

Casey at the Bat

The outlook wasn't brilliant for the Mudville nine that day;
The score stood four to two with but one inning more to play.
So when Cooney died at second, and Burrows did the same,
A pallor wreathed the features of the patrons of the game.
A straggling few got up to go in deep despair. The rest
Clung to the hope which springs eternal in the human breast;
They thought, "If only Casey could but get a whack at that--
We'd put up even money now with Casey at the bat."
But Flynn preceded Casey, as did also Jimmy Blake,
And the former was a lulu and the latter was a fake;
So upon that stricken multitude a deathlike silence sat,
For there seemed but little chance of Casey's getting to the bat.
But Flynn let drive a single to the wonderment of all,
And Blake, the much despised, tore the cover off the ball;
And when the dust had lifted, and the men saw what had occurred,
There was Jimmy safe at second, and Flynn a-hugging third.
Then from five thousand throats and more there rose a lusty yell;
It rumbled in the mountaintops, it rattled in the dell;
It knocked upon the hillside and recoiled upon the flat,
For Casey, mighty Casey, was advancing to the bat.
There was ease in Casey's manner as he stepped into his place;
There was pride in Casey's bearing and a smile on Casey's face.
And when, responding to the cheers, he lightly doffed his hat,
No stranger in the crowd could doubt 'twas Casey at the bat.
Ten thousand eyes were on him as he rubbed his hands with dirt;
Five thousand tongues applauded when he wiped them on his shirt.
Then while the writhing pitcher ground the ball into his hip,
Defiance gleamed in Casey's eye, a sneer curled Casey's lip.
And now the leather-covered sphere came hurtling through the air,
And Casey stood a-watching it in haughty grandeur there.
Close by the sturdy batsman the ball unheeded sped--
"That ain't my style," said Casey--"Strike one," the umpire said.
From the benches black with people, there went up a muffled roar,
Like the beating of the storm-waves on a stern and distant shore.
"Kill him! kill the umpire!" shouted someone on the stand;
And it's likely they'd have killed him had not Casey raised his hand.
With a smile of Christian charity great Casey's visage shone;
He stilled the rising tumult; he bade the game go on;
He signaled to the pitcher, and once more the spheroid flew;
But Casey still ignored it, and the Umpire said, "Strike two."
"Fraud!" cried the maddened thousands, and the echo answered,
"Fraud!"
But one scornful look from Casey and the multitude was awed.
They saw his face grow stern and cold, they saw his muscles strain,
And they knew that Casey wouldn't let that ball go by again.
The sneer is gone from Casey's lip, his teeth are clenched in hate;
He pounds with cruel violence his bat upon the plate.
And now the pitcher holds the ball, and now he lets it go,
And now the air is shattered by the force of Casey's blow.
Oh, somewhere in this fabled land the sun is shining bright;
The band is playing somewhere, and somewhere hearts are light,

And somewhere men are laughing, and somewhere children shout;
But there is no joy in Mudville--mighty Casey has struck out.

--ERNEST LAWRENCE THAYER

Peter at the Table

The outlook wasn't brilliant for APChem that year;
The rubrics were uncertain, with one day to prepare.
When Patsy raised a question regarding digits yet unchanged
A pallor wreathed the features of the leaders, there arranged.
A struggling few threw down their pens in deep despair. The rest
Clung to the hope which springs eternal in the human breast;
They thought, "If only Peter would enact what only he is able --
We'd bet a Belgian Waffle now, with Peter at the Table."
But Lew forgot his thermo, and Dale electrochem,
The former in Hawaii, the latter in the gym.
So to the sixteen gathered, a gloomy silence fell,
For there seemed but little chance of Peter's saying "All is well."
But Jo let drive a comment, to the wonderment of all,
And John, the new appointed, took credit for the call;
And when the chalk dust settled, and all saw what had occurred,
There was Jackie on the second and Donnie on the third.
Then from one hundred throats and more there rose a lusty yell;
It rumbled in Hendrix Center, it rattled in Dan-iel;
It knocked upon Lightsey Bridge and recoiled to Schilleter,
For Peter, mighty Peter, was approaching. Ah, much better.
There was ease in Peter's manner as he made his opening pitch;
There was pride in Peter's bearing, nary a nervous twitch;
And when, responding to a query, he didn't tell a fable
No acorn in the crowd could doubt 'twas Peter, strong and stable.
Two hundred eyes were on him, they knew he was the best;
A smile on his visage, pink flamingos on his chest.
Then while the fifty kilobooks were carried to their places,
Reliance gleamed in readers' eyes, trepidation in their faces.
And now the multicolored folders were shuttled everywhere
And Peter stood a-watching them, in haughty grandeur there.
How fast the team of aides gathered up what had been read.
"Not good enough" said Peter; "Strike one" Tom Corley said.
From the printouts black with numbers there arose an average score
Like the slow step of kinetics, needing catalyst for more.
"Back read, back read," came the word from ETS,
"Not by sacrificing standards," re-spon-ded Peter S.
With a smile of Colgate chemistry, great Peter's visage shone;
He shuffled readers back and forth; they are too hard to clone.
He signaled to John Gelder, and more statistics grew;
But Peter still ignored them. Irene then called "Strike Two."
"Food" cried the irate readers, and the echo answered "Break!"

"Let's all go now," said PSS. "There's cantaloupe and cake."
They saw his gait grow swift and bold, they saw his muscles strain,
As bite by bite, and gulp by gulp, the group engorged again.
The beer is gone from Lightsey Bridge, the chips have all been ate.
Pete wears with quiet dignity a flamingo on his pate.
And soon we'll meet in Brackett Hall. It's nearly time to go,
The standards have been posted and the students soon will know.
Oh, up there in his research lab, the burners need a light,
The piano's playing Chopin, a ballgame rips the night.

And here where friends are gathered, to toast and sing and shout
there is great pride at Clemson, for Peter has won out.

--JACKIE & LEW