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As a young boy, Jimmy loved baseball. He could hit a ball far and throw it hard. But his father, Jim Morris Sr., was a Navy man. His job required the family to move from base to base.

Sometimes those moves were on short notice. One move brought the Morris family to Brownwood, Texas where the high school had no baseball program. Jimmy had to "make do" with high school football, the town's passion. As a second-string quarterback for the Lions, he could throw a football 95 yards. He could punt 50 yards, into the wind.

If Brownwood High had given Jimmy Morris an opportunity to play baseball, perhaps his life would have taken a different direction. But the school's football coach, Gordon Wood, believed that baseball would have detracted from the school's football program. As Morris observes in his book, The Oldest Rookie:

*It is no exaggeration to say that my entire story is built on the consequences of that belief. If Brownwood had fielded a baseball team—well, there's no rational conclusion to the thought. Everything would have been different. Sometimes you choose your own destiny, and sometimes it chooses you.* (Morris, *The Oldest Rookie*, page 44.)

Playing football for the Lions, Jimmy Morris had no clue about his true destiny. But then, who among us ever really does?

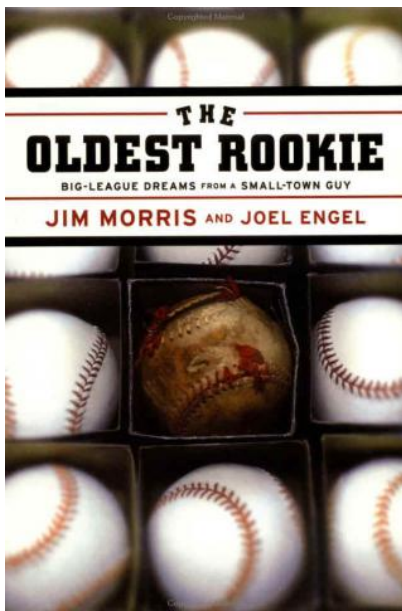
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<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/NEW-DIRECTIONS-Rookie-The>

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Media Stream



## The Oldest Rookie

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