



Twist

Solo Baseball

Jimmy Prune stood in his front yard. He held a whiffle ball and a plastic baseball bat.

“Now up to bat, number one...Jimmy Prune!” he announced. “Last of the ninth! Two out! The Jimmy Prune All Stars need one run to win the game!”

He tossed the ball up. He swung hard. But the ball dropped onto the grass.

“Strike one!” he called.

Loud Larry rode up the street on his bike. He stopped to watch the baseball game.

“Keep your eyes on the ball when you swing, Jimmy Prune!” he said.

“Watch the ball, and you’ll clobber it.”

Jimmy Prune threw the ball up again. He swung and missed again.

“Strike two!”

Next door, Mr. Evans was mowing his lawn. He stopped to watch the game as well.

“Take a good, even swing, Jimmy Prune,” he called out. “You’ll hit that ball

if you keep the bat level.”

Jimmy Prune tossed the ball up a third time. He kept his eyes on the ball. He swung evenly, and—*whack!*—the ball flew across the yard.

“It’s hit deep!” Jimmy Prune yelled.

He raced toward an old sock serving as first base.

“Safe at first!” he cried. “Now he’s heading for second!”

He ran toward the towel that marked second base.

“Go, Jimmy Prune!” Loud Larry shouted.

“Great hit!” said Mr. Evans.

“The fans are going wild!” Jimmy Prune cried. “Jimmy Prune rounds second and goes for a triple!”

He charged toward third base, a bare patch in the grass.

A girl with bangs, braids, and braces rolled up on her skateboard.

“Run, Jimmy Prune! Run!” she shouted.

“Jimmy Prune is trying for a home run!” Jimmy Prune said. “If he makes it, his team wins the game!”

“Go, Jimmy Prune! Run!” yelled Mr. Evans.

“You can do it, Jimmy Prune,” called Loud Larry.

“Hurrah for Jimmy Prune,” cheered the girl.

Jimmy Prune slid across the paper plate home plate.

The fans fell silent. They watched him stand, brush the dirt from his knees, kick the grass, and shake his fist.

“What’s wrong, Jimmy Prune?” asked Mr. Evans. “That was a great hit.”

“And a terrific slide!” added Larry.

A woman in a white hat walked by on the sidewalk. “Don’t worry about those grass stains, Jimmy Prune,” she called out. “They’ll wash right out.”

“Did you hurt yourself?” asked the Girl With Bangs, Braids, and Braces.

Jimmy Prune grabbed the whiffle ball and plastic bat. He trudged toward his front door.

“I’m not hurt, and I don’t care about grass stains,” he muttered. “I’m mad because I was out at home plate...and the Jimmy Prune All Stars lost the game.”