

Verse

Faceoff Circle

You must have left the rink with
us tied in the third period:
I score the winning goal at
nineteen fourteen then glance
at your place in the stands empty.

The rest of the team
has returned to the bus;
I'm walking, stick weighted by
one dufflebag on shoulder, up
a dark aisle to the boards.

I glare over the dull
plane of skated ice, out
into the abandoned arena.
Breath rises out of me
ghastly toward the rafters.

I focus on the faceoff
circle. There
your features congeal in red,
eye and mouth gaping but
speechless under centre ice.

— *Robert Read*