

# 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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Source: Brass Knuckles (Carnegie Mellon University Press, 1979)