

## “JUST ONE OF THOSE SNOW DAYS”

**FRIDAY FEBRUARY, CIRCA 1960:** The bell rings for the final period of the day. It is only ten minutes past two instead of three fifteen when our eighth period class usually ends, because of the snow that began falling early this morning. The schedule was shortened from fifty-five minute classes to forty five-minute classes. Everyone is anxious to get out and make their way home, but Fr. Peck the disciplinarian gave us prior warning about an orderly dismissal, so everyone is walking calmly to their locker. Walking in the hallways at Cardinal Dougherty High, (CD), is always a challenge even when the guys are walking calmly. The narrow hallways become even smaller when 2000 plus guys enter them between classes. I see Livin as I am walking to my locker, who mentions to me about playing some tackle football in the snow on the corner of J&I when we get home. Waiting for the XO bus outside of the front entrance of CD is turning into a marathon. A bunch of us decide to walk down to 5<sup>th</sup> & Godfrey Sts. to catch the 47 trolley. The ride on the 47 is always long, however this trip seems longer, but uneventful. At 5<sup>th</sup> & Allegheny Ave. we jump off and immediately board the 60 Trolley. Squid who gets on the trolley first shouts back to us that Bart Musitano is sitting in the rear. Mario Amici says to Bart, “I didn’t think they allowed North Catholic Boys on this trolley. Bart laughs and retorts with, “Your lucky I’m not with any of my classmates.” Petchy gets a seat quickly, because he appears to be a double amputee with his legs wrapped up and under his coat. Horn and I are carrying him and this lady feels sorry for him, so she gives him her seat. Horn and I are relieved, but I start laughing so hard and loud that I’m afraid that the lady may be suspicious. She looks at us funny, but quickly turns away. I just can’t stop laughing. Horn on the other hand keeps looking at me with a straight face and says, “What’s your problem”, and turns away. I walk to the back of the trolley and

tell the other guys what’s going on and they begin to laugh. Bony walks to the middle of the trolley where Petchy is sitting and compassionately asks, “John are you OK!” and immediately begins to laugh. Petchy himself is having a hard time trying to keep a straight face. Balloons, unknowingly walks up to Petchy and asks, “John are you playing football with us?” Petchy tries to signal Balloons by giving him the SHHH sign, but by now its too late. The lady that gave him her seat walks up to the conductor and whispers something to him. At the corner of 20<sup>th</sup> and Allegheny the conductor stops the trolley and begins to walk to the back. Petchy quickly unwraps his legs and runs to the middle door and off the trolley. The conductor approaches Horn and me, after the lady points us out, and he tells us to get off the trolley. We slowly walk to the middle door and off the trolley. The rest of the guys on the trolley start to laugh and hiss at the conductor and by the time they reach 22<sup>nd</sup> St. the guys are all being escorted off the trolley by the conductor. Livin is blaming me for the whole mess and says, “I can’t wait till you carry the football later.” The snow must be about a foot deep by the time we get to the corner of J&I. Barbell is passing the time waiting with Umberto, Lavanga, Minghenelli, and Jules Petrone by passing the ball to each of them. Umberto shouts, “Where have you guys been?” Petchy answers, “We had a slight altercation.” Livin starts to get on me about it being my fault. I look over at Denny DiGregorio and plead with him that it was not my fault. Vinny Chang says, “Are we going to play football or what?” After the sides are decided we begin to play in the middle of the street, where the snow tracks from the cars seem to provide the quarterback with some traction. The snow is still coming down heavily. In the huddle on the very first play Minghenelli calls a running play giving me the ball. I decline, because Liven is on the other side and is gunning for me. I avoid it for the first series of

downs, but on defense I am forced to try and tackle Livin who takes me about twenty feet over the goal line wrapped around his leg. All in all the game was great. After the game is over Joey DeLarso asks me if I want to go shoveling pavements with him. I can always use money, especially with Valentines Day coming up soon. The snow is letting up, so this is a good time to get out and shovel before there is too much competition. The first pavement we shovel is at Nicastro’s Pharmacy. Joe, the owner, is a great guy and pays us well. We proceed down 24<sup>th</sup> St. and get the next job from Angela Peditto’s mom. That was easy and went very fast. As we walk further down 24<sup>th</sup> St. we notice that the competition has started already. Eddy Trignani is shoveling along with Dell & Dom Matteo. We decide to walk down to 22<sup>nd</sup> St. and shovel pavements for the stores there, but when we get there the sidewalks have been already cleared of snow. We continue to walk down Indiana and we get a job from Leo the Barber. The next job we get is from Uncle Mike Citro. I tell Joey that I am tired and head on home. I am also hungry and as I pass by Emily’s Pizzeria I smell the gravy and get even hungrier. When I reach the corner of J&I Horn asks me if I’m going to the Mott with them tonight. I forgot all about going, I ask him if he thinks the trolleys will be running. Just as Horn is about to answer we hear Balloons say, “The dance has been called off.” After I eat the fish that Uncle Al made for dinner I walk out onto the corner. Everyone is crowded under Capriotti’s awning waiting for something to do. Trains comes up with the idea that we play basketball at St. Mary’s gym. Everybody looks at me and I know what they all want me to do. We all walk quickly over to the Rectory and I ring the bell. Mary Buccafurni, answers the door and lets me in. I patiently wait about fifteen minutes for Fr. Busco, but it is worth the wait. He lets us use the gym. HAPPY SHOVELING!!!!!!!