

## I've Been Everywhere

Last night  
was the final night of baseball at Busch stadium.  
I am not a native St. Louis person  
born and reared in Detroit  
I left there as soon as I could  
not to return.  
Like Lester Bangs  
I have worn a t-shirt on occasion  
"Detroit Sucks"  
I believe it was referring to music  
in which case  
it was wrong.

Yesterday, Wednesday, October 19,  
I arrived at the ball park  
about 5:30  
game was called for 7:28.  
National League Championship Series.  
The Astros were up 3-2 after an extraordinary  
ninth inning effort in Houston on Monday, October 17  
the first night of Sukkot.  
At Busch last night  
I sat in the same seat I have occupied  
for fifteen years.  
When I arrived, I was alone in section 244.  
I put on my headphones  
listened to the pre-game radio patter  
pulled out a tuna sandwich I had brought with me  
(there is nothing for me to eat at the ballpark)  
watched both teams take batting practice.

I knew this might be the last baseball at Busch stadium  
I said goodbye to a place that has been sweet to me.  
The first game I attended there I took all three  
of my children, they were little then. In the sixth inning,  
I plucked a foul ball out of the air with my bare hand  
to my childrens' amazement, not only creating a place  
for baseball in their lives but a place for radical amazement.  
The usher took my name and sent me a certificate in the mail.

Last night, my brother showed up half way through the game  
and we talked about wonderful places we have been  
including Caribbean ports of call where Pissarro once lived

and a century and a half later I sat and gazed at Paul McCartney's yacht  
anchored twenty feet from my inquiring eyes,  
hidden destinations on the Gulf of Eilat  
Italian villas featuring pornographic puppet shows  
the café where Shelley sat and wrote  
a table where Sartre left notes for his mistresses, etc.,  
Tiger Stadium where my Grandfather taught me to eat goobers,  
"chew 'em up good" he said.  
Busch stadium had entered my pantheon  
of ascendant scenes  
no doubt it will figure in stories and poems  
that God will grant me the strength to write,  
beginning with this one,  
the day they began to take Busch down.

Let us remember the ascendant locations  
of our wonderful lives  
honoring the places  
of our magical stories.

Speaking of Paul McCartney,  
I saw him once again sitting  
on the back porch of a house he owned  
in Tucson, Arizona. It was 1997,  
my son was fourteen and I taught him to drive  
the gently sloping roads on the outskirts of Tucson.  
Paul McCartney was playing Cribbage with Jimi Hendrix.  
I swear.

You probably don't remember cribbage.

james stone goodman