

you have six hard earned dollars
in your pocket
& you walk out of there
with the reform school girl
holding on to your arm.

in back of the speedway she
makes you come with her hand
& promises to go all the way
next time.

you're fifteen years old
& you'll never feel any better
in your life.

THE FIGHT

the kids had traffic blocked &
no adults could get thru
to break it up
& from my upstairs window I
had a hundred dollar ringside
seat
but the fight itself wasn't much
one of the boys didn't really
want to be there
in that circle
in that ritual
but the crowd was worth the view
there must have been fifty kids
running up the street to see it
all sizes & ages & they
could've been running to a
carnival or circus or fire
& some of the kids had dogs
running along with them
& the guys would be shadowboxing
& bobbing & weaving as they ran
& there were plenty of girls
making even more noise than the boys
& I hadn't heard so much laughter
in a long time
& one of the boys in the circle was
dancing & jabbing like Muhammad Ali
while the other backed up
fear all over his face
& then something happened
the scared kid got lucky &
landed a roundhouse right
flush on Muhammad's nose

& the crowd was suddenly silent
& Muhammad looked like he
didn't want to fight
anymore
& just about then a couple of
grownups got thru &
broke the thing up.

IT'S ONLY A GAME

ah yes, it is truly crazy
to be freezing your balls off
10 o'clock at night
playing softball
the 33rd annual city wide
men's softball league
& a whole lot of the players
look like they've been here
every one of the 33 years
& it's just for fun
you know
nobody will hassle you it's
only a game
but things do get hairy I
mean their bald headed 1st baseman
would block the base line &
the ump would ignore it
till our 50 year old catcher
got pissed & sunk an elbow
deep into baldie's beer gut
as he was rounding first
& by the time he got to second
most of their bench was out
on the field after him &
when the ump tried to calm things
someone on the bench tossed a beer can
his way & called him an asshole
& the ump said he'd forfeit the
goddamn game if we didn't start acting
like mature adults
& with much griping & bitching we
went back to the game
& the final score was 30 something
to 20 something
& the only other excitement came late
when our shortstop kept telling
our left fielder where to play
& what he was doing wrong
& some clown hit this pop fly
that dropped between them