Losing Sucks

Ana Delgadillo
Concordia University - Portland

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My high school team had made it to the state playoffs my freshmen year. Unfortunately, two games before the playoffs, I broke my ankle. I had gone up for a header and got bumped on the way down causing me to land funny. I could feel the entire outside of my ankle land flat on the ground. POP! and I was out for at least six weeks. So I got to be team cheerleader during the state playoffs. But I wasn’t the only cheerleader. There were three juniors who were our own Timbers Army. War paint on the face, a banana suit (our colors were yellow and purple), kilts, and drums. They were our only student fans.

It was almost the end of the first half and the game had hit a boring spell. The first twenty minutes were a bit crazy because one of our two seniors got a red card fifteen minutes into the game and she was easily our best defender. So we were screwed, but we put up a nasty fight against the lumberjacks from Bonney Lake. These girls were monsters, big and tall trees. But all the adrenaline and excitement from the beginning wore off.

We were just passing the ball around trying to find a way to the goal when my friend Emily made a cutting run and got the ball right in front of the goal. Bonney Lake’s brick giant came lumbering...
out to try to stop Emily’s shot. I looked around at our bench as I was hobbling with my boot and yelling for Emily. I could see our fans – the Scotsman, the warrior Indian, and the banana – jumping up and down with their arms in the air, cheering her on.

And then a scream. And then silence.

My friend that I’d known since I was three was on the ground screaming and crying and then went into shock. The brick wall goalkeeper was scooting as far away from Emily as she could. I was on the other side of the field and I could see almost everyone on the field look as if they were going to throw up. The only one who didn’t was one of our juniors, Eden, who went over to check on Emily. She yelled for our coach to come over, and I could see Emily’s mom book it down the stairs from the stands.

I saw Emily’s mom on the phone, and Eden came over asking for blankets, coats, anything to cover her.

“She broke her leg. I went to lift her leg up and her leg just dropped off from the middle of her shin. I need the med bag.”

I would’ve run over if I didn’t have my stupid boot. I had known her the longest out of everyone, and I was sidelined from helping her. I called my dad to tell him Emily broke her leg (he has coached her since she was eight.) Our team stood in a circle holding hands, tears welling up in our eyes, waiting for the ambulance.

When the medics crossed the field with the gurney, Emily had been lying there for half an hour. Not much to do about a broken leg other than trying not to move it and keep her from seeing it. The medics hauled her on the gurney and slowly pushed her out of the stadium. As she passed by, she gave a small wave and meek smile towards our team. Even with the morphine injections they gave her, she was sane enough to see that it hurt us to see her rolling off the field as much as it hurt her to be broken. She signaled to us to finish the game with all of our good legs, but we didn’t have enough heart left to get a win for her.

We lost. And all we could do to keep our minds off Emily was sing karaoke on the bus ride home. We knew that’s what Emily would be doing if she was with us instead of getting a rod that could predict stormy weather rammed up her shin.