

# That Day

*by* R. A. Allen

They say That Day is coming.  
"You gettin' shorter, white boy," they say,  
Short for the street.

That Day comes.  
Put your stuff in a cardboard box,  
Sign some papers.  
The gates slam behind you  
One last time.

Sunlit fields come through  
The bus window,  
But you're tense, queasy,  
Like standing naked  
In short centerfield.

On That Day  
When you get home,  
Your woman seems different.  
Everyone seems different.  
But it's you that's different,  
Scarred, marked.  
And it's nothing to do  
With the tattoo.

