

The Ball Park

Carrie Burns

You, my son, came tumbling in the house that day,
“Mom, Tiny said it’s in the paper. Baseball signups are under way.”
I gave you a grin, and we dashed to the car,
“I told you son, grab your hat; registration is not that far.”

You signed your name, and I volunteered
To bring all of the healthy snacks you thought were weird,
First practice became twenty, all too soon,
Night fell and you, Jonathon, were playing with the moon.

Game day arrived and you pounced in your room,
With new ball cleats that would make you go zoom.
Phrases such as, “Get a hit, Jonathon,” fell over the crowd.
You stood over the dusty plate not too proud.

Around the bases you spun your human wheels.
For certain they were homeruns, and you were making some big deals.
Deals for Dairy Queens and dollars too,
Satisfaction from the tattered ball was surely what pleased you.

Regular season ended and yet more good news.
You were picked for all-stars simply for paying your dues.
Six a.m. came early as the sun shined on your precious face.
“Mom, I must arrive early, I need to set the pace.”

You sat in the paint torn dugout cheering your team on.
It did not seem too awfully long,
“Jonathon’s up to bat. He can really whack.
If I were you and you were me. I’d scoot my bootie back!”

Finally it happened, my sun soaked son.
You struck out and found this not to be fun!
The crowd became silent and several took a pause
Muttering voices whispered, “Jonathon struck out, just because.”

A new pitcher that day you were not acquainted,
You struck out and nearly fainted.
Saturday became Sunday and questioning why.
“How did that happen, mom? I just want to die.”

The final game was Sunday and you became shy.
Not wanting to talk about it, nearly yearning to cry.
I began to console you, and you listened well.
Emotionally you were becoming better, as far as I could tell.

You heard my words of encouragement; successes and failures.
The one you loved most was my almost becoming a sailor.
Coach gathered everyone together for a team meeting
And the crowd entered the stadium and began seating.

“Take me out to the ball game,” piped out of the intercom.
You and your teammates became so uniquely calm.
The smell of fresh cut grass lingered on your mud-driven cleats.
That mud became a memento and a reminder of your defeat.

I glanced at you in the dust drawn dugout.
You were gulping your Gatorade and getting ready to step out.
“Jonathon is on deck!” The confident coach replied.
I held my breath and then patiently sighed.

The chanting grew to a roar. “Jonathon is up to bat. He can really whack.
If I were you and you were me. I’d scoot my booty back. “
The glare caught my eye; for an instant,
You certainly knew son, what the sound meant.

The bases were loaded and runners came home.
Not once, twice, thrice, but four times under the dome.
Some say that ball finally fell somewhere in Rome.