“Strike Three” growled the umpire. I had batted zero over the course of 20 games. Not a single hit. Not even a foul ball. And I was fully expecting it. Baseball has always been my favorite sport, and I have played it since I was six. However, I have never been good at it because my eyes are different.

My optometrist says I have what is known as monocular vision. This is caused by a slight misalignment of my right eye, to slight to even notice when you are looking at me. But this slight defect in alignment causes me great difficulty-even in everyday life.

To have monocular vision means to be limited to the use of one eye at a time for central vision. People who have normal binocular vision use both of their central vision points, each seeing an object from a slightly different angle, to piece together a three-dimensional image in the brain that the person can interact with. For me, I used to have no way to judge depth. With this, as well as double vision caused by my brain trying to use my monocular vision as binocular vision, I used to run directly into counters, stub my toes every five minutes, and knock everything over. I was the clumsiest child anyone had ever met.

Thankfully, I got glasses with prisms to fix the double vision when I was around 10 years old. However, I had no way to fix my monocular vision. In order to lessen the effects and gain some sense of depth, my brain taught itself to use shadows, texture, and contextual motion.

I have always been worse than my peers at baseball. I understand the game and most of the strategies that come with it, I know the mechanics to make best use of my body’s limited strength to perform each action as efficiently as possible. I just cannot track a baseball as well as anyone else. This has caused me some frustration, as I can hit a ball tossed under even lighting but can’t seem to hit a ball in a game. I have only kept playing baseball because I love the game.  
 I love when the sun goes down and the stadium lights turn on. I adore the smell of the freshly cut grass combined with petrichor after a light rain. I love the satisfying snap of the ball hitting the glove. I love the stress of a full count, with the risk of striking out and the possibility of a hit. And most of all, I love the crack of the bat driving a ball into the outfield. I just can’t seem to make it happen.

Baseball is a game of failure. Hitting the ball four times out of every ten at bats puts a player in the hall of fame, but that still means failing to hit the ball six times out of ten. I have had an excess of fails while playing baseball, but that doesn’t leave me hopeless that I can’t play.