



Hits!

The Peculiar Pizza of Dodger Stadium

A Dodger Stadium Pizza Review

The Home Run Caper

A Ballad

2018

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Kelly Pinkham**

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**Layout and Design by
Tristan Pinkham**



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The Home Run Caper

A Ballad by Tristan Pinkham



*There once was a boy and his name was McClarr
And he was the best player on his team.
He'd hit everything but a home run so far
And so hitting one was just a dream.*

*He stepped to his place in the batter's box, ready;
He practiced his swing a few times.
He stared down the pitcher and tapped the plate steady
As the catcher was flashing his signs.*

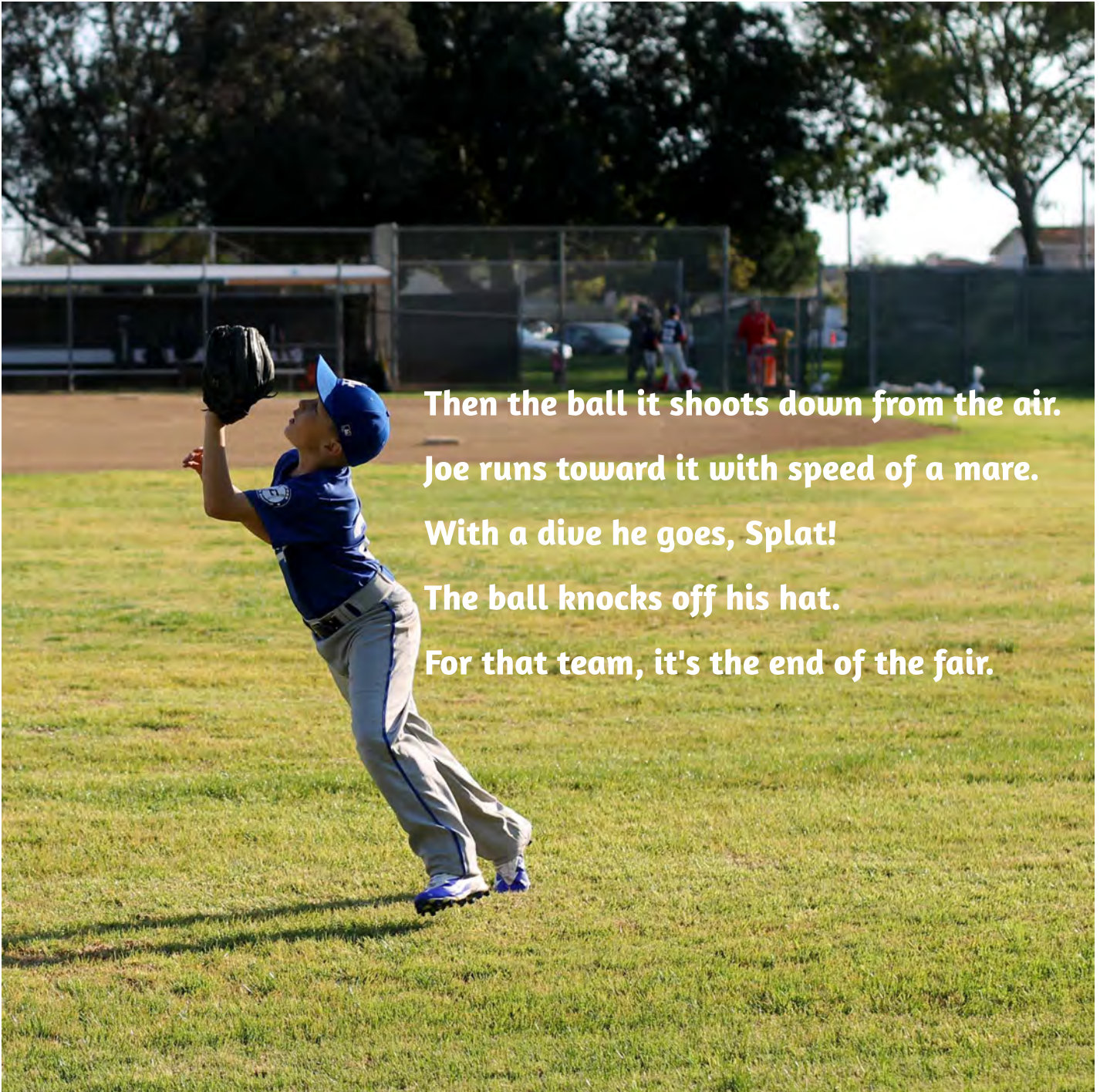
*He watched as the pitcher was lifting his leg
And he watched as the ball was released.
He loaded his bat to connect with the egg
Oh, this fastball would be a great feast.*

*Then he swung the bat hard toward the ball when it came
And the ball it then flew through the sky.
He was hoping from that day that he'd have great fame
For it soared o'er the wall great and high*

*After the game he went right toward his mom
And she said, "That was great, Chase McClarr!
But something just happened, 'twas terribly wrong,
Your home run cracked the glass of our car!"*

The End of the Fair

A Limerick by Tristan Pinkham



Then the ball it shoots down from the air.
Joe runs toward it with speed of a mare.
With a dive he goes, Splat!
The ball knocks off his hat.
For that team, it's the end of the fair.



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The Peculiar Pizza of Dodger Stadium

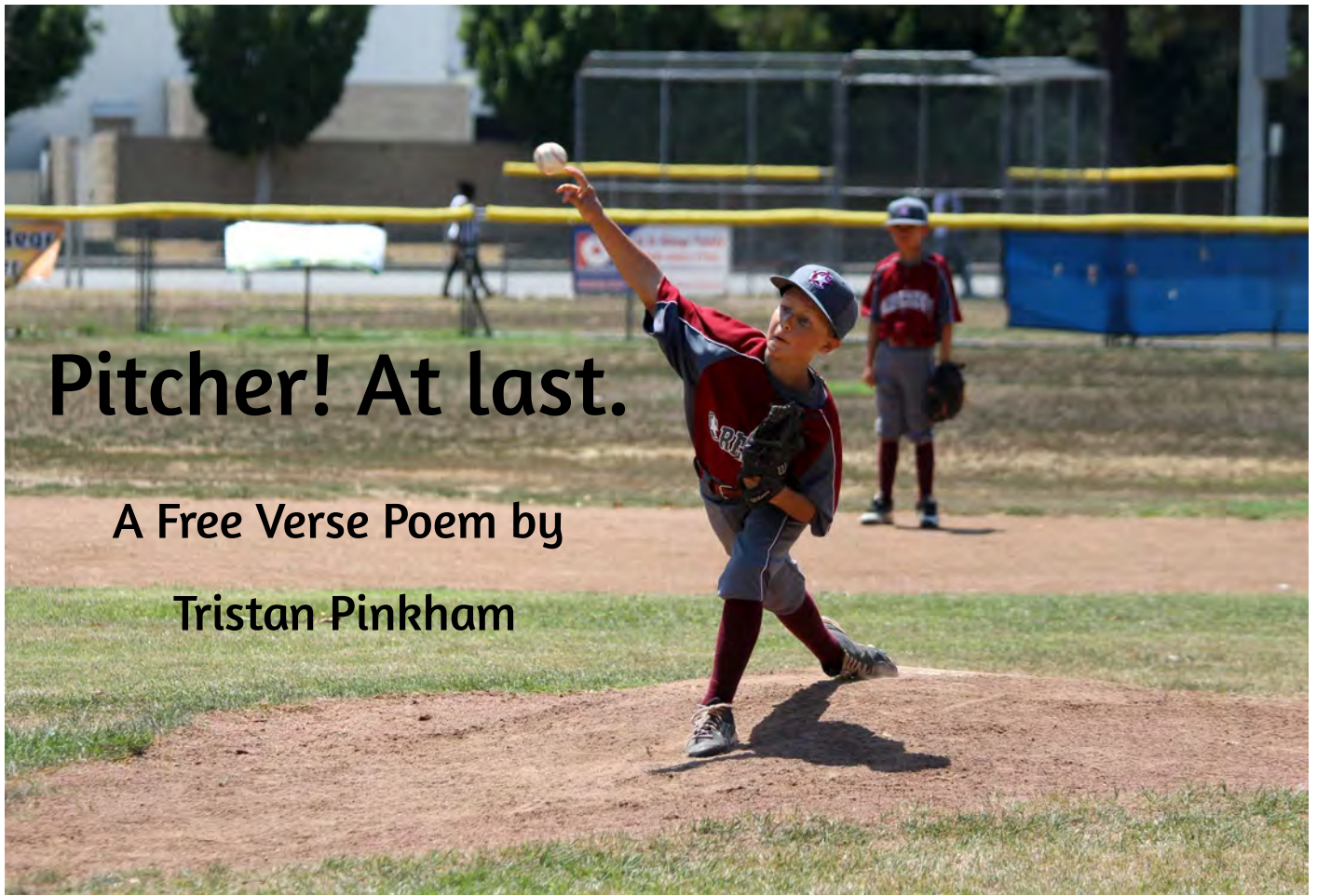
I eyed Dodger Stadium eagerly as my mom and I stumbled toward the home of the Dodgers, out of breath.

We finally made it to the metal detectors, wheezing loudly. We had walked all the way from outside the parking lot to the stadium (because my mom wanted free parking). The plan was to make it all the way down to Field Level for my mom to get a sushi bowl, walk back up to Reserve Level to buy pizza for me, and then walk all the way to our seats before the first pitch, but they were already starting the pre-game show. I was not looking forward to walking up and down more stairs after what seemed like a long hike up Mount Everest. But, alas, we were headed toward, at the moment, my greatest fear: stairs. I wanted to go fast so that we could sit down before the first pitch, but my mom was falling behind, much to my great dismay.

After forever, we finally reached the bottom of the stairs and rushed toward the sushi stand. When we got there, the starting lineups were already being announced. Now, we had to walk back up the stairs to go to the pizza stand. After what seemed like an eternity, we reached the pizza stand. They were out of cheese pizza and had to make more, which took more time, and then... the national anthem started. All the lights of the pizza stand turned off and all the workers stopped cooking during the anthem. That took more time. When the great anthem of America ended, they gave me my two pieces of pizza, and we were off toward our seats. The Dodgers were taking the field and Yu Darvish was almost done with his warm-up pitches when we saw our seats. Yikes! We collapsed into our seats just as the first pitch was about to be thrown. The first pitch was a strike.

My first bite of pizza was much better than the last time I ate pizza at Dodger Stadium. The cheese tasted real instead of fake. The texture was nice and stretchy instead of grainy and bland. The last time I had eaten it, the crust had been hard and tasted like moist cardboard sitting out in the rain all night. This time it tasted as pizza should taste. I sat back and relaxed, happy to finally be able to sit with my mom and watch the game.

Children, here's a lesson for life: don't try buying your food and getting to your seats before the first pitch if the pre-game show has already started.



Pitcher! At last.

A Free Verse Poem by
Tristan Pinkham

"You're up!" My coach announces.

A sense of thrill shoots through me.

I grab my glove and head up to the pitching mound.

Stepping onto the rubber, I feel a sense of realization and joy.

I am finally pitching in a real game.

My first time ever.

This Team

A Poem by Tristan Pinkham

The sphere of white flies through the air.

A fan eyes the orb, leaps out of his chair.

While clutching the ball, he throws out a grin;

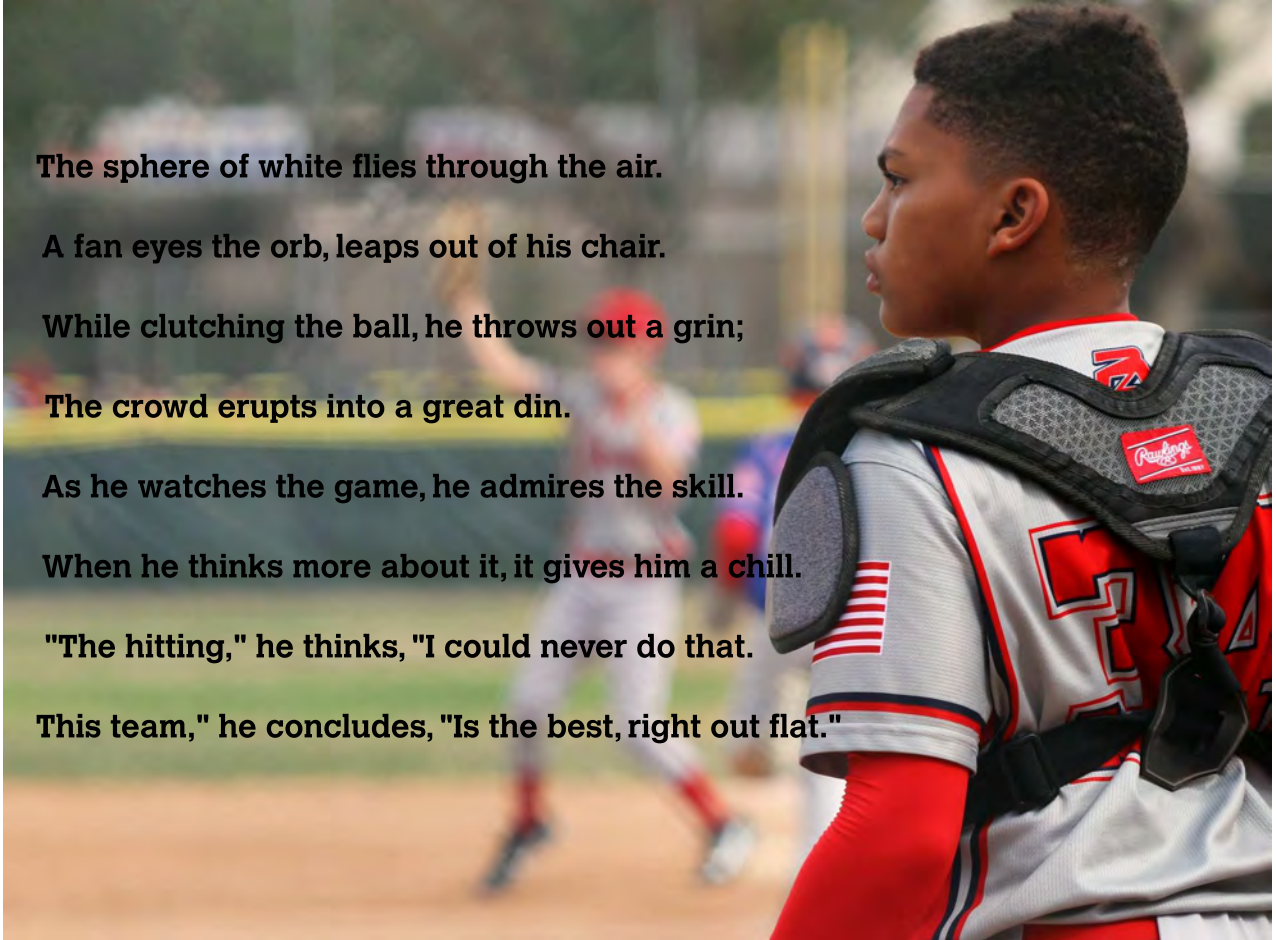
The crowd erupts into a great din.

As he watches the game, he admires the skill.

When he thinks more about it, it gives him a chill.

"The hitting," he thinks, "I could never do that.

This team," he concludes, "Is the best, right out flat."

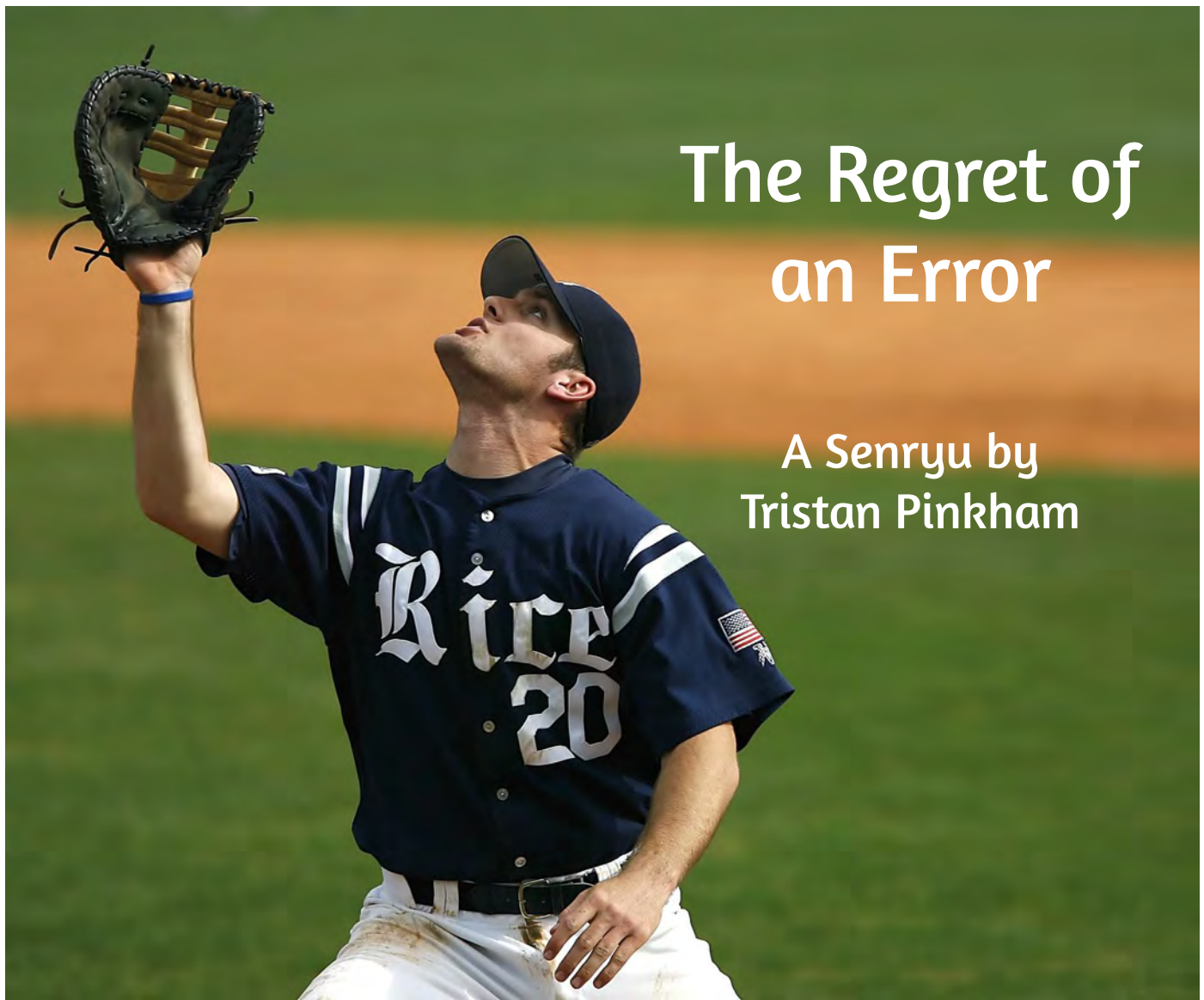




The Baseball Season

A Haiku by Tristan Pinkham

*Browned with age and a
Stitched surface, makes me think of
The baseball season*



The Regret of an Error

A Senryu by
Tristan Pinkham

*The fly ball is dropping.
The fielder squeaks in great fear.
Ducks down with regret.*

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So Close but No Cigar

By Tristan Pinkham

Kenley Jansen is on the mound. He throws a strike 2 pitch that is swung on and missed. The Dodgers have won the National League West for the fifth straight year. About a week passes and the Dodgers are in game 3 of the NLDS. Kenley Jansen is on the mound. He throws a strike 2 pitch to the power hitting Paul Goldschmidt. Goldschmidt swings and misses. The Dodgers are headed to the NLCS! On October 15, in the second game of the NLCS, Justin Turner hits a walk-off home run on the exact same day as Dodger Kirk Gibson hit one in the playoffs 29 years earlier. A few days pass and Kenley Jansen is on the mound again in game 5 of the NLCS. The hitter lines it to shortstop Charlie Culberson who snags the ball out of the air to end the NLCS. The Dodgers are headed to the World Series, and with 104 wins in the regular season, they have a pretty good chance of winning it.

In 1988 the Dodgers had two all-stars, Orel Hershiser and Kirk Gibson. The 1988 World Series came, and Kirk Gibson was injured. Mickey Hatcher, one of the non-standout players, had to replace the all-star outfielder. Everybody thought that the A's would win the World Series because they had just swept the Red Sox in the ALCS and their players seemed unbeatable. Game 1 of the World Series came. The Dodgers were behind in the ninth inning. Suddenly, Kirk Gibson rushed out of the dugout and went up to the batter's box. Dennis Eckersley, one of the best closers ever, was pitching to Gibson. With a broken leg, Gibson crushed the ball into the right field bleachers and limped around the bases for a walk-off home run.

Orel Hershiser had thrown 12, 13, or more complete games in the regular season. Hershiser, as I mentioned earlier, was the other Dodger all-star. In game 5 of the World Series, Hershiser was on the mound. He threw the final pitch for a strike, and the Los Angeles Dodgers won the 1988 World Series.

"Little did the Dodgers know that they would not return to the World Series for 29 years."



Little did the Dodgers know that they would not return to the World Series for 29 years, 3 generations later, when I was watching in 2017.

It's October 2017 at Dodger Stadium in Los Angeles. In Game 1, Chris Taylor hits the first pitch for a home run. It is off of the Astros' ace, Dallas Keuchel (KYK-ull). The Dodgers win that game. The Dodgers have a pretty good chance at winning Game 2 until the ninth inning when Astros utility player Marwin Gonzalez hits a home run to tie the game. The Dodgers stay silent in the bottom of the ninth. In the tenth inning, Astros second baseman Jose Altuve and Astros shortstop Carlos Correa both hit home runs. In the bottom of the tenth, the Dodgers tie the game again when Yasiel Puig hits a homer and Enrique Hernandez hits an RBI single. In the eleventh inning, Astros right fielder George Springer hits a 2 run home run. In the bottom of the eleventh inning, Charlie Culberson hits a home run but the Dodgers fail to win, and lose the second game 7-6. In the Game 3, Dodgers pitcher Yu Darvish gives up four runs in the second inning. The Dodgers fall to the Astros 5-3. In Game 4, the game is tied going into the top of the ninth. The Dodgers pull ahead 6-1. The Astros lose that game and the series is tied, 2-2.

Game 5 is walked off in the tenth inning by the Astros third baseman Alex Bregman off of the Dodgers closer Kenley Jansen. The Dodgers lose that game 13-12. The Dodgers win Game 6 on account of their bullpen doing exceptionally well. In final Game 7 of the World Series, the Astros win 5-1. The Astros are the 2017 World Series champions for the first time in their franchise history. It was 29 years without the Dodgers winning the World Series, and now it's 30.



Instructions:

Here are the items that you will need for this project: Red chalk and white chalk. A wall. You might think, "enough with the items, let's get to the constructing!"

First of all, take your red chalk, draw a horizontal line on a wall at your knee level that is seventeen inches long. Draw a vertical line on the wall going up to the mid-section of your body on both sides of the horizontal line that you already made. Close off the box with a horizontal line at the top of the two vertical ones. Now, we get to the advanced part of the project.

Draw on the inside of the box, with white chalk, two vertical lines going from the top of the box to the bottom of the box, splitting it into three sections. Now draw two horizontal lines going from the right side of the box to the left side of the box, splitting the entire box into nine sections. Your box should have nine evenly spaced mini boxes in it. In the middle box, write this with red chalk: Danger Zone.

That means that if you throw the ball into that section, it'll be easy for the batter to hit far.

In the upper middle box write: Watch out for power hitters.

In the upper right box write: A little bit harder for right power hitters.

In the upper left box write: A little bit harder for lefty power hitters.

In the lower left box write: Hard for most right handed hitters.

In the lower right box write: Hard for most left handed hitters.

In the lower middle box write: A home run is not likely.

In the box to the right of the middle box write: Watch out for a base hit.

In the box to the left of the middle box write: Watch out for a base hit.

In my experience making this strike zone, I unfortunately did not have red chalk so I had to use white for everything. It was also kind of hard to write on the wall.

Now go grab your glove and a ball, and go practice your pitching!

Opinion:

The Yankees' Decision

There have been a few major trades and changes this Major League Baseball off-season. Here is a big trade that is interesting for a certain baseball team that I will talk about in this post: The Yankees. The 2017 National League MVP and the player with the most home runs in 2017 (he hit 59), Marlins' right fielder Giancarlo Stanton, was traded to the New York Yankees on December 11, 2017 for 2B Starlin Castro, RHP Jorge Guzman, and SS Jose Devers.

I think this is interesting for the Yankees because their 2017 best player and American League Rookie of the Year, who hit the most home runs in the American League, Aaron Judge, is also a right fielder. So now, they have two tall (Stanton is 6'6 and Judge is 6'7), great, home run hitting right fielders.

I think that it will be at least a little bit hard for the Yankees management to decide what to do with their positioning of players and lineup. What could happen would be to make either Stanton or Judge be a designated hitter in the lineup. The other would play right field.

That is the end of this off-season update post. Catch ya' later!

Alfan, an All-Star?

A Short Story by Tristan Pinkham

"Logan Alfan!" shouted Mr. Phandro, the commissioner. The left side of the crowd erupted.

* * *

"Put your front foot forward a little more, that'll help," said Coach Dolfox to Logan Alfan. "It'll help you get to the ball quicker."

Logan put his foot forward. The pitch came. Just to show Coach Dolfox that he was wrong, he swished the ball on purpose.

"Next," said Coach Dolfox. He turned and said to Logan, "You'll get it next time, bud." Logan slouched to the dugout.

The all-star from last year, Whim Xivier, crushed the ball into the empty stands. Logan looked in awe. The all-stars were really good!

* * *

Practice ended and Logan packed his bag to go home. On the way back, he looked longingly at the all-star meeting building. How lucky Whim Xivier was, to be able to go to the all-star meetings after practice. Logan had heard that the meetings were awesome. How nice it would be to be an all-star. But since Logan was only a rookie, he thought there was no way he could ever be one. But he would try.

* * *

It looked as if Logan would never be an all-star. Every at bat was a strikeout.

One day, at the batting cages, Logan was hitting with his team. When his turn came, Coach Dolfox said, “Remember my advice about putting your foot forward.” Once again, Logan disagreed. He yelled at his coach, “How would you know? You’ve never been in the major leagues!”

Coach Dolfox replied in a calm, kind, but hurt voice, “Mr. Alfán, I’m calling your mother. That is no way to talk to your coach. I am really trying to help you, and believe me, I know what’s best. I used to be in the major leagues, before you were even born. Thank you for coming. Be back next game.” Logan screamed in anger and slammed his bat on the ground. He yelled, “I’m never talking to you again!” He picked up his bat, stuffed it in his bag, and stomped out of the building. On his way out, he heard Coach Dolfox saying in his calm voice, “That’s your choice, son.” Coach Dolfox sat down, and wiped his brow.

* * *

Back at home, Logan’s mother cooked a nice feast for him. His father played a board game with him and massaged shoulders. Logan realized that even though he was horrible and mean to lots of people, they were still kind to him and loved him. This had happened with Coach Dolfox just an hour ago.

He decided that he would make an effort to be kind to other people. Because when you were treated kindly and with respect, boy it sure felt nice.

He told his dad about how bad he was doing in his at bats. His dad advised, “Your coach used to be a major league baseball player. He knows best about batting. Go to the game tomorrow, apologize, and use his advice.”

* * *

The next day, in the game, Logan took his coach’s advice about putting his foot forward. The pitch came and Logan swung. He felt vibration. He heard, “Go, go, go!” from the dugout. He dashed toward first base. He looked back, and saw the winning run crossing home plate. After the game, Logan came up to his coach and apologized. “I’m sorry about what I said. Now I get why you were correcting me.” Coach Dolfox replied, “I knew you’d come around. And I forgive you for what you said at the batting cages.” Logan felt much better after apologizing.

* * *

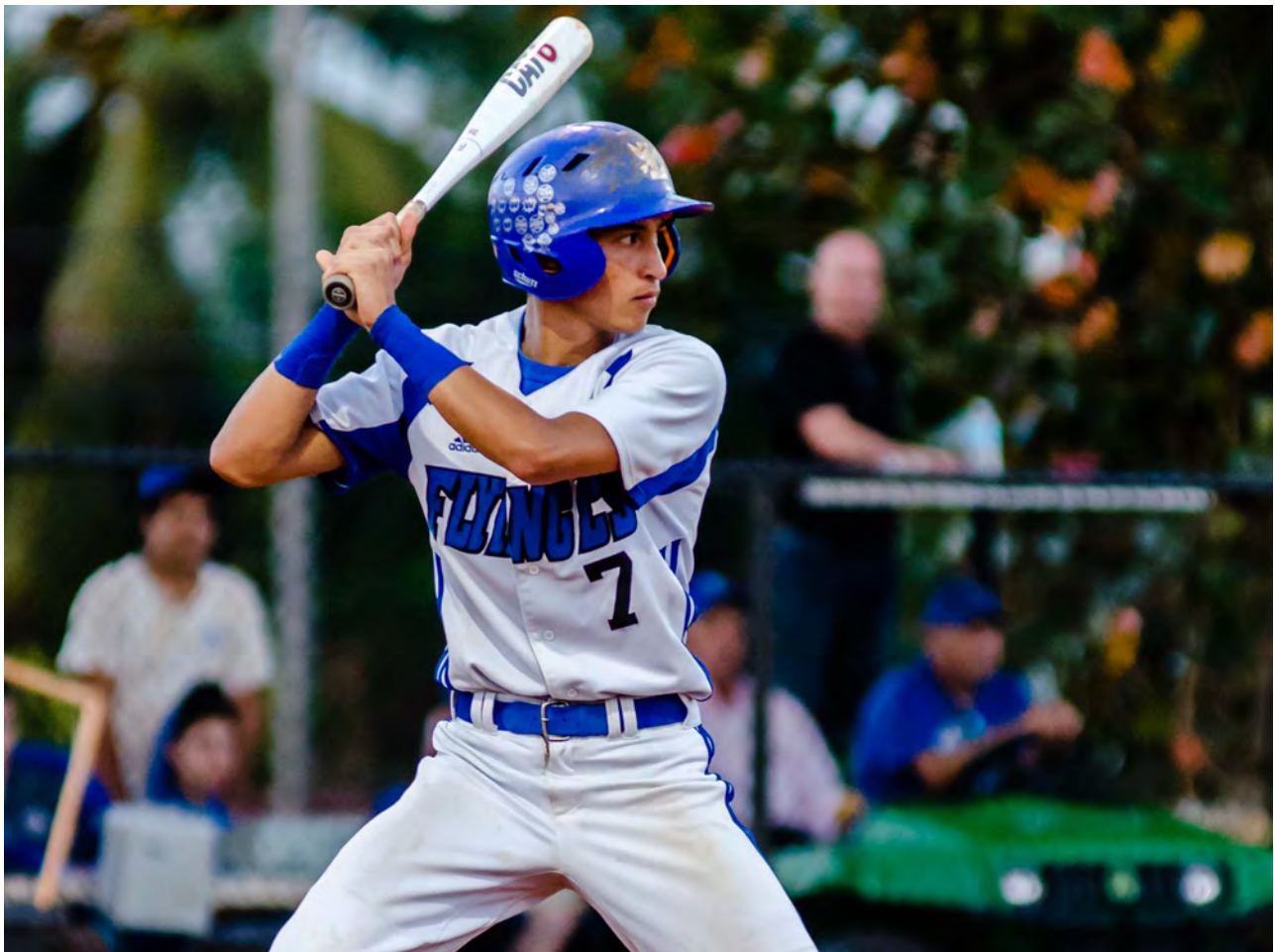
For the rest of the regular season, Logan kept his coach's advice and hit with a batting average over .300. His fielding was also good at 2nd base. The season ended and the all-star announcement ceremony came. Logan felt like he had a pretty good chance. After all, he had hit over .300 for most of the season. His whole family was there, sitting on the left side of the auditorium. The first one who was called was Whim Xivier. The list of all-stars went on and on. It had been going on for 10 minutes when it happened.

"Logan Alfán!" shouted Mr. Phandro, the commissioner. The left side of the crowd erupted. Logan's dream had come true. Beaming, he walked up to the stage. Savoring the moment, he took his place next to Whim Xivier and all the other all-stars. Cameras flashed from the left side of the auditorium. Their pictures looked good because Logan was smiling in every one of them.

"Now we will announce the manager for this year's all-star team," said Mr. Phandro. He cleared his throat and announced, "Henry Dolfox!" Coach Dolfox came up to the stage and winked at Logan.

After the ceremony, the two embraced.

The End





About the Author



Tristan Pinkham is twelve years old and lives in Southern California. His hobby is playing baseball on teams, at camps, and anywhere else. He is a two time Little League/ Pony League All-Star and has also been a Junior Broadcaster for the Los Angeles Dodgers. He lives with one brother, two sisters, his mom and dad, and his dog, Sky.





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