Girl In The Dirt

She lay in the dirt
In front of our bench
Luxuriant
In full uniform
Like a sparrow
Cavorting in a birdbath of dust.
Fourteen.
I had been trying to get her to slide all spring.
And now she just lay there
As the game progressed
Soaking in the sun
Talking to the other substitutes
 Flaunting her license to get dirty.
I almost said, Get up
Clean yourself off
That looks bush.
Then I thought
Why not support this ethic of grit?
So I sneaked a peek at her butt between pitches
The best-looking girl on the team,
The sweetest, most conscientious.
And just let the other team think what they wanted.
To my surprise
We won.
And they threw cold water over me from the bucket.
Some missed and fell on our fourteen-year-old.
She said
"I needed that."

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