Here it is, only July. Early July. Summer just started a couple weeks ago. And Jesse's already sick of it, and says he wants autumn, right now, and he doesn't want to wait for it. The Friday night sounds of high school marching bands, college football on Saturday mornings in the fall, ESPN Gameday .... Paul Keels, Jim Lachey, and Jim Karsatos. Jesse wants autumn to come quick. And writes about it for us in this really solid read.

Here it is, only July. *Early* July. Summer just started. And I'm already sick with it. I'm all summered out. Get it moving, get it over with. I don't have time to mess around with three months of this. Life is short.

Screw summer. Summer is heat and humidity that invades every molecule of air and makes it almost impossible to get comfortable. It's a perfectly good shower that doesn't take. It's torrential rain that comes out of nowhere and soaks you to the skin if you're out in it for ten seconds. It's the staleness in an air-conditioned room. It's the ragged temper of being stuck at a red light while the mercury tops ninety and the sweat flows from every pore. It's a close, muggy day that only bleeds into the next. It's the endless drone of an underachieving Indians season. Unless you're a school-kid on break or you own a swimming pool, who needs it? Besides, I prefer hot tubs to pools... and everyone knows that a hot tub gets better as the air gets nippier.

Give me autumn. Give me comfortable short-sleeved days and crisp long-sleeved nights that are perfect for sleeping with the windows cracked. Give me the sight of my breath when the sun goes down. Give me bonfires and the sweet smell of wood-smoke in the air. Give me the Friday Night sound of a high-school marching band drifting into my living room from a distance.

Give me football season.

Give me Saturday mornings in the fall. Give me prep scores in the paper that I'll scan to find out if my Kent Roosevelt Rough Riders won. Give me Chris, Kirk and the Coach on the tube. Give me a *College Gameday* crowd, a mascot head, and a sign that says LEE CORSO HAS A BABY ARM. Give me coffee, bagels, and the delicious anticipation of twelve hours of football in one sitting. Give me an eighteen-pack of cold Budweiser in my fridge, ready to be opened at a moment's notice. Give me the number to greasy food, ready to be called at a moment's notice.

Give me the noon start and Chris Spielman calling a lower-tier Big Ten game- *"Gotta like that linebacker stickin' his nose in there! Get after it, young fella!"*
Give me scores and highlights from around the nation. Give me upsets in the making. Give me bonus coverage from Jefferson Pilot. Give me the spread offense. Give me quarterbacks who can't throw and kickers who can't kick. Give me an SEC clash-of-the-titans decided by a special-teams mishap. Give me Ron Franklin's rich Mississippi baritone and Andre Ware's smooth Texas drawl. Give me Mark May smirking behind Lou Holtz's back. Give me Rece Davis calling Rutgers "the Fighting Schianos." Give me Spencer Tillman's over-applied eye shadow. Give me Tim Brando to taunt through through the screen for his 2003 Fiesta Bowl
prediction
:
"48-10, what???"
Give me Desmond Howard's wholesale butchery of the language. Give me plump little Holly Rowe down on the field. You can have Erin Andrews: I'll take the girl that keeps me warm on those crisp autumn nights.

Give me Buckeye football. Give me O-H-I-O. Give me Paul Keels, Jim Lachey, Jim Karsatos on the sideline, and Let's Go Buckeyes, Let's Go Krogering. Give me Brent Musberger telling me I'm *looking live... at the HORSE-shoe... in Co-LUM-bus* , and me knowing damn well what I'm looking at, thank you very much, but liking the sound of it anyway. Give me

twenty-year old undergrads in Woody costumes. Give me Beanie Wells throwing stiff-arms that decapitate. Give me Robo's exaggerated handing of the ball to the official. Give me Coach Tressel's lacquered-on aw-shucks shtick: *"Kent State is a darn good team and they played a heck of a football game out there."*
Give me a Saturday Night in September, prime-time, Ohio State at USC, from the Los Angeles Coliseum. Give me Petey and Tress, college football's Men of the Decade, meeting at long, overdue last. Give me a nice little buzz and my dream of a Rose Bowl rematch that nobody bothered to tell me was out-of-date ten years ago.

Give me fantasy football. Give me a waiver wire to scan and an injury report to sweat. Give me L.T. falling to the third pick that I earned by virtue of my team's 4-10 record in 2007. Give me the common freaking sense not to draft Lee Evans when Reggie Wayne is still on the board.

Give me Jon Gruden saying the word "football" three times in the same sentence. Give me Terrell Owens throwing his teammates under the bus. Give me Michael Strahan's will he-or-won't he. Give me Mike Nolan's suit and Tony Dungy's sanctimony. Give me Oakland wallowing around in the basement. Give me Rex Grossman's blank expression. Give me Mark Schlereth bragging about his eight million knee surgeries. Give me Sean Salisbury taking John Clayton's manhood. Give me Tom Jackson guffawing at Chris Berman's tired jokes. Give me a meltdown in Baltimore, a lack of discipline in Cincinnati, and a porous offensive line in Pittsburgh.

Give me my Cleveland Browns. Give me a season I'm looking forward to with something other than dread. Give me DA's rifle arm and Phil's toy-cannon leg. Give me Braylon making cornerbacks look silly. Give me Josh Cribbs burning it at both ends. Give me K2's fire, fury, and wondrous hands. Give me Joe Jury's outsized first-down gesture. Give me Joe Thomas taking pass rushers where they want to go. Give me Lawrence Vickers delivering pain on the lead block. Give me Hank Fraley in the second level looking for somebody to hit. Give me J-Lew busting tackles and Gus Johnson enthusing: *"Jamaaaal LEWIS! Ha-HAAA!"* Give me those

beautiful orange helmets in HD. Give me barking in public with 72,000 of my closest friends. Give me my annual membership in the greatest brotherhood in sports, the brotherhood of the Browns fan. Give me the Super Bowl dream. I'm totally game for it.

Give me autumn, and give me football season. But here it is, only June, and an endless, sticky summer stretches out before me.

Damn it.