

Strike III

Brian Skinner

You're not supposed to think about
Dachau in right field.
Full of ice cream and beer
and potato chips and all,
you ought to keep your eye
on the ball, your cleats
planted firm in the soft
summer grass.

Uncle Ray sits tight
behind his sunglasses and cap;
he saw it all, over there,
that other summer.
He doesn't like to talk about it,
just smokes his cigarettes, keeps
score, laughs.

You're not supposed to ask
someone like him what it felt like
to kill a man. And when the letter comes
with your name on it, I guess
you ought to think of it as just
another winter at Little League
training camp.