

## MORNING STORIES TRANSCRIPT

***Birds, Bees, and Bats:*** Framingham, Mass., writer and new Red Sox enthusiast Erica Ferencik develops a passion for baseball that rivals her husband's.

**Tony Kahn:**

Hi, everybody. This is Tony Kahn, the producer and the director of *Morning Stories* from WGBH-FM in Boston.

Assuming the, the snow does stop one of these days and melts, we are going to have a big change in here in Boston, and I don't just mean spring or summer; we are going to enter into our very first baseball season as world champions. [laughs] Excuse me while I laugh, but who's used to that around here? I mean, the words "Boston Red Sox" and "winners" have never rhymed before. What does this mean? You don't reverse four generations of never making it to Number One with the new era of self-confidence! This is a city that doesn't even bother to put street signs on its main thoroughfares, that calls the same tunnel Sumner in one direction and Callahan in the other, you want us to be role models? Winners? Well!

Now that the whole world is watching our baseball team, what does our relationship to baseball really mean? Where do you go for the proper analysis and advice from experts? Well, in the media we would normally go to the talking heads, and the pundits; after all, we've got lots of universities nearby. But in the spirit of podcasting, we're not going to do that. We're going to go to a normal, regular citizen like you and me, who's interested in the subject of baseball because it's direct, it's personal, she's honest, and she's also very funny. Our old friend, Erica Ferencik.

[sound of paper being balled up and thrown in wastebasket]

**Erica Ferencik:**

It all started last fall when my writing wasn't going very well. And I joined my husband on the couch for a break. [sounds of a baseball game on television, along with organ music starts, and continues] My eyes glazed over, the usual for me when watching team sports until [sound of crunching on chips] – who's that guy on third?

**Erica's husband:** [chewing chips]

Oh yeah, that's, um, that's Johnny Damon.

[More crunching]

**Erica Ferencik:**

Hmm, Johnny Damon. My relationship with baseball begins.

[In the background, sound of television baseball commentator]

**Erica Ferencik:**

[Sounds of a crowd of people talking in a bar] Next thing I know, my husband's asking me to go to the 401 club with him. But it was so sterile. I couldn't touch the baseball! No crack of the bat, no sugary peanut smells. A woman behind me is shrieking, "Manny, I love you! I wanna have your baby, Manny!" Manny's babies? What's wrong with having... Johnny's babies?

Pretty soon, I know what an RBI is. [rustling and eating sounds] One day I actually say, "Hey, that was a balk!" before the ump even calls it. My husband looks at me in awe, perhaps fear. [food crunching, and then a grunt] Can't tell; don't care. I'm jonesing for hot dogs. I hate hot dogs! I realize I'm eating to make the team strong!

I stop writing my novel entirely. Character development? Please! Plot points? I don't think so! Did you see Nixon's left-handed catch in the fourth in game six?

Then, the final game of the series. The miracle. Everything comes together – me, the hot dogs, Johnny, Manny, my husband, the dead Babe... [climactic music] Ecstasy! [sound of crowd cheering]

What could possibly top that? Football? [sounds of sports players yelling] I mean, don't even wake me for snacks! My husband looks happy. I'm trying to figure out what that means! Then I realize... I'm happy! [sounds of television announcer] [sound of door closing] Relieved, in fact.

[sound of deep voiced football commentator in background – "*The gladiators of the gridiron . . .*" Door closes, muting the sound of the football game.]

It's time again for my novel, solitude, a scented candle, a peaceful place no sweaty hulk or fanatic husband dares to enter. I guess it's like the cycles of nature. The seasons, ying and yang, the alpha and the omega, the yada and the yada... Or to put it more everyday married English, "Honey, how can I miss you if you never go away?"

[Violin music and birds chirping start and continue throughout this paragraph] But now the dust has cleared in Foxborough. The groundhog saw his shadow. My ears perk up. The words "spring" and "training" are showing up in the same sentence more and more often. My husband and I have started a friendly sparring match for the sports page in the morning. The sap is on the rise, there's birds, there's bees. I *think* it's gonna be a great year. [bees buzzing] [Erica laughs]

**Tony Kahn:**

That was today's podcast, *The Birds, the Bees, and the Bats* from Erica Ferencik. Podcasts of WBGH's *Morning Stories* are made possible in part with support from Ipswitch, a leader in file transfer software. Further information is available at [www.ipswitch.com](http://www.ipswitch.com)>

-- that's I-P-S-W-I-T-C-H dot com. It ends with an itch, but it doesn't start with a scratch. [laughs] [Gary laughs] Whatever that means, we're certainly grateful to Ipswitch for their support, so thank you guys.

**Gary Mott:**  
Absolutely.

**Tony Kahn:**  
...And Gar, we have a website, too, don't we?

**Gary Mott:**  
<wgbh.org/morningstories> Lots of good listening there, believe me.

**Tony Kahn:**  
So. [sighs] Here we are.

**Gary Mott:**  
Spring.

**Tony Kahn:**  
[Laughs ironically] Spring!

**Gary Mott:**  
I walked out the door this morning, and I heard the birds chirping.

**Tony Kahn:**  
Mm-hm.

**Gary Mott:**  
And I felt, you know, something in the air that I hadn't felt for, for many many months, and then I, I realized - it's twenty-two degrees out here! [Tony laughs] What is this?

**Tony Kahn:**  
So what were you feeling in the air?

**Gary Mott:**  
[Laughs]

**Tony Kahn:**  
Your breath? [laughs]

**Gary Mott:**  
[Laughs] Maybe it was the spring in my step.

**Tony Kahn:**

True story, Gary. In the course of going to the mailbox and mailing a letter, I started off with a cold wind blowing at my back, and I was sweating on the way back from excess humidity. Three seasons in the course of a, what, minute-long walk!

**Gary Mott:**

(simultaneously) Of one walk, yeah.

**Tony Kahn:**

I thought, this is it. But since no one else will hire me, I'm staying here! [laughs]

**Gary Mott:**

[Laughs] It's time. It's time for spring.

**Tony Kahn:**

Anyway, whatever the weather is, we'll be back next week with another *Morning Story*, so...

**Gary Mott:**

Something springy, I hope.

**Tony Kahn:**

Something springy.

**Gary Mott:**

It's a palate cleanser! The best five minutes of your week, we guarantee.

**Tony Kahn:**

And feel sorry for you, if that's the case.

**Gary Mott:**

[Laughs]

**Tony Kahn:**

So, we'll, we'll see you next week!

**Gary Mott:**

Thanks.

**Tony Kahn:**

Bye.

[End of recording]

Transcribed by: Rebekah Sprecher