

each note matched with one of the six numbers. Then he would play through the song and the numbers would add up. (I don't remember all of the notes, but number songs always started with C#-F.) We got through the numbers and said, "Dune." Then they taught a story with a song and it went like this: The sky was a note and the forest was a note and the ground was a note and a man was a note. Then he glued these things together using the same addition he used with numbers. So he had a skyman and a forestman and a groundman.

His song went on, saying that the skyman was equal to one and the forestman was equal to two and the groundman was equal to three. I envisioned costumes for each of these characters. I couldn't decide with the groundman if he was made of ground or if he had a canvas sack on. I pictured him coming up from under the ground and taking a drink from the stream. Then the song said that the difference between the skyman and the groundman was eighty-six. This puzzled me and I looked at the boy. His eyes were open and he said, "Dune," when the song ended.

I thought, "This must be an allegory for how the math works here." And I left it to my subconscious to sort it out.

The hike took us to a valley where another group was camping. It was a kind of bowl that had been dug up, perhaps by lumberjacks. The night was growing stormy and the men hid away under boards that were lodged in the dirt over small, shallow foxholes. The man with the pith helmet took me and the boy down to a set of boards toward the bottom of the pit. We sat on piles of telephone books. (I say these were telephone books, but they were more like magazines, they dated back to the 1980s and were labelled, "Port Frampton, Washington," they had no telephone numbers, just lists of names and corresponding ham radio call signs, I looked through quite a number of these, the names and call signs never seemed to change, from year to year.)

I was distracted from looking at the phone books once I realized that the boy was playing a piccolo. The man in the pith helmet had given it to him and was saying, "Dune," and smiling after each little song. I sat there and ate