

**Descriptive Essay**  
**English class**  
**Ward Stradlater**

### A Glove to Catch With

My brother Billy's baseball glove lies quietly on our chiffonier in the corner of our shared bedroom. I have the top two drawers, as well as the top bunk. Dust has settled on the mitt due to a season of lonely retirement. I pick it up and feel the smooth, cold leather, and I can smell the mild grass and dirt smell ingrained into the body. The tips of the fingers and pocket are worn and floppy like an elephant's ear, telling of years of countless catches in the backyard.

I put the glove on my right hand, and it feels awkward. I haven't put a glove on the wrong hand since that time at school when all the right-handed gloves were taken and I had to use the one left over. I caught just fine, but I couldn't throw the ball for anything. Billy said that I looked like a girl trying to lob the ball to him, and he thought that was so funny. I was so mad at him for that. They were *my* friends we were playing with that day. When I think about that, the game, the glove, the laughing, I get a little depressed.

I open up Billy's glove and flapped my hand open and closed to make the glove talk like a faded, brown puppet on that one kid's show. The knots in the tied leather straps on the fingers look like eyes and a nose. Gary the Glove. Manny the Mitt. I make the glove talk, telling Billy that the mitt is eager to play again. It wants to catch things again.

I take the glove off and open it like a book to read the secret poems inside. Written in green ink (from a marker borrowed from Mr. Andersen, the art teacher), these poems remind Billy that

Catching in the sun  
Is pretty fun  
Open up your eyes  
Score one for the guys  
Lift your glove in the air  
Their ups at bat will disappear

Allie wrote that one in school sometime, and he thought reading it aloud would make the time in the outfield fly by. I told him it was stupid and all, especially the part about scoring one for the guys. How do you score a run for your team while in the outfield? He never answered that question.

I toss the glove back on the bureau, almost knocking over the picture of me and Billy taken during that baseball tournament. My arm is around him, and his arm is around me. Billy is, of course, wearing the glove and it rests on my shoulder, as if he caught me in it.

The glove on the dresser closes and returns to its original form, almost as if it has a memory of its own.