

THE GREATEST GIRLS' SOFTBALL TEAM

By Robert Nersesian

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Dedication

This play is dedicated to Allyn Sitjar, Artistic Director of The All Kids Theatre of Sussex County. The play was first produced by the All Kids Theatre of Sussex County, Sparta, N.J., at the Andover United Methodist Church on February 7, 1986. The production was directed by Lavinia Plonka.

The Playwright

Story of the Play

A hilarious calisthenics session, funny prayers to the Goddess of Softball, and a mimed ball game that's as exciting as any real one provide the comedy in this poignant one-act. Al's Pizza Pounders haven't won a game all season and it doesn't help when Dabney is taunted about her "secret," that her father is in prison. An unlikely friendship keeps Dabney from quitting and helps the team win the final game.

CAST OF CHARACTERS
(1 M, 11 W)

AL'S PIZZA POUNDERS

DABNEY: Third base, about 14 years old.
STONER: Shortstop, about 13.
MORELLI: Second base, 7 or 8.
JANKOWSKI: Pitcher, 13 or 14.
LOGAN: First base and captain of the team, 15 or 16.
SHEILA: Catcher, 13.
MARTIN: Left field, 12 or 13.
SANDERS: Center field, 12 or 13.
WILLIAMS: Right field, 12 or 13.
SIEVERS: Short center field, 10 or 11.

OGDENSBURG RANGERS

O'BRIAN: Catcher and co-captain, 13 or 14.
SWEENEY: Pitcher and co-captain, 13 or 14.

THE GODDESS OF SOFTBALL

SETTING

A softball diamond in Sussex County, New Jersey. An old time version of "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" is heard just before the house LIGHTS are dimmed. The stage LIGHTS come up and the SONG fades out.

When the play begins, there is the sound of a number of girls shouting offstage. Something frantic is happening, something that should be prevented. Some girls are shouting "Sheila, cut it out!" , "Hey, watch it!" , "She didn't mean it!" , "C'mon, you guys!", etc. Suddenly DABNEY runs on stage carrying a bat, followed by SHEILA. The crowd of girls for the "Al's Pizza Pounders" softball team. Dabney whirls around and threatens Sheila with the bat. Sheila stops in her tracks. It's a standoff, with Sheila being restrained by the rest of the team and Dabney standing five paces away, bat raised.

Scene 1

DABNEY: C'mon you turkey. I dare you! Come a little closer!

SHEILA: I will if these turkeys let go of me!

DABNEY: C'mon, you chicken!

SHEILA: Who's a chicken, you turkey!

DABNEY: You are, turkey!

SHEILA: Let go of me, you turkeys, so I can kill her!

THE GIRLS: No way! Hold onto her! Sheila, c'mon! Dabney, put down the bat!

DABNEY: That's a good idea. Why don't you let go of her so I can knock her head over the fence.

SHEILA: If you did, it would be the first time you ever hit anything out of the infield ... TURKEY, TURKEY, TURKEY!!!!!!!

(SHEILA breaks loose of the girls, runs to DABNEY and grabs her bat. Both of them have it now. One is trying to wrestle it from the other. The rest of the girls descent on them, and everyone falls to the ground like dominoes. There is much scrambling for the bat and plenty of noise. LOGAN enters; she is captain of the team and seems sure of herself.)

LOGAN: What's goin' on? Hey, cut it out. I said ... *SHE either whistles through her fingers or blows a whistle attached to a cord around her neck. EVERYONE stops and pays attention to her.* I said get up! *(EVERYONE gets up except SHEILA and DABNEY.)* I said get up! *(SHEILA and DABNEY get up.)* You are the worst ... you are the worst ... YOU ARE THE WORST SOFTBALL TEAM IN SUSSEX COUNTY. Look at you. Twelve games played, twelve games lost. I mean ... I mean, I'm just so embarrassed. I can't even walk down the halls at school without people pointing at me and saying, "There she goes, the captain of Al's Pizza Pounders. How's it going, Miss Pepperoni?" They know how bad you guys are. Does anyone remember the game against Stillwater?

WILLIAMS: (*Quietly.*) Yeah.

LOGAN: Gee, Williams that's the most alert I've ever heard you sound. What was the score?

WILLIAMS: Sixty-four to nothing.

LOGAN: And would it be a strain if you told everyone what last week's score against Branchville was?

WILLIAMS: Uh ... uh.

LOGAN: I knew you'd get tired quick.

JANKOWSKI: I know. I know.

LOGAN: Lay it on me, Jankowski.

JANKOWSKI: Thirty-eight to nothing.

LOGAN: You hear that everyone? Thirty-eight to nothing.

JANKOWSKI: So we're getting better, huh?

LOGAN: What?

JANKOWSKI: We're getting better. We didn't get beat as bad. Soon we'll win, huh?

DABNEY: Sure, Jankowski, by the time you're a grandma.

(Some of the GIRLS snicker.)

LOGAN: Shut up! Dabney, you think you're really cool, don't you. For someone who hasn't gotten a base hit all season, you've got a big mouth.

DABNEY: Yeah?

LOGAN: Yeah.

SHEILA: (*Taunting.*) Dabney and her secrets ... no wonder she's so lousy.

DABNEY: Turkey!

(SHEILA and DABNEY get ready to square off again. LOGAN comes between them.)

LOGAN: Cut it out. CUT IT OUT! You want to know why this team is so awful? Because everyone is always fighting. What's wrong with you guys? Man, I mean ... (*SHE starts to lose control.*) ... what the ... Oh man ... you all stink ... I mean ... *HER head drops, her body slumps, she covers her face with her hands.*) ... I just want to be

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