



Catching the Moon: The Story of a Young Girl's Baseball Dream

By Crystal Hubbard

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Now in paperback, the true story of Marcenia Lyle, an African American girl who grew up to become "Toni Stone," the first woman to play for a professional baseball team

One day in the 1930s, Marcenia and the boys she plays ball with learn that Gabby Street, a famous baseball manager, is scouting children for a baseball summer camp sponsored by the St. Louis Cardinals. Eager to earn a spot, Marcenia plays her best, but is discouraged when Mr. Street tells her there are no girls in his camp. Convinced that baseball is her destiny, Marcenia won't give up, ultimately proving her skill and passion to Mr. Street and her dubious parents.

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Catching the Moon: The Story of a Young Girl's Baseball Dream By Crystal Hubbard Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #22947 in Books
- Published on: 2010-06-30
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 10.22" h x .9" w x 8.52" l, .31 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 32 pages



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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Kindergarten-Grade 3—This anecdotal tale is based on the childhood of Marcella Toni Stone Lyle Alberga (1921-1996), who became the first woman to play professional baseball. As a girl, Marcella dreams only of playing baseball, while her strict but loving parents suggest that she stick to dolls and focus on school. One night she overhears them ruefully acknowledge the limited options that lie in store for most African-American girls: teaching, nursing, or being a maid. Marcella promises herself that she'll achieve her goal. Opportunity arrives in the form of Gabby Street, manager of the St. Louis Cardinals, who runs a free baseball camp for kids. He's impressed by her talent, but doesn't allow girls to participate. The story ends with her acceptance into the camp and her determination to make her dream come true. An afterword sums up Lyle's name change and her career, including the fact that she filled the spot vacated by Hank Aaron when he joined the Major Leagues. Hubbard's lively text does a fine job of capturing this young heroine's unquenchable spirit. DuBurke's balanced pen-and-ink and acrylic artwork strongly supports the mood and emotion of the text. Much like its winsome, pigtailed heroine, this heartwarming picture book will inspire and engage dreamers young and old.—*Marilyn Taniguchi, Beverly Hills Public Library, CA*

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From [Booklist](#)

PreS-Gr. 2. In her torn dress and street shoes, Marcella, who is growing up in the 1920s, bests many of the boys on her baseball team. But her father criticizes her "tomboy" interests, and a scout for a local baseball camp refuses to accept a girl on the team. Marcella vows to play hard and change the scout's mind, and she finally wins a spot on the team. An afterword explains that Marcella grew up to become Toni Stone, the first woman to play for a professional baseball team. Hubbard never clarifies which parts of the story, rich in dialogue and detail, are based on true events. She does, however, write with sensory precision that conveys the thrilling feel of playing ("the powdery taste of dust clouds"; "the sting" of a baseball slamming into a mitt), while DuBurke's textured ink and acrylic images emphasize Marcella's excitement on the field and yearning at home. Children, especially girls, will cheer for Marcella as she defies the narrow expectations for young women of the time and fiercely pursues her dream. *Gillian Engberg*

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Review

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Marcella Lyle wants to be a professional baseball player. But as an African-American female in the 1930s, she has many strikes against her. Her parents are loving, but realistic about her limited options. When the St. Louis Cardinals manager Gabby Street forms a boys' baseball day camp, he refuses to consider allowing her to join. However, Marcella dazzles him with her daring and skill until he agrees to let her join and even

supplies the baseball shoes she lacks. Hubbard [chooses] to present a vignette . . . [and in the] afterword . . . the reader learns the facts of Marcenia's real life as the first female player on a professional baseball team. [DuBurke's] acrylic illustrations beautifully enhance the text. --Kirkus Reviews

This anecdotal tale is based on the childhood of Marcenia "Toni Stone" Lyle Alberga (1921-1996), who became the first woman to play professional baseball. As a girl, Marcenia dreams only of playing baseball, while her strict but loving parents suggest that she stick to dolls and focus on school. One night she overhears them ruefully acknowledge the limited options that lie in store for most African-American girls: teaching, nursing, or being a maid. Marcenia promises herself that she'll achieve her goal. Opportunity arrives in the form of Gabby Street, manager of the St. Louis Cardinals, who runs a free baseball camp for kids. He's impressed by her talent, but doesn't allow girls to participate. The story ends with her acceptance into the camp and her determination to make her dream come true. An afterword sums up Lyle's name change and her career, including the fact that she filled the spot vacated by Hank Aaron when he joined the Major Leagues. Hubbard's lively text does a fine job of capturing this young heroine's unquenchable spirit. DuBurke's balanced pen-and-ink and acrylic artwork strongly supports the mood and emotion of the text. Much like its winsome, pigtailed heroine, this heartwarming picture book will inspire and engage dreamers young and old. --School Library Journal

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Robin Millard:

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