

Unlike Mike

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We lost time while heat simmered on the blacktop.
Our hands stunk of warm rubber
still sticky from slushies and candy
from the convenience store down the block.

The big kids lowered the hoops
With a timeworn screwdriver.
So when we jumped
we felt like pros.

We knew,
when we grew up
we'd do it without lowering the hoop.
We knew.

But now we've aged
the best of us weren't good enough
while the worst of us feigned sprains and fractures
to pretend that fate was at fault.

Dreaming about what could've been.
Now just a hollow echo of who we once were—
Like the distant sound of a ball bouncing
In a vacant schoolyard.