



Margie Makes a Difference

Dawn Brotherton

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Dawn Brotherton is a retired colonel in the US Air Force and has been playing fast-pitch softball since the age of nine. Her Lady Tigers series encourages preteens to get reading and make friends through playing group sports. In the second book of the series, *Margie Makes a Difference*, eleven-year-old Margie Clark plays second base for the twelve-and-under Lady Tigers softball team. She's delighted to have her parents there cheering her on but can't forget that a big change is on the way: her father, an Air Force master sergeant, is being deployed to Afghanistan for another six months. How can she prepare for starting middle school and help her mother look after her baby sister without her dad around?

Luckily, Margie has her two teammates and best friends, Trish and Nikki, to keep her spirits up with sleepovers and invitations to go get frozen yogurt. She also manages to keep in close contact with her dad through texting and Skyping. Wanting to do something special for the kids on base whose parents are serving overseas, Margie and friends set up a softball clinic, which attracts thirty kids between the ages of six and ten. Eight-year-old Jake Grafton has a particularly bad attitude about being coached by girls, but Margie learns that his bravado hides deep sadness about his pilot mom being away and takes him under her wing.

Game blow-by-blows will be exciting for sports enthusiasts, but beginners can also use the glossary of softball terms at the end of the book to keep up. This plucky book affirms the value of hard work, team effort, and compassion. As Margie learns when she helps kids connect with their parents abroad, you can always use your own experiences to help other people—and volunteering gives you a great feeling, too.

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