

Harsen's, MI

On the radio, you could hear, *and in ten pitches, the heart of the order goes 1-2-3.*

So Dad turned the radio off and I said to Dad, "why don't we just watch them on the TV?"

But Dad did not say anything.

Dad did not say anything for a good twenty minutes and then he turned the radio back on and it was *gone over the left field fence* and the voice on the radio did not sound at all happy about it and I could tell Dad was thinking about it, thinking about whether to turn the radio off or to keep the radio on and we were losing - the team on the radio was losing. You could tell they were losing just by the voice on the radio and how the voice sounded and the voice did not sound at all happy.

But Dad, Dad did not seem unhappy and I could tell he wasn't unhappy just by the way Dad was sitting on the lawn chair, the white lawn chairs that sometimes break when you sit too fast or sit with force, and Dad was looking out over and past the dock at the white-caps spinning and breaking into themselves.

I asked Dad again about watching them on the TV because the mosquitoes were starting to bite and when they come they come fast and you don't want to be sitting. Don't want to be sitting outside on a lawn chair not listening to the ball-game watching the waves break.

On the radio it was *the dog days - it's what makes or breaks them.*

Dad, again, turned off the radio.

It was just Dad and I, sitting on white lawn chairs behind the seawall, turning the radio on and off and not watching them on the TV. Waves broke like waves do over the beach and we sat there listening to the water when the radio was off and off the dock, up in the sky and up in a way that you could almost reach and touch, the Sun was sinking twilight and the Moon was rising, wide and blue.

When the radio was off, I said to Dad, “Do you remember when the water used to come up to the seawall? And off of the dock, it was above my head?”

Dad sort of laughed, sipped his beer, and switched the radio on. This time, though, it was *back, back, not going to catch it, over the right field fence* and there was going to be a pitching change and Dad supposed we didn’t need to watch that on the TV.

“When did you put the new seawall in, Dad?” I said.

Dad said, “Right before the water level started to dip.”

“Is that when we had a boat at the end of the dock?”

“We put a new dock in, too,” Dad said, “same time as the seawall. The dock and the seawall went in at the same time.”

And now, now behind the new seawall and underneath the new dock, was a beach. A brand new beach *made of the finest sand*. That’s what Mom would say, say it to Dad when Dad started on about the new dock and the new seawall and bad timing. Mom would say it was made of the finest sand. And us, my brothers and sisters and I, we liked the beach, and didn’t understand much the frustration about the new dock or seawall. We built sand castles and hung from the pylons meant to protect the dock from the surge of water that came in the wake

of lake-system freighters. We didn't understand much the frustration and even though we were losing, the team was losing, Dad did not seem unhappy about it.

"After the next inning," I said, "can we watch the game on the TV?"

Dad flipped the radio off and we just sat there, behind the seawall watching the waves break on our new beach with the Sun and Moon hung up low enough to touch.