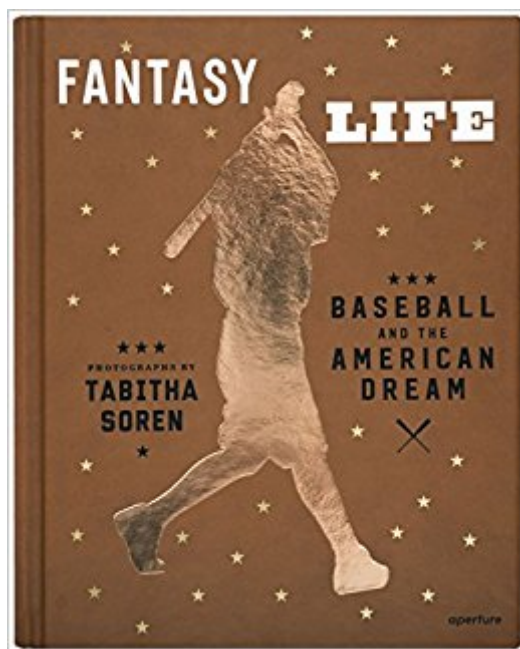


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# Tabitha Soren: Fantasy Life: Baseball And The American Dream



## Synopsis

In 2002, Tabitha Soren first began photographing a group of minor league draft picks for the Oakland Athletics — a group of young men coming into the major league farm system straight from high school or college. Since then, she has followed the players through their baseball lives, an alternate reality of long bus rides, on-field injuries, friendships and marriages entered and exited, constant motion, and very hard work, often for very little return. Some of the subjects, like Nick Swisher and Joe Blanton, have gone on to become well-known, respected players at the highest level of the game. Some left baseball to pursue other lines of work, such as selling insurance and coal mining. Others have struggled with poverty and even homelessness. Fifteen years after that first shoot, *Fantasy Life* portrays a selection of these stories, gathering together a richly textured series of photographs taken on the field and behind the scenes at games, along with commentaries by each of the players and memorabilia from their lives — from kindergarten-age baseball cards to x-rays of player injuries. Dave Eggers contributes five linked short stories that compellingly condense the roller-coaster ride of the minor-league everyman, from youthful pursuit of stardom through the slog of endless hardscrabble games, to that moment of realization that success may not be just around the corner after all. Additionally, a number of the featured players add their own real-life experiences of trying to make it to “The Show.” Together, these elements evoke the enduring spirit of this quintessential American fantasy of making it in the major leagues.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Tabitha Soren left a successful career in television in 1999 to start another one as a photographer. Her work is included in public collections such as the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Oakland Museum of California; Transformer Station, Cleveland, Ohio; Pier 24 Photography, San Francisco; New Orleans Museum of Art; Indianapolis Museum of Contemporary Art, Indiana; and the Ogden Museum of Southern Art, New Orleans. Her work has been featured in Dear Dave, McSweeney's, Vanity Fair, New York Times Magazine, Blink, Slate, New York, Sports Illustrated, California Sunday Magazine, and ESPN The Magazine. She is represented by the Kopeikin Gallery, Los Angeles.

Purchased the book for a friend as a birthday gift, I had a chance to look through all of it in a day therein lies the problem I think for not understanding the product in depth. It's mostly pictures overall and little back story on each person chronicled in it IMO. Buy this if you are a fan of photography really only there isn't much on the players themselves on what has taken place later on in life (or since "Moneyball"). I gave it three stars as some of the photography is good but if I had a chance to thumb through this is a B&M facility I wouldn't have purchased it and actually almost thought about returning it but I think it will be a nice coffee book table for him as he's a big A's fan.

A thing of beauty. Based on a great idea...following the lives of a class of men drafted by major league baseball. Wonderful pictures and solid commentary. It helps that I am an A's fan.

This is basically the photo-art sequel/companion to Michael Lewis' "Moneyball" - 15 years in the making!! If you are a baseball fan you will appreciate it; if you like to critique art photography you can go crazy in it; if you are an Oakland A's fan wanting to reminisce about the early Aughts team, you will love it (who remembers Mark Teahan?). A different but pleasing kind of take on the baseball book - like Moneyball before it.

Sent as a gift to my 25 year old grandson, a recent graduate from the Iowa State journalism program and complete baseball fanatic. He unpacked the box and set down to browse. Didn't put it down until he had read the entire book.

The player essays are very short and not revealing at all. The pictures are unimpressive except for a handful that Soren did not take herself. Very disappointed.

Not only are the photos very special (particularly the ones with players' family members), but I think many of the players' stories are rather poignant and sometimes almost heartbreaking. A special look at the lives of some baseball players, including those whose hopes were crushed....

If you are both a baseball fan and a fan of great photography or, really, just interested in ....well, life, then get this book. T

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