



In a corridor next to the celebration that nobody wanted to end, the man who started the game that won the [Washington Nationals](#) a World Series wrapped his arm around the man who finished it. [Max Scherzer](#) is one of the greatest pitchers of this generation, a tightly wound perfectionist whose eyes flit with nervous energy.

[Daniel Hudson](#)

is a journeyman relief pitcher who was jobless in March and somehow found himself here, in the middle of history

.Black swimming goggles covered Scherzer's eyes. When he removed them, there were tears, not from the burning of champagne sprays but the emotion bombarding his amygdala. It happened. It really happened. Three days earlier, Scherzer was supposed to start Game 5, only for his neck to lock up so badly he couldn't turn his head. Two days earlier, he prayed a cortisone shot and chiropractic treatment would offer some kind of relief. A day earlier, he watched the Nationals save their season and gift him an opportunity at redemption. And on Wednesday, he stood on the mound in Game 7 against the [Houston Astros](#) facing the cruelest of binaries: win a championship or lose everything.

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