

The Tools of Ignorance
by Tom Clark

Facing out
I set the target
While everyone else
Is looking in
I am the field commander
Of signals and signs
My mitt hand swollen
From 100 mile per hour fastballs
My knees creaking
From 10,000 squats per season
I am Yogi, Pudge, Campy
I am the wall, the backstop, the glue
My head in a cage
Controlling the game
Controlling the flow
Every situation
Every moment in time
The pitcher is a wild horse
I soothe him
Squat down in the dirt
I am the target
I know the umpires
I can fool them
Sometimes with my mind
My right arm is a rifle
My eyes laser beams
I know when the runner is going
I will gun him down
I sweet talk the hitters
Get inside their heads
I can fool them too
Most times
They are putty in my hands
I own the plate
It is mine
I have studied every nuance
Of this game
Since I was nine years old
Since the very first time I donned
The tools of ignorance