

Story Example

Right Field Blues

"Come on, Billy! Pitch it in there, babe!"

"I'm standing out in right field, where I've been standing for about half an hour. Now I'm starting to hug myself to stay warm.

"Ball four!" the umpire yells.

Billy Perkins, my best friend who is fast becoming my former best friend, is getting wild. He's walked two batters after hitting the first one in the back with a curve ball that never curved. The batter taking the plate now doesn't want to put his other leg in the batter's box.

"Ball one."

"Come on, Billy! He can't hit it!"

Arturo Suarez, the center fielder, has his arms and legs crossed. The left fielder is crouching.

"Ball two."

"Come on, Billy, pitch it over the plate!"

Billy looks out at me.

"Come on, Billy, you can do it!"

"Ball three."

We've already lost the game. We have our last ups, but we're down by seven runs.

"Ball four!"

Make that eight runs.

In the field beyond the right field fence, the Lady Tigers are finishing up their practice. There's Amy Hong, their star pitcher. She can throw the ball underhand faster than I can throw it overhand.

Crack!

Uh oh.

I turn around just in time to see the ball flying over my head.

One of the parents is yelling, "Wake up out there!"

The ball lands and rolls all the way to the fence. I huff and puff and run as fast as I can, grab the ball, and throw it as hard as I can to the infield. Our second baseman throws it home just in time to catch the runner, who was trying for a home run. All right, the inning's over!

I jog back to the dugout where I see Billy. He's looking down at his feet. Nobody's speaking to him.

"That was a good pitch he hit," I say. "It looked like you were starting to find your groove."

"Thanks. He really smacked it. I don't think you could've gotten it even if you'd started running before he hit it."

Best friends again.