

John Repp

*Beets*

Beets was the only man at the Maplewood could hold the table on Dyke Night & not piss off Maxy & her crew when he bawled “Dyke up!” after a missed shot. A dime bought a game then, the beer a quarter & cold, roast beef piled three inches high on the Kaiser. We had legends & letters—Beets pitched woo hard as Feller, charmed two wives to Estelle Manor, where the jive crumbled fast as the week-old bread Beets made his daily gift to the larder. Born for the heat of the bar in winter, happiest reading Thomas Wolfe past closing, feet crossed near the Wedgewood, calling “Hey! Listen to this beauty of a thing!” as Jack & Pam swept up, he’d left the war as far behind as anyone had, which even Maxy would tell you means about an inch. Beets wrote a fine hand. If you weren’t a wife sailing envelopes into the fire, you’d treasure whatever he sent.