

All in the Game by Arthur Gottlieb

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Night falls at five
like a house of cards
collapsing another winter day.

Properties pile up profits
on the Monopoly board.
Mortgaging hotels and houses
to the hilt, we collect at Go
before running the gauntlet again.

Next it's chess. Stalemated
king and queen's every move
monitored by a bishop.

Must we live with
the hand we're dealt?
A joker could alter everything
we ever bet on
for better or worse.

Poker-faced, we watch
the pot build
for the one winner,
the bluffer who takes all,
cashing in his clutch of chips
before he's spent at sixty.

Arthur Gottlieb is an Oregon poet whose work has appeared in mostly small literary magazines, including *The Ledge*, *Chiron Review*, *The Alembic*, *The Pacific Review*, *Lullwater Review* and many others.

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