

1998

Bottom of the Ninth

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Bottom of the Ninth

The way your Levi's hung off your hips
was a blow from a baseball bat to my knees.
I dressed in pink pajamas before you tucked
me into bed, kissed my forehead, and turned

out the lights. You closed the door, just like Daddy
did years ago. I was too grown to allow you to pull
the covers to my chin, but you were too much a boy
to stay all night, and crumple your Levi's

on the chair in the corner of my room. I heard
the door's latch catch, and I slumped
like a rag doll across my quilt, eyes
sown wide and smile still stitched on.

—Michelle Grindstaff '02