

# OVERCOMING THE *Fear* of the Baseball

By  
**Brian Jordan**











Former Major League Baseball and National Football League player Brian O. Jordan shares another empowering and personal childhood experience in his latest literary offering, *Overcoming the Fear of the Baseball*. This episode in young Brian's life could have shattered his dreams forever. At the age of 10, Brian's father signs him up for organized baseball with a team called the Cubs. After establishing himself as a reliable and fearless teammate, Brian suffers a rare, but terrifying injury – a pitch to the jaw – which forces him to overcome a typical fear for a young ballplayer: getting hit by the ball. This inspiring story encourages children of all ages to overcome their fears, by never giving up. Brian Jordan has used this philosophy throughout his life -- in the classroom, on football and baseball fields and in today's business world. Find out what happened to young Brian and how this universally-understood experience helped him to later play 15 years in Major League Baseball.

Starbridge Media Group, Inc. brings Brian Jordan's childhood experience back to life with vivid illustrations. The action-packed pictures keep readers of all ages engaged to the end!



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Illustrated By  
**Starbridge Media Group**

**STARBRIDGE**  
MEDIA GROUP INC.

**Chin Park & Nestor Zerpa**  
**John Gallagher, Art Director**



“Overcoming the Fear of the Baseball,” is dedicated to the two people who have helped me overcome all of my fears, my parents **Mr. & Mrs. Alvin & Betty Jordan**. My parents have been my rock through everything. They have encouraged me to overcome any obstacle set before me by simply trying again.

My parents always told me, “If it doesn’t break you, it will make you stronger.” In my family, giving up is NEVER an option. I thank my parents for instilling this principle inside of me. Now I will take what my parents taught me and pass it on to my children.

Thank you mom and dad for all your support and encouraging spirit to overcome my fears.

**Love you!**  
**Brian**



## **Overcoming the Fear of the Baseball**


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**First Edition**





**When Brian was a little boy  
he loved playing the game of  
baseball. He and his friends  
would go out in the alley and  
play all the time.**

They would break off a broomstick and grab a tennis ball, using a brick wall as the backstop. They would draw the strike zone on the wall with some chalk. They would play just about all day, because they were having so much fun -- **they never got tired!**

Brian's dad decided one day it was time for Brian to play in an organized league with other kids. Brian was scared about playing with kids he did not know, but he also thought it would be cool to meet other kids his age.







He and his dad went to registration,  
which is where kids sign up for baseball  
and get assigned to a team.

His dad turned to him and said, "You are  
on the baseball team called the Cubs."

Brian's father pointed him in the  
direction of where the coach and the  
team stood. Brian then walked slowly  
over to the group of boys, who were  
talking and laughing.

"You must be Brian," said the coach.

"Well, get ready to have some fun!"

Brian smiled -- he **was** ready  
to have fun!





Brian turned out to be a pretty good baseball player, and he quickly became the team's **starting pitcher!**

When he was not pitching, Brian played shortstop.

Brian had no fear of the baseball, and no matter how fast the pitcher threw the ball, he seemed to get a hit almost every time at bat.

The Cubs played well together and won their games consistently. Brian had made new friends, had fun, and loved baseball even more than he had before.





By the fourth game of the season, it was pretty evident that Brian was one of the most talented players on the team.

During this game, the pressure was on for Brian to pull the team through for a victory. Brian was up to bat and the bases were loaded. The score was 4-4. It was the bottom of the final inning and there were two outs.

Brian could hear the crowd behind him saying, "Hey batter, batter, batter ... Hey batter, batter, batter ..." He swung at the first pitch, but fouled the ball into the stands.







Brian's teammates yelled, "It's all yours, Brian! We've got this game in the bag."  
Brian fouled the second pitch back over the concession stand.

With two strikes on Brian, his coach gave him a signal to choke up on the bat. Brian heard his dad in the stands whistling a secret sound only meant for Brian.

"Swhoo Swhoo Swhooa, Swhoo Swhoo Swhooa," Brian's dad whistled.

Brian knew this meant it was time to lock in and get a hit.





Brian settled into his stance and had his bat ready for the third pitch. The pitch came, headed straight towards Brian's face. Brian tried to jump out of the way, but just could not move fast enough, and the ball hit him right on his jaw.

"Oooooouch!" screamed Brian.

"Ahhhhhh!" screamed all the players in the dugout.

They could all feel the pain that Brian was going through. Brian wanted to cry, but he knew all the players were staring at him. They had begun to look up to him as their team leader, and he didn't want to upset them by seeing him cry.









As he held back the tears, Brian was sure his jaw was broken.

Brian was rushed to the hospital to see the doctor. The pitch did *not* break his jaw, but his face was pretty swollen.

Although Brian told no one, he did not want to pick up a baseball again.

He now feared the baseball, and did not have the courage to get back on the field.





Brian missed the next games because of the injury in his face. He could have played for the third game, but he missed on purpose, claiming his jaw still hurt. Unfortunately, the team was on a losing streak without him.

Brian made up different excuses for his parents about why he could not play. At that time, he said he had a headache. At another time, his stomach was upset. The team could not afford to miss any more games if they wanted to make the playoffs.







**Knock, Knock, Knock!** Phillip, one of Brian's teammates, was knocking on his front door. When Brian answered the door, his friend pleaded with him to rejoin the team.

"Brian, you have to come back and play -- we'll never make it to the playoffs without you," his teammate begged.

"The doctor told me I have to rest a little longer," Brian stated. Brian would make up excuses to avoid playing.





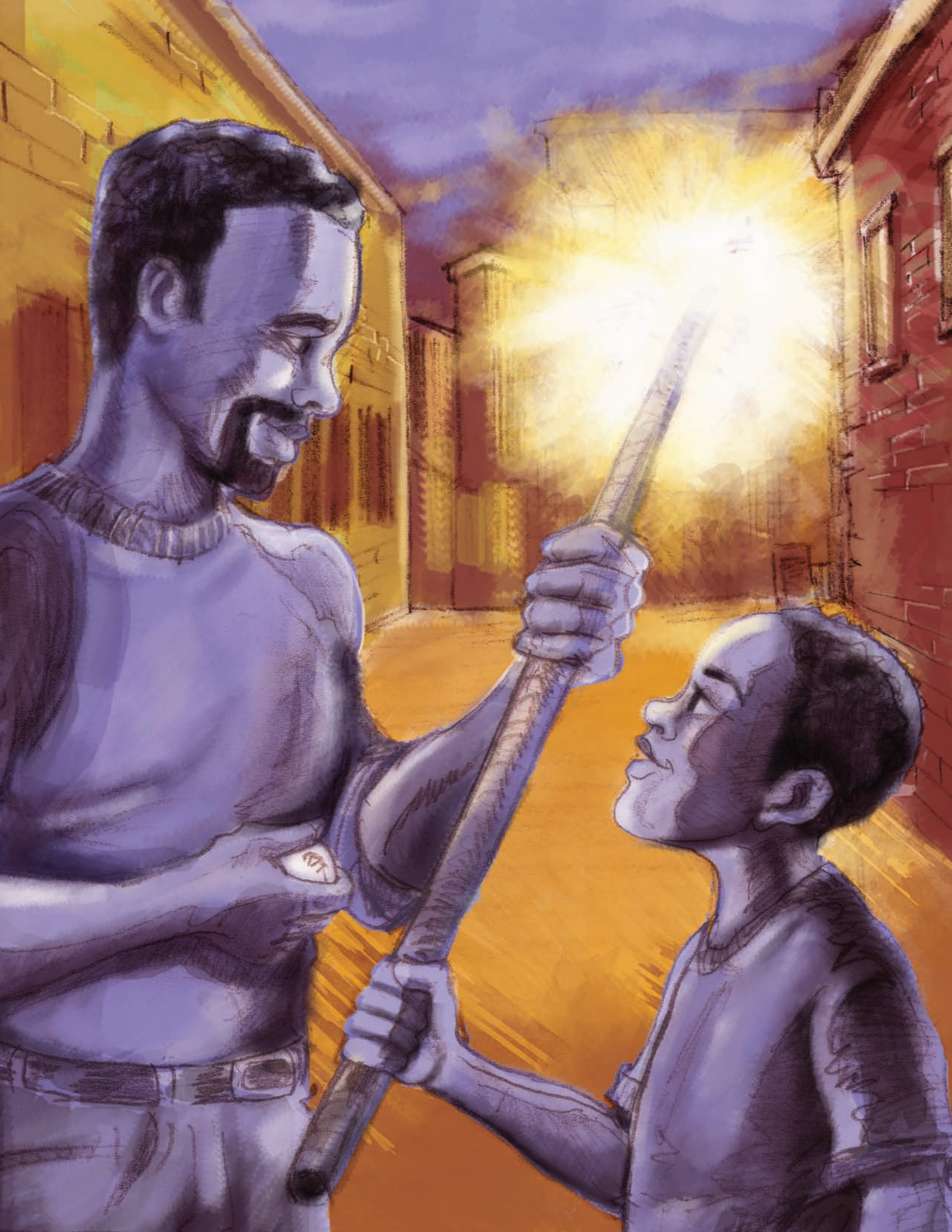
Brian knew he had to get back on the field and help his team win, but he was scared of the baseball hitting him again.

Brian went to talk to his dad, and told him about being afraid. Brian's dad put his hand on Brian's shoulder, and looked at him warmly, but seriously.

"If you want to be the best baseball player you can be," Brian's dad said, "you have to get back in there and swing the bat. Everyone gets scared once in a while, but to overcome your fear -- you have to try again!"

Brian's dad grabbed a tennis ball and took him to the alley. Then he handed Brian the broomstick. It was time to try.







While practicing with his dad, some of Brian's teammates saw him. "Hey Brian, you're playing again! Why don't you come play stickball with us?" one of Brian's friends yelled.

Brian was OK playing with his dad, but did not know if he was ready to play with his friends. Brian thought to himself, "What if one of them throws the ball hard towards my face?"





Brian's dad gave him a reassuring look, and Brian knew he had to get over the fear and go play. Finally, Brian said, "Come on guys -- let's play stickball!"

They played a game of stickball, and Brian was whacking that tennis ball everywhere. He was no longer scared. The fear was gone by him just trying again.



Brian went to baseball practice the next day and stated to the coach:

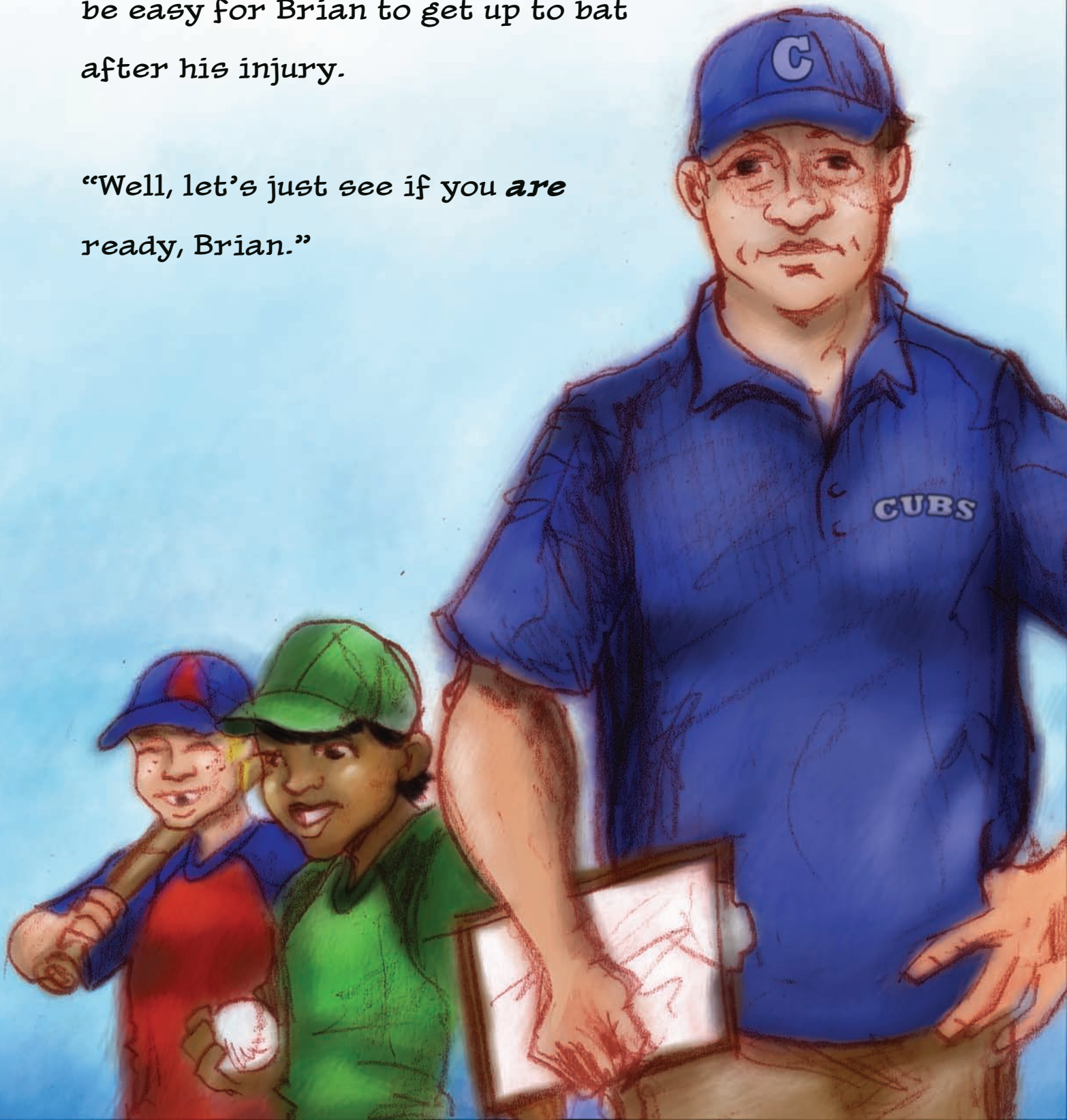
“I am ready to play!”






The coach looked at him with worry on his face. He knew that it would not be easy for Brian to get up to bat after his injury.

“Well, let’s just see if you *are* ready, Brian.”









The coach threw a few pitches to Brian,  
and he hit every one of them!

His friends cheered!

Brian could not wait to get home and tell  
his father about getting back on the field!

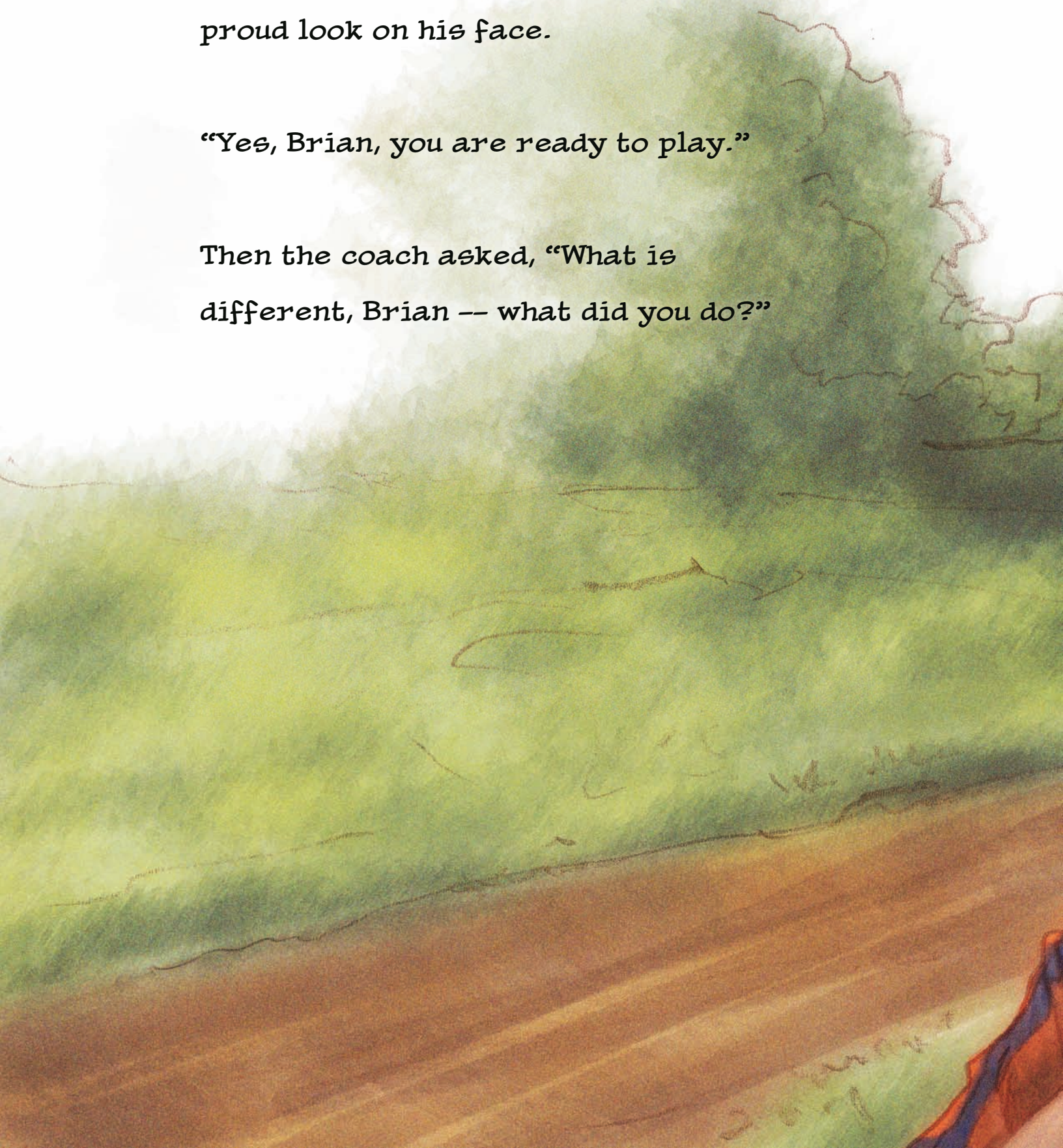
“Way to go, Brian!” someone on his  
team yelled!

Brian smiled proudly, and asked, “Coach,  
am I ready to play?”

Brian's coach walked down from the pitcher's mound, with a very happy and proud look on his face.

"Yes, Brian, you are ready to play."

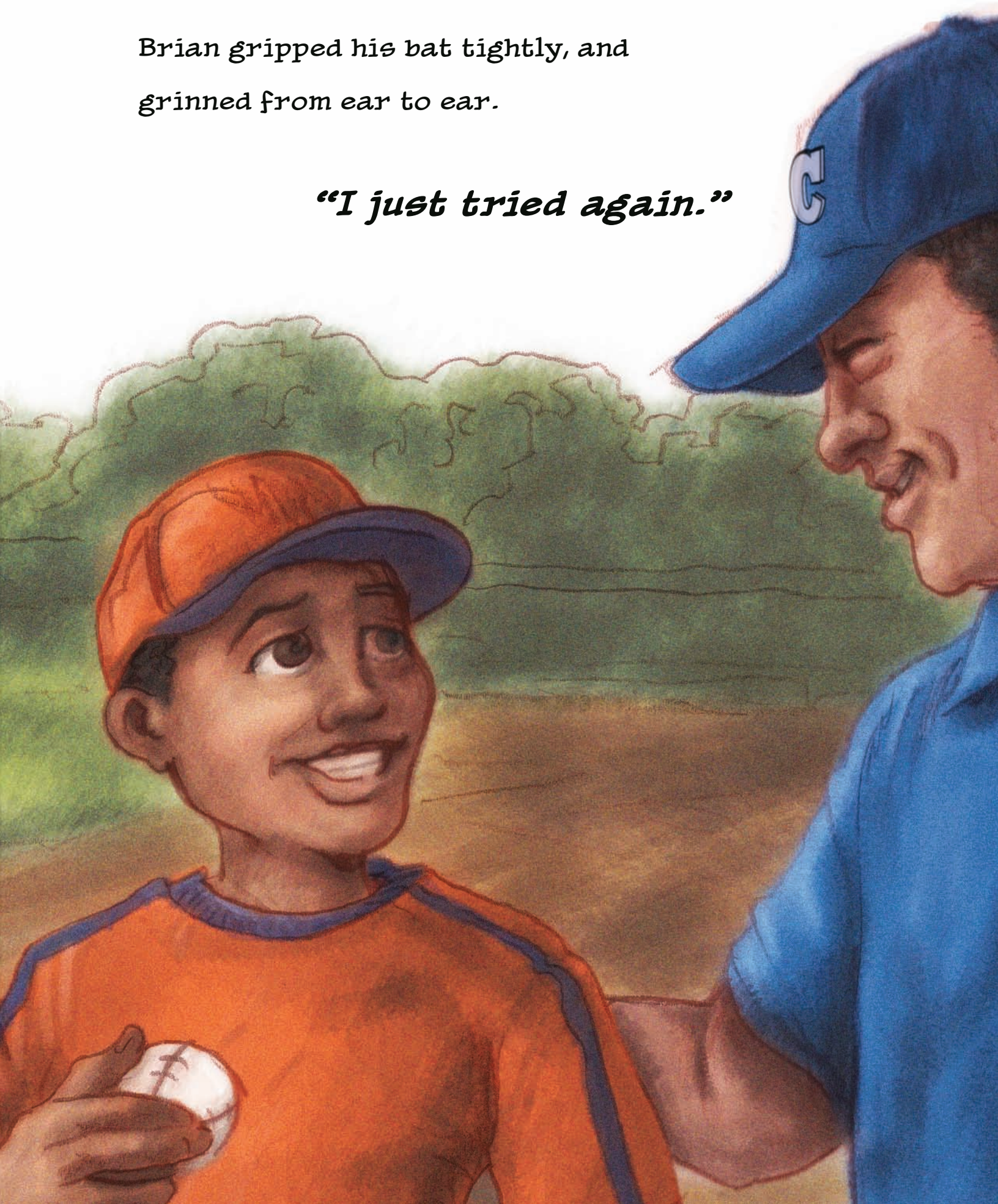
Then the coach asked, "What is different, Brian -- what did you do?"





Brian gripped his bat tightly, and  
grinned from ear to ear.

***“I just tried again.”***







**Brian Jordan** is a former two sport professional athlete in baseball and football, who continues to make positive plays on and off the field. The Baltimore native played for the Atlanta Falcons for 3 years and made his Major League Baseball debut in 1992. He went on to play 15 seasons for the St. Louis Cardinals, the Los Angeles Dodgers, the Texas Rangers and the Atlanta Braves. In 2006, Jordan displayed his remarkable talent as a writer by releasing his best-selling children's book "I Told You I Can Play." Jordan is currently an Emmy award winning sports analyst for Fox Sports South, Comcast Sports South and ESPN. Jordan and his four children live in Atlanta.

In 1998, he founded the Brian Jordan Foundation, a non-profit organization that believes "In every child, there is the potential for excellence." The foundation is committed to creating and supporting programs in literacy and health that improve the quality of life for underprivileged children and their families. For more information about the Brian Jordan Foundation you can log on to [www.brianjordanfoundation.com](http://www.brianjordanfoundation.com).





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From the moment Brian picked up a bat and ball,  
he quickly fell in love with the game of baseball.

When Brian suffers a rare but scary injury --  
a pitch to the jaw -- he is forced to face a common fear  
for every young ballplayer: getting hit by the ball.

Written by former Major League Baseball and  
National Football League player Brian O. Jordan, this  
inspiring story encourages children of all ages to  
overcome their fears, by never giving up.

