



THE OLD PINCH HITTER

comes out of the dugout in the last of the 9th
2 out. the winning run on 2nd
he's 7 for 20 on the season: .350
he walks slowly to the plate, seems relaxed but
deliberate. faces a fireballing young pitcher,
18 years younger than he.
takes ball one. ball two. fouls off
the next two. then runs it to 3 and 2.
the fireballer gets his sign, checks 2nd
blazes it in as the runner goes

the perfect pitch
the perfect strike
knee-high and inside:

click!

nobody can handle it:
a solid liner between 1st and 2nd
the runner from 2nd scores.
the old pinch hitter touches first
then turns and runs slowly toward
the dugout.
another night's work.
that shower is going to feel
good.

SCARLET

it's so strange afterwards when it's
finished, when it has been finished
for some time.
in her bedroom she sat on the bed and
I sat in a chair, and I had to tell her
how strange it was:
"nothing against you
but when I look at you now
I can't understand how you ever made a
madman out of me, how you got hold of my
feelings"
she just sat there and smiled
her body the same,
her red long hair as long as ever.
she had never loved me;
it only mattered a little to her
that I had gotten away.
she was working on other prey.
she sat there and told me about him.
I listened.
when I left I didn't kiss her
goodbye. I got into my car and drove
away.
after driving 4 or 5 blocks I was no
longer thinking about her.