

Thunderegg Falls  
Spec scene: Tom Ranger "Integrates" into Little League

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EXT. BASEBALL DIAMOND

Little League practice is about to start. All the kids are being rambunctious shitheads. One kid, JEREMY, clearly the alpha boy, shows off his jock strap by punching himself in the junk. Three weak-chinned COACHES, early 30s, try to get their attention without imposing anything that looks like discipline. TOM is the only one not wearing a team jersey.

COACH 1

I want you all to meet Tom Ranger.  
Tom is, uh. He's part of the--

COACH 2

He lives out there with BJ Hancock  
and he's here cuz, well--

COACH 3

He needs to, that is, we want him  
here to coach because--

TOM

You kids ever hear of the... *Fort  
Wayne Tin Caps*??

Beat.

JEREMY

Fart Wayne Tin Cocks!

All the kids laugh.

TOM

...I played ball for them.

COACH 1

Ok, welcome Tom. Please keep the  
cursing to a minimum, Jeremy. And  
let's--

The three coaches all say in a practiced unison, Tom  
struggles to catch up:

COACHES

--prrrrractice ball!!

TOM

...ball.

The coaches split up in three directions and the kids each  
follow one, leaving Tom alone not knowing where to go.

LATER

Some kids waiting for their turn at the plate sword fight  
with aluminum bats.

Kids in the outfield are literally having a pissing contest. Tom is leaning against the batting cage looking out of place. Coach 1 is pitching floaters for Jeremy who swings wildly. Coach 3 has his phone out, trying to pose infielders for Instagram.

Tom's eyes glass over and a RINGING noise begins to drown out the practice. A beat, then Tom is snapped out of his daze by:

JEREMY

No! Riley can have his turn as soon  
as you stop throwing like a tin  
cock!

TOM

Elbow up, bud.

Jeremy looks at him quizzically, then holds the bat over his head to lift his elbows, "like this?"

TOM (CONT'D)

No. Just your back elbow. Here.

Tom puts his hands on the kid to correct his form. Coach 2 springs delicately into action.

COACH 2

Haha, woah Tom. I'm the, uh,  
batting coach today.

(to Jeremy)

Just keep your eye on the ball.  
Sometimes I like to watch the ball,  
then when I'm about to swing I  
scrunch up my face, close my eyes,  
and swing as hard as I can.

TOM

Don't close your eyes though.

COACH 2

Well, just a little to really put  
the effort in, see?

Coach 2 does a slo mo swing, more focused on his exaggerated facial expression than his form.

JEREMY

You look like you're shitting.

All the kids laugh.

COACH 1  
 (from the mound)  
 Come on! Let's prrrractice ba-- you  
 guys left me hanging.

He throws a pitch and Jeremy, elbow up and eyes open, hits a grounder to the scrawny short stop, ANTHONY, who fumbles it. Coach 3 records it all on his cell phone.

TOM  
 Short stop! Put your glove like  
*this* below your waist, and like  
*this* above your waist.

Coach 2 makes a worried signal to Coach 3 to stop recording and quickly, gently pulls Tom aside.

COACH 2  
 Tom, that's Anthony. His mom makes  
 a whole thing of it if we criticize  
 him.

TOM  
 You mean *coach* him?

COACH 2  
 Haha, woah Tom. Tell ya what, how  
 about you go help out over there?

TOM  
 The catcher? Fine. He can't squat  
 for shit.

The catcher is sitting on his ass in the dirt.

COACH 2  
 No no, squatting makes him tired so  
 he's okay like that. I meant *there*.  
 (indicating the pile of  
 equipment lying around  
 beyond the catcher)  
 Those bats won't put themselves  
 away.

COACH 3  
 I want to see smiles, boys!

Tom goes to the pile of equipment. He starts to pick up the child size bats. The RINGING starts and Tom is fully zoned out, staring into the middle distance while the practice continues. The chubby kid at bat, RILEY, takes off his batting helmet and throws it over his shoulder. It lands on Tom's head. Kids titter. Tom doesn't react, but he is nudged out of his daze. His mood has swung violently.

TOM

Y'all think I'm your bat boy?! You got the three tenors coaching, and I'm the bat boy? I can throw a ball faster than the damn world. Tin Cups won the Midwest Minor League Championship in two thousand and nine or ten or eight, around then, but I'm picking up your gloves. You ever seen the Geode Springs team? You thought you lost bad last week? Those kids are ugly little RBI machines. Strike zone, all day!

(to the coaches)

Y'all can't hit, throw, or field but you wanna coach these kids?

(to the kids)

Your coaches ever hit the ball like this?

Tom throws a ball up and cracks it with the kid's bat. It sails easily 50 feet past the outfield fence. The kids look at Tom with admiration for the first time. The effort made Tom a little light headed and he uses the bat like a cane to steady himself.

TOM (CONT'D)

(regaining his balance)

Twenty-oh-ten, baby. There are two teams now.

He places his bat like a line in the sand.

TOM (CONT'D)

Over there, you got the Thunderegg... Uhh..

RILEY

Falls.

TOM

Yeah, Falls, but the team name.

JEREMY

(snarkily, indicating their jerseys)

The Shell Devils.

TOM

Thunderegg Falls *Shell Devils* over there. Over here, you got the Thunderegg Falls...

A beat. Tom notices for the first time that his head hurts right where the helmet struck him.

RILEY  
Winners?

JEREMY  
That's dumb.

Riley punches Jeremy in the jock strap.

ANTHONY  
The Ball Hitters!

Kids all like this. Jeremy tries to pretend he's not hurt.

TOM  
We'll get the name later. Everyone,  
choose your team.

All the kids walk over to Tom's side of the bat as Tom rubs the sore spot on his head.

TOM (CONT'D)  
(to Riley)  
That was a heads up nut tag, kid.  
You're our new short stop.

The coaches try to cross to Tom's side.

TOM (CONT'D)  
Haha woah, fellas. Coaching staff  
is full up.

COACH 1  
But ours kids are on that team.

TOM  
Then we'll see you at the game.  
(to Coach 3)  
Oh hey, here's a kodak moment for  
you, Coach! Come on, guys.

Tom flips off the coaches, the kids join in gleefully.

JEREMY  
What the hell is a Kodak?