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Yankees 2, White Sox 1

Bob Georgalas
College of DuPage

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Yankees 2, White Sox 1

Bob Georgalas

It's five-thirty-seven P.M.,
mid-June, nineteen sixty-one. The
sky has crayoned itself pink and
powder blue and my eight-and-a-
half-year-old mind bargains with the
light, cajoling it to stick
around so that maybe you can
toss me a few in the alley
when I get home. But the blue steel

dinosaur lumbers slowly. So
I poke a hole in the plastic bag
and march my wax green troops over
the hump on the floor, trying to
forget that Saturday has
exhausted half its life while
I shopped for clothes with Mom in some
undercooled, overcrowded
department store on Fordham Road

in the Bronx. You're forty, just home
from work, your tie as yet unloosened,
and you're sitting on the brick and
concrete stoop that fronts the humongous
house where Mom grew up as a young
woman and where we live with grandma
and Georgie and Florence and Charlie
and my pesty sister, Lorna,
who got to stay home and wrestle

with the new puppy and read comic
books and play checkers, while the best
I could do was to duck in and
out of the dress racks in the ladies
department, pretending the clothes
were a jungle and I was Tarzan
determined to rescue Jane. Looking
at your watch, you doubt that we'll return
in time for you to slide the tickets

from your inside pocket and
casually unleash the news
that will launch my heart like a
Mercury rocket. Then the blue
dinosaur slides to the curb
and I catch the hint of a smile
in your eyes and, suddenly, as
I stand before you, looking up,
I know. Amidst a jumble of

courthouses, restaurants, apartments
and el tracks, the cathedral glows
like Emerald City. I ball
my fist into the fat fingered
hunk of brown leather on my left
hand and adjust the navy blue
cap with the white NY tight to
my head. You take my free hand, half
the size of yours, and guide me

steadily through the multitudes and
 into the land of the diamond,
 where arc lights erase the night and
 promise me perpetual summers.
 Seated, we order hot dogs with
 everything on them. Then, an
 inning later, peanuts, soda,
 and an ice cream pop. I study
 the scorecard like a priest the gospel

and you teach me how to track the
 plays and explain about bunts and
 sacrifice flies. In the seventh,
 Mickey smashes one into the
 bleachers in center, the crack of
 his bat stentorian, clean. I
 shoot up, as if scalded, waving
 my pennant like a fourth of July
 parade flag, knowing this team could

never lose. It's two A.M., late
 May, nineteen-ninety-one. I'm five
 states west, staring out at an
 etherized sky, and sobbing softly
 because I can't raise my hand and
 stop the bullet of time from digging
 its way through your chest. Maris and
 Mantle are specters now, powerless
 to suffocate the phone that

ulcerates the silence. Alarmed,
 my wife bolts upright, while I,
 unmoored, freeze like a line drive in
 Tony Kubek's glove. The ninth is
 over and I'm trembling, scared that
 the final kiss we shared was not
 enough to ever let you know.