

THE FISHING STORY

This is a wonderful story about my Dad and me. At the time I was a young teenager living in Southern California. Once a year my Dad and I would go fishing. We would get up early in the morning, pack our fishing gear, and then get into the car for the long drive down to San Diego.

Once there we would get on a half-day boat with about twenty other real fishermen. All the men would put a few dollars into a betting pool. The biggest fish caught that day would win the pool. My Dad would always put money into the pool for the both of us. We never won but we always got excited that the largest fish we caught would be the winner.

One day something unbelievable happened. Our boat floated into a ragging school of hungry barracuda. The water around the boat was foaming with jumping fish. My Dad hooked a barracuda and around the boat he went. He traveled under one fisherman's pole after another until he finally reeled in his fish.

I was locked in combat myself, as were all the other fishermen. This excitement lasted for about an hour. For my Dad and me it would always be our big fishing adventure on the high seas.

But that is not the main point of this story. The magic really happened on our return home. After fishing my Dad and I would stop at a small and I mean small diner to eat. This diner was situated in the parking lot of the Los Angeles Coliseum. It was called The Nighthawk. It had a real menu but practically everyone was eating chili. As soon as you sat down you were presented with a big bowl of chili. So many people came to this parking lot diner just for the chili. After you got your bowl the owner would come around and pile on raw chopped onions. He would not stop spooning the raw onions until you said stop.

We ate until we could hardly move. Then it was back into the car for our trip home. We must have gone two blocks before my Dad belched. He looked at me and we both laughed. He belched again and I could not stop laughing.

My Dad then said, "I bet I can belch one hundred times before we get home." My job was to count. It was like my Dad had uncontrollable indigestion. I now know they were not real. My Dad was faking it. But what a happy ride home. We got home exactly at number one hundred. Both of us were exhausted from laughing.

I am sure no one has ever continuously laughed while driving from Los Angeles to the San Fernando Valley. But my Dad and I did.....
