

"No One Could Hit It"

by charlie poet

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Roles

Narrator: All knowing invisible voice

Charlie Poet: Thirteen year old left handed baseball pitcher for little league team the Cubs, wears jersey 13

Harry Carey: Real life world famous baseball announcer for Professional baseball team the Chicago Cubs (long since deceased)

"Slappy" Cronin: Left-handed power hitter, best contact hitter in little league

Steve Stone: (the sober one) Not so famous real life baseball voice (play by play announcer) for Chicago Cubs and long time sidekick of Harry Carey

Coach: Alcoholic baseball coach (construction worker)

Lance: Freckle faced red-headed first baseman and Charlie's best friend

Colleen Cronin: Asian/Irish smarty pants cutie pie (Charlie's first love)

Umpire: Tall, fat, bearded, aging alcoholic (fireman)

Dad: Charlie's father (Vietnam War Hero, PTSD, ex-con)

Scene: A little league baseball field. Lights dim until only one spotlight shines on the pitcher's mound at center stage shining on Charlie. The star pitcher.

Narrator

Charlie the pitcher (wearing jersey number 13) circles the mound after walking the bases loaded. He is trying to maintain composure by taking a few deep breaths as the next batter "Slappy Cronin" walks slowly to the plate. Charlie's imagination is running wild. One spotlight becomes two illuminating Harry Carey and Steve Stone calling the game from a booth at the front left of the stage.

Harry Carey

Hey Stonie this Bud's for you!

Steve Stone (Stonie)

Thanks Harry but it's 11:00 a.m. I'm focused on how Charlie is going to keep calm as Slappy comes up w/ the bases loaded in the bottom of the last inning of the championship game.

Harry Carey

Holy Cow your right Stonie what a ball game. Come on Charlie throw the curve ball no one can hit it.

Steve Stone

That curve ball is Charlie's bread and butter pitch but when he can't control it he sure walks a lot of players as is the case right now. Cubs up two to one in the little league World Series championship deciding game. The bases are loaded with two outs. Here comes Slappy the White Sox best hitter who Charlie has beamed twice already this game. Fortunately for Charlie and the Cubs no runs came from those mistakes. If any hitter in baseball can hit Charlie's curve ball it is Slappy Cronin. It's lefty versus lefty in the dream showdown to end the game. Will Charlie throw the curve or try to work the corners of the strike zone with his not so fast but very accurate fastball?

Harry Carey

Charlie, ya gotta throw the curve ball kid and strike Slap Happy out to win the game. C'mon Charlie no one can hit it.

Narrator

Just as Charlie is about to put his left foot on the rubber (officially resuming play) his coach calls time out, (perfectly interrupting Slappy digging his cleats into the batters box), and runs onto the field to talk to Charlie. He puts his arm across Charlie's shoulders and walks with him a few feet towards second base with their backs toward home plate.

Coach

Hey kid how ya feel? Ya know we got pizza after the game and were all hungry as hell so throw the curve and strike Slappy out, what ya say kid?

Charlie

I feel good coach but my curve is off. I can't control it.

Coach

Yes you can you just gotta focus. Aim for the catcher's mitt and place your fingers on the seams of the ball sideways like I showed you and throw it like a fastball with a twist. Just like you done all year. Your curve ball is why we made it this far and it's gonna win us the game. You got it kid. Now through a few fastballs and strike him out with the curve alright?

Charlie

Yeah coach, thanks.

Narrator

Coach trots off the field and play resumes. Slappy intimidatingly digs a hole in the batters box with his shoe to get situated and Charlie steps onto the pitching rubber.

Steve Stone

Allright here we go and the pitch...

Narrator

Charlie hurls the ball to the catcher who nearly stands up to catch it

Steve Stone

High and outside a fast ball that was clearly out of the strike zone. The count is 1 ball and 0 strikes and that was Charlie's fifth ball in a row and I wonder if coach is considering taking Charlie out of the game he has struggled throughout. Charlie's gotta find the strike zone soon.

Harry Carey

There sure are some pretty moms here at the ball game today huh Stonie? What a great day for baseball.

Narrator

Stonie grins and shakes his head. Ignoring, out loud anyway, Harry's remark. But Charlie hears what Harry said because it is all going on in his mind and Charlie pans the crowd with his eyes. He should not have done that because all he sees is Colleen. Slappy's very pretty sister, standing behind the batter's box and home plate eating a giant red Popsicle. She is staring right at Charlie. Everyone knows Charlie loves Colleen, especially her. And she loves teasing him.

Colleen

(standing on her tippy-toes with pirate smile, screams to Charlie) You'll never come to my party Charlie Curve Head!

Narrator

Colleen knew just how to frustrate Charlie Curveball, as he was known, and you could see it in his furled brow as he hurled his second pitch.

Umpire

(leaping from crouched position hollers) "Striiiiike!" (and immediately takes his face mask off, turns around and scowls at Colleen) "Either you keep quite or go stand somewhere else little Slappy Cronin."

Narrator

The catcher stands up and throws the ball confidently back to Charlie.

Catcher

Great pitch Charlie! We should have Colleen come to every game and make you mad. Throw two more like that and this game's over Charlie Curve Ball. C'mon!

Narrator

Charlie catches the ball, lifts his cap and wipes the sweat from his head with his forearm and looks at Colleen getting scolded.

Charlie

(whispering under his breath) That's it! I'm gonna marry her right after this game and keep her mouth duct taped forever. Except when we kiss. Ha! Cronin. Bout time she gets in trouble little smarty pants.

Narrator

Charlie circles the mound keeping his eye on the adorable teeny bopper who stares right back at Charlie and sticks out her long cherry tongue as far as it could go. Charlie smiles and looks away.

Harry Carey

Way to throw a strike Charlie this Buds for you!

Steve Stone

He's thirteen years old Harry but that fastball was the best he's thrown all day. One ball, one strike, and the pitch... A ball... Now the count is 2 and 1 and Slappy has the clear advantage, the batter's count here.

Harry Carey

Throw the curve Charlie c'mon kid your the best.

Steve Stone

With this count Charlie needs to throw the fast ball and place it well or Slappy will make solid contact he always does.

Harry Carey

Yer right Stonie. Throw a good strike low and away Charlie get the count back even.

Narrator

Charlie is flustered by Colleen, hurrying to throw the next pitch. The catcher notices and stands up and calls time and ties his shoes to slow Charlie down. Colleen is mouthing "Never coming to my party Charlie Curve Head" as obvious as she can so he can read her lips. She turns around and shakes her butt at him with the big red Popsicle melting all over her skid row t-shirt, down her dirty face and hands. The catcher resets and Charlie sets. He lofts a cream pie fastball right down the pipe. Slappy sees it like a slow motion dream and crushes the ball deep into the stands.

Umpire

Foul ball!!!

Harry Carey

Doesn't matter how hard he hit it Charlie a foul ball is a foul ball strike and the count is two and two.

Steve Stone

Well Charlie got lucky there because that pitch was right over the center of the plate and if Slappy Cronin hadn't swung a smidge early that was a grand slam to end the game. Now here comes Lance the first baseman and Charlie's best friend to calm him down.

Lance

It's the World Series Charlie throw the curve ball. No one can hit it just throw it!

Charlie

Alright I'm gonna throw it.

Narrator

Charlie thought he had lied to his best friend because he was afraid to throw it. His confidence was gone. His arm was throbbing and he couldn't control it.

Charlie

(to himself): All I need is one more strike and game over. Throw the fastball low and away and game over.

Narrator

Charlie steps back onto the mound and stands on the rectangular rubber and throws another pitch. Ball three.

Steve Stone

Well this is it now as Charlie loads the count with another ball. That was nowhere close as the catcher made a good play of blocking the ball in the dirt. The count is full now, will Charlie throw

his unhittable curve and will it be a strike?

Harry Carey

Boy you said it Stonie, c'mon Charlie throw that dynamite that's outta sight! That was almost a wild pitch Charlie throw the damn curve ball kid!

Narrator

Charlie catches the ball back from the catcher and paces the mound stalling for time. Nobody rushes him though the intensity makes time stop. Just than all goes dark but a spotlight that reveals Charlie's dad in a jail cell placed in center field.

Dad

Charlie how ya doin' out there kid? Lost the curve I taught ya I see.

Charlie

Dad hi! You watching me dad? You can see me? I'm pitching in the championship game can you believe it?

Dad

I'm always watching son. Always. Of course I believe it your the smartest pitcher in baseball and you got the best curve in the world. Now what's beatin' ya?

Charlie

My arm's killing me dad I shouldn't be pitching I can't control my curve ball.

Dad

What does Bruce Lee say son?

Charlie

To be like water and flow. Let nothing stop you, adjust to the course.

Dad

That's right son now be like water and flow. Just before you throw the curve see the ball flowing past Slappy and landing in the catcher's mitt. See it in your mind and see nothing else. Do not see Colleen. Be like water son and Flow. Let the universe control.

Charlie

Why aren't you here dad? You're never here.

Dad

I am here now and will always be watching you. I'm hear in spirit son just not in person. Now step up and say the motto. What is it son?

Charlie

Dad why does mom act so strange?

Dad

You will understand one day I promise son. Just know she loves you. Now do you remember our motto?

Charlie

Of course I remember dad, never forget it, "Throw with flow."

Dad

That's right son. "Throw with flow." Now step on that mound and strike him out. Throw the curve. No one can hit it.

Charlie

Thanks dad.

Narrator

Charlie quickly pulls the teardrop from his eye and throws it to the ground like a bug. The spotlight fades from his father's jail cell in center field and all eyes and the only spotlight stay focused on Charlie for duration of the play.

Harry Carey

(speaking from the darkness now) C'mon Charlie throw the curve!

Steve Stone

(in the dark as well) Now or never Charlie, pitching rule number one is when in doubt throw your best pitch. Here comes the wind up, and the pitch...

Narrator

Charlie hurls the curve ball. Just like his father said. He imagines the ball passing Slappy and landing in the catchers mitt. Let everything go. Let the universe control and flow like water.

Harry Carey

Holy Cow he struck him out! He struck him out! He struck him out!



Steve Stone

That was the best curve ball I have ever seen a 13 year old pitch. It looks like a giant lollipop coming at the batter and it is impossible not to swing. And as soon as you swing Charlie's curve drops clean out of sight like a tommy john knuckleball.

Harry Carey

Cubs win! Cubs win! Cubs Win! Holy Cow! Charlie Curveball strikes again and the Cubs are little league champions for the first time ever! Holy Cow kid this Bud's for you!

Narrator

Charlie raises his arms in victory and tosses his glove in the air. He runs in a circle than runs to center field and falls in the grass, rolls over and looks up at his father in the jail cell. A small light shows Colleen's face. She stares at Charlie way out in centerfield and squints at him in wonder. More than anything in the world she wanted him to run up and finally kiss her, but he didn't. She never understood him. Nobody did. Spotlight fades on Charlie Curveball. Darkness takes the entire stage. A loud crash is heard.

Harry Carey

Stonie help! I've fallen and I can't get up. Holy Cow! Where are you Stonie I can't see a thing.

Steve Stone

Hey Harry this Bud's for you.

Narrator

All noise fades now including the roar of the crowd except for the voice of Charlie. Who was still laying in center field laughing out loud and whispering to his father's ghost.

Charlie

No one could hit it dad. All year long. No one could hit it.