

Violet

By Joe D'Angelo

The sky was clouded and the air slightly cool. I approached the batter's box, bat on my shoulder. My heart was pounding against my chest, seemingly trying to break through. Drops of sweat streamed down my face, tickling my cheeks, and my arms were shaking uncontrollably, as if being shocked. I took a glance down at my coach, who did a series of motions with his arms and gave me a, "Let's go, Joe." Coach's signs didn't really translate to anything, but I knew what I had to do at this point—I didn't need him to tell me how to get the job done. I briefly closed my eyes in an attempt to clear my mind. I desperately wanted this moment; no, I *needed* it. I dug in with my foot, and met eyes with the pitcher. It was a staring contest—my eyes never left his. I had the intention of reaching into his brain and shaking it like there was no tomorrow—to make him think of anything other than pitching.

He reared back and fired it towards the plate; without thinking my arms straightened and *Crack*. The ball rocketed through the air and dropped in right field, just far enough from both outfielders so I could make it to second base. Tears started to form behind my eyes as a wave of emotion swept over me. No, this hit didn't win the game, and no, I had not set some sort of record or anything like that. In fact, as far as the game itself, the hit was meaningless. But to me, it was perhaps the most important achievement in my life. This hit was for my grandmother.