

An Aging Athlete Holds Their Ground

By Lisa Timpf

crack of bat and blur of ball in the night
you're playing on borrowed time but stand your ground
at third base, also known as the hot corner,
cooled tonight by summer evening breeze

though muscles aches and limbs sometimes betray
you cannot yet give up this summer dream
crouched and waiting for the bat's sharp crack
the blur of ball beneath the bright white lights

under the lights the ball outleaps its shadow
the runner's footsteps pound toward first base
while you stand, poised and waiting, at your post
cool under pressure on breezy summer night

you sidestep and then smoothly scoop the sphere,
turn and fire with fluid, practiced moves
hear ball meet glove, see umpire's black-clad arm
fly skyward as he cries aloud, "You're out!"

you're playing on borrowed time, this much you know
caught in time's tide, the flowing of the years
the day will come to set aside your glove
but not tonight, in cool of summer breeze