

The Prairie Light Review

Volume 10
Number 1 *Gaea's Songbook*

Article 10

Winter 3-1-1991

The Save

Joe Lewis
College of DuPage

Follow this and additional works at: <https://dc.cod.edu/plr>

Recommended Citation

Lewis, Joe (1991) "The Save," *The Prairie Light Review*: Vol. 10 : No. 1 , Article 10.
Available at: <https://dc.cod.edu/plr/vol10/iss1/10>

This Selection is brought to you for free and open access by the College Publications at DigitalCommons@COD. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Prairie Light Review by an authorized editor of DigitalCommons@COD. For more information, please contact orenick@cod.edu.

THE SAVE

Joe Lewis

Heartbeat

I saw it coming a mile away, but could do nothing except watch. I held my ground as I was taught, taking comfort in the thought that (for once) someone else was doing their job.

Heartbeat

I watched their strategy develop, and agonized for a millisecond as I saw our weakness. A fantastic leap, an impossible stretch, but only a glancing block. An obscene exclamation was the starter's pistol launching my body into motion.

Heartbeat

Below conscious level, numbers (only to be remembered later) swirled in meaningless calculations. Two numbers in particular etched themselves upon my memory like the afterglow of a flashbulb: 18mph — my top speed in short-distance sprints, and 95mph — the speed of the object I was chasing.

Heartbeat

No longer wasting energy or precious time watching, I bent my neck and let instinct lead me. Having nothing else to think about, I awaited that time-honored cliché of time slowing down. It never happened. In fact, events speeded into an unreal rapid-fire succession, making me feel more like an observer than the participant.

Heartbeat

My legs thrust against the hollow-sounding hardwood floor; my arms pumped furiously. The steel and propylene symbiote encased around my knee screeched in protest at every step. Oddly enough, though I was totally focused on the game, I was acutely aware of every pair of eyes watching me: player and spectator alike.

Heart-

A white streak entered my vision. My rapid, measured footsteps fell into an irregular stagger as my body stretched into a desperate dive. With one last push of my leg, I extended my body fully, knowing it was the only way. My eyes found (and followed) the ball as it pounced onto my outstretched forearms.

-beat

One last heave, and the ball jumped off my arms, arcing back over my head. I swear it winked at me as it flew by. My attention was brought crashing down to earth as my body came crashing down. I was too overextended to try to roll with the blow, and too drained to care.

Heartbeat

With all the grace and good will of a cheese grater, the varnished wood peeled layer after layer of skin off my palms and elbows. The contraption that called itself a knee brace grudgingly saved my leg one last time before giving out. As I slid to a stop, I was grateful that though it didn't feel good, at least my landing looked good.

Heartbeat

Heartbeat

I scraped what was left of my body off the floor and looked back at the court. The ball I had so heroically chased down homed in on one of my teammates, who volleyed it back over the net.

Heartbeat

I started to jog back, even as the exertion of my run caught up with me. Breathing hard, I watched as the other team set up another play.

Heartbeat

Heartbeat

Five men on the court left too much floor open. A fantastic leap, an impossible stretch; and once again it was off to the races . . .