Million-Dollar Throw by Mike Lupica

What would you do with a million dollars, if you were 13? Nate Brodie is nicknamed “Brady” not only for his arm, but also because he’s the biggest Tom Brady fan. He’s even saved up to buy an autographed football. And when he does, he wins the chance for something he’s never dreamed of—to throw a pass through a target at a Patriots game for one million dollars. Nate should be excited. But things have been tough lately. His dad lost his job and his family is losing their home. It’s no secret that a million dollars would go a long way. So all Nate feels is pressure, and just when he needs it most, his golden arm begins to fail him. Even worse, his best friend Abby is going blind, slowly losing her ability to do the one thing she loves most—paint. Yet Abby never complains, and she is Nate’s inspiration. He knows she’ll be there when he makes the throw of a lifetime. Mike Lupica’s latest sports novel is also his most heartwarming.

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My Personal Review:
Not only did thirteen-year-old Nate Brodie have an extraordinary throwing arm, he also had a deep sense of compassion and empathy. So when his best friend Abby started to lose her vision to a retinal disease, Nate struggled desperately to support her in any way he could. When Nate’s father lost his job at the large commercial real estate company and both his parents had to take on multiple lower-paying jobs, Nate did his best to accept their new schedules and the difficulties they had making it to his games.

He could even come to terms with the placement of their house on the market because of the pressure his family was under, pressure his dad blamed on "never having enough money and starting to think you're never going to have enough again." When Nate won a raffle giving him a chance to win a million dollars by throwing a football through a target at an upcoming Patriots game, he realized the prize money could solve all his
family's financial problems. Everyone around him knew he had the raw talent to make that throw, but Nate started losing confidence when he allowed all the worries and the pressure to get inside his head and in the way of his magic arm.

How would he make that million-dollar throw if he could not even keep his position as starting quarterback on the school team? This riveting sports novel is bound to grab the attention of young readers seeking strong characters and an interesting plot. Thrown into the mix is an important lesson in economics related to the constraints placed by a tighter budget on a family's purchasing power and ability to spend time with each other. The book will undoubtedly meet the high standards that kids now expect from a Mike Lupika novel.

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