

Chapter 1

It was the bottom of the last inning of the championship game. My team, the Raging Bulls, was up against the Red-Hot Devils. The Red-Hot Devils were ahead 4–5. I was on second base, waiting for Kimberly Sacks, our best hitter, to come to bat. We had two outs already. If we got one more out, the game would be over — the whole season would be over — and my team would lose.

Sweat dripped down my forehead. My heart thundered in my eardrums. I'd never been in a championship game before. My team had never made it this far. But we were going to win. I knew it.

I crouched low as Kimberly walked to the plate. I glared at Jamie Redmond, the meanest pitcher in the league.

Kimberly got into position. She brought her bat up to her shoulder.

Jamie Redmond just stood there.

“Throw the ball already,” I muttered as I inched away from second base.

Jamie whirled around suddenly and tossed the ball to the second baseman, but I was already back, my foot on the plate. *Too late*, I thought. *Ha ha*.

Kimberly got ready again. She looked like a statue of baseballness. My heart twittered. Kimberly was going to whack that ball so hard, it would be a homer, and she and I would fly into home plate for the victory. The score would be 6–5. The Raging Bulls would win!

Jamie threw. Kimberly swung.

She missed.

“Strike!” the umpire called.

“Ha!” the second baseman next to me shouted.

“That’s okay, Kimberly!” I hollered. “Next one’s yours!”