

Jackie Robinson

By Paloma Paez-Coombe

Drops of sweat that fall to the dust. The roar of a crowd, the smoothed wooden handle gripped tightly with slippery fingers, the gleam of black skin under a brutal sun. Who was this man, really, the one we call Jackie Robinson? I think he knew that it wouldn't matter, in the end. People needed a hero, not a man, and that's what Jackie gave them.

Born in the south in 1919, Robinson must have endured countless taunts, racist jibes, and inequalities growing up, and he must have been angry, but when he was offered the challenge of playing for the Brooklyn Dodgers when he was a young man, he took it, knowing full well that it would only make his life more difficult. I can imagine that the next couple of years were some of the worst of his life, but Robinson's struggles were not his own. They belonged to the countless people that he was inspiring, and forging the way for. He must have known that, must have felt the import of his figure. That was what he did it for.

Whoever he was, Jackie Robinson was not just a man. He was a figure, an idol. Not many people would have been able to do what he did, endure the pain, the threats, with just the knowledge that it was so much bigger, that he was igniting a spark that would become an inferno. Very few people were able to be exactly what the world needed exactly when the world needed it, but Jackie Robinson was one of those people.

The man may have died but the hero remains. Jackie Robinson's legacy will live on always, continuing the work he did while he was alive. Jackie Robinson will never stop playing ball.