A Place on the Team

A story of kindness, courage, and belonging



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For every child learning something new,
and every friend who makes room.

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A Place on the Team
First edition

Scripture quotation: Galatians 6:2,
King James Version (public domain).

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Every afternoon, a gingerbread boy in a little white cap stopped beside the baseball field.
He loved the crack of the bat and the cheers from the benches.

“Nice catch!” “You can do it!”
More than anything, he wanted to belong to that team.
There was just one problem.

Most of the children had played for years. He had never played at all.
When he ran, he finished last. When he swung, the ball sailed past his bat.

And when he tried to catch a fly ball...
Plop! It landed behind him.
He straightened his white cap and tried again.
Would trying ever be enough?



At tryouts, he met a boy named Ben. Ben ran like the wind and hit the ball far into the outfield.

“I wish I could play like you,” said the gingerbread boy.
“I’ve had lots of practice,” Ben said. “You’ll get better.”

While he waited for his turn, the gingerbread boy noticed little things.
He picked up a forgotten bat. He brought water to a thirsty player.

When a girl missed three pitches, he scooted over.
“You can sit by me,” he said.
Soon, the children saved him a seat, too.

On the last day of tryouts, the gingerbread boy arrived early.
He wanted to practice catching.

But someone was already beside the field.
Ben sat on the bench with his face in his hands.
“What happened?” asked the gingerbread boy.

Ben held up his glove.
The old leather laces had snapped.
“It was my big brother’s,” he said.

“Can you use another one?”
Ben shook his head. “The extra gloves are all being used.
Dad can’t get here before tryouts.”

The gingerbread boy looked down at his own glove.
He had hoped that today—finally—he would make a good catch.

Out on the field, tryouts were beginning.
He rubbed his thumb along the glove's smooth edge.
Then he held it out.

“Here. Use mine.”
Ben blinked. “But what will you use?”
“I’ll ask Coach to let me take my turn after yours.”

“What if there isn’t time?”
The gingerbread boy’s tummy gave a crumbly flutter.
“I still want you to have a turn,” he said.

While Ben took the field, the gingerbread boy gathered loose baseballs and stacked the batting helmets.

When Ben caught a high fly ball, the gingerbread boy cheered so loudly that his white cap slipped over one eye.

Afterward, Ben hurried back.
“Your turn,” he said. “I’ll warm up with you.”
“Watch the ball all the way into your glove.”

They tried again.
Thump!
“I caught it!”
It was only one catch—but one more than before.

“This team has room for players who are still learning,”
Coach said.
“Will you keep practicing?”
“Yes,” he said. “Even the catching.”

Coach handed him a team shirt.
“We’ll see you Tuesday.”
Ben grinned. “Sit next to me?”
“Now it’s my turn to save you a seat.”

That evening, he told Grandmother everything.
“Ben needed a glove, and I had one. But I was worried I might miss my own chance.”

“The Bible teaches us to carry one another’s burdens,” Grandmother said.
“Today, you helped Ben carry his.”
“Tomorrow, he’s helping me practice!”



At their next practice, Ben helped him try again.
“Watch the ball,” Ben said. “Take your time.”

The gingerbread boy planted his feet and lifted the bat.
He was still learning.
And now he had a friend to practice with.

The gingerbread boy still missed pitches. Some fly balls still landed—plop!—in the grass.
But every Tuesday, he went back.

He practiced. He encouraged his friends.
And he kept noticing who needed a hand.
That was part of being a teammate, too.

Kindness Is Part of the Team

A verse to remember

“Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.”
Galatians 6:2 (King James Version)

Think about it

A burden is something hard to carry. The gingerbread boy helped Ben by sharing his glove. Ben helped his friend practice.
What could you do to help someone this week?

A little prayer

Dear Jesus, help me notice when someone needs help. Give me a kind heart and willing hands. Amen.