

(APPLEGATE)

—partisan of the noble Washington Senators, to be the hero who leads them out of the wilderness to the championship.

JOE

(Front)

The Senators are in seventh place.

APPLEGATE

Your powerful bludgeon and sparkling play will inspire the team to greatness. We'll call you Hardy—Joe Hardy. You will be 22 years old. They'll put a new wing on that baseball museum at Cooperstown, dedicated to you—the Hardy shrine.

JOE

(Rise)

Well—well—what do you want me to do?

APPLEGATE

(Front)

—Just leave everything to me.

JOE

(Rise)

My job—my wife.

APPLEGATE

This is a big operation. Can't let things like that stand in the way.

JOE

I just disappear, is that it?

APPLEGATE

Very simple.

JOE

And what happens after I stop being a baseball player? Then where would I be?

APPLEGATE

(Laugh XL)

Well now, of course, that's fairly well known.

JOE

Yes, but—

APPLEGATE

(Turns)

After all, there's nothing unusual about it. How do you suppose some of these politicians around town got started – and parking lot owners.

JOE

Still – If what they say –

APPLEGATE

Look, I've got something to trade here. I'm offering you a chance to be what you wanted to be all your life.

JOE

In my business we have what you call an escape clause.

APPLEGATE

(XL)

This is not a real estate deal.

JOE

If I don't like it, I ought to be able to get out.

APPLEGATE

(Turns back)

Get out?

JOE

I've got my wife to consider.

APPLEGATE

(Turns)

All right, all right. I don't want to hear any more about your wife. Wives. They cause men more trouble than the Methodist Church.

(XR)

I'm trying to be understanding, but all this haggling. All right, I'll give you a chance to get out.

JOE

Well sure in that case –

APPLEGATE

On the 24th of September at midnight. I wouldn't do it, but I don't want to have those damn Yankees win.

JOE

You can say that again.