SL

Poetry

Opening Night

Alan Harawitz

at Madison Square Garden
and the seats are packed with hope for the new season.

Television cameras pan the front row searching for celebrities.
After all, this is New York and basketball at the Garden
is the place to see and be seen.

The Knicks are the main attraction; it's been more than a half-century
since the glory days of Walt (Clyde) Frazier and the last championship year.

There's a new coach, a couple new faces on the team and
Spike Lee in the front row, fluorescent orange Knicks-colored suit,
pinstriped, topped off by a black hat sitting on his head almost,
but not quite, like a crown, Spike being the face of Knicks fandom,
attending every home game.

Not to mention being a former middle school student of mine,
adolescent 8th grader and I just a few years fresh out of Brooklyn College.
Both of us having in common the strong bond, ardent Knicks fans.

To see him now fulfilling the dreams of his youth,
dreams he could not possibly have foreseen back then
coming as true as this, while I watch on television,
nowhere near the Garden, in a different state,
dreams of my own long forgotten.

Alan Harawitz, a retired New York City secondary school teacher, has been living in a small town on Maine's southern coast for about two decades. His poems have appeared in more than 100 publications including *The Writer's Almanac* (where Garrison Keillor read two poems from his book), *Poet Lore*, *Hanging Loose*, *Rattle*, *Fugue*, *Sport Literate*, *The Main Street Rag*, and *Gargoyle*. His first collection of poems, *The Day I Met Ava Gardner*, was published in August 2019 (Deerbrook Editions).

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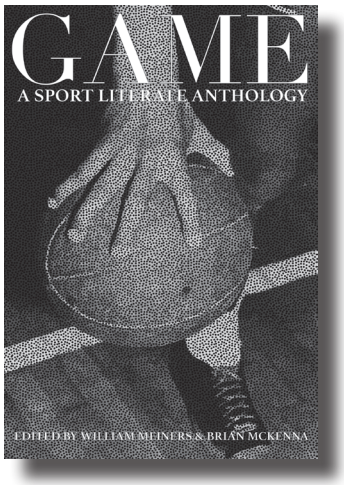

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