

How I Proved Myself to Play Baseball

One second I was in Ohio living with my mom and the next, I was standing alone on a train going to Louisiana. I was traveling lightly with nothing but a briefcase filled with the necessities I need and another with dry food, photo albums, and books. But underneath all that junk is my most treasured possession which wouldn't be weird for a boy, but for a girl like me... well, to put it nicely, it would definitely be inappropriate. My baseball attire which was given to me by my late father when I was seven. After Father died, Mother would just sit in front of the fireplace with her knitting tools and silently cry her heart out. Everyday after private school, I would go to the grocery store to make some money. Being an only child was kind of tough. Then a few days ago, Mother declared that she was well and that I, Marisa Gardenfield, had to go do something useful with my life. She told me that I was going to live with my grandparents for a while. What she did not mention to me was that I would have to prove that I am astounding in baseball.

Grandpa and Grandma kissed both my cheeks before sending me on my way to school. My new school is called Magrahinderth Middle School which had me doubling over with laughter the first time I heard the name. As I stepped into my first class, I was greeted by a friendly smile from a young aged man. He introduced me to the class which was filled with kids who looked like they were being tortured to death by boring speeches. This continued for 8 exhaustingly long periods and finally, the bell rang as the clock struck 4. Everyone got up and rushed to the door and I was no exception. I sprinted all the way to the football field, a flyer in hand, and a wide grin plastered on my face. Earlier that day I'd found a lone flyer lying on the floor and it immediately caught my attention. It said, "Baseball tryouts are today. Anyone and Everyone is welcome but know that if you make the team, you have to be committed to do your best. Come to the football field after school. Good Luck." I thought that this day couldn't get any better. I was certainly and most definitely wrong.

By the time I reached the football field, it looked as if tryouts had already begun. Boys were either warming up or stretching but to the looks of it, there was not a single girl. Out to the side, a man who was probably in his fifties held a clipboard in one hand and was viciously writing down notes. I dropped my backpack and went to the coach to introduce myself. When I went up to him, he looked at me like I was a low peasant.

"Move out of the way girl," he barked. "I am trying to run baseball tryouts."

"Actually Coach," I started. "I came here to try out. My name is Marisa Gardenfield. On the flyer, it said that anyone and everyone can try out, so here I am." For a few seconds, he became silent. Then he burst out laughing.

"You?" He questioned. "For baseball tryouts? Are you insane? Baseball is a sport. It's not fit for you. Why don't you run along and go play with your dollies?"

That comment made me furious. Who does he think he is to tell me what to do? "Are you implying that all I can do is play with dolls?" I replied with a raised eyebrow. I smirked when his face turned beet red with embarrassment. "I know that I can play baseball, in fact, I have been playing it my whole life. Just give me a chance." I was practically begging.

"Fine. I'll give you a chance but remember, I decide if you're on the team or not," the coach replied with no further instructions. He handed me a ball and a bat and I knew that the bat

was way too heavy. I would have to swing a bit earlier so I could hit the ball on time. I went to home base and hitched up my skirt as I got ready to prove myself. A boy not too older than me went to the center of the field with the ball. He first threw the ball at me a bit low and I swung way too early. Coach called out, "Strike one!" The next ball came to me very high and I swung late. "Strike two!" Coach bellowed with a small grin. The last ball was a curveball which was exactly what I was expecting and the ball and bat met with a loud satisfying crack. I immediately dropped the bat and ran to first base, then second. Adrenaline pumped through my veins and my legs were burning but I would not give up. I risked a glance at where the ball was and right now, boys who were surrounding the field were chasing the ball. I sprinted to third base and then I headed for home base. Out of the corner of my eye, I saw that the ball was in the air and was in a straight path to the pitcher so I jumped and fell on home base a second before the pitcher caught the ball and I grinned with triumph.

I slowly approached Coach and asked if I had made the team and he just stared at me in shock and bewilderment. I just stood there patiently as he snapped out of his shock and nodded. I grinned and said that I would see him at practice tomorrow. "You just gotta prove yourself to get what you deserve," I thought, "and no matter what, you absolutely can not give up."