

The Minnesota Twins

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JOGGING IN RED SWEATS across the university's Library Mall, he unclipped his beeper from his belt and stared at a phone number he didn't recognize. But the message could have only come from his brother. "Call now. NOW," it read. Arnold was expected to meet Eddie's demands. Most people did.

"Where are you?" Arnold typed, his thumbs colliding.

"NOW!" was the reply.

His office at a distance, Arnold found a payphone off the mall. He wiped the perspiration from his forehead with his wrist.

"Go to Milwaukee," Eddie said with urgency. "You gotta go now."

"Eddie—"

"Jump and go. Call me from County Stadium."

Arnold was in Madison, two hours away. He had intended to complete his run, then prepare for tomorrow morning's lecture.

"Go and do what?"

A little wind kicked up off Lake Mendota, perhaps a harbinger of September rain.

"Arnie, for Christ's sake, will ya?"

"And do what?" Arnold repeated.

"Just show up, put on the uniform, just be, you know, me."

Eddie and Arnold Flood were identical twins, but they were as different as a riot and an afternoon nap. Eddie pitched for the Minnesota Twins. Arnold was a professor of microeconomy

theory. They were 32 years old, Eddie eight minutes the elder. Today's kind of nonsense had been going on since elementary school.

"Look, I pitched last night. I'm not due to pitch until Monday. Just suit up, sit in the bullpen and keep quiet."

"I'm not— This is ridiculous."

"I don't show and I'm suspended, Arnie. I ain't going into spring training next year with that hanging over me. Kelly hates me as it is."

"Kelly?"

"The manager. Tom Kelly. He's been there for years. We're 20 games under and they're looking for a scapegoat."

They both heard the coins drop, signaling Arnold had to pump in more change. Reluctantly, he dug into his pouch and found a couple of quarters.

"Arnie, they cut me loose and what am I going to do? I'm 6-15 with an ERA pushing six. I can't brush my teeth with this elbow."

"Should I ask why you can't go to the game yourself?"

"I can't leave the room," Eddie explained. "Her husband is out there. She says he always carries."

"A gun?"

"Why not? He's a cop."

"Good lord, Eddie."

"Get there by 3 o'clock. Shag with the guys—"

"Shag'?" asked Arnold Flood.

"My gear is in my locker. Just go. Watch the other pitchers, Arnie. You can do it. Remember prom?"

When Eddie and Arnold were sophomores, Eddie agreed to go to senior proms with girls from both Crookston High and

the Sacred Heart School in East Grand Forks, unaware that the dances were on the same night. He sent Arnold to East Grand Forks. His date's father mentioned that he didn't carry himself like an all-state athlete, but otherwise it worked out, Arnold losing his virginity posing as his brother.

"Eddie—"

"You can do it. You have to. I'll be in touch later."

"Eddie—"

The coins dropped again.



EDDIE WAS THE ONE-OFF in the Flood family, a distinction that became apparent soon after the twins could walk. A whirlwind, always recklessness, he was a natural athlete, a lefty who could throw a baseball harder and with more precision than any kid in the state. When he was 10, he was pitching against high school seniors and striking them out, not just with speed but with a knee-buckling curveball. If he could've maintained a respectable GPA and hadn't been caught by the Polk County cops with an ounce of weed and a 14-year-old in her father's Chevy, he could've accepted the full scholarship the University of Arizona offered. Instead, he stayed local at the College of St. Scholastica in Duluth. As a freshman, he went 19-2 with a 0.97 ERA and 230 strikeouts in 172 innings. In 1991, the Twins drafted him in the first round ahead of Shawn Green, Joey Hamilton, Manny Ramirez and Aaron Sele. His first start for the Twins was at Yankee Stadium in late '92. As he promised his classmates back home, in the first inning he buzzed Don Mattingly with a fastball under the chin. Two pitches after Mattingly dusted off the dirt, Eddie Flood struck him out with a nasty

12-to-6 curve. The team still in contention, Flood went seven, giving up two runs (both on a Mattingly double off a curve-ball). The Twins won in the ninth on a Kirby Puckett home run, a monster shot. Rick Aguilera got the win. The next morning, Flood woke up next to a woman who said he owned her \$900 for the night. He paid her in cash he withdrew at a Chase Manhattan branch; Puckett, Kent Hrbek and Chuck Knoblauch had eyed him as he crossed the Grand Hyatt lobby with her, autograph-seeking kids all around, she wobbling in red stiletto heels and a matching thigh-high glittery dress.

Meanwhile, Arnold was deep in the path cut by his parents Carl, a professor of agronomy at UM of Crookston, and Rowena, the head of library services at the college. (Dr. Flood's hybrid sunflower species *Helianthus rowena* was named for his wife.) A whiz at arithmetic and higher mathematics, he was a keen student from the start who, had he not an identical twin, would have been skipped ahead at least one grade in elementary school. Tall and sinewy as was Eddie, he was a swift runner who thought about going out for track. But when his father's eyesight began to deteriorate, he took over the accounting practices for the small family-owned farm in Crookston. At his father's knee, he learned the rudiments of economics set to practice. It was as if his father's blindness had been preordained to set Arnold on his successful, satisfying career course.

Until Eddie pitched as a rookie at the Metronome against the Royals, Arnold had never witnessed his brother in action on any level – in a bitter twist, he was at the game when Eddie's elbow began to act up. But throughout school and beyond, Arnold learned of his brother's feats from friends, acquaintances and, increasingly, reporters. They ascribed admirable, almost-saintly

traits to Eddie that were pure fiction. Eddie supported no charities, was hardly a family man (twice divorced by age 30), and he took his skills for granted, working out only as necessary. Absent his stardom, Eddie was an abyss. He had no friends but Arnold, who was unquestionably loyal, as evidenced by now: Arnold was on his way to County Stadium to, once again, portray Eddie Flood. As he drove east through the drizzle along 94, he deliberately ignored all that could go wrong and how much he was risking – disappointing his wife and daughters, embarrassing the college, tattering his reputation for honesty and integrity. But Eddie needing his help took precedent over all.



THE PARKING LOT SURROUNDING County Stadium was nearly empty when he arrived. The attendant at the Players' Entrance was dubious when Arnold introduced himself as Eddie Flood.

"Why didn't you come in on the team bus?" the burly Black man asked. He wore a navy uniform that lent him an air of authority.

Thinking quickly, Arnold said, "I have family in Madison. I mistimed the return trip." He pointed skyward. "The rain."

The attendant retrieved a clubhouse boy.

"That's him," said the boy, who wore a navy polo shirt with the Twins' logo on its chest.

The boy led him down a long, narrow concrete corridor. "Coach wants to see you."

They entered the locker room, crowded with 25 to 30 men. Rock music boomed as players were seated in various stages of dress, some at their lockers, others lounging on sofas, a few at a

table where a card game was unfolding. The air was scented with liniment and lingering sweat. Following the boy, Arnold passed a man rubbing the handle of his bat with a bone, another taping his ankles, a third signing baseballs in a box. No one looked at him, which was just as well. Arnold didn't know a single player by name or appearance.

The boy rapped on an office door frame. "Skip," he said. "Flood is here."

"Finally," said the gray-haired man in glasses behind the desk. He wore a white T-shirt with long blue sleeves. A report of some kind was spread out before him.

The man sitting across from him rose from a well-worn arm chair. He was in full uniform albeit with shower shoes. "Where have you been, Eddie?"

Arnold remembered his brother said that the Twins' manager, Tom Kelly, hated him, which explained the lack of eye contact or conversation from the man behind the desk. Thus, the man who addressed him was the coach.

"Family in Madison. The rain. Traffic."

"And what's with the get up? You and tweed? Khakis?"

Eddie favored finely tailored suits, preferably Italian.

"My dry cleaning is at the hotel," Arnold risked.

"Come with me," he said.

The coach walked him to his locker. "Look, the flu. It's got LaTroy now, and Soup. So we're short. Skip knows you're worn down, but you're up if we go extras. More likely a one-and-done, Surhoff, Hamilton, you know." He shrugged. "Nothing I can do."

Arnold tried not to blink. Save for the word "flu," he had no idea what the coach had said.

"So stay in the pen. Heads up."

He clapped Arnold on the arm and departed.

In the open locker was his uniform – gray, pinstriped, the word “Minnesota” in red block letters across the chest, a big red number 50 in back. Arnold removed his tweed blazer and hung it carefully below a shelf that held bubble gum, chewing tobacco, toiletries and Twins cap with rosin on the bill. Two mitts were on a chair, one as broken in as an old shoe, the other relatively new. He turned to watch the players dress. Thin white hose went on first, followed by socks with stirrups. A jock strap next. Tight boxer shorts. A shirt not unlike the one worn by the manager, then calf-length pinstriped pants...

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STEPPING ON TO THE field, illuminated with bright lights from high overhead, Arnold noticed the other players whose numbers were in the 50s were lingering in the outfield, trotting after balls hit by batters who were stationed under a mesh screen. To avoid conversation with his brother’s teammates, he found an empty space to occupy. When he slipped his right hand into Eddie’s glove, it bumped into an emery board tucked into one of the fingers. Arnold removed it and put it in his back pocket.

Discreetly, he looked around the stadium, peppered now with fans braving the threat of rain. Behind home plate, the stands rose several stories. The outfield bleachers had long rails, instead of individual seats. Underfoot, the grass was so finely trimmed as to appear manicured. In all, Arnold thought it a natural treat and, even under murky clouds, lamented that his state’s team chose to perform indoors on an artificial surface.

Only two balls were hit his way. One rattled deep into the bleachers. The other dribbled to a stop about 20 feet before him.

Well aware any attempt at an overhead toss would immediately expose him, he jogged to retrieve it and flipped it to a teen in a Brewers' uniform who was standing on the sidelines.

Soon, with the arrival of the Brewers' players, the Twins began to exit the field. Number 48 walked alongside Arnold on the trip toward the dugout.

"Where were you?" he asked. Squat and broad-chested, he wore guards on his knees and shins.

"Family in Madison," Arnold replied.

"The broad, though. She wasn't the one from Chicago, was she?"

Arnold knew nothing about the policeman's wife. "That flu, huh?" he replied. "LaTroy and Soup. How are you feeling?"

"Don't bust my balls, Eddie," 48 replied. "Just because my kid had it don't mean I brought it into the clubhouse. I'm not sick, am I?"

"No," said Arnold quickly. "But you can transmit the flu without showing symptoms."

Number 48 stopped and stared. Then he said, "Kiss my ass, Eddie, all right?"

Since his brother had yet to apologize to anyone for anything he said or done, Arnold stayed silent.

As they descended, their cleats clattered on the dugout's concrete steps.



PRIOR TO THE NATIONAL Anthem, Arnold trailed several pitchers on the long walk to the bullpen, lagging to avoid contact. By the time they settled in, the first two Milwaukee batters

had hit the ball hard into the right-field corner, resulting in the first of five runs surrendered in the first inning.

“We’re working tonight,” shouted 48, whose role was bullpen catcher. “All hands.”

The pitching coach studied his clipboard as if working a puzzle.

When the Brewers scored two more runs in the second, making it 7-0, the relief pitchers agreed that the best strategy was to pray for rain. And in the third inning, the sky opened, pouring faucet-like as the ground crew scrambled to tarp the infield. Arnold followed as the bullpen marched along a corridor that led to the clubhouse. Word spread that the delay would last at least an hour.

“Then I’m done too,” said a pitcher named Watkins, who had relieved the starter in the first inning.

After a while, Arnold sought the clubhouse boy, who spent the rain delay running minor errands for the players.

“Can you get me a program?” he asked.

The boy delivered quickly.

Arnold flipped through it, bypassing beer ads, color photography and cheery articles about the Brewers’ players. Stapled to its center was a scorecard, the rosters of each team in neat rows on the outer edges of the pages. He looked around the clubhouse and matched numbers to names, names to faces. The man who had greeted him earlier was pitching coach Dick Such, the bullpen coach Rick Stelmazek. Studying the statistics, he deduced that a higher BA and a lower ERA were preferred; that BA reflected the odds of a hit per at bat – given the number of variables, it seemed to Arnold insufficient data to judge a hitter – and ERA the number of runs a pitcher would surrender per

nine innings. Tonight's starting pitcher, Arnold realized, had registered an ERA for the game of 135.00, which was astronomically higher than Eddie's apparently abysmal and highest-on-the-team 5.76. The cumulative stats were easy to digest, though he was puzzled by the premium placed on home runs. Did it matter how a run was scored? Thus far tonight, the Brewers had scored seven times without one.

In the sanctuary, the card game had resumed and the TV offered cable news without sound. As the minutes slowly passed, Arnold realized that it wasn't only Kelly who held Eddie in low regard. While the players chatted amicably with each other, no one approached him. This was in his favor, he knew, since conversation would expose him. But it caused him to wonder how Eddie had managed to offend the entire team and whether he had done so en masse or individually.

Nestling into his seat, bill of his Twins cap at the bridge of his nose, Arnold heard his beeper buzz in the inner pocket of his tweed jacket. He retrieved it. The same number as before. Eddie, thought Arnold. Unless it's the police...

There was a payphone next to the shower area.

"Don't say my name," Eddie told him. "What are you hearing?"

Arnold said, "Right now, it's relatively quiet. Subdued."

"Yeah, getting your ass pounded will do that. Did Such talk to you?"

Arnold said he did, though only before the game.

"He said for you to be ready, right?"

As a teammate passed to use the rest room, Arnold said yes.

“Damn it. Listen, Arnie, we’re halfway to hell. Look around. Hawkins and Campbell are out with the flu, right? Trombley got shelled. Kelly won’t put Scotty back in if it rains much longer.”

Scotty being Watkins, Arnold surmised.

“Radke is going tomorrow, so he’s out. Mahomes they won’t risk him on a wet field. We’re down to four pitchers and it’s the third inning.”

Arnold understood the implication.

“What exactly did Such say?”

“One and done,” Arnold recounted. “What’s it mean?”

“If they need a lefty to face a lefty.”

“Number 18 is a lefty.”

“Eddie’s our closer. They won’t waste him in a blowout. That means we’re down to three healthy arms for long relief. Three.”

“How many do they need?” he asked earnestly.

Eddie groaned. “I’m screwed. They’re going to laugh me out of the game. They’re looking for an excuse...”

As Eddie prattled, his sole concern once again himself, Arnold realized he’d had enough of tonight’s charade, sitting in a half-empty ballpark in the rain, well outside the camaraderie and common purpose among Eddie’s teammates, in a uniform that meant something to them but much less to his brother. “Well, what did you think was going to happen? Really?”

“Arnold, if they start looking your way, tell them you’re sick. You got the flu too. You can’t work. You’re light headed.”

Arnold took off his cap. Like his brother, he had thick dark hair that parted natural in the middle. “They won’t buy it.”

“Then go to the trainer and tell them your elbow is acting up. It’s seizing. Cradle it. Go ‘ow’ the second he touches it.”

As Eddie spoke, Arnold realized he’d had enough.

"It's over," he said calmly, purposefully. "I'm dressing and I'm leaving. You deal with it. You."

"You do that and my career is dead. I'm finished."

"You should've thought of that before you went chasing after a cop's wife. Again."

"Arnie, will you shut the hell up and listen?"

As Eddie continued to protest, Arnold pulled the phone away from his ear for an announcement from one of the coaches.

"The tarp is coming off," he reported to his brother. "The game will resume in a half-hour."

"Oh, that is just fantastic," Eddie said, his word dripping sarcasm. "Listen to me—"

"Stop it," Arnold said with surprising force. "When they find out – when I'm humiliated, my wife and kids, the college – everybody will say, 'Oh, that's Eddie Flood all right. What a character. There's nobody like Eddie Flood.'"

"Arnie, for Christ's sake, will you—"

"I blame myself. Really. The first time back in Crookston, I should've said no. No. Never. I should've let you face whatever. You would've had to grow up. But what happened? I enabled you, Eddie. I invented you. Look where you ended up. And now you're dragging me down with you."

"Arnie, Arnie. This is serious business. I'm—"

"Goodbye, Eddie," Arnold said as he slammed down the receiver.



SUCH APPROACHED JUST as Arnold began unbuttoning his uniform top.

"I can't pitch," Arnold said preemptively. In his mind's eye, he could see himself behind the wheel, heading west toward Madison.

"Yeah, forget it. Skip wants you in the dugout," the coach said. "We're pulling Puck and Marty after we bat. The outfield is a swamp."

Relieved, Arnold asked, "Do you really need me, Coach?"

"Let's hope not," he replied, walking away.

When the game resumed, the stands were much more than half-empty. As instructed, Arnold joined the hitters and starting pitchers in the dugout, stationing himself behind a Gatorade cooler, scorecard folded in quarters in his back pocket. The mood was dour until Puckett tripled, racing his bowling-ball body around the wet infield. Two singles followed and though the Twins failed to add another run, they had broken through. When Puckett, now out of the game, came to the cooler for a drink, Arnold said, "Heck of a shot."

Nodding knowingly, Puckett winked.

In the next inning, the Twins scored twice more on a pinch-hit double by Hale substituting for Knoblauch, who could no longer fight off the flu. The score was now 7-3. Arnold sensed a shift in the momentum, if only because the Twins' fans who had traveled to Milwaukee were outcheering the locals. Twins' pitcher Schullstrom was limiting the Brewers to pop-ups and weak ground balls.

Then it was 7-5 on three consecutive doubles. Pitchers who had lazed on the bench were now leaning against the rail in anticipation. Puckett had returned to the dugout, raising the level of enthusiasm. When Kelly inserted Masteller, a lefthanded hitter, to face a Brewers' righty, he responded with a two-run

homer. His teammates greeted him with back claps and high fives. Caught up in the moment, Arnold left his station and joined in.

It remained 7-7 going into the ninth. Kelly himself walked to the end of the dugout.

“Stretch,” he said to Arnold.

“Sir?”

“If Walbeck gets on, you’re running for him.”

“All right...”

Arnold followed Kelly along the dugout and went into the narrow corridor to do as instructed, limbering as he did before jogging around campus. As his calves and hamstrings flexed, he withdrew the scorecard and looked at Walbeck’s stats. He was batting .250, meaning there was but a one-in-four chance of a hit. Arnold sighed in relief.

By the time he returned to the dugout, Walbeck was in the batter’s box. The Brewers’ pitcher was a big, burly man, as round as Puckett but taller by several inches. As he prepared to throw, he leaned forward in a threatening manner, daring Walbeck to hit what he threw. Nonetheless, the Twins cajoled their teammate. Arnold felt the electricity of anticipation.

The first pitch hit Walbeck squarely on the side of the knee. He fell in a heap.

Kelly and the Twins’ trainer ran to him, as the pitcher strode to the back of the mound.

Arnold went to the top of the dugout steps.

“Jesus, Flood,” Such groaned, “wait ‘til they cart him off the field.”

Soon Walbeck limped to the dugout. Arnold greeting him with a tap on the back and then trotted to first base. He was odd-

ly unconcerned; in fact, he felt a stir of elation. Forgetting his tiff with Eddie, he knew if there was one thing he was capable of doing under the lights on the County Stadium field, it was to run the bases. How hard could it be?



AS ARNOLD TROTTED TO the bag, the number 50 jiggling on his back, the Brewers gathered at the mound. Scott Ullger, the Twins' first-base coach, leaned in, put his hand on Arnold's shoulder and said softly, "Don't break until the ball is down."

Arnold looked at him in confusion.

"You get the sign?" Ullger asked.

Arnold said no, what sign?

"Bunt is on. Don't break until the ball is down. And heads up – the field is wet. They just might throw it away."

The Milwaukee first basemen returned. Arnold had a foot on a corner of the white quadrangle, his opponent one on the opposite corner.

"Wait..." cautioned the coach.

The pitcher brought his hands to his chest and, for some reason, the first baseman started running toward home.

Standing still, Arnold saw that the batter, Meares, was holding his bat perpendicular to the ground. When the pitcher threw the ball, he withdrew it. "Ball!" yelled the umpire.

"Eddie, what are you doing?" said a frowning Coach Ullger. "Take a lead, a couple of strides. But no more 'til he breaks."

Again, Meares held the bat as if he were offering it to the pitcher. When the first baseman bolted toward home, Ullger told Arnold to extend his lead.

Then the ball struck Meares' bat and began to roll up the third-base line.

"Go!" yelled Ullger.

Arnold went. He kept his eye on the second-base bag, guarded now by the shortstop. As he arrived, careful not to run by it, he heard both a groan and a cheer from the crowd.

"Go, Eddie. Keep going," Ullger yelled. "Go!"

The Brewers' third baseman had heaved the ball past first base. Racing, Arnold looked over his shoulder and saw the right-fielder dashing in to retrieve it, rainwater splashing under foot. At the third-base bag, Coach Gardenhire had his hands in the air – the universal stop sign. Arnold did as instructed.

"Good hustle, Flood," said Gardenhire as he clapped Arnold on his butt.

Milwaukee's beefy pitcher took a long, desolate walk back to the mound. The umpire tossed him a fresh, dry baseball.

It wasn't until later that Arnold discovered that, with one out in the ninth in a tie game, it was Puckett's turn to bat – Puckett by then a batting champ, a perennial All-Star, a two-time World Series hero. But having been taken out of the game for safety's sake, he was ineligible to reappear. In his place was 23-year-old rookie Matt Lawton, a lefthanded who had been with the team for a week.

"Be alert," Gardenhire told Arnold, whose foot was as affixed to the third-base bag. "Infield's in so don't break on contact. Go ahead now, take a lead."

Arnold risked a few cautious steps down the line.

"Get in foul territory," Gardenhire said, as the beefy pitcher brought his hands to his waist.

Arnold stepped backwards onto the grass.

The pitcher threw the ball. Lawton swung and missed.

Arnold stayed in place.

“Touch,” Gardenhire said, pointing to the bag.

Facing Lawton, the coach then ran his hands rapidly across his chest, down his thigh, along his sleeve. Clap, clap. Pumped fist.

Signs, thought Arnold as Lawton returned to the station, waving the bat menacingly.

The pitcher stared at catcher.

“Be alert, Eddie,” said Gardenhire. “Get a good lead.”

The pitcher threw. Lawton swung. The ball lifted high in the air toward rightfield.

“Tag, Eddie,” yelled Gardenhire, cupping his mouth.

“What?” replied Arnold Flood.

“Get back here and tag.”

Arnold went back to base.

As the rightfielder settled under the ball, positioning himself to throw, the Brewers’ pitcher ran behind home plate, the second baseman ran into rightfield, the first baseman stationed himself on the grass between the infield and outfield.

Arnold was positioned as if at a starting block for a sprint.

“Now!” Gardenhire yelled as the ball settled in the rightfielder’s mitt.

Arnold took off at full speed. As he raced along the line, he saw the catcher, who stared into the outfield in anticipation, was straddling home plate.

Arnold kept running, arms pumping, breaths through gritted teeth.

“Get down,” yelled Munoz, the next batter, flapping his hands and arms toward the turf.

Having no idea what he meant, Arnold continued as he had been. Just as the ball arrived, he barreled directly into the catcher, who fell backwards.

The ball tumbled out of his mitt.

Arnold looked down. He was standing with both feet on home plate.

He had scored the go-ahead run.

The Twins' fans cheered. Munoz greeting him with a high five. Kelly was on the dugout's top step when Arnold arrived.

"Way to hustle, kid," the manager said, shaking his hand.

His teammates whacked his back and head as he walked along the dugout, meeting Lawton halfway. Reveling in the moment, they sat side-by-side, smiling happily.

Ten minutes later, just as the rain resumed, Lawton caught the flyball that ended the game. Pitching, number 18 registered the final three outs for what's known as a save.

By the time Lawton trotted toward the infield to present the ball to his pitching teammate, Arnold was driving south toward Chicago. He was back in tweed and khaki, his brother's Twins cap on his head, his left knee purpled with a knot the size of plum, courtesy of the catcher's shin guard. He ignored the beeper buzzing in his jacket pocket.



ARNOLD FLOOD SAT IN the most conspicuous spot he could find in the lobby of the Westin, facing the revolving doors and the concierge's desk. Guests came and went, a few doing a double take at the thought that they recognized Eddie, who by all accounts should be celebrating a victory in Milwaukee, his

mad dash toward home and collision with the Brewers' catcher the deciding factor. But no one said anything to him.

Soon it was after well midnight and a calm had settled over the hotel and the Miracle Mile beyond its doors. Arnold limped to a payphone and dialed his brother's number.

"Where the hell have you been?" Eddie barked.

"Downstairs in the lobby. No one is looking for you. No cop with a gun. No one."

"Wait. What? You can't be sure."

"I'm you, Eddie, remember? So I'm here and no one gives a damn."

"Really?" Eddie said in wonder. He laughed in relief.

"Tell your date she's safe."

"She left hours ago," Eddie replied. "Service elevator. I couldn't risk it. He'd kill me, not her."

"Such chivalry..."

"But, Arnie, man, you did it. You pulled it off. The winning run. What did Kelly—"

"Goodbye, Eddie," said Arnold Flood.

He hung up the receiver and limped toward the parking lot, his mind not on baseball, its intricacies, rituals, imperfect statistics nor its nuanced rules of play – stay here, go but not too far, not yet, wait, now! Nor was he thinking of Eddie, who he would no doubt forgive in time. Arnold Flood was thinking only about going home.

