

# Play Ball ○ Baseball Haiku

COR VAN DEN HEUVEL was known as Dutchy when he caught for the Comets, a sandlot team in Dover, NH. In a memorable game against the Somersworth Saints he threw out two runners trying to steal second, effectively discouraging any other such attempts, and hit a game-winning homer. Lefty Allen held the Saints to five hits and one run and Bomb-Bomb Lewis made a spectacular catch when he ran into a tree at the field's edge to rob the Saints' power hitter George Pelletier of a home run. Dutchy's homer was a long drive into Willand's Pond in the bottom of the ninth to win the game 2-1.

In later life Cor van den Heuvel is the editor of *The Haiku Anthology*, the definitive collection of English-language haiku, now in its third edition. His own haiku books have won three Merit Book Awards from The Haiku Society of America. He lives in New York City.

"When Cor's up, the haiku outfield moves back."

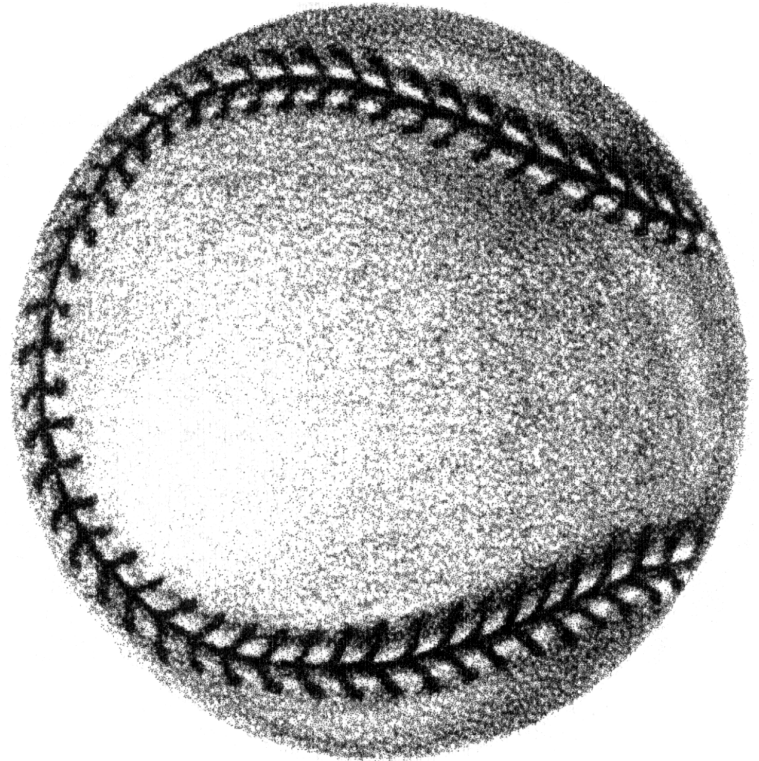
—William J. Higginson, author of *The Haiku Handbook* and *The Haiku Seasons*

"Master Cor is the Babe Ruth of American haiku."

—Hiroaki Sato, author and translator of many haiku books, including *Basho's Narrow Road*

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Cor van den Heuvel

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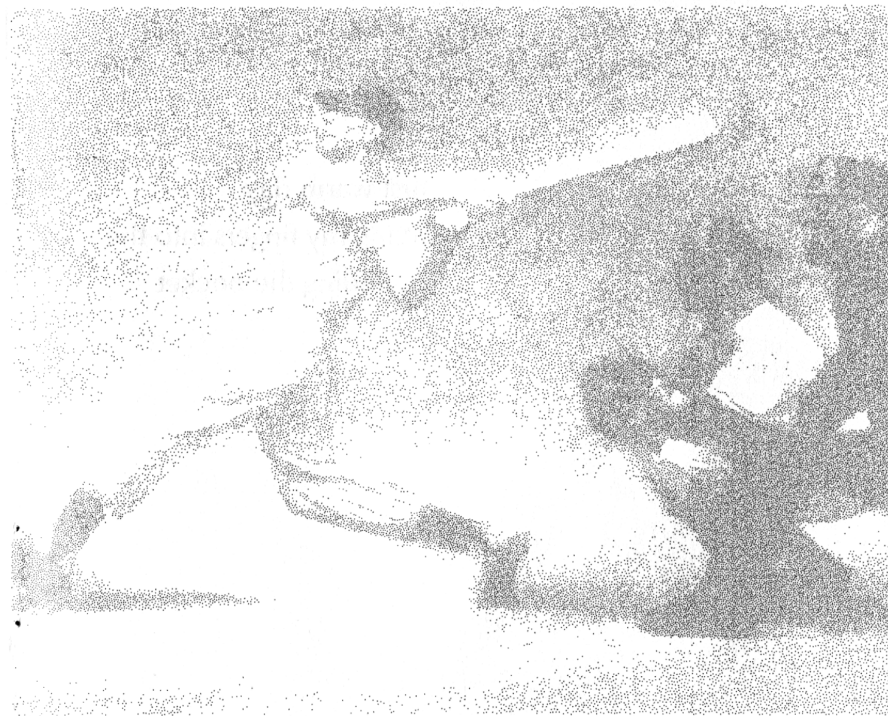
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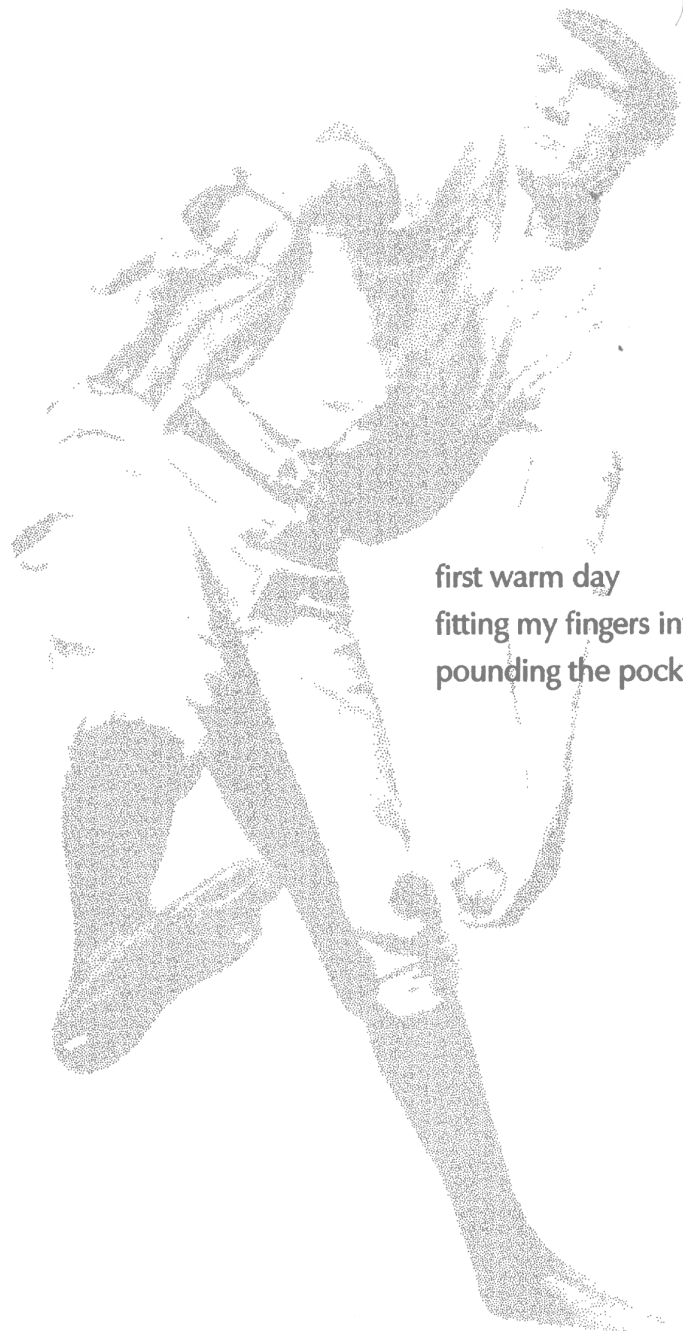
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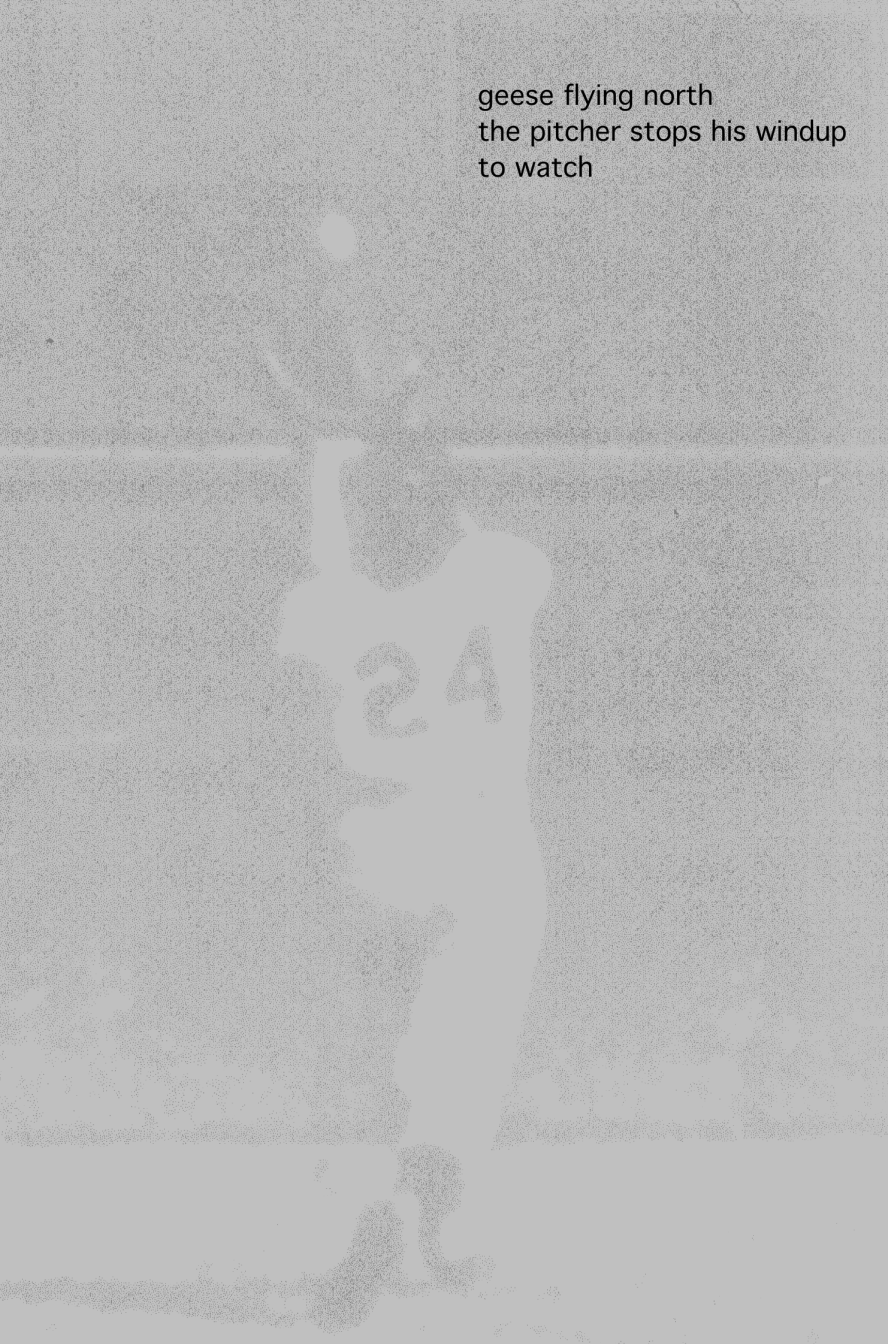
Cor van den Heuvel



first warm day  
fitting my fingers into the mitt  
pounding the pocket

lingering snow  
the game of catch continues  
into evening

a spring breeze  
flutters the notice  
for baseball tryouts



geese flying north  
the pitcher stops his windup  
to watch

through the blue sky  
the tape-wrapped baseball trails  
a black streamer

baseball cards  
spread out on the bed  
April rain





biking to the field  
under a cloudless sky  
my glove on the handlebars

downpour  
windswept spray blows across  
the outfield

under the lights  
hitting it out of the park  
and into the night

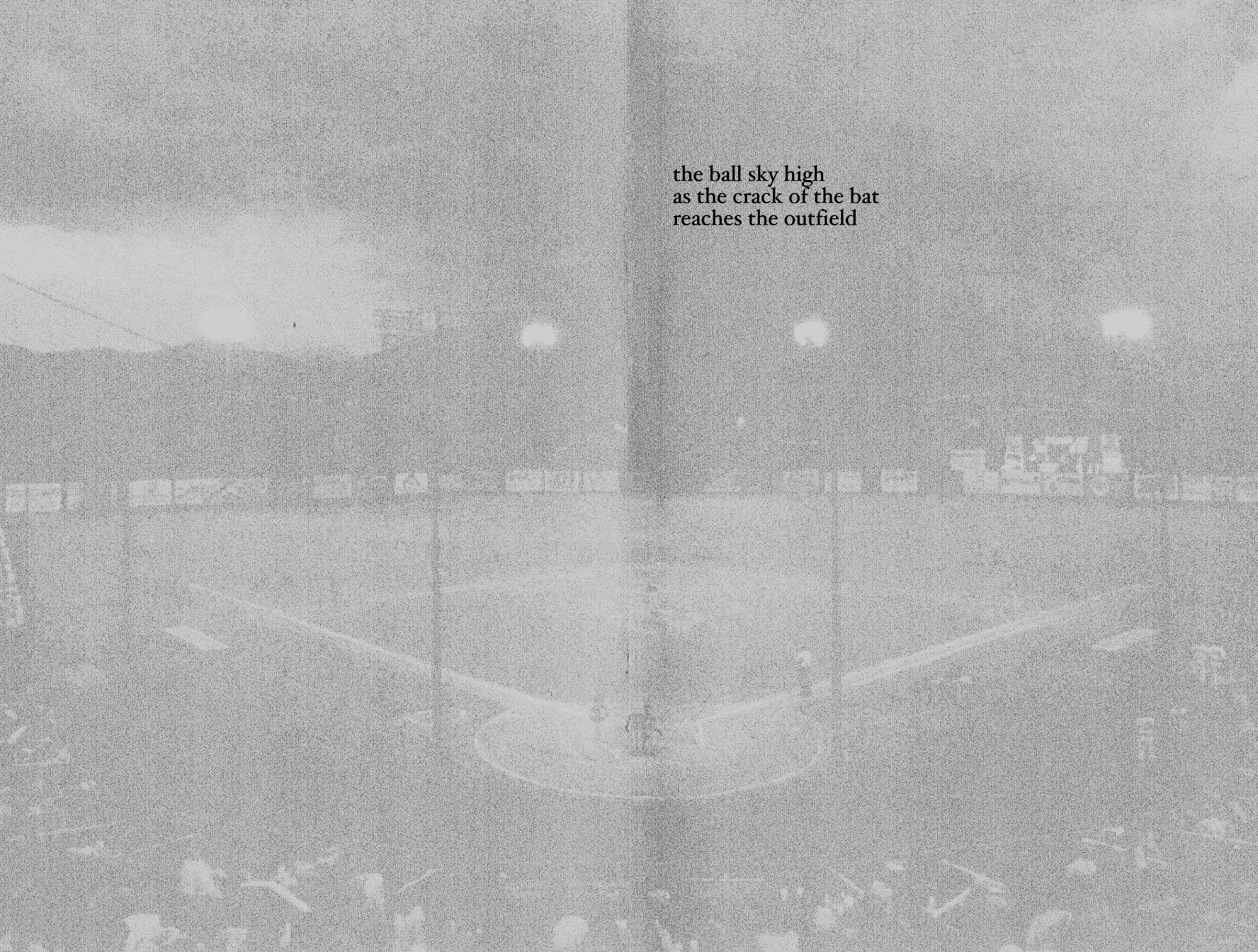
summer afternoon  
the long fly ball to center field  
takes its time

dispute at second base  
the catcher lets some dirt  
run through his fingers

conference on the mound  
the pitcher looks down  
at the ball in his hand

the batter checks  
the placement of his feet  
"Strike One!"

the ball sky high  
as the crack of the bat  
reaches the outfield



after the grand slam  
the umpire busy  
with his whisk broom

long day  
the right fielder is playing  
with a dog

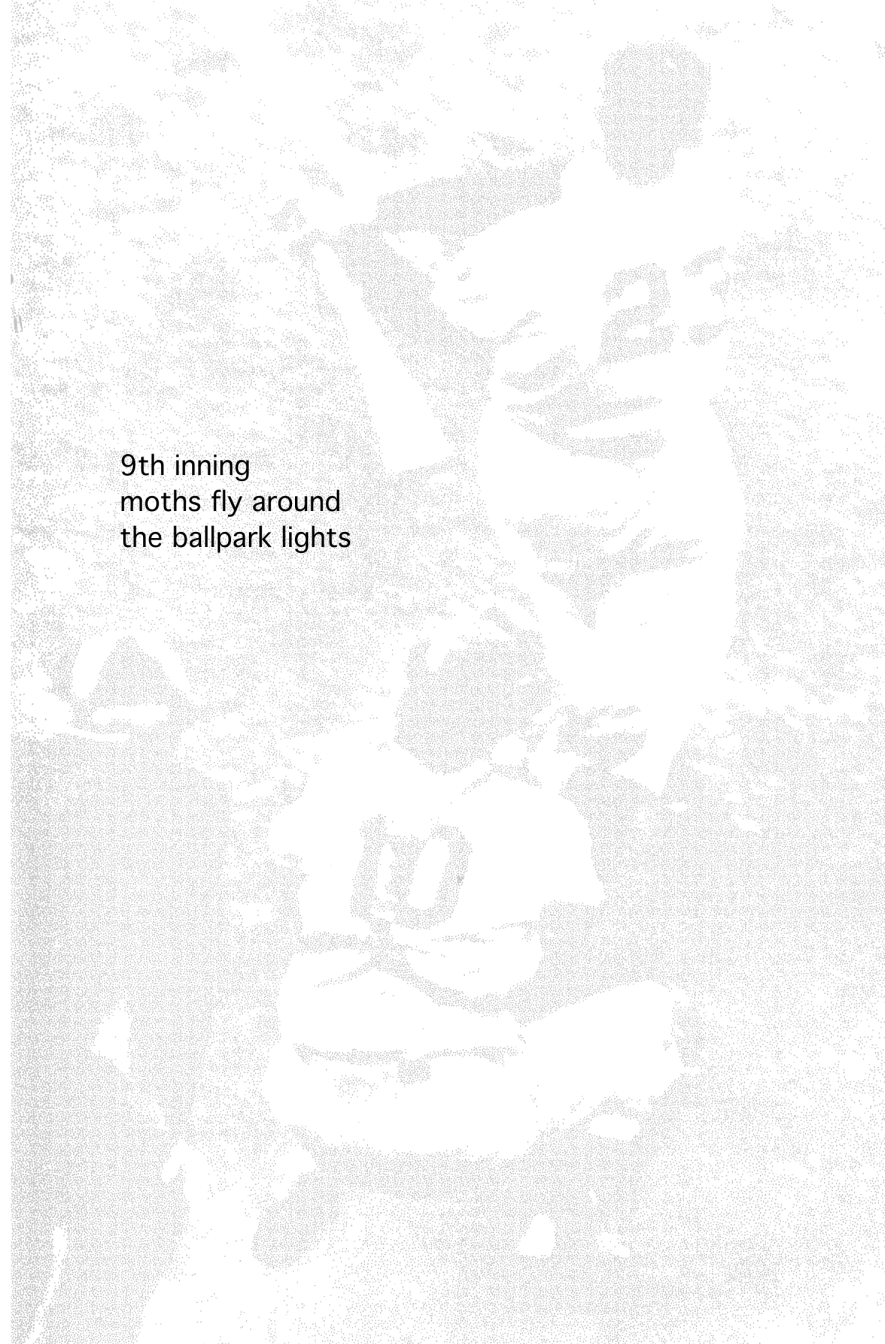
changing pitchers  
the runner on first looks up  
at a passing cloud

light rain  
a line drive knocks up dust  
between second and third

in the outfield's  
late-afternoon shadows  
the coolness of my glove

the infield chatter  
floats out to deep center  
summer breeze

9th inning  
moths fly around  
the ballpark lights





Ted hits another homer  
a seagull high over right field  
gets out of the way

pitcher and catcher  
head for the dugout  
the batter stares at his bat

after the game  
a full moon rises over  
the left field fence

hot day  
listening to the ballgame  
while washing the car



autumn leaves  
scatter across the infield  
the pitcher blows on his fingers

snowstorm  
a baseball glove  
under the Christmas tree

above the snowy field  
where we play ball in summer  
a falling star



a baseball  
in the tied catcher's mitt  
snow deepens

March thaw  
the sounds of a game of catch  
from the driveway

spring rain  
waiting on the front porch  
with my ball and glove

