

BACKLOT BASEBALL

FADE IN:

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

One streetlight blinks on and off in the empty parking lot of a strip mall. DEVON (17) and LIZA (16) get out of Devon's car and walk toward the streetlight.

DEVON

I don't know about this, Liza.

LIZA

Devon! The card has to go to the highest bidder, even if he seems a little creepy.

DEVON

Are you sure we should do this? We could call it off right now and drive out of here.

LIZA

Sure, and then we'll lose the house. All we'll have is Dad, each other, and a crappy baseball card when we could've had ten thousand dollars!

Devon looks up and stops. They are right under the streetlight. A bug flies into the lightbulb and falls dead to the ground. A shiver goes up Devon's spine.

DEVON

He couldn't have picked a better place?

LIZA

I guess when a guy has a lot of money, it doesn't always mean he likes the nicer things in life.

The rattle of metal trash cans causes Liza and Devon to turn their heads. Liza waves into the dark.

LIZA
(overly friendly)
HELLO! MYSTERY MAN?! WE HAVE YOUR
CA-

Devon clamps his hand over Liza's mouth.

LIZA
(muffled)
What are you doing?

DEVON
(whispering)
Keeping us from ending up on a
"missing person" billboard! Let's
go!

Devon starts to walk back to the car. Suddenly, a scratchy
and gravelly voice comes from the dark.

MYSTERY MAN
(cautiously)
Yes?

Devon stops in his tracks. Liza pushes away from him and
walks toward the voice in the dark.

LIZA
Hello, sir! We have your Barry
Bonds 1986 Trading Card. Do you
have the money?

Silence.

LIZA
Sir?

A silhouette appears from the dark. Liza and Devon cannot
see the face of the MYSTERY MAN, but just from his figure,
he appears to be tall.

MYSTERY MAN
Did you ever see Barry Bonds play?

LIZA
No! But he was pretty good, right?

MYSTERY MAN

Not in 2005. That's when I saw
him. And he sucked.

LIZA

(polite but cautious)
Well, you still want his card,
right?

MYSTERY MAN

How's the cardboard?

DEVON

It's cardboard.

MYSTERY MAN

Is it wet or dry? I don't want a
wet card.

Devon and Liza look at each other, unsure of how to
respond. Liza pulls out the card from her jacket.

LIZA

It's a, uh, it's a very dry card,
sir.

MYSTERY MAN

Hm. Not too dry, I hope.

DEVON

(frustrated)
Do you want the card or not?!

A gust of wind blows up Liza and Devon's hair. When they
look back at Liza's hand, the Barry Bonds card is gone.

DEVON

Liza! Oh my god, where's the
card?!

LIZA

(shocked)
Look. Devon, look.

Devon looks down to see a backpack where the Mystery Man
was standing. Liza runs toward the backpack.

DEVON

Liza!

Liza begins to laugh. Devon runs over to her. Liza pulls out two stacks of dollar bills from the backpack.

LIZA
We've made it!

Devon picks up the backpack and looks inside. It is more money than he has ever seen in his life. He looks at Liza.

LIZA
I told you selling it was the
right move.

Devon smiles and nods.