

LOW AND OUTSIDE

by
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inspired by true events

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EXT. THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, CIUDAD TRUJILLO - MIDDAY

Spring, 1937. On a church in the distance a ridiculously large electric sign, turned on even though it's daytime, brightly announces "Trujillo en tierra, Dios en cielo!"

A baseball stadium bears an equally oversized sign - "Estadio Trujillo."

Outside the ballpark a larger-than-life statue of General Rafael Trujillo greets the crowd, whose parked cars bear license plates that say "Viva Trujillo!"

EXT. TRUJILLO BASEBALL FIELD - MIDDAY

EMMANUEL, 22 and dark-skinned, is on the pitcher's mound. He winds up. Releases. It's ball one.

Dominican Republic Dictator, GENERAL RAFAEL TRUJILLO, 40s, average height and build, but menacing eyes that convince you he's ten feet tall, watches from the stands. He's seated next to a 14-YEAR-OLD GIRL, his face expressionless.

Emmanuel's body slumps. He kicks at the dirt on the mound, trying to regain some composure. Flips the ball around in his hand, searching for a solid grip. Winds up again. Releases.

The CRACK of a bat...

EXT. DOMINICAN REPUBLIC SUGAR CANE FIELD - MIDDAY

...becomes the CRACK of a machete slicing through sugar cane. The sky is blue, the sugar cane a vivid green. It's a picture perfect spring day and the sun blazes. Another CRACK.

A HAITIAN MIGRANT WORKER covered in sweat and toiling in the fields hears the MACHETE and looks around nervously for the source of the sound, his body teetering under the weight of the sugar cane he has cut.

He drops the sugar cane, wipes some sweat from his brow and reaches for his canteen. He takes a swig but nothing comes out. He tips the canteen upside down confirming its emptiness and the relentless thirst he will have to endure.

Another CRACK, and a member of the DOMINICAN REPUBLIC MILITARY emerges from the stalks wielding a machete.

The migrant worker recoils in horror.

One last menacing CRACK of the machete...

EXT. THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, CIUDAD TRUJILLO - MIDDAY

...becomes a CAR BACKFIRING. It's a red Packard with a different license plate - 'La 42'. The Packard tears down the street, recklessly swerving, HORN BLARING.

COMMANDER MIGUEL ANGEL PAULINO, the stocky and graying leader of Trujillo's death squad, 'La 42', drives and laughs. He fires a SHOT out the window...

EXT. TRUJILLO BASEBALL FIELD - MIDDAY

...which becomes the CRACK of a baseball bat as Emmanuel offers up a double and the runner on second base advances to third.

IN THE STANDS

Trujillo's team is losing, and he does not like losing.

The young, anxious girl seated next to him tries not to look at the General's hand on her knee.

ON THE FIELD

Emmanuel winds up. Releases. The batter hits a line drive and takes first base, loading the bases.

IN THE STANDS

Trujillo runs his hand up the young girl's leg. She tries not to wince, not to cry, and then is momentarily spared.

Trujillo's number one advisor, DR. AYBAR, 40s, a manicured and professional air, takes a seat next to them.

TRUJILLO

A beautiful ball field, no?

The sound of PITCH HITTING GLOVE.

UMPIRE (O.S.)

Ball one!

DR. AYBAR

Magnificent. Most generous, El Benefactor.

TRUJILLO

They appreciate nothing.

Aybar rummages through a briefcase, pulls out some papers, as PITCH HITS GLOVE once more.

UMPIRE (O.S.)
Ball two!

TRUJILLO
I raise a republic out of the rubble. And they appreciate nothing. Do they even remember the hurricane that washed it all away?

DR. AYBAR
Lo siento, El Jefe, but--

TRUJILLO
--Don't. Don't make excuses for them. It is beneath you.

DR. AYBAR
No excuses. The election campaign report. That you asked for.

Aybar holds out the report. But Trujillo's gaze is...

ON THE FIELD

Emmanuel pitches and it's ball three.

IN THE STANDS

TRUJILLO
I ask for nothing. I give. And give and give. Hospitals, schools, parks, art. I give the people of the Dominican Republic my love.

He fondles the girl's thigh once more.

TRUJILLO
Yet it goes unrequited.
(to Aybar)
Except for you. You love me.

DR. AYBAR
With all due respect, it is not about what I love. It is about what the people love.

TRUJILLO
So, diga me. What does your report say? What do the people love?

Trujillo runs his hand up along the young girl's side toward her breasts.

DR. AYBAR
Baseball, El Jefe.

ON THE FIELD

Emmanuel winds up and releases ball four, walking in another run for the opposing team. He looks up...

IN THE STANDS

...he catches Trujillo's disgusted glare as Trujillo leads the young girl forcefully but calmly out of the stadium...

TRUJILLO
Then get me a real baseball team.
And we will win this year. On the
field, and off.

Dr. Aybar stares out into the field as Emmanuel pitches again. The CRACK of a bat...

EXT. U.S.A., PITTSBURGH'S GREENLEE FIELD - MIDDAY, A FEW DAYS LATER

...becomes the CRACK of another bat thousands of miles away. A ball soars out toward center field. Just beyond, above some bleachers, a sign says "Greenlee Field."

It's a pop fly hit by Negro League all star, SAM BANKHEAD, 32, but almost childlike at only 5'8" and sporting a toothy grin.

SATCHEL PAIGE, 31, a Negro League pitching legend, is on the mound.

JOSH 'GIBS' GIBSON, 26, a Negro League catcher who leads the league in batting average, catches.

A scoreboard indicates it's the bottom of the ninth, there are two outs, and Satch's team, the Pittsburgh Crawfords, leads the Homestead Grays 3-0.

SAM
Damn! It's all I can do to get me
jus' a piece! What'd Satch eat for
breakfast this mornin'?

Sam walks off as COOL PAPA BELL steps up to the plate. He's the fastest player in the Negro League, a center fielder who switch hits.

COOL PAPA
Lemme show you what you're doin'
wrong Sammy B!
(MORE)

COOL PAPA (CONT'D)
I'm gonna get me a hit off ol'
Satch so I can die a happy man!

GIBS
You wanna die Cool Papa, we are
happy to oblige!

Satch winds up. Releases. With a HIGH PITCHED SCREAM the ball whizzes by Cool Papa in a blur, just missing him. Gibs catches it for...

UMPIRE
Strike one!

Satch winds up, takes a deep breath, and releases again.

UMPIRE
Strike two!

Gibs tosses the ball back to Satch.

GIBS
Better not dig that grave jus' yet.

COOL PAPA
That's a'right. I got time!

Satch winds up, releases, and this time Cool Papa gets a piece of it.

UMPIRE
Foul ball!

Satch whizzes a fast ball right past Cool Papa.

UMPIRE
Strike three! You're out!

Satch's teammates rush the mound and lift Satch up on their shoulders in celebration.

They drop him next to Gibs before walking off the field. Gibs notices Dr. Aybar, dressed in a suit, staring at Satch.

GIBS
(indicating Dr. Aybar)
Anything you wanna tell me?

SATCH
I ain't done nothin'. 'Cept pitch a
damn good game.

GIBS
You sure this ain't got nothin' to
do with that pretty little thing
you met at Crawford Grille?

SATCH

She wasn't no spic. An' since
when's a guy not allowed to buy a
pretty girl a drink?

GIBS

Since the guy's married.

SATCH

Damn. You think that's it?

GIBS

Hope not. That's one scary lookin'
suit.

EXT. TRUJILLO BASEBALL FIELD - AFTERNOON

Emmanuel stands on the mound, looking out toward home plate.
The field and stands are deserted.

He stretches his pitching arm and shoulder, then rotates it a
few times to loosen it up.

He drops to the ground for push-ups. After a breather he does
another set. Emmanuel is a man on a mission.

He takes the mound once more, a look of intense focus in his
eyes. He winds up. And releases...an imaginary ball.

EMMANUEL

Ball four. After all you have given
me, El Jefe, I give you ball four.

He rotates his shoulder once more, then drops to the ground
for more push-ups.

EXT. EMMANUEL'S PLANTATION - AFTERNOON

Emmanuel's modest farm house stands watch on a hill over-
looking the road on a sugar cane plantation outside of town.

A white Chevrolet pickup truck parks. Emmanuel hops out.

ON THE PORCH

LOLA, 19, Emmanuel's sister, waits impatiently in a rocking
chair cleaning dirt out from under her fingernails.

Emmanuel pulls a flask from his pocket and takes a swig.

LOLA

Dios mio! Have some water!

Lola grabs for Emmanuel's flask but he pulls it away.

EMMANUEL

I do not need water.

She grabs for it again, snatches it and takes a swig herself.

LOLA

I was there.

EMMANUEL

Then you know I do not need water.

He tries to take his flask back...

LOLA

I know you will pitch better next time.

...but Lola holds it in the air, darts back and forth, switches hands.

EMMANUEL

That is funny. You are funny. You think they will let me pitch next time?

LOLA

You are just in a...a rut.

EMMANUEL

And you have been doing man's work. Again.

She stops, puts the flask behind her back, holds out her other hand.

LOLA

What do you mean?
(*showing her fingernails*)
Look. Clean.

EMMANUEL

Like Papa's shirt?

Emmanuel reaches around her waist, pretends to brush some dirt off the shirt, and grabs the flask.

LOLA

At least I wear it well, no?

Lola pulls the white shirt more tightly around her.

Emmanuel takes a swig from his flask.

EMMANUEL

I do not understand what you see in any of it.

He collapses into the rocking chair.

LOLA
Don't you? Each stalk is my perfect
pitch. Strike three. Each stalk
is...

EMMANUEL
Lola--

LOLA
--It is like he is still standing
next to me.

EMMANUEL
Only it is not Papa. It is the
mamabichos you hang around with!

He takes another swig. She grabs the flask back.

LOLA
Are you calling Wilfrid a
mamabicho? Cause he is Haitian?
Sweet Wilfrid? Who has devoted his
life to caring for our sugar cane?
You sound like Trujillo.

EMMANUEL
I hope so.

LOLA
Hate is hate Manny. It is never
right.

She grabs his arms, tries to pull him up out of the chair.

LOLA
Ven. Conmigo.

Emmanuel doesn't budge.

EMMANUEL
Trujillo is a good leader.

LOLA
So a good leader makes his 3-year-
old son a colonel?

EMMANUEL
He is loyal to his family. It's
symbolic.

She tugs him out of the chair once more.

EMMANUEL
I can not right now.

LOLA
But it's late and you promised.
Papa would--

EMMANUEL
--I am the 'Papa' now!

LOLA
Well that explains why you can not
pitch. Papa had a terrible arm, no?

Lola storms off. RUSTLING sugar cane...

EXT. ANOTHER SUGAR CANE FIELD - AFTERNOON

...becomes LOUDER RUSTLING. Commander Paulino holds an OLD
HAITIAN MIGRANT WORKER by the back of his shirt.

He shoves the Haitian to his knees. A tense, silent moment as
his troops look on and the old man begs for his life. Then,
with one swing of his machete, Paulino decapitates him.

COMMANDER PAULINO
Is that so difficult? For garbage
that pollutes our country?! Have
you no Dominican pride? What would
El Jefe say about your weakness?
About how you defy his direct
orders. Huh? Negro es sucio.
Haitiano es sucio! Sucio!
Comprenden? Like this! On my shoe!

Paulino brushes dirt off his shoe. There is no response.

COMMANDER PAULINO
Comprenden?!

ALL
Si.

Paulino turns to the soldier to his right, and with one more
swing, decapitates him as well.

COMMANDER PAULINO
I should not have to do another
man's work. Comprenden?

ALL
Si!

COMMANDER PAULINO
Dismissed.

As the troops make their way back into the sugar cane, the
CRACK of machete on sugar cane...

EXT. GREENLEE FIELD - AFTERNOON

...becomes the CRACK of a bat as a few players practice.

Satch ices his arm. Gibs elbows him.

Dr. Aybar is headed straight for them.

DR. AYBAR
Mr. Paige is there somewhere we
could speak in private?--

Gibs rummages in Satch's bag, finds a towel.

SATCH
I ain't done nothin' wrong.

DR. AYBAR
I am sure that is true.

SATCH
Did I Gibs?

Satch removes his arm from the ice. Gibs tosses the towel.

GIBS
No sir. You would never!

SATCH
See? So if we're all through here--

He turns his back on Aybar, gathers his things.

DR. AYBAR
--Please, Mr. Paige, this will only
take a moment of your time.

SATCH
Do I need me a lawyer?

GIBS
You gotta at least let him get
hisself a lawyer.

DR. AYBAR
Señor Paige does not need a lawyer
to hear what I have to say. If you
will excuse us.

Gibs offers an 'I got your back' look as Dr. Aybar and Satch
walk to the bleachers. The conversation trails off with...

SATCH
I ain't never laid one finger on
her. I swear. And I ain't gonna say
otherwise!

(To read the rest, please contact Shari at
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