

Clothespins

By Stuart Dybek

I once hit clothespins
for the Chicago Cubs.
I'd go out after supper
when the wash was in
and collect clothespins
from under four stories
of clothesline.
A swing-and-a-miss
was a strike-out;
the garage roof, Willie Mays,
pounding his mitt
under a pop fly.
Bushes, a double,
off the fence, triple,
and over, home run.
The bleachers roared.
I was all they ever needed for the flag.
New records every game—
once, 10 homers in a row!
But sometimes I'd tag them
so hard they'd explode,
legs flying apart in midair,
pieces spinning crazily
in all directions.
Foul Ball! What else
could I call it?
The bat was real.

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