

May the Best Fan Win

by Jonathan Rand

— Revisions rundown —

Date of book in circulation:	July 26, 2013
Date of these revisions:	April 6, 2016

This play has been rewritten since publication, so if you've got a book, it's an old version of the play. The latest edits are in this document.

Various dialogue replacements below:

MERV. Those are indeed *literal* goosebumps.

TIM. Merv, I simply cannot *wait* for this literal clash of the titans.

...

TIM. Now as we get started, Merv, I'll say this: *everything* hinges on this first quarter. It's all about which player establishes himself early.

MERV. But so far, Tim, we are seeing a *tepid* start from both men.

TIM. Merv, we're seeing literally no eyeball movement, and in this league, you *have* to have eyeball movement. But listen, Merv—we both know how *explosive* these men can be, and how this game can turn on a *dime*.

...

TIM. (*With a knowing chuckle:*) Merv, I said it during the Crazytown Copy Center Pre-Game Show. Baxter *loves* to start strong. He *really* set the tone there.

...

MERV. And *another* strong move from Baxter!

TIM. Merv, is that what I think it is?

MERV. It is *indeed* a Tostitos Scoop!!

TIM. And Felton still looks lost out there. You have to wonder if he's a hundred percent.

MERV. And here comes Baxter with a double—no, a *triple dip*!! How often do you see that?!

TIM. This is getting ugly, *fast*. Felton better focus, or he'll never climb out of this early hole.

(BAXTER *casually* takes a chip from the bowl and eats part of it.)

(BAXTER *dips* the same chip into some dip, eats a bite, and then dips a third time and finishes the chip.)

MERV. He reaches for the remote for a volume change... here it comes... OH! *Denied!!*

TIM. Oh my, Felton and the remote are simply *not* on the same page.

MERV. And he mistakenly flips the Input Source from HDMI to AV-1! *What* an embarrassment!

TIM. Merv, the last thing you want to see is an early fumble.

MERV. He cannot connect!!

TIM. And the crowd here at JP Morgan Chase Living Room is letting him hear it.

MERV. Ohh! And Donald Baxter *steals* the remote, *with* authority.

TIM. Classic homefield advantage, Merv. You just gotta love his remote control control.

MERV. It's — a — *blowout!*

TIM. And with a commanding lead like this, you gotta think he'll get aggressive now.

MERV. Baxter reviews his options, fakes left, jukes right — and then an *unexpected move* to the Merlot! *Unbelievable!*¹

TIM. Unbelievable is right, Merv! This guy's a career PBR man. We never expected wine, let alone a red, let alone a *varietal*. What a bold play.

MERV. But hold on! Out of *nowhere* Baxter is *stuffed* at the line of corkage. Folks, he is *cork-blocked*.

TIM. Merv, his Achilles' Heel is, and always will be, beverage penetration.

MERV. Twenty seconds have come...and twenty seconds...have gone.

TIM. We may witness history here, Merv. The record is twenty-eight seconds.

MERV. Oh my. OH MY!! Donald Baxter has *shattered* the world record of cork-related incompetence!

TIM. Now let's see if Felton can take advantage.

MERV. And a *powerful* move by Michael Felton.

TIM. Merv, it was a twist-off!

MERV. The cork was never even on the field! *What* a mental error!

TIM. And he knows it, Merv. Look at his face; look at his body language. That will haunt him forever.

(FELTON *starts to ineffectively fiddle with the remote control.*)

(The crowd boos.)

(BAXTER *casually takes the remotes, easily hitting the few various necessary buttons on the remotes to fix the TV situation.*)

(BAXTER *moves his hand from a beer to a soda, but then reveals a bottle of wine.*)

(BAXTER *can't open the bottle with a corkscrew.*)

(BAXTER *gives up and puts the bottle on the table.*)

(FELTON *casually picks up the bottle and easily twists off the cap.*)

(BAXTER's *face hasn't changed. Or he's yawning.*)

MERV. Tim, could *this* spark a turnaround for Felton?

TIM. No question, Merv.

MERV. But wait, now Baxter fights back with a difficult five-point play attempt. He lets it fly...

(After a play on the screen, they celebrate a little and BAXTER holds up his hand for a high-five. FELTON doesn't notice it and casually celebrates on his own. BAXTER's hand remains up in high-five position.)

OH HHHH! Re-jected!

TIM. Merv, that has to be one of the best blocked shots I have ever seen in my twenty years of watching dudes watch sports.

MERV. Get that *outta here*.

TIM. And Baxter just can't believe it. He is *still* hanging out to dry.

MERV. Oh no, is he — ? I think he might...
Ohhh! Donald Baxter *pretends* he is *stretching!*

(BAXTER tries to play it off like it was never a high-five, with a little stretch.)

TIM. Merv, how quickly the tables turn. Baxter has lost the upper hand.

MERV. Tim, *was* that pun intended!?

TIM. Merv, I *don't* even know what I'm saying.

MERV. Don't look now, but it's only getting worse for Baxter, who simply *drifts* off into a catnap.

(BAXTER starts to drift off to sleep.)

TIM. Merv, now I've seen *everything*.

MERV. He is simply *unconscious!!*

TIM. I mentioned this yesterday on the Toyota Tundra Radio Show: Felton *loves* to catch his opponent sleeping.

And here we go — we're seeing just that right now.

(All while casually chewing and mostly watching the game, FELTON places an empty, large bowl on BAXTER's sleeping head.)

MERV. THE BOWL IS ON THE HEAD!

TIM. That's right; it's Felton's signature move "The Fiesta Bowl." But now will he take full advantage?

MERV. OH HHHHHH! He! Just! Got! Instagrammed!

(FELTON nonchalantly takes a picture of the sleeping BAXTER with his phone and taps the screen.)

TIM. Hashtag *embarrassing*.

MERV. I am *still* on MySpace!

TIM. *Really*, Merv.

MERV. The internet *frightens* me!

TIM. Wow.

MERV. Well, folks, we are *tied!!* What an *astounding* comeback by Michael Felton!

TIM. And as the clock ticks down on this game, both players are *hungry* for victory.

MERV. They survey the spread... there is not much edible remaining on the field...

TIM. Bear in mind there aren't any tater tots, despite their 99.4% approval rating.¹

(FELTON *slaps* BAXTER's arm to wake him. BAXTER *groggily* removes the head-bowl.)

(They *casually* poke around on the coffee table to see what's left to eat.)

...

MERV. He looks downfield, goes deep... and he *drains* five crumbs from an empty bowl of Ruffles!

TIM. These men will literally eat *anything* to avoid walking ten feet to the kitchen.

(BAXTER *empties* crumbs from a bowl or bag into his mouth.)

...

TIM. You never want to see this, Merv, but at the same time, you can't be surprised. Both men were clearly at capacity and yet continued to commit mouth fouls. And this after Baxter's rehab from last year's seven-layer dip.

MERV. *Seven debilitating* layers!

TIM. Merv, this crowd has gone *silent*. You could hear a pin drop.

MERV. We now kindly ask everyone to say a prayer for a full recovery, and to honor this brief moment of silence.

(Pause.)

What's this? He's okay, folks! He's going to be all right!

...

MERV. Not so fast, Tim. I do believe we have an Olive Garden When You're Here You're Family Challenge Flag.

TIM. Here we go. Let's check that replay.

...

TIM. First we have the dance sequence. Oh no, Merv, I did *not* notice this in real time, but Baxter is intensely biting his lower lip.

MERV. Oh my!

TIM. That could cost him. And is Felton doing the *Cabbage Patch*? Talk about *old-school*.

MERV. *Michael Felton, living in the past!*

(In *slow-motion*, we see a much different version, as BAXTER *dances* while doing that *cheesy, intense* look while biting his lower lip, while FELTON *does the Cabbage Patch*.)

¹ If you're producing this play outside the *Crazytown* full-length play, cut this entire line.

TIM. And let's take a close look at the man-hug. Oh no — there's a moist eye right there, Merv. We've got a cryer...

MERV. How *emasculating*!

TIM. And what is Baxter doing with his phone?

MERV. *Donald Baxter, watching a video of cats playing with yarn!!*

TIM. This is uglier than we thought, Merv. Let's hope at least the chest bump was clean.

(The slow-motion replay continues with their hug, where FELTON gets teary-eyed and covertly wipes his eye.)

(Then, mid-hug, we see BAXTER covertly check his phone.)

(A replay of the chest-bump.)

Wait, did they even make contact? It may be too close to call.

...

TIM. Merv, this is remarkable. The officials have indicated that all the penalties offset. Which means:

MERV. We are going to overtime!

TIM. This entire game will come down to a sudden-death verbal shootout, where each player will speak actual words.

MERV. A verbal shootout! Tim, is this the first time *ever* that two men during a sporting event will exchange actual words?

TIM. It will, Merv, and I don't mind telling you: this will be *riveting*.

MERV. And the officials are set to begin this overtime thriller. Hold on to your hats, because here...we...go...

(The sound of a referee's whistle.)

BAXTER. *(Simply:)* Hey what time is it?

FELTON. *(Simply:)* Four.

(The final horn blares. FELTON and BAXTER continue to look at the TV without emotion, as MERV and TIM lose their minds.)

MERV. OH MY GOODNESS!!

TIM. UNBELIEVABLE!!

MERV. IT'S OVER! IT'S OVER!

TIM. UNBELIEVABLE!!

MERV. FELTON SPEAKS FEWER WORDS AND THEREFORE COMES AWAY WITH THE STUNNING OVERTIME VICTORY!

TIM. UNBELIEVABLE!!

MERV. THE GREATEST COMEBACK OF ALL TIME ENDS WITH A WORD-IN-ONE!! A WORD-IN-ONE!!

TIM. UNBELIEVABLE!!

MERV. DO YOU BELIEVE IN MIRACLES THAT SHOULDN'T BE CONSIDERED MIRACLES BECAUSE THEY'RE ACTUALLY PRETTY INSIGNIFICANT?!

TIM. I do, Merv. I really do. Also: unbelievable.

MERV. Well, folks, we have just witnessed the *apex* of greatness. Everything in life from here on out will be a depressing, bitter disappointment. But don't change that channel. Next up: a replay of the exact same game you just saw. Tim and I will certainly be watching. Goodnight!

Endnotes

ⁱ If it's a problem for your theater to reference alcohol, use this dialogue instead:

MERV. Indeed, Baxter reviews his options, fakes left, jukes right—and then an *unexpected move* to the Cherry Coke! *Unbelievable!*

(BAXTER *moves his hand from soda to soda, and reveals a bottle.*)

TIM. Unbelievable is right, Merv! This guy's a career Pepsi man. We never expected a Coke, let alone a specialty Coke. What a bold play.

MERV. But out of *nowhere* Baxter is *stuffed* at the line of twistage. The cap simply *refuses* to open.

(BAXTER *keeps trying to twist off the bottle cap in vain.*)

TIM. Merv, his Achilles' Heel is, and always will be, beverage penetration.

MERV. Twenty seconds have come...and twenty seconds...have gone.

TIM. We may witness history here, Merv. The record is twenty-eight seconds.

MERV. Oh my. OH MY!! Donald Baxter has *shattered* the world record of soda-related incompetence!

(BAXTER *gives up and puts the bottle on the table.*)

TIM. Now let's see if Felton can take advantage.

MERV. And a *powerful* move by Michael Felton.

(FELTON *casually picks up the bottle and easily opens it with a bottle opener.*)

TIM. It wasn't a twist-off, Merv! It was an old-school bottle cap!

MERV. *What* a mental error!