



Willie and the All-Stars

Floyd Cooper

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Willie, an African-American boy growing up in Chicago, dreams of playing baseball in the Major Leagues, like his idols. But it's 1942, and Jackie Robinson is years away from breaking the color barrier. One day Willie sits with the old men in the neighborhood as they spin tall baseball tales. Willie knows the game like the back of his hand, but he's never heard of Josh Gibson or Cool Papa Bell. "That's because they're Negro Leaguers," says Ol' Ezra. "Being a Major Leaguer is about a lot more than how good a fella is. It's also about the color of his skin. And yours is the wrong color." Willie is crushed. Until, that is, Ezra hands him two tickets to an exhibition all-star game between Major Leaguers and Negro Leaguers, and Willie sees firsthand how determination can change everything.

A beautifully illustrated tribute to the power of a boy's dreams, and the great gift that is hope.

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