It’s for real, not for practice, and it’s televised, not secret, the way you’d expect a civilized country to handle delicate things, it’s in color, it’s happening now in Florida, ‘This Is American Baseball’ the announcer announces as the batter enters the box, we are watching, and it could be either of us

standing there waiting for the pitch, avoiding the eyes of the pitcher as we take a few practice cuts, turning to him and his tiny friends in the outfield, facing the situation, knowing that someone behind our backs is making terrible gestures, standing there to swing and miss

the way I miss you, wanting to be out of uniform, out of breath, in your car, in love again, learning all the signals for the first time, the way we learned the rules of night baseball as high-school freshmen: first base, you kiss her, second base, her breasts, third, you’re in her pants, and home is where the heart

wants to be all the time, but seldom can reach past the obstacle course of space, the home in our perfect future we wanted so badly, and want more than ever since we learned we won’t live there, which happens to lovers in civilized countries all the time, and happens too in American baseball when you strike out and remember what the game really meant.