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Core 099I

Childhood Narrative Revision

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Ba, Baseball, & Box Seats

From a very young age, I loved baseball. I mean I played T Ball in kindergarten, and I always claimed to be a Mets fan because that's who my Dad would root for, but I never had my own baseball identity. In 2002, my birthday came and I received my first box of baseball cards. I loved them. I remember pulling out superstars like Tom Glavine, Greg Maddux, Frank Thomas, Manny Ramirez, Derek Jeter, but my favorite card was Ichiro. For those who don't know, Ichiro was a dynamic Japanese outfielder who made a splash in the MLB in the late 90's. He won Gold Gloves, especially because of his famous home run robberies. And helped the Seattle Mariners make the playoffs. On the card, he was standing and laughing with Mr. Met. I never forgot it and that was when I became a true Met fan. I became a fan because I felt that if my mascot could make anyone laugh or smile, especially a player from another team, then I too could enjoy the reward of being a New York Mets fan. I still have the card at home. After getting the cards, I would watch baseball whenever I got the chance and follow the sport closely.

I went to Shea Stadium for my first game a year later in 2004. My parents had to go to my cousins' wedding and no one could watch me. But, my mom's friend Maureen, who I call Ba, worked for a very good company that had box seats, so she could watch me. I was so excited to be finally watching my team. We ate lunch at Ba's house, probably White Castle. Then about an hour before game time we left her house and hopped on the world famous 7 train. After

getting off the platform and starting to walk towards the stadium, I remember hearing ticket scalpers saying, "Tickets, tickets, here, come buy some tickets and watch the Amazins' win." Finally we approached our gate and the song *Meet the Mets* was playing. Ever since then I knew all the words. Luckily, my first ever game was on a promotion day. They were giving out replica Shea Stadium's. Ba could see the excitement on my face. After going through the turnstile, I was in.

I made a mad dash to our seats and couldn't wait for baseball activities to start. It was a crisp day and the Mets were sending out veteran pitcher Al Leiter in a classic division rival against the big bad Atlanta Braves led by their future Hall of Fame Manager, Bobby Cox. Al pitched amazingly, but I wasn't concerned about the game after a few innings because I was talking to everyone within a few rows of me, I felt like a mini celebrity because I was telling everyone that it was my first game.

Then came the 7th inning stretch. Mr. Met and his crew shot T-shirts out of an air gun. I was so excited. Ba told me we probably would get one because we were so close. I could hear the screaming of fans trying to get the party control crew's attention. Popcorn was flying and beer was being spilt. Finally they came near my section. It seemed like silence in a movie, only I existed, and the floating Pepsi T-shirt was coming my way. Of course I was too short in that point in my life to grab it, but Ba had it in her grasp, and she got bumped by the guy next to her, and he grabbed it.

My face looked defeated. The guy did not apologize at all. The section then began chanting and screaming, "Give it to the kid" and "Pass that T-shirt to the kid, it's his first game," and a few expletives may have been dropped. It got so bad that he had to be escorted out by security. As soon as that happened the section began cheering for the guy's departure and then we

all focused on the game again. After the fiasco during the 7th inning stretch, Ba and I left during the 8th inning. But before we left, Ba got me a Mets hat filled with delicious Carvel ice cream with rainbow sprinkles on top and a Mets pin. We took the 7 train back home with all the other Mets fans leaving. We got back to her apartment and I fell asleep at 10:30. It was such a great time, and I never forgot it. When I am able to be a sports broadcaster, I want my family there for my first game, and I want Ba there too.