

Sade Thinks Baseball is Just a Game

By [Paul Rhymer](#)

Announcer: *Well sir, it's late afternoon as we enter the small house half-way up in the next block now, and here in the kitchen we find Mrs. Victor Gook and her son, Mr. Rush Gook. This latter individual has just entered from out of doors and at the moment is lightly tossing his cap underneath the sink.*
Listen:

SADE: All right; go pick that up.

RUSH: I plan to leave again pretty soon.

SADE: Go pick it up. Call that civilized? —a monstrous big high school boy throwin' his hat on the floor like a pigpen? We got hooks.

RUSH: Yeah, but hooks is all the way off in the front-room hall an' you hate to have people tramp over your rugs so I should think---

SADE: You know I don't mean the front room hall hooks. Your hat can hang on the hooks in the cellarway.

RUSH: Yes'n a guy's liable to miss his step an' fall down the stairs. Sixty-nine fatal accidents of the nature occurred in Cleveland, Ohio, during the month of---

SADE: Oh, scoot. Argue, argue, argue.

RUSH: [*moving off*] Certainly been a fine day outside.

SADE: Hasn't it though?

RUSH: [*moving off*] Around noon it was just plane hot.

SADE: Uh-huh. Mr. Gumpox came through the alley an' I noticed he had his coat folded up an' layin' beside him on the seat of the garbage wagon.

RUSH: [*off a way*] Mom, I don't see any hook. They're all full of overalls an' aprons an' junk.

SADE: You'll find a place if ya look. There's squillions of nails there. Hey, what's your fathers an' Mr. Drummond doin' so much talkin' about?

RUSH: Where are they?

SADE: Garbage box. Just more'n wavin' their arms around.

RUSH: [*returning*] They weren't there when I come past just now.

SADE: Prob'ly walked home together an' stopped by the garbage box to finish their talk.

RUSH: [*almost up*] If they're talkin' about baseball they never

will finish.

SADE: [*giggles*]

RUSH: What they doin'?

SADE: [*giggles*] Glarin' at each other an' makin' signs an' doublin' their fists all up. See out the window?

RUSH: [*chuckles*] Uh-huh.

SADE: Looks like they're almost yellin'.

RUSH: Let's raise the window and listen.

SADE: Naw.

RUSH: They're talkin' baseball all right. I could tell hands tied behind me---

SADE: Why do they get so excited?

RUSH: [*chuckles*] I don't know.

SADE: Person'd think one had stole the other one's pocketbook or bumped into his automobile or something.

RUSH: Yeah.

SADE: Baseball's just a game ain't it?

RUSH: Well, yes an' no. It's kind of a business, too.

Professional baseball players go down to the diamond after dinner just like Gov goes down to the office. They got wives an' children an'—

SADE: Guess the argument's just about over. Here comes Gov toward the house.

RUSH: He acts like Mr. Drummond got the best of him. See the little quick steps he takes an' the way his face is?

SADE: [*giggles*] Uh-huh.

RUSH: That's the expression he gets when he comes home an' you tell him you've made arrangements for you an' him to go with Mr. An' Mrs. Stembottom to the Bijou an' see Gloria Golden.

SADE: [*laughs*] Yeah.

RUSH: Let's knock on the window and give him a jolly wave of the hand.

SADE: You just want to aggravate him some more?

RUSH: [*chuckles*] No.

SADE: [*giggles*] Ya do to. Lands, *baseball*. What is there to it to get so upset about?

RUSH: Oh, there's thousands of ins an' outs.

SADE: Maybe for kids. But grown-up men like Gov an' Mr. Drummond—what do they care?

RUSH: You just don't comprehend the National Pastime, Mom.

SADE: I guess I don't.

RUSH: See, it's the Big Leagues that interest Gov an' Mr. Drummond. Here we got a bunch of large cities all represented by baseball team. New York, Chicago, Boston, Philadelphia—
[door slams]

SADE: [*raises voice*] Hello there, mister.

VIC: [*cheerily enough*] Hi, everybody. How's tricks?

SADE: All right.

RUSH: [*as door closes*] I must of missed ya along the alley some place, Gov. I got home about two minutes before you did.

VIC: Drummond an' I saw you up ahead. We didn't holler an' ask ya to join us because we were in no mood for crude company.

RUSH: I see.

VIC: [*to Sade*] Paper come yet?

SADE: I doubt it. Boy very seldom shows up this early. What were you an' Mr. Drummond havin' such a to-do about?

VIC: When?

SADE: Just now by the garbage box. We saw you through the window.

VIC: What makes ya think we were havin' what you are pleased to call a "to-do"?

RUSH: Never saw so much arm wavin' in my life.

VIC: The arm wavin' you saw through the window will in no way unbalance the equilibrium of the world. Life will go on as before.

SADE: No, but a person watchin' would get the idea you fellas were about to have a fight.

VIC: That may come to pass one of these days. [*to himself*] The big boob.

SADE: Who--Mr. Drummond?

VIC: Yes, Mr. Drummond.

SADE: Are ya mad at him?

VIC: I wouldn't exactly condescend to get mad at a creature so handicapped. Mr. Drummond is short the normal quota of brains. Mr. Drummond moves helplessly in a fog of stupidity. Mr. Drummond, in short, is a halfwit.

SADE: [*giggles*] Did you tell him that?

VIC: I intimated as much—an' more—only I couched my barbs with such subtlety they went over his head like soft summer clouds.

RUSH: Baseball, huh, Gov?

VIC: How's that?

RUSH: You an' him were discussin' baseball?

VIC: One could hardly refer to it as a discussion. I'd vouchsafe a thoughtful opinion an' Drummond'd come back with a splatter of meaningless words boorishly strung together.

RUSH: But it was baseball you were talkin' about?

VIC: Yes.

RUSH: [*chuckles*] See, Mom?

SADE: I was just askin' Rush, Vic, how grown-up men can work theirself into a frenzy about such stuff.

VIC: Am I worked into a frenzy?

SADE: You acted like you were worked into something out by the garbage box just now. You an' Drummond both.

VIC: What did Mr. Rush reply when you quizzed him?

SADE: [*giggles*] He said he didn't know.

VIC: That would be his rejoinder when quizzed on any topic, I believe.

RUSH: [*chuckles*] Aw, c'mon, Gov, don't take it out on me.

SADE: [*to Vic*] No, but really. If there was a baseball eleven in this town an' your brother was in it or somebody an' a fella run down your brother an' his baseball eleven, I could halfway see why you might let yourself be upset. But these baseball elevens in Chicago an' around. What do you care?

VIC: Baseball, Sade, is a strong American institution.

SADE: Is it?

VIC: Baseball is a wholesome vent for excess nervous energy.

SADE: [*giggles*] Prob'ly is if you're fullback on the team or somethin'. But all you an' Mr. Drummond can do is talk about it. I always think of baseball as a game Rush an' the kids play over Tatman's vacant lot. Can't understand why grown-up men should lose sleep because New York beats Pontiac.

VIC: You can understand why grown men would be interested in science, can't ya?

SADE: Is baseball science?

VIC: Certainly.

SADE: I never knew it.

VIC: I expect not. However, baseball is a science an' a mighty fascinating one.

RUSH: He's right there, Mom. You take when, say, there's a man on first base an' no outs. O.K., the next batter'll attempt a bunt. That means hit the ball easy. In cold blood this batter's cuttin' his own throat. He wants to be put out. He's desirous of advancing the man on first to second, see?

SADE: No. The whole business is Greek to me.

RUSH: I could make it clear in a few minutes' time.

SADE: Don't bother. [*to Vic*] Is that what you an' Mr. Drummond were arguing about—the science of it?

VIC: Not exactly, no. We were tryin' to get together on a little investment but we couldn't reach an agreement.

SADE: [*quickly on the alert*] Money?

VIC: How ya mean, 'money'?

SADE: You're not gonna put money on the baseball?

VIC: I still don't get your point.

SADE: You're not gonna—send money to Chicago—to hire a

baseball fella to—kick a homerun or somethin', are ya?

VIC AND RUSH: [*laugh*]

RUSH: You don't know the first thing about baseball, Mom.

SADE: I know it.

RUSH: [*to Vic*] Imagine sendin' to a dollar to Lou Gehrig an' tellin' him to knock one over the fence?

VIC: [*negative*] Uh-huh [*laughs*]

SADE: Well, what was that about money?

VIC: I don't recall mentioning money.

SADE: You said you an' Mr. Drummond something.

VIC: Oh. Well since him an' I both are interested in the old apple an' also because we could use a little exercise now an' then, it was my idea for us to go in cahoots an' buy a pitcher's glove for me an' a catcher's mitt for him an' we'd play catch evenings after supper out in the alley.

SADE: Oh.

VIC: See, summer's comin' on an' we'll have lotsa time to play before it gets dark nights.

SADE: Uh-huh. Do baseball gloves cost much?

VIC: Oh, depends on the quality ya buy. I expect we could pick up the pitcher's glove an' the catcher's mitt both for less than ten dollars.

SADE: There's baseball stuff of Rush's down in the basement by the bushel.

VIC: Kid's junk. What we want is regular standard big-league equipment.

SADE: Um.

VIC: Won't that be kinda nice for me? Give me a chance to exercise an' loosen up the old arm.

SADE: I should think you could play with Rush as well as with Mr. Drummond.

VIC: Rush couldn't catch me.

SADE: Couldn't what?

VIC: Catch me. He couldn't hold onto the ball when I threw it. I've got a steamer that'd tear his arm off of I ever let loose with it.

RUSH: I never witnessed that steamer you brag about.

VIC: No. Because I never endangered your life by throwin' it at ya. They usta say, back in Dixon, my steamer would go through a half-inch solid oak board.

RUSH: I'm from Missouri.

SADE: Well—what was it you an' Mr. Drummond argued about?

VIC: That boob.

SADE: Didn't he want to put up his share of the money?

VIC: He wants to wear the pitcher's glove.

SADE: Huh?

VIC: He wants to wear the pitcher's glove. Wants me to do the catchin'. Imagine that? Drummond posin' as a hurler?

SADE: I don't know what you're talkin' about.

RUSH: I do.

VIC: Explain to your mother.

RUSH: [*chuckling*] Mom, here we got Gov an' Mr. Drummond.

SADE: Yes?

RUSH: They decide wouldn't it be dandy to a pitcher's glove an' a catchers mitt an' play catch out in the alley evenings.

SADE: I caught on that much.

RUSH: But here's the rub—[*chuckles*] ... both of 'em wanta pitch.

SADE: Throw the ball?

RUSH: Yeah.

SADE: Well, lands, when ya play catch ya throw the ball back an' forth, don't ya?

RUSH: Sure—only the guy that's wearin' the pitcher's glove gets to whirl around fancy an' wind up an' let loose with all he's got. While the guy with the catcher's mitt only has the privilege of catchin' the ball an' tossin' it back.

VIC: The point is, kiddo, that Drummond has neither that Drummond has neither the mentality or the physique to work on the mound. He hasn't got the arm an' he hasn't got the brain.

SADE: [*helpless*] I don't get it.

RUSH: May I put it in a nutshell for ya, Mom?

SADE: Yeah.

RUSH: It's simply this. [*chuckles*] Gov an' Mr. Drummond each want to wear the pitcher's glove. Neither one will even think of wearin the catcher's mitt.

SADE: [*to Vic*] Is that right?

VIC: Yeah.

SADE: Well, if you're gonna buy both things, can't you take turns wearin' the pitcher's glove an' the catcher's mitt?

VIC: [*obstinately*] No.

SADE: You mean to tell me that two great big grown-up men with offices an' families can jump at each other's throat over a thing like that—who gets to be the pitcher?

VIC: [*stubborn*] Sure.

SADE: Is that baseball, Rush?

RUSH: [*chuckles*] Uh-huh.

SADE: Is that science?

Announcer: *Which concludes another brief interlude at the small house half-way up in the next block.*



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