The Beginning of the Women's Movement in Fitchburg, Massachusetts, 1962

james wade
The Beginning of the Women’s Movement in Fitchburg, Massachusetts, 1962

It was a summer baseball game. A little penis boy squatted at the plate, frog-like, and smacked a pop-up. The ball sagged through the air, squirming in a fish arc, then clopped down lazily.

A mustard woman in the splintery green seats read her newspaper. Knock! The metal sawdust exploded on her skull. The woman immediately groped for her head and began rubbing in the pain, a dead possum lying in the middle of an asphalt road.

The blue umpire floated over, his bags all inflated, a Portuguese man-of-war dragging his gangling tentacles through the sand beside the fence. His filaments exposed he bubbled the woman to lie on his purple sac, resting her head on his soft cotton bladder. He wanted to soothe the woman, pumping back and forth on his tubular fingers, smoothing his body like a raccoon. When we were conked by a pitch, we twirled up like african violets on his chest. We all humped around the bleachers, wiggling our tiny rubber cleats into the ground. We wanted to get on with the game.

The woman, sweating and wet from the pain, looked off queerly past the stands, across the road, to scraggy birch trees, broken from last winter’s storms, bent over like farting old men at the edge of the woods.

james wade

james w. wade, who received a B.A. in English from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, is currently enrolled in the Indiana University creative writing program to complete his M.A. in English.