Rickey. *

RICKEY'S VOICE

A deliberate violation of the law, needs a little show of force. I leave it to you. Good night, Leo. *

DUROCHER *

Yes, Mr. Rickey. *

CUT TO:

80 INT. HOTEL KITCHEN - NIGHT 80

Deserted. Durocher stands in a hotel bathrobe, arms crossed as his PLAYERS and COACHES file in. Bleary-eyed, half-dressed, they're all here, all wondering what this is about.

Suddenly, Durocher grabs the handle of an industrial-sized SOUP POT and heaves it across the room. BRWANG-RANG-RANG!

DUROCHER

Wake up, ladies! Wake the Hell up!
(a stunned beat)

It's come to my attention that some of you fellas don't want to play with Robinson. That you even got a petition drawn up that you're all gonna sign. Well boys, you know what you can do with your petition? YOU CAN WIPE YOUR ASSES WITH IT!

WALKER

C'mon, Leo...

DUROCHER

Come on what?!

WALKER

Ball players gotta live together,
shower together, it's not right to
force him on us. Besides, I own a
hardware store back home and I --

DUROCHER

Screw your hardware store, Dix!
 And if you don't like it, screw
 you! Mr. Rickey'll be happy to
 make other arrangements for you.

Durocher suddenly marches to Higbe, looks like he's going to
 belt him. As Higbe gulps, Durocher turns to the team.

DUROCHER

I don't care if he's yellow or
 black or has stripes like a zebra,
 if Robinson can help us win, and
 everything I've seen says he can,
 then he's gonna play on this ball
 club. Like it, lump it, make your
 mind up to it because he's coming!
 And think about this when your
 heads hit the pillow, he's only the
 first, boys, only the first. More
 are coming right behind him. They
 have talent and they wanna play!

He lets that sink a moment.

DUROCHER

Yes, sir, they're gonna come diving
 and scratching. So I'd forget your
 petition and worry about the field.
 Because unless you fellas pay a
 little more attention to your work,
 they are going to run you right out
 of the ball park! A petition?

(looks them over)

Are you ballplayers or lawyers?

As he marches past them and through the doors...

CUT TO:

81 OMITTED

81 *

82 OMITTED

82 *

83 OMITTED 83 *

84 EXT./INT. DUGOUT - PANAMA PRACTICE FIELD - DAY 84 *

Jack in his Montreal uniform headed off the field for the dugout. Sukeforth headed over wearing Dodger blue. *

SUKEFORTH *

Robinson! *

As Jack turns, Sukeforth tosses him a FIRST BASEMAN'S GLOVE. *

JACK *

What do you want me to do with this?

SUKEFORTH

Play first base.

JACK *

I've never played first base in my life, Coach. *

SUKEFORTH

Well, it's like this. Brooklyn's got a solid second baseman. And they got Pee Wee Reese at short. But first base is up for grabs. Are you catching my drift? *

JACK *

(nods) *

Yeah. I don't need a glove to do that. *

CUT TO:

85 OMITTED 85
 86 JACK - PRACTICE FIELD 86

Coach Sukeforth, getting balls from a bucket, hitting grounders down to Jack at first. The short hops are wicked.

Jack rolls his catches over to a little PANAMANIAN KID who chucks them down to his brother who tosses them back to Sukeforth. As Jack struggles...

PANAMANIAN KID

El es muy malo.

SUKEFORTH

Mr. Rickey said he wants you playing conspicuous baseball!

(whack)

To be so good the Dodgers'll demand you on the team!

(whack)

So I thought about it awhile and then I looked up conspicuous in the dictionary.

(whack)

It means to attract notice or attention.

Jack dives, spears a liner. Sukeforth tilts back his cap.

SUKEFORTH

Conspicuous.

CUT TO:

87 OMITTED 87

88 OMITTED 88 *

89 INT. RICKEY'S OFFICE - THE TIVOLI HOTEL - DAY 89 *

Bobby Bragan sits across from Rickey looking defiant.

RICKEY

Bragan, most of your teammates have recanted on this petition nonsense. Are you really here to tell me you don't want to play with Robinson?

BRAGAN

Yes, Sir. My friends back in Birmingham would never forgive me.

RICKEY

And your friends here in Brooklyn?
(Bragan just shrugs)
Then I will accommodate you. If you give me your word that you will try your very best for this team until I can work out a trade.

That gets Bragan's goat. He jumps up, really mad.

BRAGAN

Do you think I would quit on anyone?! I don't quit.

RICKEY

Only on yourself apparently. You can go, Bragan.

CUT TO:

89A SECOND BASE - PANAMA - DAY 89A *

Time slowed way down as Jack takes a throw at second from the Montreal shortstop. He pivots to turn the double-play even as Dixie Walker barrels in low. *

All Jackie's focus on the task at hand as he throws while Walker submarines him. He lands in a heap tangled up together. They both look back to see the result of the play. *

As Robinson smiles and Walker scowls, we know... *

RICKEY'S VOICE *

Send Dixie in. *

CUT TO: *

90 DIXIE WALKER

90 *

Sitting down across from Rickey.

RICKEY

I received your letter, Dixie.

(reads)

Recently, the thought has occurred to me that a change of ball clubs would benefit both the Brooklyn Baseball Club and myself.

(to Walker)

This is about Robinson?

WALKER

I'm keeping my reasons private. Hope you can respect that, sir.

RICKEY

I realize, Dixie, that you have a Southern upbringing, that you would have to subordinate your feelings for the welfare of this venture. I for one would deeply appreciate it. I think we can all learn something.

WALKER

What I have, Mr. Rickey, is a hardware store back home. It's called Dixie Walker's. Folks don't come because I have the lowest prices, they come because it's called Dixie Walker's. Understand? And I make as much money owning that store as I do playing for you.

RICKEY

Is that what you're you afraid of?

(he doesn't answer)

Bragan's a third-stringer, but you bat clean-up. You're popular in Brooklyn. Children look up to you!

WALKER

You got my letter; can I go?

RICKEY

I'll start looking for a trade or a sale. But it won't happen until I get value in return. Until then I expect you to drive in runs.

WALKER

I always have. That's my job.

*
*

CUT TO: *

91 EXT. PENN STATION - NIGHT

91

INSERT: Manhattan. April 8, 1947.

Jack exits with his luggage. Looking for a cab, he sees Smith waiting. Smith offers a salute. Jack looks grumpy as he steps over. The Buick waiting beyond.

JACK

You again.

Smith leans back, blinks.

SMITH

That's right. Me again. Something wrong with that, Jack?

JACK

Come on.

Jack continues past. As Smith follows...

CUT TO:

92 INT. SMITH'S BUICK - 34TH STREET - NIGHT

92

Traffic heavy. A glum silence in the car until...

SMITH

They can't keep you on Montreal for long. After these exhibition games, they've got to bring you up.

(no reply)

You don't have two words to rub together, do you?

JACK

Do I have to entertain you?

More silence, then...

SMITH

You ever wonder why I sit out in right field with my typewriter on my knees? Does that ever cross your mind?

Jack stares out the passenger window, not in the mood. As he looks up at some of the taller buildings they pass...

SMITH

It's because Negro reporters aren't allowed in the press box.

Jack doesn't answer, doesn't look over. Finally Smith starts talking to himself. Pretending to be Jack.

*
*

SMITH 'AS JACK'

You know, Wendell, I never asked you where you were from?

SMITH

Why I'm from Detroit, Jack.

SMITH 'AS JACK'

You don't say? Tell me more.

SMITH

My daddy used to work at Fair Lane. That was Mr. Ford's estate. My daddy was Mr. Henry Ford's cook.

SMITH 'AS JACK'

I did not know that.

SMITH

Cooked for him for years, but never once broke bread with him. I'd go to work with daddy sometimes. Play baseball out on the lawn with Mr. Ford's grandchildren. We all had a real good time. But it was understood, if they got tired of playing ball and moved inside to the bowling alley or swimming pool, I was not invited or allowed. The grass was as far as I got. So guess what? You're not the only one with something at stake here.

JACK

(after a beat)

If I start talking, will you stop?

SMITH

I'd be happy to.

Smith stops at a red light.

JACK

I apologize. You've been there for me through this more than anyone besides Rae and Mr. Rickey. But I guess that's what bothers me.

SMITH

How do you mean?

JACK

I don't like needing someone to be there for me. I don't like needing anyone but myself. I never have.

SMITH

You are a hard case, Jack Robinson.
Is it okay if I keep driving you or
should I let you out so you can
walk?

Jack bursts out laughing. So does Smith. *

JACK *

You remember the last time we were
at a red light? Down in Florida? *

SMITH *

New York City now, baby. We've
come a long way. *

JACK *

And we got a long way to go. *

The light turns green. Off they go. *

CUT TO:

93 INT. BRANCH RICKEY'S OFFICE - BROOKLYN - DAY 93

Rickey reads to Parrott from the New York Sun.

RICKEY

Branch Rickey cannot afford to
upset team chemistry and so the
only thing keeping Robinson off the
Dodgers now, plainly, is the
attitude of the players.

INSERT: Brooklyn. April 9, 1947.

RICKEY

If it softens at the sight of
Jackie's skills, he'll join the
club some time between April 10 and
April 15. Otherwise, Robinson will
spend the year back in Montreal.

(throws paper down)

For the love of Pete, he batted
.625 in the exhibition games
against them, us, them -- Against
us! Judas Priest!

Rickey flummoxed as the phone RINGS from the outer office.

PARROTT

Maybe you could have Durocher hold
a press conference. Demand that he
get Robinson on his team.

RICKEY

Durocher. Of course, he's my ace
in the hole. Very good, Harold.

The phone still rings. Rickey looks to his open door.

RICKEY

Jane Ann! Are you out there?

Grumbling, brambly eyebrows twitching, he makes the mistake
of answering his own phone.

RICKEY (CONT'D)
Branch Rickey... You're speaking
to him... The Commissioner of
what..? Oh, yes put him on.
(looks to Parrott)
The commissioner of baseball.

CUT TO:

94 INT. COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE - DAY

94

HAPPY CHANDLER gets a manicure. Always jovial, a head like
an anvil with hair parted in the middle, he picks up a phone.

HAPPY
Branch, how are you?

INTERCUT THE FOLLOWING:

RICKEY
Fine. What can I do for you, Happy?

HAPPY
Branch, how would you feel about
losing Durocher for a year?

Rickey switches the phone from one ear to the other.

RICKEY
I'm sorry, Happy, I thought you
said lose Durocher for a year.

HAPPY
Yes. He was seen in Havana with
known gamblers.

RICKEY
Anyone who sets foot in Havana is
seen with known gamblers.

HAPPY
It's not just one thing, it's an
accumulation. I received notice
today from the Catholic Youth
Organization. Vowing a ban on
baseball unless Durocher is
punished for his moral looseness.

RICKEY
You're joking.

HAPPY
It's this business with the actress
in California. She's recently
divorced and Durocher is the cause.
They may even be illegally married.

RICKEY

Now I'm sure you're joking.

Happy checks his nails, returns his hand to the MANICURIST.

HAPPY

I wish I were. The CYO buy a lot of tickets, Branch. They draw a lot of water and I can't afford to ruffle their feathers. Am I mixing metaphors there?

RICKEY

You know very well my organization is about to enter a tempest. I need Durocher at the rudder. He's the only man who can handle this much trouble, who loves it in fact. You're chopping off my right hand!

HAPPY

I have no choice. I'm going to have to sit your manager, Branch. Leo Durocher is suspended from baseball for a year.

RICKEY

You can't do that! Happy, you son of a bitch!

DIAL TONE. Rickey steadies himself, looks to Parrott.

RICKEY

Trouble ahead, Harold. Trouble.

CUT TO:

95 INT. DODGER LOCKER ROOM - EBBETS FIELD - DAY

95

Durocher, in a suit, cleans out his locker. Carefully sets each item in a cardboard box. Finished, he closes the locker door. CLICK. And then -- WHAM! -- Drives his fist in, taking it off its hinges. He picks up his box, quietly walks out.

CUT TO: *

96 OMITTED

96 *

97 OMITTED 97 *

98 OMITTED 98 *

99 OMITTED 99 *

99A INT. MCALPIN HOTEL ROOM - EARLY MORNING 99A *

RING... Jack asleep in bed, fumbles for the receiver. *

INSERT: April 10, 1947. *

JACK *

Hello? *

JANE ANN'S VOICE *

Mr. Robinson, this is Jane Ann in *

Mr. Rickey's office. He needs to *

see you right away. He has a *

contract for you to sign. *

That wakes him up. *

CUT TO: *

99B INT. BRANCH RICKEY'S OFFICE - BROOKLYN - DAY 99B *

Jack sits at the desk. Alone. He looks back over his *

shoulder at the GOLDFISH. As one of them stares back, Rickey *

enters with the CONTRACT in question. He sets it down before *

Jack, hands him a pen. *

RICKEY *

I'm so sorry about the rush. *

Events are unfolding too fast to *

keep up with. The burden has *

finally fallen to me and so be it. *

JACK *

(points) *

Sign here? *

RICKEY *

Yes, yes. *

As Jack poises the pen -- Rickey suddenly aghast. *

RICKEY *

Stop! *

The pen a millimeter over the page. *

RICKEY *

History. And I'm blabbing, *

blabbing through history... Rushing *

it along. What am I thinking? *

99C RICKEY'S OUTER OFFICE

99C

Rickey sticks his head out the door.

RICKEY

Jane Ann, come in here.
(hollering down hall)
Harold!

Parrott sticks his head out from an office down the hall.

RICKEY

Get some employees up here!

*

CUT TO:

99D RICKEY'S DESK

99D

Where Jack Robinson signs his contract. As he sets the pen down -- Rickey starts APPLAUDING. He's joined by Parrott, JANE ANN and a JANITOR. Rickey claps Jack on the shoulder.

*

RICKEY

Harold, telegram the press. Say this: "The Brooklyn Dodgers today purchased the contract of Jackie Robinson from the Montreal Royals. He will report immediately."

As Jack takes it in, he's the only one not smiling.

CUT TO:

99E INT. HALLWAY - ISUM HOUSE - PASADENA - DAWN

99E

The phone rings. Rachel answers in her nightgown.

RACHEL

Hello?

JACK'S VOICE

Rae, I'm in Brooklyn.

Brooklyn... Rachel lets out a triumphant WHOOP!

RACHEL

What did I tell you?

CUT TO:

100 EXT. NIGHTSCAPE - NEW YORK MIDTOWN SKYLINE - NIGHT

100

A few lights twinkle, but this city does occasionally sleep.

101 JACK 101

This man does not. He stands bare chested in his boxers staring out the window of a MCALPIN HOTEL ROOM. Considering the world before him. Wondering where his place is in it.

INSERT: April 15, 1947. 3 AM.

It's a lonely moment. Until Rachel appears behind him in her nightgown. She wraps her arms around him, looks over his shoulder at the world out there. Finally, softly...

RACHEL

I love you...

As he closes his eyes, absorbs it...

CUT TO:

102 INT. AISLE - SINGER'S DRUG STORE - BROOKLYN - DAY 102

Jack cruises down, stops in front of the PEPTO BISMOL.

INSERT: April 15, 1947. 11 AM.

As he grabs a bottle -- a man on the other side pulls one out as well. Jack finds himself looking at Pee Wee Reese.

JUMP AHEAD TO:

103 EXT. SINGER'S DRUG STORE - BROOKLYN - DAY 103

Jack and Reese exit together, each with a bottle of Pepto Bismol in hand. Reese hefts his bottle. *

REESE

Opening day nerves. Doing my stomach something awful.

Jack nods in commiseration. It's awkward between them. A RUMBLE as a GARBAGE TRUCK goes by.

REESE

There goes another one.

(smiles)

Every time I see a garbage truck go by I still can't figure why the guy driving isn't me.

JACK

(smiles back)

We'd both better get on base.

Reese nods. They start walking toward the stadium.

REESE

Know when I first heard of you?

JACK

No I don't.

REESE

On a troop transport, coming back from Guam. A sailor heard it on the radio, told me the Dodgers had signed a Negro player. I said that was fine by me. Then he said the guy was a shortstop. Least you were then. That got me thinking. Thinking gets me scared.

Jack smiles, hefts his bottle of Pepto.

JACK

Black, white, we're both pink today, huh?

(Reese nods)

You still scared, Pee Wee?

REESE

(looks down street)

Of garbage trucks? Terrified.

CUT TO:

103A EXT. EBBETS STADIUM - DAY

103A *

The Taj Mahal of baseball. Opening day. *

INSERT: Ebbets Field. Brooklyn. *

CUT TO: *

104 INT. DODGER LOCKER ROOM - DAY

104

Some guys quiet, some guys joking around. Everyone in some version of getting out of their street clothes or into their uniforms. The entire operation comes to a halt as --

Jack enters. As he walks past -- some players nod hello. Others look like Sphinxes. Walker turns and faces his locker. Gene Hermanski and Branca step over to SHAKE HANDS.

HERMANSKI

I'm Hermanski. Welcome to Brooklyn.

BRANCA

Hey, man. Ralph Branca.

Last, but not least, Spider Jorgensen, his Montreal teammate.

JORGENSEN

We made it, Jack, huh? Good luck.

That's it. Everyone else is too busy to come over. As Jack scans for a locker with his name on it, BABE HAMBURGER, the clubhouse manager, steps over.

BABE
 You're looking for your locker,
 huh, kid? Follow me.

They walk over to a hook on the wall. A uniform hangs from it. A FOLDING CHAIR below.

BABE (CONT'D)
 I just got the word. Best I could do. I'll get you straightened out tomorrow though, huh?

Jack nods, unbuttoning his shirt... Stanky is suddenly there. All pugnacity as he gives up 4 inches and 40 pounds to Jack.

STANKY
 You're putting on that uniform, it means you're on my team. But before I play with you I want you to know how I feel about it. I want you to know I don't like it. I want you to know I don't like you.

Jack regards him. Stanky doesn't flinch. Maybe he should.

JACK
 That's fine. That's how I prefer it. Right out in the open.

CUT TO:

105 HOT DOG VENDER - EBBETS FIELD 105

Standing before his steaming HOT DOG STAND.

VENDOR
 C'mon, Brooklyn! Get your Harry M. Stevens special here!

As he hands one over, gets his .20 cents in return. Then:

VENDOR (CONT'D)
 Hey, Lady!

Rachel looks over, baby Jackie in her arms. The vendor takes a baby bottle out of the hot water in his STEAMER.

VENDOR (CONT'D)
 I think it's ready.

CUT TO:

106 JACK ROOSEVELT ROBINSON - DODGER CLUBHOUSE 106

Looking at himself in a MIRROR. Standing in his uniform, the clean white wool, the flowing script: Dodgers. It fits.

We FOLLOW HIM past Stanky as he goes. Follow the BLUE 42 on his back as he steps through the clubhouse. *

107 MAKES HIS WAY UP THE TUNNEL. 107

Always on that magic number as he comes up through the Dodger DUGOUT and steps onto...

108 EBBETS FIELD 108

PHOTOGRAPHERS snap photos, the crowd spot him and CHEER.

109 RACHEL 109

Watches from the stands. Pleased at the cheering. She holds the baby up to see, whispers to him....

RACHEL

Okay, okay, that's good.

As Jackie's eyes find hers...

CUT TO:

110 THE PLAYERS LINED UP FOR THE NATIONAL ANTHEM 110

The Dodgers down one baseline, the BOSTON BRAVES down the other. Forty-nine white players and one black. Jack at the end alongside Ralph Branca. Jack trying not to choke up.

EVERETT MCCOOEY

O'er the land of the free! And the
home of the brave!

CUT TO:

111 EXT. DODGER DUGOUT - DAY 111

The players not starting return to the dugout. Bragan catches up with Branca.

BRAGAN

You're crazy standing that close to him.

BRANCA

What do you mean?

BRAGAN

(laughing)

What if the sharpshooter misses and hits you instead?

BRANCA

You got a serious problem, Bragan, you know that?

BRAGAN
Really? I don't see it.

CUT TO:

112 BRANCH RICKEY 112

Surveying the scene. Parrott alongside.

RICKEY
Opening day, Harold. The world is
all future and no past.

PARROT
A blank page, sir.

113 INT. BROADCAST BOOTH - EBBETS FIELD - DAY 113

RED BARBER looks down onto the field.

BARBER
One out in the bottom of the first.
Headed toward the plate for his
first big league at bat is Dodger
rookie Jackie Robinson. Jackie is
very definitely brunette.

114 JACK 114

Walks toward the plate. More cheers. Mostly.

FAN
We're with you, Jackie!

FAN #2
Hey, boy, how about a shine?!

Jack struggles not to look back at the source of the jeer.
He settles in at the plate. JOHNNY SAIN on the mound waiting
for the sign. The crowd BUZZING.

BARBER'S VOICE
Sain looking in. When he's got
that fastball working, he can toss
a lamb chop past a hungry wolf.

The BRAVES CATCHER signals '1'. Here come the pitch. CRACK!
It's down the third base line.

The THIRD BASEMAN is going to need every ounce of his arm as
he fields it at the line, throw across his body to --

FIRST. Where Jack's foot hits the bag an instant before the
ball smacks into the first baseman's mitt.

UMPIRE

You're out!

Jack can't believe it. As he trots toward the dugout he looks at the umpire who looks back: *I dare you to complain.*

STANDS

As the Brooklyn faithful BOO the call, Rachel and Smith watch Jack head decisively toward the dugout. He was safe.

Rickey sits down closer to the dugout.

RICKEY

It's a game of inches, Jackie!

PARROTT

Get some glasses, ump!

CUT TO:

115	OMITTED	115	*
116	OMITTED	116	*
117	OMITTED	117	*
118	OMITTED	118	*
118A	INT. HALLWAY - DODGER OFFICES - DAY	118A	*
	BURT SHOTTON, 62, walks down the hallway with Parrott.		*
	INSERT: <u>April 18, 1947.</u>		*
	PARROTT		*
	How's Florida, Burt?		*
	SHOTTON		*
	Roses need pruning, but fine when I		*
	left it last night. Branch said it		*
	was important and I heard about		*
	Leo. Any idea what this is about?		*
	PARROTT		*
	You'd better just talk to him.		*
	A beat as they reach the door. Parrott knocks.		*
	RICKEY'S VOICE		*
	Come in!		*
118B	INT. BRANCH RICKEY'S OFFICE - BROOKLYN - DAY	118B	*
	Rickey smiles from his desk as they enter.		*

RICKEY

Baseball has returned to Brooklyn,
Burt. Another season is underway.

SHOTTON

Yeah, it's a shame about Leo.

RICKEY

Inevitable I suppose. I asked him
if she was worth it and he said
yes. How's the retirement?

SHOTTON

It's fine. The roses --

RICKEY

It's a helluva thing when a man has
good health and enough money and
absolutely nothing to do.

SHOTTON

I'm perfectly happy.

RICKEY

Is that so?

SHOTTON

When I took off that Cleveland
uniform two years ago, I promised
the Mrs. I'd never put on another
uniform again. Roses look great
and I sleep a whole lot better.

RICKEY

Roses and sleep are two wonderful
things, Burt. But sleep you can
get inside your casket and flowers
look good on top of it. You don't
look like a dead man to me.

SHOTTON

What's this about, Branch?

RICKEY

I need you to manage the Dodgers.
We're a ship without a captain;
there's a typhoon ahead.

SHOTTON

No, I'm sorry, but no.

RICKEY

Do you miss the game, Burt? Look
me in the eye and tell me you
don't.

Shotton considers Rickey a beat and then looks away.

SHOTTON

Baseball's the only life for an old
pepper pot like me, but I promised
my wife, Branch.

RICKEY

You promised her you wouldn't put
on another uniform. You didn't
promise her you wouldn't manage.
Wear a suit and tie; Connie Mack
still does.

(a beat)

You remember how to get to the Polo
Grounds, Burt?

SHOTTON

Branch, I --

RICKEY

You remember what the peanuts smell
like roasting, how the crack of the
bat sounds, the roar of the crowd?

SHOTTON

Sure...

Rickey tosses him a set of car keys.

RICKEY

My car's parked right out front.
Harold will show you where. Now
what do you say?

SHOTTON

Okay.

CUT TO:

119 INT. VISITOR'S LOCKER ROOM - POLO GROUNDS - HARLEM - DAY 119

Shotton addresses the half-dressed Dodgers, Jack included.

SHOTTON

Men, I don't have much to say.
Just, don't be afraid of old Burt
Shotton as a manager. You can win
the pennant in spite of me. I can
not possibly hurt you.

The Dodgers trade looks. Not exactly inspirational. As
Shotton heads out he pauses by Jack.

SHOTTON

Are you Robinson?
(Jack nods)
I thought so.

Shotton pats Jack on the shoulder, continues on his way.

CUT TO:

120 INT. PRESS BOX - THE POLO GROUNDS - DAY 120

A huge CROWD beyond. Bob Cooke of the Herald Tribune (seen
at the Waldorf Astoria) holds court as Jack is ANNOUNCED.

COOKE

Mark my words and circle this date.
Negroes are going to run the white
man straight out of baseball. I'm
not prejudiced; it's physiological.
They have a longer heel bone.
Gives em an unfair speed advantage.

121 JACK - POLO GROUNDS 121

Standing dead still at the plate, bat cocked and ready.

BARBER'S VOICE

Here's Robinson. Jackie holds that
club down by the end. Rear foot on
the back line of the box. Slight
open stance, bent at the knees...

*
*
*
*
*

Giants pitcher DAVE KOSLO goes into his wind-up and throws.

Jack swings. CRACK. The ball screams out to left. Home
run! The crowd goes crazy. This is what they came to see.

122 PRESS BOX 122

Typewriters pounding away as Jack finishes his home run trot.
Bob Cooke watching thoughtfully as...

ANOTHER REPORTER

Was that because his heels are
longer, Bob?!

As everyone cracks up, everyone but Bob...

CUT TO:

123 INT. LAWSON BOWMAN'S CAFÉ - HARLEM - NIGHT

123

Jack and Rachel out for dinner. Jack nodding as BLACK PATRONS pass by, saying encouraging things. He almost gets a forkful of food to his mouth before a MENU and a PEN are offered for an autograph. As he signs, a FLASH BULB goes off. In a lull, Jack cuts his steak, low to Rachel.

JACK

I'm not complaining, I just, I don't know what they want.

RACHEL

(beaming)

They want to see if Jackie Robinson is real. They want to see your pride, your dignity. Because then they'll see it in themselves.

He's stopped short. She blinks with mock coquettish modesty.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

And me? I'm just young and scared and amazed at how brave you are.

He grins at her, almost gets a forkful in when LAWSON BOWMAN, the Black owner, pulls up a chair, shakes Jack's hand.

OWNER

I'm Lawson Bowman, Jack, the owner of this joint. How's the steak?

JACK

I'm not sure yet. It looks good.

CUT TO:

123A INT. 526 MACDONOUGH STREET - BROOKLYN - DAY (MONTAGE) 123A *

BATHROOM MIRROR - Steamed. A finger traces '42' in the steam on the glass, then wipes it clean to reveal Rachel. Hair wrapped in a towel, she looks at herself, frowns. *

INSERT: Brooklyn, April 22, 1947. *

DRYING DIAPERS - Hang like pennants on a line stretched across the BEDROOM. Rachel ducks under them to retrieve her shoes. She looks at them, frowns. *

RACHEL - Brushing her teeth. Pauses to hold the toothbrush in a batting stance. Swings... *

RACHEL - Strains to reach to zip her dress up. She pulls at the edges of the dress, straightens herself out. She looks over at Jack Jr. who watches from his crib. *

RACHEL

You're lucky you're a boy.

DOORWAY - Dressed to go, Rachel holding the baby, looking anxiously out on the street. Suddenly, ALICE the baby-sitter is there. Here she comes up the steps, opens the door.

ALICE

Sorry I'm late. Class ran long.

RACHEL

It's okay.

Rachel gently hands the baby over.

RACHEL

It's so cold and raw out, I don't want him getting sick at the game.

ALICE

He'll be nice and warm here.

RACHEL

(checks her watch)

I'm going to be late.

She kisses him goodbye, frowns as she heads outside --

123B EXT. MACDONOUGH STREET - DAY

123B

*

A forboding sky above as Rachel hurries along. Pulling her jacket on as she goes. It's going to be a cold day.

*

*

RED BARBER'S VOICE

The sky's are leaden. Threatening.
Eddie Stanky safe at first as
Robinson steps to the plate.

*

*

*

*

124 EXT. ON DECK CIRCLE - EBBETS FIELD - DAY

124

Brooklyn vs. Philadelphia. The bottom of the first. The crowd CHEERS. Stanky safe on first.

RED BARBER'S VOICE

The sky's are leaden. Threatening.
Eddie Stanky safe at first as
Robinson steps to the plate.

Jack walk to the plate, digs a cleat into the batter's box...

CHAPMAN'S VOICE

Hey! Hey you black Nigger!

Jack looks to the visitor's dugout where the Phillie Alabama-born manager BEN CHAPMAN stands at the top of the steps.

CHAPMAN

Why don't you go back to the cotton
fields where you belong!

The bear baiting has begun. Jack is in a kind of temporary shock. That's the Phillies manager! In uniform.

CHAPMAN

Or did you swing your way out of the jungle?! Bring me a banana!

124A RED BARBER - IN THE BOOTH

124A

BARBER

Chapman the Phillies manager up on the top step, seems to be chirping something out to Robinson. Chapman a hothead during his playing days with the Yankees.

125 RICKEY - IN THE STANDS

125

Sitting next to Parrott. He leans forward, unsure.

RICKEY

What's he saying?

126 VISITOR DUGOUT

126

Chapman joined by two of his PHILLIE BENCH PLAYERS.

PHILLIE ONE

Go home, Nigger!

PHILLIE TWO

Go back to Africa!

Phillie pitcher DUTCH LEONARD looks in. Jack has to try to concentrate on the pitch. Here it comes. A fastball well inside. Jack hits the deck to keep from getting beaned. *

CHAPMAN

Bojangles! You sure can dance, snowflake!

STANKY

On first, mouth hanging open. Almost forgets to take a lead. It's an instant Rorschach test.

DODGER DUGOUT

Shotton and the players look stricken. Even Walker doesn't quite know what to make of it. No one enjoys it, but Higbe.

STANDS

CONCESSION MEN walk closer to listen. The fans range from horrified to some mildly pleased. Rachel looks stricken.

JACK

A fastball inside. He leaps back again. This one was even closer to hitting him. As Jack glares at Dutch... *

UMPIRE

Ball two!

CHAPMAN'S VOICE

Hey, black boy! Hey, shoe shine!

Jack doesn't want to look over, but he is compelled. The bench players flanking Chapman look furious, but Chapman is doing this with a sick sort of glee.

CHAPMAN

You like white girls?! Huh?!
Which one of them Dodger boys'
wives are you climbing on tonight?!

Chapman looks toward...

DODGER DUGOUT

They don't like that one.

CHAPMAN (CONT'D)

Oh, I think I got it. Dixie, I
believe I know!

JACK

Grips the bat. Watches for the next pitch with bloody mindedness. He hacks at it, lofts a routine fly into left. He's about halfway down to first when the left fielder catches it and Jack can mercifully return to the dugout.

127 RICKEY 127

Rickey watches as he disappears inside. Finally exhales.

128 BENCH 128

Jack sits down. No one says anything to him. No one comes near him as he stares ahead, trapped in a kind of void. The closest player to him is Bobby Bragan. Bragan finally manages to glance over at him, then looks quickly away.

CUT TO:

129 RACHEL 129

As the Dodgers take the field, Jack heads to first. Almost wincing, wondering if it's going to start again.

RACHEL

(under her breath)

Look at me, baby. Look at me.

Finally, Jack glances up to her. She offers her eyes: *I'm with you.* He looks away. Her witnessing makes it worse.

130 BEN CHAPMAN 130

Settles back in the shadows of the dugout. Finished for now.

CUT TO:

131 DODGER SCOREBOARD

131

No score. Bottom of the 3rd.

INFIELD

Spider Jorgensen takes a lead off first. At the plate, Stanky lines a single to right. Jorgensen holds at second.

JACK

Steps to the batter's box, starts digging in that back foot.

VISITOR'S DUGOUT

As Chapman emerges with his two bench players. *

PHILLIE ONE
Hey, Nigger lips!

PHILLIE TWO
Party's over, jungle bunny! *

CHAPMAN

Hey, Pee Wee! Dixie! What's this Nigger doing for you all to let him drink from the same water fountain as you?! I hope it's worth it!

JACK

Waiting for the pitch. Takes a mighty swing -- CRACKS a towering POP-UP between home plate and the mound. Dutch watches his catcher Seminick settle under it. Waiting.

DUTCH

Hey, is that a home run!?

SEMINICK

Yeah! If you're playing in an elevator shaft!

Jack veers off the first baseline. Heads for the dugout.

CHAPMAN

You don't belong! Look in a mirror! This is a white man's game. Get it through your thick monkey skull!

Jack stops short looks at him. Chapman stands his ground.

RICKEY

Stands, watches. Praying this doesn't go south. As Jack finally continues on, Rickey closes his eyes in relief.

RACHEL

Sick for her husband.

THE DUGOUT

Jack stalks down past the team. No one looks at him. Bragan is ashamed. Dixie tries to look disinterested. Stanky and Reese exchange a helpless glance as Jack continues into:

132 THE TUNNEL

132

Like a bull on his way to slaughter, he revolts. WHAM-WHAM! He proceeds to turn his bat into SPLINTERS. Concrete chips, wood flies. Jack drops the handle of the bat, pounds his fists. Heaving for breath, framed by the empty tunnel. Raw, electric, ungovernable. All the anger on display, the fury.

FEET SCRAPE. Jack looks up to see Rickey standing there, watching, afraid to get too much closer.

JACK

To hell with this. The next white son of a bitch who opens his mouth, I'll smash his goddamn teeth in.

Rickey stands there until finally, opening his mouth...

RICKEY

You can't, Jackie. You know it.

JACK

I'm supposed to let this go on?

RICKEY

These men have to live with themselves --

JACK

I have to live with myself, too! And right now I'm living a sermon out there. I'm through with it!

Jack is at the end of his rope. All Rickey has are words.

RICKEY

You don't matter right now, Jack. You're in this thing. You don't have the right to pull out from the backing of people who believe in you, respect you and who need you.

JACK

Is that so?

RICKEY

If you fight, they won't say Chapman forced you to; they'll just say that you're over your head. That you belong where you are.

(MORE)

RICKEY (CONT'D)

That every downtrodden man who
wants more from life is over his
head.

Jack's either going to explode or break into tears.

JACK

Do you know what it's like, having
someone do this to you?!

RICKEY

No. You do. You're the one living
the sermon. In the wilderness.
Forty days. All of it. Only you.

JACK

And not a damn thing I can do about
it.

RICKEY

Of course there is! You can stand
up and hit! You can get on base
and you can score! You can win
this game for us! We need you as
well! Everyone needs you.
(a beat; exhausted)
You're medicine, Jack.

Rickey reaches out, touches the wall to stay standing. Jack
just breathes as familiar sounds reverb down the tunnel.

JACK

They're taking the field.

RICKEY

Who's playing first?

Jack considers him. Everything hangs in the balance. Then:

JACK

I'm gonna need a new bat.

As Jack heads back down the tunnel for the field.

CUT TO:

133 EXT. SCOREBOARD - EBBETS FIELD - DAY 133

Eight zeros hang for the Phillies. Seven for the Dodgers.
No score, the bottom of the 8th coming up.

134 JACK 134

Steps into the batter's box. Chapman and his sidekicks step
from the Stygian abyss of the visitor's dugout.

CHAPMAN

Hey, black Nigger! I know you can hear me! If you were a white boy, you know where you'd be right now?! On a bus headed down to Newport News cuz you can't play for shit!

Here comes the pitch. Jack nonchalantly sticks his bat out, pokes a soft hit past second. A nothing hit, but he's standing on first. And he looks, well, ferocious in fact.

As Pete Reiser steps up into the batter's box...

Jack stares at Dutch Leonard. Assassin's eyes as he takes an insolent, in-your-face lead off first.

Dutch fires to first. Jack dives back safe!

Back on his feet, he spits out a piece of grit he picked up sliding back on his belly. Not bothering to dust himself off, he's turning into something elemental before our eyes.

135 RED BARBER 135

Up in the booth.

BARBER

Two strikes now to Reiser as Leonard looks in. Robinson with another big lead off first. He's as restless as a cat with a hot foot.

*
*

136 RACHEL 136

Witnessing.

RACHEL

Steal it, sweetheart. Take it.

137 FIELD 137

Dutch throws. Jack on the run as Reiser swings and misses - STRIKE THREE! - and Seminick comes up throwing.

Jack slides into second, the throw high, ends up in center.

Half a dozen Dodgers impulsively on their feet and waving him on as Jack gets to his feet and motors into THIRD. The throw well late. Phillies third baseman HANDLEY throws the ball back to Dutch. Handley then looks to Jack.

HANDLEY

I'm sorry. I want you to know what goes on here, it don't go for me.

Jack barely nods, but he heard.

BARBER'S VOICE
Hermanski steps up.

PLATE

Dutch looking to third, nodding distracted at a sign, looking back to third before... Hermanski cracks a single to left.

As Jack crosses the plate, he stares down Chapman on his way to the dugout. As Chapman turns his head, spits --

CUT TO:

138 INT. VISITOR'S LOCKER ROOM - DAY 138

Several REPORTERS around Chapman as well. He drinks a BEER.

CHAPMAN
You fellas are making too big a deal out of this. He scored We lost. One to nothing.

REPORTER THREE
Do you think you were a little hard on Robinson?

CHAPMAN
We treat him the same way we do Hank Greenburg except we call Hank a kike instead of a coon. When we play exhibitions against the Yankees, we call DiMaggio the Wop. They laugh at it. No harm, it's forgotten after the game ends.

Chapman tosses away his beer can.

REPORTER THREE
Don't you think this was maybe one foot over the line?

CHAPMAN
Hey. Let's get the chips off our shoulders and play ball. It's a game, right?

CUT TO:

139 INT. SHOWER - DODGER LOCKER ROOM - DAY 139

Jack alone in the shower. Water beating down. Steam rising. A warrior who survived another day of battle. Maybe. They say the Lord doesn't ask us to bear any more than we're able, but God is cutting it pretty damn close here. He is in pain.

CUT TO:

140 INT. BRANCH RICKEY'S OFFICE - BROOKLYN - LATE AFTERNOON 140

Rickey sits brooding, thinking. Parrott enters, upset.

PARROTT

I'm going in that Phillie dugout
tomorrow and wring Chapman's neck!

Rickey considers Parrott, starts laughing. Parrott is hurt.

PARROTT

Did I say something funny?

RICKEY

When I first told you about Jackie,
you were against it. Now all of a
sudden you're worrying about him.
How do you suppose that happened?

PARROTT

Well, any decent minded person --

RICKEY

Sympathy, Harold, is a Greek word.
It means to suffer. I sympathize
with you means I suffer with you.
This Philadelphia manager has done
me a service.

PARROTT

A service?!

RICKEY

Is there an echo in here? Yes,
he's creating sympathy on Jackie's
behalf. Philadelphia by the way is
Greek for brotherly love.

The intercom BUZZES.

JANE ANN'S VOICE

Bob Bragan to see you, Mr. Rickey.

*

RICKEY

(flashes angry)
What in Satan's fire does he want?
(presses button)
Send him in.

Rickey pretends to review papers as Bragan enters, his hat
literally in his hand. Rickey lets him stand there a moment.

RICKEY

What do you want, Bragan?

BRAGAN

I'd like not to be traded, sir, if
it isn't too late.

RICKEY

What about Robinson?

Bragan's been staring at the floor. He looks up now. The
low afternoon sun hits his face.

BRAGAN

I'd like to be his teammate.

RICKEY

Why?

BRAGAN

The world's changing; I guess I can
live with the change.

RICKEY

(sarcastic)

Red Sox just offered Ted Williams,
but I'll see what I can do.

BRAGAN

Thank you, Mr. Rickey.

Bragan leaves. Rickey looks at Parrott: *'What do you know?'*

CUT TO:

141 EXT. UNDER THE STANDS - EBBETS FIELD - LATE AFTERNOON 141

Rachel waiting. Jack exits, sees her, hadn't expected her.

JACK

You shouldn't have waited.

RACHEL

They haven't made a day long enough
that I wouldn't wait for you.

JACK

Give these boys time. It's a three
game series.

A beat between them, framed by the steel girders around them.

JACK (CONT'D)

I don't care if they like me; I
didn't come here to make friends.
I don't even care if they respect
me. I know who I am; I got enough
respect for myself. But I do not
want them to beat me.

RACHEL

They are never going to beat you.

JACK

They're taking their best shot. I don't want you coming tomorrow. I don't want you to watch that, them beating me.

RACHEL

Wherever you are, I am, too. Look at me. Jack...

He looks over. It's not easy for this most proud of men.

RACHEL

I have to watch. So our hearts don't break... Plus I already bought a scorecard.

She holds it up. His name the only one filled in.

RACHEL

And I put your name on it. See? Jack Robinson.

He puts his hand out, takes hers.

JACK

I did good the day I met you.

RACHEL

Baby, you hit a home run.

CUT TO:

142 EXT. EBBETS FIELD - DAY

142

The SCOREBOARD shows 1 run scored by the Phillies in the top of the first. Jack steps up to the plate. Here we go again.

INSERT: April 23, 1947. The next day.

*

CHAPMAN

Hey, porch monkey! Hey Robinson!
Hey boy! You know why you're here?

EDDIE STANKY

On the bench. Without warning, he blasts off it. MOVE WITH him as he marches toward Chapman who doesn't see him coming.

CHAPMAN

You're here to draw those Nigger dollars at the gate for Rickey!

Chapman clocks the apoplectic Stanky. Spit flying as:

STANKY

Sit down. Sit down or I'll sit you
down.

CHAPMAN

What's the problem, Stank?

STANKY

You're the problem, you goddamn
disgrace! What kind of man are
you?! You know he can't fight!
Pick on someone who can fight!

BARBER'S VOICE

(over it)

Eddie Stanky having a chin wag with
his ex-teammate Chapman. Both men
masters of distraction. Eddie, of
course, from second. Chapman from
the dugout.

*
*
*
*
*
*
*

Stanky so mad he can't see straight. Chapman surrenders.

CHAPMAN

Okay, okay. Jesus.

As Chapman disappears into his dugout, Jack whacks a single.

CUT TO:

*

143 EXT. DODGER DUGOUT - DAY

143

Stanky sits here stewing. His head down.

*

BARBER'S VOICE

Robinson on first, Pete Reiser at
bat. Reiser belts it. A long one.
Deep into left center. Back goes
Ennis who is not tall enough. This
one's off the wall. Robinson is
going to score from first.

*
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*
*

Over Barber: a CRACK of the bat, the ROAR of the crowd. As
players around him react, Stanky finally looks up as Robinson
crosses the plate, heads in, sits a few feet from Stanky.

*
*
*

JACK

Thanks.

STANKY

For what? You're on my team. What
the hell am I supposed to do?

(softly)

I gotta look in the mirror, too.

Stanky stands, walks away. Today's gonna be okay.

CUT TO:

144 INT. BLACK CHURCH - BROOKLYN - DAY

144

A BLACK PREACHER leads his congregation in prayer.

PREACHER

Lord, make me an instrument of your
peace. Where there is hatred, let
me sow love. Where there is injury,
let me sow pardon. Where there is
darkness, let me sow light.

'Amens'. We see Rickey sits in the back row, the day heavy
on him. A YOUNG GIRL turns, looks at him. Why's a white man
here? Rickey smiles, puts a finger to his lips... *Shhhh*.

CUT TO:

144A OMITTED

144A *

144B OMITTED

144B *

144C OMITTED

144C *

144D OMITTED

144D *

*

145 INT. LOCKER ROOM - EBBETS FIELD - DAY

145

Players put on their uniforms as Higbe, in street clothes,
fires the contents of his locker into a cardboard box.

HIGBE

I speak my mind and they trade me!
This ain't the America I know!

He glares down to Jack's locker. Jack regards him back.
It's Higbe who looks away first. He continues packing.

WALKER

Where are they sending you, Hig?

HIGBE

Pittsburgh! For cash and some Italian outfielder named Gionfriddo!
(consider his
jockstrap)
Pittsburgh...

CUT TO:

146 EXT. EBBETS FIELD - DAY

146

Dixie Walker takes batting practice, drives the ball all over the field. A natural. *

Rickey and Shotton watch from behind the backstop.

RICKEY

Do you remember the story, Burt, of the 99 sheep? How one was missing?

SHOTTON

If you're talking about Dixie, I'd leave the word sheep out of it.

RICKEY

I find myself at odds. I want integration and the pennant. I want to punish Dixie and at the same time I want his salvation.

SHOTTON

Can't he just be a good ballplayer? He has to be a good person, too?

RICKEY

It would be so much simpler if he wasn't batting .385. *

As Walker finishes, he passes Jack whose turn it is. *

WALKER

She's all yours, Robinson. *

As THUNDER rumbles in the distance... *

CUT TO:

147 OMITTED 147 *

147A INT. BRANCH RICKEY'S OFFICE - BROOKLYN - DAY 147A *

Rain beats on the windows. Rickey looks over as Parrott rushes in; he's out of breath and dripping wet. Parrott holds up the Herald Tribune sports section. *

PARROTT *

The news isn't good, sir. *

RICKEY *

Nevertheless it must be accepted calmly, Harold. What is it? *

A headline: PLAYERS STRIKE. Parrott reads... *

PARROTT *

A National League players' strike instigated by some of the St. Louis Cardinals against the presence of Negro first baseman Jackie Robinson has been averted temporarily and perhaps permanently quashed. *

RICKEY *

Madness! What are they thinking?! *

CUT TO:

148 EXT. MANHATTAN HOTEL - DAY 148

Wendell Smith waits under an umbrella as the CARDINALS get off the team bus. Smith buttonholes manager EDDIE DYER.

SMITH

Eddie, what's all this talk about your Cardinals refusing to play?

DYER

We're here, aren't we? We didn't come to New York to go to Macy's.

Dyer continues past him. Here comes big JOE GARAGIOLA.

SMITH

Hey, Garagiola --

GARAGIOLA

Get lost.

Here comes STAN MUSIAL, a class act if there ever was one. *

SMITH *

Hey, Stan, what's the story? *

MUSIAL

This is big league baseball, not
English tea. Couple a guys
might've popped off; it's hot air.

*
*
*
*

CUT TO:

149 INT. HOTEL ROOM - MCALPIN HOTEL - DAY

149

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*

Smith types out his report. As rain lashes the window, the
Empire State building looms a few block away.

*
*

SMITH (V.O.)

St. Louis didn't win the world
championship last year without
using their heads. They have the
same heads this year and should
know that they can't pick the
players of another club.

CUT TO:

150 INT. EBBETS FIELD TRAINING TABLE - DAY 150 *

Jack sits here alone, tending to a bat. Cleaning it with rubbing alcohol, handling it like the friend it is. Rickey joins him. He has a newspaper in hand. He holds it up.

RICKEY

National League President Frick says this is America and baseball is America's game. He says one citizen has as much right to play as another.

(looks up)

Baseball will go on as planned once the rain stops.

*
*
*

Jack eyes his bat.

JACK

Why are you doing this, Mr. Rickey?

RICKEY

Because my job is to win. I have an obligation to Brooklyn to put the best team on the field I can. Your presence on the roster increases our chances of winning.

Not buying it, Jack looks over at him.

JACK

If this is winning, I'd hate to see us on a losing streak.

CUT TO: *

150A INT. DODGER LOCKER ROOM - EBBETS FIELD - DAY 150A *

Guys change into their street clothes. Branca reads to Reese from the New York Post. Walker listens in from his locker. *

BRANCA

Listen to this: Right now Robinson is the loneliest man I have ever seen in sports.

(upset)

Who's this guy to say Jackie's lonely? He doesn't wear it on his sleeve. Man's got one helluva game face. Take no prisoners. How does some reporter know how he feels.

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*
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*

They stop talking as Robinson walks past, the last one into the shower, a couple of towels around him. *

BRANCA

Lonely? I say its the best game
face in the world.

*
*
*

WALKER

So long as he showers lonely, he
can have whatever face he wants.

*
*
*

CUT TO:

*

151 EXT. EBBETS FIELD STANDS (BETWEEN FIRST AND HOME) - DAY 151

Rachel sitting here. This section about two-thirds full.

*

INSERT: May 6, 1947. Brooklyn.

Then, about five rows behind her, two RACIST FANS find their
seats. They spot Jack down at first.

*

RACIST FAN #1

Look there he is! Black as the ace
of spades!

*

RACIST FAN #1

Damn! You believe that? A genuine nigger in a Dodger uniform.

*

As Rachel winces at his words --

BROOKLYN FAN #1

Shut up and go back to St. Louis!

RACIST FAN #1

Hey, you got a nigger on your team!

*

BROOKLYN FAN #2

So what?! He's better than anyone you got!

RACIST FAN #1

Wait'll his cousin wants your job! Don't you know nothing?

*

BROOKLYN FAN #1

Don't you?!

RACIST FAN #1

He's a nigger! Hey, black boy!

*

Rachel stares ahead, tries to maintain. She shows them her back, sits up as straight as she can. Her movements heroic.

CUT TO:

152 EXT. EBBETS FIELD - DAY

152

Jack steps up against the Cardinals. Garagiola, the catcher, shouts down to third.

GARAGIOLA

Watch this guy! He can't hit! Especially the curve! He can only get on base bunting!

As Jack digs into the box.

GARAGIOLA

Take your time, Robinson, you're digging your own grave.

Big RED MUNGER looks in for the sign.

Garagiola flashes a sign: '1'. Wants it inside.

Here's the pitch. Inside. Jack just scoots back.

152A RED BARBER - BOOTH

152A

BARBER

Takes a fastball in on the hands. Robinson, who is pitched to a great deal that way, uses a thicker handle bat than most hitters, just because he hits a lot of balls out on his hands.

152B BATTER'S BOX

152B

Jack edges up closer to the plate.

JACK

What's your average, Joe?

GARAGIOLA

It'd be a lot higher than yours, if I could run as fast as you can.

JACK

No matter how fast you run, you'll never hit as much as you weigh.

Garagiola signals for another fastball.

GARAGIOLA

C'mon, Munger! Boy's got a hole in his bat!

Munger throws inside.

Jack falls back, strokes a double into the gap.

BARBER'S VOICE

That one wasn't quite 'in' enough. Robinson punishing the Redbirds with a smart piece of hitting.

RETURN TO:

152C EXT. EBBETS FIELD STANDS (BETWEEN FIRST AND HOME) - DAY 152C

The Brooklyn fans cheer; the Racist fan sulks. The double is little comfort to Rachel who stares ahead, sitting as straight up as she can. Willing herself not to cry. *

CUT TO:

153 OMITTED 153 *

154 INT. BROOKLYN CITY BUS - DAY 154 *

Jack and Rachel ride home. Forlorn, she stares out.

RACHEL

Oh Jack...

JACK

What is it, Rae?

RACHEL

Nothing. It's just, sometimes when I sit up there with those bastards, those loudmouths in the stands, I know you can hear them.

*
*
*

JACK

Don't worry. It's okay.

*

RACHEL

No, it's not okay. And I can hear them, too.

*
*

Jack looks at her, takes her hand in his.

*

JACK

I know. I'm sorry for that.

*
*

Rachel squeezes his hand back.

*

RACHEL

We're in it together. When they start in on you, you know what I do? I try to sit up as straight.

*
*
*

JACK

Yeah?

*
*

RACHEL

Straight as I can.
(MORE)

*
*

RACHEL (CONT'D)

I got it in my head that I can
block it from you, some of it, if I
sit up straight.

(a sad smile)

Isn't that dumb?

Closing the space between them, he takes her hand.

JACK

It worked. I didn't hear a thing.

She tries to smiles. As the tears streak her cheeks, he
leans in kisses her forehead.

JACK

They're just ignorant.

RACHEL

If they knew you, they'd be
ashamed.

She puts her arm around him, draws that strength.

JACK

Hold on.

RACHEL

I am holding on.

JACK

Long as we hold on, it'll be okay.

CUT TO:

155 EXT. STANDS - EBBETS FIELD - DAY

155

WHACK! Rachel and Rickey watch Jack taking batting practice.

RICKEY

You look lovely, Mrs. Robinson.

RACHEL

Thank you.

RICKEY

I don't know how you do it. Every
day, from the 1st to the 9th.
Myself? I could pay \$100 for a
suit and in twenty minutes I'd look
like I fell out of bed. Even my
shoes look rumped.

They watch Jack crack one high off the Schaefer Beer sign.

RACHEL

I used to think Jack was conceited.

*

RICKEY

Is that so?

RACHEL

It was the very first thing I noticed about him.

RICKEY

How did you two meet?

RACHEL

I saw him at a UCLA football game. Even in uniform with a helmet on, his vanity was awful. It was the way he held his hands on his hips. I hated him!

(Rickey laughs)

And on campus he always wore crisp white shirts and I'd think his skin is so dark, why would he do that? Then I got to know him, his pride and confidence, and I realized he was showing off his color. I was wrong. He wasn't conceited; he was proud. Always, of who and what he is. I'd never met another man like that. What about you? How did you meet your wife?

*

*

*

RICKEY

Trying to catch her in a race. She was the fastest girl in town. Beautiful legs. I finally caught up; we've been together ever since.

They sit a moment. Below: Jack nails another one.

RICKEY

I wanted to apologize to you.

RACHEL

For what?

RICKEY

Everything. I can't apologize to him. He and I both knew what we were getting into. But you. A newlywed, trying to blossom a marriage under all this pressure.

RACHEL

Don't worry about me. Or us. We know who we are.

Crack. Jack hits another.

RICKEY

Your husband has humbled me. When this all began I thought I was changing the world and that Jackie was my instrument. Can you imagine? I wish I could help him, but I'm just a spectator.

RACHEL

You help him plenty. Believe me.

They watch him rip into another pitch.

RICKEY

Is he able to get things off his chest? So he doesn't burn up?

RACHEL

Yes. I have to let him have that silence at first, let him come to me. But he opens up eventually.

RICKEY

Good. It's too much to carry inside. Does he have any friends on the team?

(she gives him a look)

They're spectators, too. They do admire him though.

Rachel looks out to where Reese and Stanky play catch.

RACHEL

Do you think so?

RICKEY

Even the worst of us recognizes courage. Moral courage especially. I have to think they see it. Jackie's a man on trial. He's responding with glory and grace. No one can take their eyes off him.

RACHEL

He's had himself on trial since the day I met him. No man is harder on himself or gets to himself worse than Jack. But I hope his teammates know, they're on trial too.

RICKEY

I suppose we all are. You're an astute woman, Mrs. Robinson.

RACHEL

(laughs)

I have to be, Mr. Rickey, I'm married to a man of destiny. I can't let him down.

RICKEY

If I'd met you first, I wouldn't have looked so long for Jackie.

*
*
*

RACHEL

How do you mean?

*
*

RICKEY

I mean if he was good enough for you, he's certainly good enough for the rest of us.

*
*
*
*

CUT TO:

156 INT. PENNOCK'S OFFICE - SHIBE PARK - DAY 156

Phillie GM HERB PENNOCK at his desk, on the phone.

PENNOCK

Branch, it's Herb.

157 INT. BRANCH RICKEY'S OFFICE - BROOKLYN - DAY 157

RICKEY

What can I do for you, Herb?

INTERCUT THE FOLLOWING:

PENNOCK

How long have we known each other?

RICKEY

Twenty years. Maybe more.

PENNOCK

Then trust me when I say, Brooklyn's due here tomorrow, but you can not bring that Nigger down here with the rest of your team.

Rickey grits his teeth, stays civil.

RICKEY

And why's that, Herb? His name's Jackie Robinson by the way.

PENNOCK

We're just not ready for this sort of thing in Philadelphia.

(MORE)

PENNOCK (CONT'D)

I'm not sure we'll be able to take the field against your team if that boy is in uniform.

RICKEY

Herbert, what your team does is your decision. But my team is coming to Philadelphia. With Robinson. If we have to claim the game as a forfeit, we will. That's 9-0 in case you forgot.

PENNOCK

Branch, you've got one helluva hair
across your ass on this thing and
I, for one, would like to know what
you're trying to prove?

*
*
*
*
*

RICKEY

Do you think God likes baseball? I
do.

*
*
*

PENNOCK

What the hell does that mean?

*
*

RICKEY

It means you're going to meet God
one day, Herb, and when he inquires
why Robinson wasn't on the field in
Philadelphia and you answer because
he was a Negro, it may not be a
sufficient reply.

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*
*

As Rickey hangs up the phone...

*

CUT TO:

158 OMITTED 158 *

159 EXT. THE BENJAMIN FRANKLIN HOTEL - DAY 159 *

The Dodger TEAM BUS pulls up. The doors whoosh open; Parrott steps off looking official. As the players start to follow: *

INSERT: May 9, 1947. Benjamin Franklin Hotel, Philadelphia. *

PARROTT *

Come on, fellas! We have twenty *

minutes to check in and then get to *

Shibe! Chop chop. *

No one is listening as the TEAM DRIVER opens the lower compartment and the players (including Jack) grab their bags. *

HOTEL MANAGER *

Out! Get that bus out of here! *

The HOTEL MANAGER stalks over, flanked by HOTEL SECURITY. *

PARROTT *

We're the Dodgers. We have a *

reservation. *

HOTEL MANAGER *

Your team's not welcome, not while *

you have ballclub Negroes with you. *

PARROTT *

You mean Robinson can't stay here? *

HOTEL MANAGER *

I mean the entire team is refused! *

PARROTT *

We've been staying here ten years. *

HOTEL MANAGER *

And you can stay away that long! *

SHOTTEN *

(last off the bus) *

Hold on now, let's talk about this. *

The Hotel Manager jerks his thumb like an umpire. *

HOTEL MANAGER *

Get out! Now, grandpa! *

SHOTTEN *

Grandpa? Hey hold on, you! *

Security getting between as Shotten and the Manager go at it. *

Jack is embarrassed, but what can he do? Walker says to no one in particular, but loud enough for Jack to hear: *

WALKER

Maybe 42's got enough friends in town, we can bunk up.

JACK

What's that supposed to mean?

WALKER

Nothing. It's just, I know when you can't get into a hotel, you got people's houses you can stay at. *

JACK

What do you want from me, Walker?

WALKER

An apology. *

JACK

(steps forward)

For what? Places like this? *

Parrott alarmed at this turn of events. *

WALKER

For turning this season into a sideshow! I'm a ballplayer; I want to play ball! *

JACK

So am I! I'm here to win! *

WALKER

How the hell are we gonna win sleeping on the bus?! *

PARROTT

Fellas -- *

JACK

It might do you some good the way you're swinging the bat lately. *

DIXIE

Watch your mouth! *

Walker jabs his chest with a finger; Jack bats his hand away.

JACK

Watch your damn hand!

And they're lunging at each other. Separated by Reese, Stanky, Branca and Bragan while other players hold off Shotton. Two fights about to break out at the same time.

SHOTTEN

Grandpa?! I'll show you grandpa!

Parrott summons something deep, lets loose a shrill WHISTLE.

PARROTT

Fellas! Burt! Please! Take the bus to the field! Worry about the game. I'll find another hotel.

CUT TO:

160 INT. PENNOCK'S OFFICE - SHIBE PARK - DAY

160 *

Ben Chapman sits across from Herb Pennock who flips through underlined newspaper reports. Pennock reads one:

PENNOCK

There is a great lynch mob among us; they go unhooded and work without rope.

(looks at him)

That's you, not me.

(reads some more)

We must remember that all this country's enemies are not beyond the frontiers of our home land.

CHAPMAN

Some Jew must've wrote that.

PENNOCK

This doesn't look good, Ben! It makes the Phillies, look racist! You've got to do something.

CHAPMAN

Me?!

CUT TO:

161 INT. VISITOR'S LOCKER ROOM - SHIBE PARK - NIGHT 161

ON PARROTT. He's trying to work up the nerve for something. *
Finally, he comes around the corner where Jack sits at his *
locker talking to Smith. *

PARROTT

Jackie, excuse me, um, a request *
came in. The Phillies manager Ben *
Chapman, he'd like his photo taken *
with you.

Jack pretends to sniff the air around Parrott.

JACK

You been drinking, Harold?

PARROTT

Mr. Rickey thinks it's a good idea.
He says it'll be in every sports
page in the country. An example
that'll show everyone even the most
hardened man can change.

JACK

Chapman hasn't changed. He's just
trying to take the heat off.

PARROTT

Mr. Rickey says it doesn't matter *
if he's changed. As long as it *
looks like he's changed. Chapman *
said he'd come down here. Or meet *
you in the runway.

As Jack slow burns...

SMITH

See the ball come in slow. See the *
photo come in slower. *

JACK

(to Parrott) *
Tell him on the field. Where *
everyone can see him. *

As Parrott smiles; he's done it. *

PARROT

Perfect. *

CUT TO:

162 EXT. HOME PLATE - SHIBE PARK - NIGHT

162

Chapman and Jack stand side-by-side facing the PRESS.
Chapman makes a little speech. Hypocrisy at its best.

CHAPMAN

Jackie's been accepted in baseball
and the Philadelphia organization
wish him all the luck we can. I
only hope in some small way our
trial of fire... helped him along.

Jack looks at him: *Did he just say that?*

PHOTOGRAPHER

How about a picture? Shake hands.
Bury the hatchet?

JACK

You want a picture? Sure.

Jack steps to the on-deck circle, grabs a BASEBALL BAT.
Chapman's eyes widen as he starts toward him with it.

JACK

(low to Chapman)

We'll hold the bat. That way we
don't have to touch skin.

Chapman nods, looks relieved. A photographer hands over a
bat. Chapman has two hands on the handle. Jack puts one
hand on the barrel, the other stays on his hip.

JACK

Ben, I hope all your friends back
home like the picture.

Jack smiles as the flashbulbs go off. Chapman looks dumb.

DIXIE WALKER

By the dugout with Stanky, watches in disbelief. *

WALKER

Carl, I swear, I never thought I'd
see ol' Ben eat shit like that.

CUT TO:

163 EXT. FORBES FIELD - PITTSBURGH - DAY

163

FRITZ OSTERMUELLER on the mound. He takes a long look in at
Jack, at his catcher KLUTTZ who flicks his thumb: 'Hit him.'

INSERT: May 17, 1947. Pittsburgh.

Here it comes. All Jack has time to do is cover his face to
lessen the blow. Beaned in the head, he goes down in a heap.

Branca leads the Dodger players out onto the field. The
UMPIRES move to head them off. Pirates as well. Kirby
Higbe, now in a Pirate uniform, claps his hands pleased.

BRANCA

(in his face)

Ostermeuller, you kraut! You gotta
bat, too! Don't you forget!

OSTERMUELLER

I'm ready, you Wop bastard!

BRANCA
It's gonna come right between your
eyes! Like a Kamikaze!

*
*
*

OSTERMUELLER
(re: Jack)
For him!? He doesn't belong here!

*
*
*

BRANCA
You don't belong here! Go home to
Goering and Shmelling!

*
*
*

OSTERMUELLER
Make me, you goddamn dago!

*
*

As an UMPIRE gets between them, Jack sits up. He's okay.

CUT TO:

164 INT. BRANCH RICKEY'S OFFICE - BROOKLYN - DAY 164

Rickey looks up as Reese enters. He holds a LETTER.

RICKEY

What can I do for you, Pee Wee?

REESE

Well, Mr. Rickey, it's like this, the series in Cincinnati next week.

RICKEY

It's an important road trip, we're only three games out of first.

REESE

Yes, sir. You know, I'm from Kentucky.

RICKEY

Cincinnati's nearly a home game for you.

REESE

I got this letter, sir. I guess some people aren't too happy about me playing with Robinson.

Rickey is not liking where this is going; he motions for the letter, scans it, reads the highlights...

RICKEY

Nigger lover. Watch yourself. We will get you, carpetbagger.

(holds it out)

Typical stuff.

Reese takes the letter back, a little hurt.

REESE

It's not typical to me.

RICKEY

How many of these letters have you gotten, Pee Wee?

REESE

Just this. Ain't that enough?

Rickey looks Reese over a moment. Pushing back his chair he steps over to a filing cabinet.

Motioning Reese to join him, he pulls open a drawer, pulls out a 4-inch stack of flattened letters, then another, then a third. He looks to Reese.

REESE (CONT'D)

What are those?

RICKEY

I'll tell you what they aren't,
they aren't letters from the Jackie
Robinson fan club. Here --

He thrusts a sheaf of it into Reese's hands. As Reese flips through the stack of hate, reads:

REESE

Get out of baseball, or your baby
boy will die.

(next one)

Quit baseball or your Nigger wife
will be...

Reese trails off, won't say it out loud. Skips to another.

REESE (CONT'D)

Get out of the game or be killed.

He looks at one more, reacts to the vitriol, but does not utter it. Reese looks back at Rickey, shocked.

REESE (CONT'D)

Does Jackie know?

RICKEY

Of course he knows. And the FBI.
They're taking a threat in
Cincinnati pretty seriously. So
excuse me if I'm not too shocked at
you being called a carpetbagger.
You should be proud of it!

REESE

We'd just like to play ball, Mr.
Rickey. That's all we want to do.

RICKEY

I understand. I bet Jackie just
wants to play ball. I bet he wishes
he wasn't leading the league in hit
by pitch. I bet he wishes people
didn't want to kill him. But the
world isn't so simple anymore. I'm
not sure it ever was. We just,
baseball ignored it. Now we can't.

REESE

(quiet)

Yes, Sir. I gotta get to practice.

CUT TO:

165 A 10-YEAR OLD BOY

165

In the stands. Freckled, cute. Looking at the men around him, his own FATHER SHOUTING at Jack as the Dodgers take the field (the Reds coming off it).

*
*

Jack headed for first. Pee Wee out to short.

*

FRECKLES

Nigger!

(then...)

We don't want you here!

INSERT: Crosley Field, Cincinnati, June 21, 1947.

RED BARBER'S VOICE

*

Cincinnati fans expressing their displeasure as the Dodgers take the field. Jackie Robinson at first. The Brat Eddie Stanky at second. Spider Jorgensen at third. And the captain Pee Wee Reese at shortstop.

(a beat)

Ask any man and they'll tell you that the Gillette Superspeed razor is a honey. Maybe the sweetest shaving razor you'll ever use.

166 OMITTED

166

167 OMITTED

167

168 EXT. INFIELD - CROSLY FIELD - DAY

168

Jack reaches first, throws the ball around the infield. Many *
in the crowd beyond rise to jeer and heap abuse. *COON!*
SHINE! Jack tries to let it wash over him.

At short, Reese receives the ball, moves to throw to first
when he pauses. Deciding, he suddenly moves to trot across
the diamond until he's alongside Jack.

JACK

What's up?

Now cries of *CARPETBAGGER!* cut through. *PEE WEE, HOW CAN YOU
PLAY WITH THIS BLACK BASTARD!?* Reese stares up at the worst
hecklers along the first base line. He looks a little sad.

REESE

They can say what they want; we're
here to play baseball.

JACK

Just a bunch of crackpots still
fighting the Civil War.

REESE

Hell, we'd a won that son of a gun
if the cornstalks had held out. We
just ran out of ammunition.

Jack laughs. Reese has a funny way of saying it.

JACK

Better luck next time, Pee Wee.

Reese impulsively puts his arm around Jack's shoulder, stares
into the Cincy dugout.

REESE

Ain't gonna be a next time. All we
got is right now. This right here.
Know what I mean?

Walker reacting out in right. The crowd shuts down, some in
shock at the gesture. Jack surprised also.

REESE (CONT'D)

Thank you, Jackie.

JACK

What're you thanking me for?

REESE

I've got family here from
Louisville. Up there somewhere. I
need 'em to know who I am.

Jack moved by Pee Wee's gesture, can't find the words.

RED BARBER'S VOICE

Robinson and Reese conferring at first. Maybe discussing an infield shift on Baumholtz.

*
*
*
*

UMPIRE

Hey! Number one! You playing ball or socializing?

REESE

Playing ball, ump! Playing ball!
(to Jack)
Maybe tomorrow we'll all wear 42.
That way they won't be able to tell us apart.

Reese heads for short. Jack pounds his fist in his glove.

CUT TO:

169	OMITTED	169
170	OMITTED	170
171	INT. TRAIN - ENROUTE TO NEW YORK - DAY	171

Jack playing Gin Rummy with Branca, Reese and Wendell Smith.

BRANCA

(to Smith; teasing)

You ever write about white guys in your paper? I mean, if I threw a no hitter and Jackie got a base hit, what would the headline be?

SMITH

Jackie leads Dodgers to victory. Again. Under that: white Italian guy does ok.

They all laugh.

REESE

I'd call your folks for ya, Ralph. Tell 'em how you did.

BRANCA

No problem. It'll still make the Post.

They play their hands as they talk.

REESE

We are on some kind of winning streak, huh boys? And I don't mean cards.

BRANCA

Hey, maybe forty of our last fifty.

SMITH

Thirty-two and fifteen actually. Since the 4th of July.

BRANCA

Math is why I throw a baseball for a living.

REESE

This next series against the Cardinals, it's a big one.

They look over at Jack who hasn't said a word. It's his play. He lays his cards down. Deadpan as he wins the hand.

JACK

Gin.

RED BARBER'S VOICE

The top of the 11th inning, all tied at 2. For those of you just tuning in, how did we get here?

*
*
*
*

CUT TO:

*

A172 JACK AT BAT

A172

*

Jack strokes a DOUBLE over Stanky's head as Stanky breaks off second for third.

*
*

RED BARBER'S VOICE

It's been double trouble as Robinson knocked in Stanky with a double in the third...

*
*
*
*

B172 DIXIE WALKER AT BAT

B172

*

Walker strokes a DOUBLE over Stanky's head as Stanky breaks off second for third.

*
*

RED BARBER'S VOICE

...And Dixie Walker did the same with a double in the eighth.

*
*
*

172 EXT. EBBETS FIELD - DAY

172

ENOS SLAUGHTER steps in for St. Louis. Hugh Casey on the mound for Brooklyn. Slaughter looks fiercely determined.

RED BARBER'S VOICE

It wasn't enough as the Cardinals tied it with two of their own in the top of the ninth. This game is crucial to the Red Birds. They're five games out, the Dodgers having not relinquished first place since June 30th.

Casey throws a pitch. Inside, a ball.

INSERT: August 20, 1947. Brooklyn.

RED BARBER'S VOICE

Slaughter takes ball one low. Casey in his second inning of relief. This game is tighter than a new pair of shoes on a rainy day. Slaughter hitless in four trips as Casey goes into his wind-up.

*
*

Slaughter swings, hits a hard ground ball right at Reese who fires over to Jack at first. Slaughter is out by fifteen feet, but he never slows down. And his foot comes down --

-- High on Jack's right calf. Slaughter's spiked him something wicked. Jack goes down in a heap clutching his leg, blood already seeping through his high socks.

Slaughter, head down, on his way to the visitor's dugout as Dodger players pour out of their own to protest. As the UMP raises his hands, motions them all back... Jack pulls up his sock, a bloody mess. Stanky looks to Casey.

STANKY

Next batter, throw right at his head. Clean his clock --

JACK

(fierce)

Just get him out. Understand? Game's too important.

As Casey nods, Jack reaches up to Stanky and Reese.

They pull him to his feet. Jack looks, finds Rachel in the stands. As he gives her a little wave: 'I'm okay.'

CUT TO:

173 WHITEY KUROWSKI

173

A big Cardinal slugger at bat. Casey pitching.

BARBER'S VOICE

The top of the 12th and Kurowski at the plate. He hit his 20th home run on Monday so Casey's going to want to be careful with him.

The pitch grooves in and Kurowski nails it.

BARBER'S VOICE (CONT'D)

Oh dear. There goes number 21.

CUT TO:

174 SCOREBOARD - EBBETS FIELD

174

The Cardinals leading 3-2 going into the bottom of the 12th.

175 JACK

175

The stadium electric as Jack steps in, his left leg bloody. He takes an inside pitch at the knees. Bastards!

Here comes the next one. WHACK - He singles hard up the middle, nearly takes the pitcher's head off.

FIRST BASE

He rounds hard, returns to the bag. Reiser stepping up to the plate as Musial holds Jack on at first. Jack in a fury.

JACK

I don't care what happens, I don't care what kind of play it is, when I get to second I'm gonna knock someone into centerfield.

MUSIAL

(glances at blood)

I don't blame you, man, you got every right.

Jack running on the pitch. Reiser bunts. The play is to first. Reiser is out and Jack slides safe into second. SCHOENDIENST has the sense to vacate before he gets there.

JACK

Bouncing up and down, wearing that badge of potential violence and action. The crowd buzzing, the electricity practically hits you in the face. Jack's going to score.

RICKEY

Coming up out of his seat along with the fans around him.

JACK

Walker at bat. Jack steps out, checks on MARION the shortstop. He takes another step out, looks to Schoendienst.

RED BARBER

(over it all)

Munger sets. Robbie back and forth off second. The third bag clearly in his sights. Oh, and Munger deals a pick off throw to Marion at second and Robinson is out!

Marion breaks for the bag and Munger turns and fires a strike. Marion brings down the tag -- *Out!*

He is and he knows it. The crowd stunned into silence. Jack frozen a moment, head down, furious with himself. Low.

BARBER'S VOICE

The Cardinals pick up a game. It was one of those plays where you do or you don't and Jackie didn't.

CUT TO:

176 INT. TRAINER'S TABLE - DODGER CLUBHOUSE - DAY

176

Jack on his stomach as STITCHES are sewn into his leg. REPORTERS in front of him.

REPORTER ONE

Did he spike you on purpose?

*

JACK

You saw the play. I had my foot
inside the bag. He was out by a
mile. But he kept coming.

*
*
*
*

REPORTER TWO

Slaughter said it was an accident.

*
*

JACK

What are you asking me for then?

REPORTER TWO

Are you calling Slaughter a liar?

This guy's a real jerk. Rickey arrives, a BASEBALL in hand.

RICKEY

Get out. Let me talk to my first
baseman. Go. He's getting
stitched up for Pete's sake.

The reporters move off for other interviews. Reporter Two
hesitant to let it go, finally drifts off. Rickey watches.

RICKEY

Sticking up for yourself is what
you'd expect of any man. Some find
it galling to see it in a Negro.

JACK

I'm sorry, Mr. Rickey.

RICKEY

Sorry? Sorry for what?

JACK

I lost my cool out there. It
probably cost us the game.

RICKEY

I told you, Jackie, all the best
base runners get caught sometimes.

JACK

I wasn't thinking.

Rickey pulls up a chair sits across from him, leans in.

RICKEY

Do you know what I saw this
morning? I was passing a sandlot
and a little white boy was up to
bat. You know what he was doing?

JACK

Sitting on a fastball?

RICKEY

He was pretending he was you.
Wiping his hands on his pants,
swinging with his arms outstretched
like you do. A little white boy
pretending he was a black man.

*
*
*
*
*

CUT TO:

177 OMITTED

177 *

178 INT. TRAINER'S TABLE - DODGER CLUBHOUSE - DAY

178 *

The two men, who have done so much, looking each other over.

JACK

Why are you doing this, Mr. Rickey?

RICKEY

We had victory over fascism in Germany; it's time for victory over racism at home.

JACK

Why are you doing this? Come on now.

A long moment between them. Finally, Rickey looks away.

RICKEY

I love this game. I love baseball. I've given my life to it. Forty odd years ago I was a player coach at Ohio Wesleyan University. We had a Negro catcher, best hitter on the team. Charley Thomas.

Rickey starts slowly rubbing the baseball in his hands.

RICKEY

A fine young man. I saw him laid low. Broken because of the color of his skin and I didn't do enough to help. I told myself I did, but I didn't. The game I loved had something unfair at the heart of it. I ignored it. But a time came when I could no longer do that.

(looks up)

You let me love baseball again. Thank you.

Jack's eyes gentle on Rickey's.

JACK

You're welcome.

Rickey fighting back tears now, retreats to his more confident self.

*
*

RICKEY

You're a force of nature, Jackie, you've complicated everything but yourself. You're changing the world, and refusing to let it change you. I for one am in awe.

Jack reaches, takes the baseball from him. A beat as they consider each other. Finally, a promise...

*

JACK

I won't get picked off second base again. Not this year.

CUT TO:

179	OMITTED	179
180	OMITTED	180
181	OMITTED	181
182	OMITTED	182

183 OMITTED 183

184 INT. BEDROOM - 526 MACDONOUGH STREET - BROOKLYN - DAY 184

It's early. Rachel watches from bed as Jack finishes packing. She looks sad.

Jack looks into the cradle at Jackie Jr..

JACK

It's pop's last long road trip of the year, little man.

RACHEL

Careful you don't wake him.

JACK

I know. I won't.
(looks over)
You okay?

RACHEL

I don't like seeing you leave, that's all.

He looks at her a beat, resumes packing... *

JACK

I'll be home in a week.

RACHEL

Eleven days. That's a long time without you. *

He doesn't answer, packs away. Finally: *

RACHEL *

Try not to lunge at the plate. *

JACK

Seriously?

RACHEL

That's why they're throwing the fastballs inside.

He looks at her, a little shocked.

RACHEL

Fight those inside fastballs off,
foul them back. Sooner or later
they won't be able to help but
throw a curve.

He steps to the bed, leans over her.

JACK

And what'll happen then?

She *clucks* a 'hit' sound, makes an 'ahhhhhh' crowd sound.

JACK

We win enough of these next games
and we'll bring home the pennant.

RACHEL

Pennant? Where are we going to put
a pennant? All these baby diapers
hanging everywhere.

Jack looks around the room, at the diapers hanging.

JACK

We got room right over there.
Between number one and number two.

She mock grimaces at his bad joke.

RACHEL

Win one if you have to, but bring
yourself home; that'll be plenty.

They kiss.

JACK

Rae, you're in my heart.

RACHEL

Promise me you'll come home. That
you'll always come home.

As he looks at all he loves in the world...

JACK

I promise.

CUT TO:

184A EXT. MACDONOUGH STREET - BROOKLYN - DAY

184A *

Jack exits MacDonough Street apartment building and makes his
way down the street. *

185 OMITTED

185

186	OMITTED	186
187	OMITTED	187
188	OMITTED	188
188A	EXT. SPORTSMAN PARK - ST. LOUIS - DAY	188A

A CARDINAL RUNNER on second. Jackie holding another RUNNER on first as the St. Louis crowd ROARS.

BARBER'S VOICE

2 on 2 out for the Cardinals in the eighth. Anxious moments now as they've cut the Dodger lead to 2. Nippy Jones up. Musial taking his place on deck. Jones likes to punch that ball when he swings.

*
*
*
*
*
*
*

Insert: September 13, 1947.

Casey on the mound receives the ball. Pounds his glove.

JACK

Come on, Casey, get him out! Pitch that ball!

BARBER'S VOICE

The outfield is deep, shaded toward left. Robinson holding the runner on first. Here comes Casey with the pitch --

*
*
*
*

Jones swings, pops it up. *

BARBER

It's popped up foul toward first. Should be out of play. But here comes Robinson, he's coming hard --

*
*
*
*

189	OMITTED	189	*
190	OMITTED	190	*
191	OMITTED	191	*
192	OMITTED	192	*

CUT TO: *

193 EXT. SPORTSMAN PARK - ST. LOUIS - DAY 193

Jack chasing down the foul, headed right for the open steps of his own dugout. He never considers the peril as he CATCHES THE BALL and his left foot comes down onto nothing --

BRANCA LEAPS forward, tackles Jack back onto the infield.

BARBER'S VOICE

He's got it! And one of the
Dodgers has him!

*

CUT TO:

194 OMITTED 194 *

195 OMITTED 195 *

196 INT. VISITOR'S LOCKER ROOM - SPORTSMAN PARK - DAY 196 *

BARBER'S VOICE

The Dodgers closing in on the
Pennant as they'll leave St. Louis
for Cincinnati and a three game
series with the Reds.

*

*

*

*

*

Jack sits in his grass stained pants after the game. Most of the guys are in the shower. Branca, a towel around his waist, is headed there himself. The sight of Jack stops him.

BRANCA

Can I ask you something, Jackie?
How come you never shower until
everyone else is done?

Jack just stares at him. Branca won't let it drop.

BRANCA

You shy or something?

JACK

I don't want to make anyone
uncomfortable.

BRANCA

We're a team. On a hot streak.
 Half the wins on account of you.
 You're the bravest guy I ever saw.
 You're leading us and you're afraid
 to take a shower?

A beat as Jack considers him. Stone-faced.

BRANCA

C'mon. Take a shower with me.
 (a beat)
 Hey, I don't mean it like that.

CUT TO:

197 SHOWERS

197

The Dodgers showering, guys chattering. Suddenly, there's
 Branca and Jack at the shower entrance. All eyes look over.
 Branca enters. Then Jack. A beat and everyone goes back to
 getting clean. It's no big deal. Except...

Dixie Walker looks to the floor, shakes his head. Finally,
 quietly, he leaves. Who's the loneliest man on the team now?

CUT TO:

198 INT. BRANCH RICKEY'S OFFICE - BROOKLYN - DAY

198

As the phone rings, Rickey grabs it. On edge.

INSERT: September 16, 1947

RICKEY

Rickey here.

199 INTERCUT WITH PARROTT

199

On a payphone in the CROSLY FIELD CONCOURSE.

PARROTT

We did it, Boss! We did it! We
 swept Cincinnati! That puts us
 seven games up.

*
*

Joyous, Rickey grabs a sheet showing the NL standings.

RICKEY

And eliminates the Giants and
 Boston.

*

He puts an 'X' through Boston and the Giants. The rest of
 the NL are already crossed out. Only the Cardinals remain.

At the same time, Parrott X's the same out on his notebook.

RICKEY

We'd have to lose nearly every game
for the Cardinals to catch us now.
One more win may do it. Who's
pitching tomorrow for the Pirates?

PARROTT

Ostermueller.

CUT TO:

199A EXT. MACDONOUGH STREET - BROOKLYN - DAY

199A

*

Rachel walks pushing Jackie Junior in his stroller. As she
moves, the RADIO BROADCAST of the Dodgers' game can be heard
from one house to the next. In a gap, a passing car picks it
up and we hear it from the window. Then another house.

*

*

*

*

BARBER'S VOICE

A very big game today here in
Pittsburgh. A win and the Dodgers
will have clinched the National
League Pennant.

CUT TO:

199B EXT. EBBETS FIELD - DAY

199B

Branch Rickey alone in the stadium. The field empty as he
listens to the call of the game over the PA.

BARBER'S VOICE

Fritz Ostermueller on the mound.
He's 12 and 8 on the season.

200 EXT. FORBES FIELD - PITTSBURGH - DAY

200

INSERT: September 17, 1947. Pittsburgh.

Ostermueller on the rubber. Staring in at Jack.

OSTERMUELLER

You don't belong! You'll never
belong!

Jack waits. Ostermueller pitches.

BARBER'S VOICE

Here comes the pitch and Robinson
takes outside. Ball one.

200A RACHEL - ON MACDONOUGH STREET

200A

*

Listening as --

BARBER'S VOICE

Ostermueller winds and throws, low and away ball two. Fritz seems to be pitching around Jackie. Or trying to get him to chase.

RACHEL

Come on. Throw him a strike.

CUT TO:

200B EXT. FORBES FIELD - PITTSBURGH - DAY

200B

Shakes off one sign, then nods at the next. Throws the ball well outside. Another pitch outside. "*Ball Three!*"

BARBER'S VOICE

3 and 0 now. Robinson waiting on something he can swing on.

As catcher Kluttz throws it back...

JACK

Give me something I can hit!
(to himself)
What are you afraid of?

OSTERMUELLER

You want it?!
(to himself)
Careful what you wish for boy...

Ostermueller nods at the sign. Jack about to slay the dragon as the pitch comes in - WHACK! The ball is going for a ride.

BARBER'S VOICE

That is a deep fly ball to left. Kiner on his horse, but I don't think he'll get there.

200C EBBETS FIELD

200C

Rickey standing, looking up like he can see it.

BARBER'S VOICE

Back, back, back and oh doctor!
Robinson got his pitch!

CUT TO:

200D FORBES FIELD

200D

The ball sails out: HOME RUN! Ostermueller hangs his head.

200E INT. MACDONOUGH STREET APARTMENT - BROOKLYN - DAY 200E *

Rachel listening, smiling as CHEERS sound from outside the apartment. We hear the sound of car horns on the street. *

200F JACK 200F

He runs toward first and we run with him. The smile starts somewhere in his body. His heart most likely. By the time it reaches his face, his joy has erupted. The weight of the world starting to drop.

201 PIRATES DUGOUT 201

Kirby Higbe who watches Robinson round the bases in disgust.

HIGBE
Pittsburgh...

202 JACKIE ROBINSON 202

Nears second on his home run trot. Even the Pittsburgh crowd starting to applaud him.

CUT TO:

203 OMITTED 203

203A EBBETS FIELD 203A

Rickey absorbing the moment. It's almost too much. *

204 JACKIE ROBINSON 204

Rounding second and headed for third. The weight of the world somehow lifting. They gave him one he could hit.

CUT TO:

205 OMITTED 205

206 42 206

We're tight on Jack's back as he heads for home at Forbes Field. 90 feet away... 75...

207 WENDELL SMITH IN THE STANDS 207

Finally inspired to type: T-h-a-n-k y-o-u, J-a-c-k-i-e.

208 JACKIE ROBINSON 208

Nearing home. About to step on the plate. He closes his eyes as well and --

WE CUT TO:

209 EXT. 526 MACDONOUGH STREET - BROOKLYN - DAY 209 *

Rachel all alone on the sidewalk looking up and down the street. And suddenly there he is... Jack, scooting between two cars, hurrying to her. And they're in each others arms. *

JACK
I'm home. *

RACHEL
Safe. *
(re: house) *
The baby's sleeping so don't you *
make a sound. *

He makes to button his lips. *

RACHEL
Stay just like that. *

She kisses him. And kisses him. And he kisses her back. As they finally head inside, we let them go. And as we're left looking down the street, a crawl begins: *

Branch Rickey was elected to the Hall of Fame in 1967. *

Pee Wee Reese was elected to the Hall of Fame in 1984.

Bobby Bragan retired the following year and became a manager in the Dodger minor leagues. He is credited with mentoring several African American minor league players.

Wendell Smith became the first African-American sportswriter to join the Baseball Writers Association in 1948. *

Ben Chapman was fired in 1948 and never managed again.

Eddie Stanky went on to manage the St. Louis Cardinals, the Chicago White Sox and the Texas Rangers. *

Ralph Branca lives and works in Rye, New York. *

Dixie Walker was traded the following season to Pittsburgh.

Ed Charles grew up to become a professional baseball player. He won the World Series in 1969 with the Miracle Mets.

Rachel Robinson splits her time between Connecticut and Manhattan where she runs the Jackie Robinson Foundation.

Jackie Robinson was named Major League Rookie of the Year in 1947. He won the World Series in 1955 against the New York Yankees, stealing home in Game One. He was elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1962. *

We end on a montage of Jackie Robinson Day in present time. Every year in April, all MLB players wear the number 42 as a reminder of Jackie's accomplishments on and off the field. The number 42 is the only number retired by all of baseball. *

We see 42s leaving their dugouts, 42s at bat, 42s in the field, 42s signing autographs, 42s stealing bases, 42s lined up for the National Anthem.

FREEZE FRAME on a **42**.

The End.