

Great American Pastime

Sarann Spiegel

What sweeter Americana
than the boys in stripes, knees dirtied
by the red, red earth
the bat and ball and swing; looking up
because the Heavens may appear.

My grandfather and I sit on the porch
watching the world go by
and make up lives for the ants.

Once upon a time, in a country
of abaci and love on the first date,
bombs not yet detonated flew through the sky.

In the outfield Mookie Betts and JBJ dance
and the ball hurtles into the blue. A man
goes home to his wife and holds her
like a bomb. Did God make man
with such gentle hands as these?

The shaking finger points across Clinton
to children on rollerblades. Palms
press shoulders and sides under the Green
Monster's watchful eye. Knuckles scabbed
and weeping. Sunlight wets the green.
I love it all: the crack before the sky splits open,
same smile crossing my face and my father's and his father's
and his brother's and his son's and his son's.

We sit for hours and we watch. God
is in the stands tonight, on the diamond
and on the porch and passing by. He is the ball
in hand, heavy and ragged. The pitcher winds up,
aims. My grandfather lands, bomb touching earth.
The family across the way has had that dog
for three years now. Fire. Fire. The stadium is alight.
We glory in its burning.