

THE MEXICANS LIVED BEHIND OUR FIELD

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The sun is where it was
years ago
before a row of bushes
and a pitiful pine tree
came to live
on our infield

homeplate, batter's box
carved with
hands, bat, feet--
built-in red brick
backstop catcher--
enduring asphalt sidewalk
pitching mount--
outfield across the
street.

The houses were our wall

cars drove through.
slow motion music
rolled by,
ice cream inside--
the only half-time
baseball ever knew

"game-on" - game resumed
game on the line
in my child mind.
"this one's going to the Mexicans"
who lived behind
our field,
separated by an alley,
a language, a history

casual periodical
green tennis ball

homerun flights
were our only
connection with them--
we wanted no
broken windows,
no bad feelings.
I wondered if
they hated us
and our complaining
american ways

infield became unfield--
the weak bond
broken by a tree,
some bushes, and
years of growth.
The balls that may have found themselves
in that back alley,
now sit untouched
beside the cars
in the garage.