

The Paddle

Waking up early to pack some peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and make a canteen filled with bittersweet lemonade was not the highlight of my day. The drive to the lake took about half an hour, but to nine-year-old me it seemed like forever. We pulled up and there were boats of all different sizes and kinds everywhere! After parking we piled out of the car, my sisters and I racing toward the playground without a care in the world if my grandparents were about to permit it or not. My grandparents caught up and directed us towards the office where we were to find out which boat was ours for the day.

The last thing I remember before jumping into that sailboat was my grandfather bickering with the renters about a paddle. I thought to myself how silly it was that my grandfather would argue with a stranger about something as little as a paddle. Little did I know, that paddle would later have made all the difference in how our day went. After being taught all the rules of sailing and the functions of every piece of equipment on the sailboat my grandfather let me sail for a while. While I deep down had a fear of tipping over the sailboat I felt so liberated. All that liberation was taken away from me though when all of a sudden the wind completely stopped.

My grandfather gently tried to keep my grandmother, my sisters and I calm, but I think even he was panicking inside a little. We started to paddle to shore using our arms as paddles since our renters wouldn't provide us with any. I now understood why my grandfather was so frazzled earlier. Paddling for thirty minutes got us to land, and as soon as we hit it my grandfather trotted off to find a phone to use and call the renters for help.

When the renters showed up finally two hours later they quietly towed us back to shore. In the end we were thankful we had woken up so early to pack our lunches!