



Take Me Out to the Ball Game

A Full English translation is available.

帶我去球場

Author: Kiya Chang **Illustrator:** Kiya Chang **Publisher:** Gaea Books

Date: 02/2023 **Rights contact:** bft.children.comics@moc.gov.tw

266 pages | 14.8 x 21 cm **Volume:** 1

Adaptation: A spin-off project from the TV drama

BFT2.0 Translator: Tony Hao

Take Me Out to the Ball Game offers a rare, heartfelt portrait of Taiwanese baseball, capturing the sport's authentic local flavor. Creator Kiya Chang, celebrated for her meticulous research and attention to detail, brings this world vividly to life. While most baseball stories focus on players or industry insiders, Chang tells hers from the perspective she knows best—that of a devoted fan.

Spanning six stadiums across six cities, this book weaves personal, intimate stories. From a daughter's deepening appreciation for her father—a beloved baseball announcer who retired early to spend more time with his family—to the family that runs a small eatery outside a stadium, it captures the love ordinary people have for baseball and how the game brings them together.



Author **Kiya Chang**

Originally from a tea-farming family in Chiayi, Taiwan, Kiya Chang now lives in Taipei. Since 2010, she has been serializing stories that explore Taiwan's Formosa tea history through the perspectives of British merchant John Dodd and Chinese merchant Li Chunsheng. From 2013 to 2023, she published *Formosa Oolong Tea* and *Take Me Out to the Ball Game*. The fifth volume of *Formosa Oolong Tea* won the 14th Golden Comic Award for Best Comic. Her work has received numerous accolades, including the Bronze Award at the 2022 Japan International Manga Award. It has also been adapted into a mystery-solving app and board game, and showcased at major events such as Angoulême and Frankfurt.

A Rare and Intimate Look at Taiwanese Baseball: A Heartfelt Portrait of the People Who Love the Game

by Chin-Cheng Hsu

Kiya Chang's most representative work to date is undoubtedly *Formosa Oolong Tea*, a monumental graphic novel that took her ten years to complete. By comparison, *Take Me Out to the Ball Game* may appear more modest in scope and scale. However, this does not make it an immature early work. On the contrary, whether judged by its script, storyboarding, or artwork, the level of refinement is so high that it hardly resembles the work of a debut author.

In the history of Taiwanese baseball and comics, *Take Me Out to the Ball Game* holds profound significance. Its commitment to realism, in both narrative and art, serves as a vital preservation of

Taiwanese professional baseball history. The stories unfold across a diverse landscape of ballparks—including Douliu, Hualien, Hsinchu, Tainan, Taichung, and Taipei—each meticulously documented. Rather than relying on imagination, Chang personally visited every location to gather reference material. This faithful recreation of real-world settings reflects a core ethos among comic artists. They take pride when readers compare the original scenes with the illustrated frames and recognize the artist's dedicated craftsmanship.

Moreover, the book adopts a strictly realist narrative; it eschews exaggerated feats of athleticism and miraculous

comebacks in favor of an authentic, local Taiwanese flavor. The roots of Chang's later masterpiece, *Formosa Oolong Tea*—a work defined by careful research into the tea industry—are clearly visible here. Her steadfast commitment to factual accuracy and her patient, detail-oriented process are already fully realized in *Take Me Out to the Ball Game*.

Second, the narrative is told uniquely from the perspective of a fan. Many baseball comics focus on players and star athletes. Occasionally, they might depict someone working in the baseball industry, such as a scout. But even then, the narrative still centers on the game. Chang, however, chose to tell the baseball stories she loves most from the perspective she knows best—that of a fan. This shift in perspective is exceedingly rare, yet it proves to be the most fitting way to capture the soul of the sport.

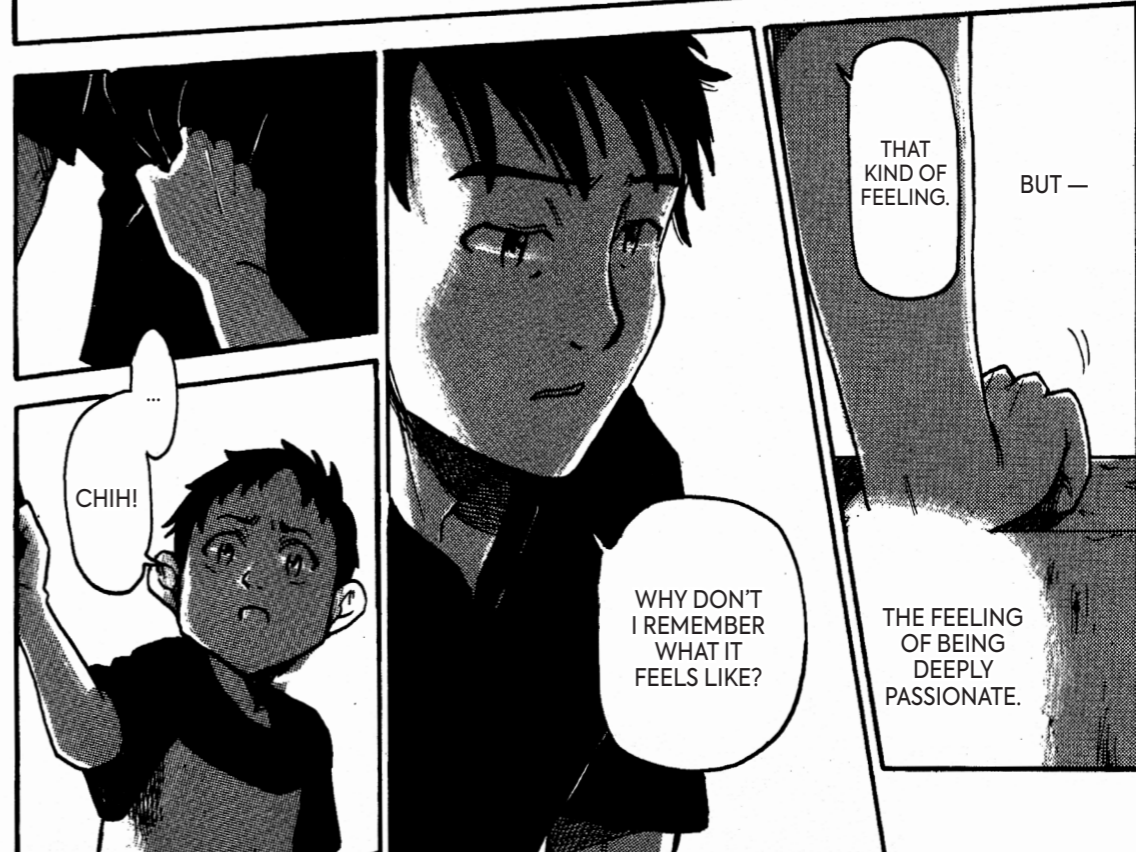
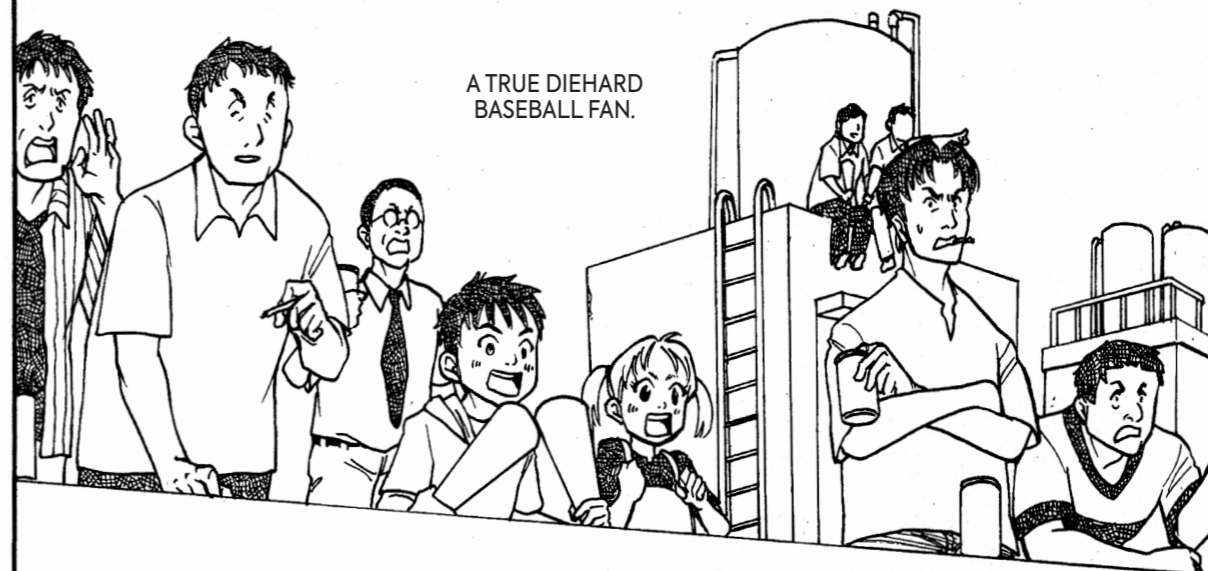
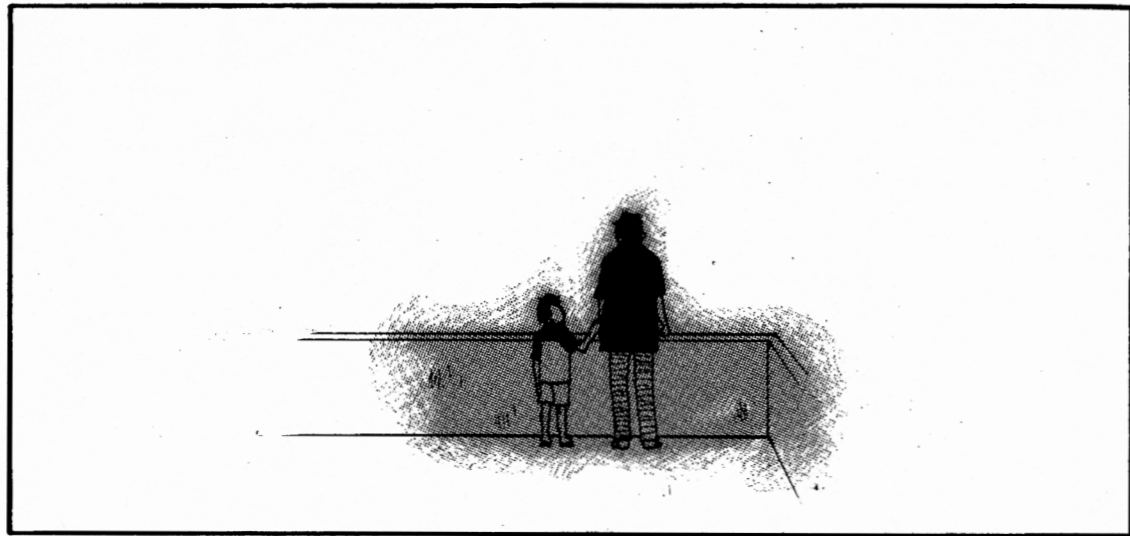
Third, the book expresses an unwavering love for the game. This devotion is particularly poignant given both the era depicted and the period of its publication—a time when Taiwanese baseball fans were often dismissed as blind or foolish. When *Take Me Out to the Ball Game* was first published, over a decade had passed since the devastating match-fixing scandals of the mid-nineties, yet the Chinese Professional Baseball League (CPBL) was still struggling to reclaim its former glory and public trust.

Chang's comics express a love for baseball that asks for nothing in return. At a time when countless fans chose to stay away from ballparks due to players fixing games, she steadfastly drew "Reasons to Stay." I was once a fan. When I first read it, I couldn't help feeling it was a bit overly sentimental. Rereading it now, I feel its emotional impact much more strongly. Because of this comic, I, too, have begun to miss the ballpark again.

Upon rereading Kiya Chang's *Take Me Out to the Ball Game*, I believe readers will discover even more layers of meaning within it. Its content has not aged a bit. Even though some of the locations depicted no longer exist, this only reinforces the unique pleasure and necessity of reading. Whether in the history of Taiwanese baseball comics or in Kiya Chang's own creative journey, this work is a joyful and profound accomplishment.

This afterword has been edited for the purposes of this booklet.

Chin-Cheng Hsu is a professor at National Kaohsiung University of Science and Technology and the author of numerous works, including screenplays, bridge books, and picture books. His research focuses on modern Taiwanese literature, children's literature and culture, as well as sports literature and culture.





BUT THE HOME PLATE BATTLE WAS ABSOLUTELY HIGHLIGHT-WORTHY.

YOU CAN'T BE THE KING OF LOBI!

NEITHER TEAM SCORED.

WHISTLE

HONK

...



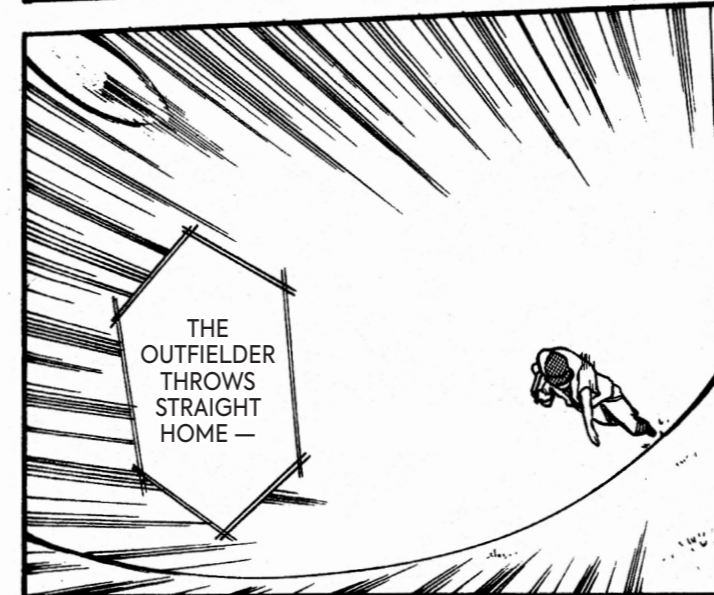
BASE HIT!



THEY'RE WAVING BOTH RUNNERS HOME —



INTO THE LEFT FIELD —

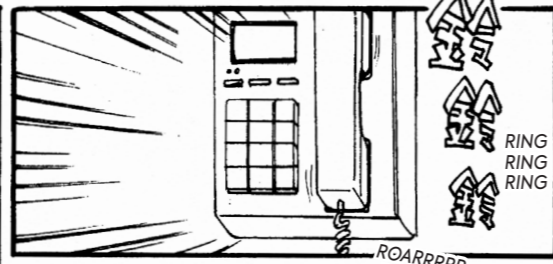


THE OUTFIELDER THROWS STRAIGHT HOME —



CHIH!

FAN!



RING RING RING

ROARRRRR ROARRRR

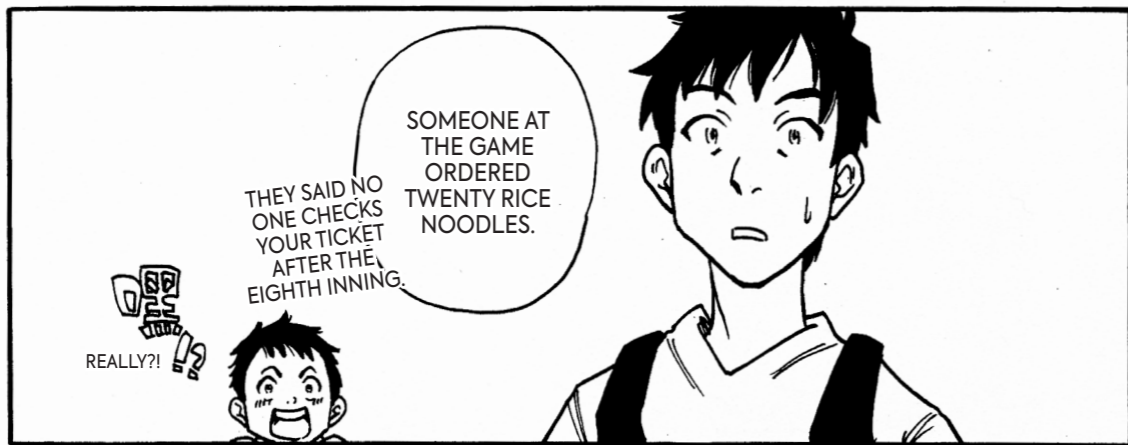


SO NOISY, I CAN'T HEAR YOU.

OH! OKAY.

CLICK HELLO?

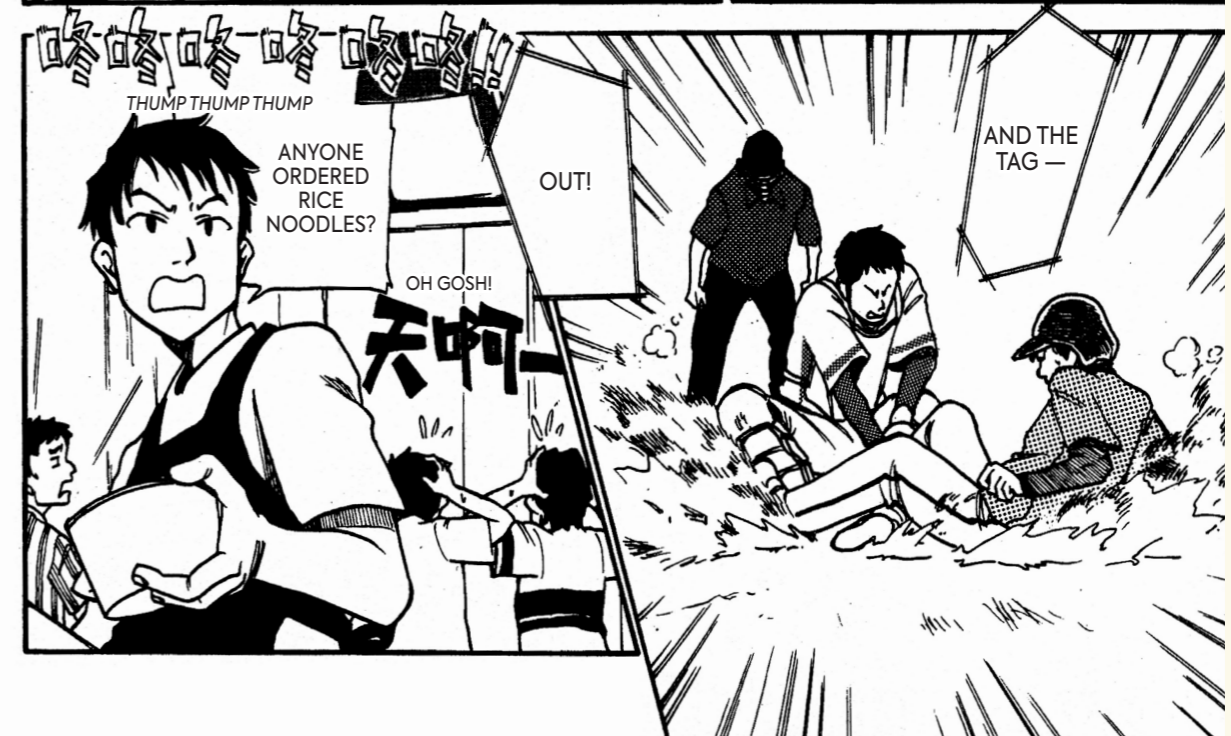
OH HI.



THEY SAID NO ONE CHECKS YOUR TICKET AFTER THE EIGHTH INNING.

SOMEONE AT THE GAME ORDERED TWENTY RICE NOODLES.

REALLY?!



THUMP THUMP THUMP

ANYONE ORDERED RICE NOODLES?

OUT!

OH GOSH!

天啊!

AND THE TAG —

