Hitting the Apex

By Mark Neale
This is how it begins.
A motorcycle racer
and his crew chief
looking for speed.
I'm thinking how to corner well
with my knee to the ground
how the crew chief has explained.
It's difficult.
This is how it begins.
A motorcycle racer and his crew chief.
And his race engineers
and his suspension engineer
and his tire engineer
and his electronics engineer
and his mechanics,
looking for speed.
From the smallest minimoto track
to the fastest grand prix circuit,
from little bikes
that cost a few hundred
to MotoGP missiles that cost millions.
From 20-mile-an-hour childhood thrills
to 220-mile-an-hour
grand prix battles.
The principle remains the same.
Find the fastest line around the track.
And then figure out how to go faster.
Grand prix motorcycle racing is
the process of turning fire into speed.
The combustion of fuel
and air in the engine
and the fire in the heart of a rider
willing to risk everything to win.
Time is the enemy.
The fractions of a second
lost or gained in every corner
which add up to defeat or victory.
And the few years that you have
to make it to the top
and try to stay there.
This is what you have to do.
Brake as late as possible.
Stay wide.
Turn.
Hit the apex. Accelerate.
Brake.
Lean... further.
Faster.
Stay on the motorcycle.
Hit the apex. Accelerate.
Stay on the motorcycle.
Crashing... hurts.
It wrecks your bike.
It wrecks your body.
It wrecks your chances.
Stay... on... the bike.
And fight.
Every lap.
Every corner.
Every second.
In 18 races around the world.
Flat out
for over 2,000 miles each season.
Fight to the finish.
Fight to the top.
Fight.
This is the story of six fighters.
Six of the fastest motorcycle racers
of all time
and of the fates that awaited them
at the peak of the sport.
When the speeds had never been higher,
the competition more intense
or the talent on the track
more brilliant.
It's the story of what is at stake
for all of them.
All that can be won.
And all that can be lost,
when you go chasing glory
at over 200 miles an hour
on a motorcycle.
I love sleep. I love sleeping.
Marco, my helper, wakes me up.
So I take some breakfast.
I just feel that I'm more nervous
than on Saturday.
You start feeling the butterflies in your stomach.
I hate this feeling.
You feel more tired.
You feel... You are less strong.
Wake up, breakfast, warm up.
Normally I sleep well but that time I will be a little bit nervous.
Sunday morning, the feeling is always the same.
Scary, fear, adrenaline.
Think positive, but also scary to make some mistake.
Together, the worst and the best moment of my life.
Valentino, you're so handsome!
The countdown to the MotoGP race at two o'clock is punctuated by the roar of the support events...
The junior class at 11.
The intermediate at 12.20.
Then it's time.
There are many things out of your control.
These are the things that make you a bit uncomfortable in that particular hour before the race.
I enjoy it.
It's great to see my son get to the top.
But you also suffer.
As parents, we are afraid because it's very dangerous.
The danger's inevitable.
It's motor racing on two wheels at very high speeds.
We're always trying to make it better.
We're working on rider equipment.
The airbags inside the leathers.
And then the rules that I apply to not allow the riders
to do things that put them in danger.
The road to the MotoGP
world championship
is long, difficult and dangerous.
It must be taken at maximum speed
at all times.
The finish line is thousands of miles,
hundreds of races and hundreds
of crashes from the start.
Thousands of young riders go racing
each year in Europe, Asia and America,
dreaming of a place on the world stage.
Very few of them will get there.
Nobody knows
the ferocity of the competition
better than Valentino Rossi.
He's raced in over 300 grand prix
since 1996,
won over 100 of them
and taken nine world championships.
He made it to MotoGP
the way most of them do,
rising through the junior
and intermediate classes,
learning the grand prix tracks
on 140-mile-an-hour bikes.
Then 170-mile-an-hour bikes
before the move to MotoGP
and over 200 miles an hour.
Year after year, he's fought off
wave after wave of challengers.
Over 100 riders have come and gone
in his time at the top.
Rossi is the only one left
from the MotoGP class of 2000.
From 2001 to 2005, he won
five MotoGP championships in a row.
Rossi goes through and
there's nothing Biaggi can do about it.
Oh! They touched! He's wide!
Oh, Rossi's pushing him off the track!
Rossi's gonna take victory
in the Spanish cup.
He was
the undisputed king of the sport.
At the end of the decade
he was still fighting, still winning.
One more premier class title
and he would equal the all-time record.
One more step to cementing his status
as the greatest motorcycle racer
of all time.
But by 2010, Rossi had his hands full.
The men who could beat him had arrived.
If you'd known where to look,
you could have seen them
coming for him all along.
1994, Spain.
Seven-year-old Jorge Lorenzo
slips and slides his way
around a car park in Mallorca.
Casey Stoner on 166.
Keep your eyes on Casey.
1997, Australia.
Twelve-year-old Casey Stoner
leads the pack in a dirt-track race.
Casey Stoner 166
with that nice comfortable lead.
He led hundreds
of dirt-track races there.
He once won 32 in a single weekend.
That's a very easy win
in event number five.
1999, Italy.
12-year-old Marco Simoncelli wins
the national Minimoto championship.
The same competition
Rossi started his career in.
2000, Casey Stoner's family takes
all their savings and moves to Europe.
Racing on asphalt for the first time,
Stoner finds himself up against
the fastest rider he's ever seen.
Dani Pedrosa,
from Sabadell near Barcelona.
Ten years later, the new generation
are all on the grid with Rossi.
Almost all of them, that is.
There's another very fast one coming none of them know about yet.
1997, Cervera, Spain.
Marc Marquez gets a motorcycle for Christmas.
He is three years old.
Casey Stoner stunned Valentino Rossi and everybody else in 2007, his second year in MotoGP. The Australian didn't just beat Rossi to the world title that year, he wiped the floor with him, taking ten victories to the Italian's four. Yamaha then signed Jorge Lorenzo as their second rider for 2008. It was a statement. Rossi was the past. Lorenzo was the future. In 2010, the 23-year-old rode a perfect season. He finished every race, took nine wins and seven podiums and scored more points than anybody in history. I saw it when he was five. It was impressive how he could ride beyond logic, beyond the laws of physics almost. When you see that in a child you know there is great potential to go very far in this sport. He had it and other things besides. He's very stubborn. He's very hard-working. He sticks at things until he achieves them. He's a non-conformist. A perfectionist. And of all that together with the right circumstances has enabled him to reach the level he's now at. Dani Pedrosa excelled
on the smaller bikes,
winning three titles.
In MotoGP, the diminutive Spaniard finished second to Stoner in 2007 and second again to Lorenzo in 2010, pushing Rossi down to third in the championship standings.
With Valentino Rossi in apparent decline at the age of 31, Italy is looking for a new MotoGP hero.
Enter Marco Simoncelli.
I took him to ride mini bikes. I didn't take him to piano classes. He loved it. It was easy.
The first race, he fell three times. He didn't win.
But he learned fast.
All of them, I've seen all his races. Little by little, with difficulty, with many concerns, we got where he wanted to be.
From his determination and the way he rode we always knew he would be great.
Me and his mum.
Racing in the intermediate class, Simoncelli took six victories in 2008 and clinched the world title in the tropical heat of Malaysia.
Marco, how does that sound, to be world champion?
It's wonderful.
I... I...
I can't speak.
I am too hot. I'm sorry.
Congratulations anyway, Marco.
Thanks very much.
It's wonderful. Grazie tutti.
Scusati.
Marco Simoncelli lived in Coriano, a few miles from Valentino Rossi's home in Tavullia.
Eight years Rossi's junior, he sharpened his skills on the same twisting roads that the world champion had ridden as a teenager. And over time, the world champion became a friend and mentor. From 2007, I passed a lot of time with him. Every day at the gym, motocross, go-kart. A lot a lot together. Yeah, he was my best friend in the paddock. Our relationship become more deep. The doors to MotoGP opened for Simoncelli. He made his debut in 2010 with Fausto Gresini's team. Like everybody before him, he struggled. At first he had some trouble and he crashed a few times. But moving from two-stroke engines to four-stroke engines, going from one way of working to another takes time. It's a huge leap in performance. From a top speed of around 170 miles per hour in the intermediate class to over 220 in MotoGP. A MotoGP bike accelerates faster than a Formula 1 car. Crashing can mean flying through the air faster than a free-falling skydiver. A 200-mile-an-hour landing survivable as long as you hit the ground at a shallow angle and slide. At the beginning of the season, we were in big trouble with the bike. Step-by-step, we improved every race. And now the last three races for me are so positive,
I hope to end the season in the best way and to step up on the podium. There is Marco Simoncelli. Simoncelli is gonna do it. No! Dovizioso has so much more drive coming out of the Parabolica. Well done, Simoncelli. He's going to be disappointed. That's his dad, isn't it? Giving him a big hug. Marco Simoncelli, we're gonna see a lot of you next season. I don't think there's any doubt about that. Great ride. By the end of the year, Simoncelli had emerged as one of the fastest of them all. He hadn't won a race yet, but he'd won a lot of hearts. He was just what many people wanted in a motorcycle racer, a demon on the bike and a nice guy off it. I'm happy for the big improvement that I do with my team during this year. And the results coming better and better. And now we hope to continue in this way. At the final race in Valencia, he qualified on the front row for the first time, ready to take on anyone, including newly-crowned world champion Jorge Lorenzo. Jorge Lorenzo fights back against Marco Simoncelli and gets up the inside. Simoncelli fights back immediately. He loves to be aggressive, doesn't he? I read something he tell about my riding style,
but, I don't know,
for me he said some wrong things...
Because he said I touch him
and maybe he crashed.
Lorenzo dives
for the inside line and touches!
Oh, he was almost down!
And he was just hanging on.
Lorenzo is absolutely furious!
I was in front and he tried to pass me
and he did a mistake.
He hurt me.
His tire was on my leather
from the leg to the shoulder.
So for me it's not a correct example.
It's working? Yeah?
For my side, I think yesterday
I speak the right words.
And for me, it's not a problem.
If in the future, it doesn't happen
anything, it's not a problem.
We'll see what happens in the future.
Yes, but you did
a wrong example for me.
I think you have a lot of touching
with a lot of riders.
Yes, but the example
was wrong for me.
How many races I doesn't crash?
I don't touch any rider.
I said that your example was wrong.
Sorry, eh?
This is your opinion.
But I think a lot of people
here in the paddock,
a lot of riders
have the same opinion of me.
Try to ask.
Ask Dovizioso for example...
For example, ask Dovizioso in 2005.
It doesn't matter.
If in the future it doesn't happen,
it's not a problem for me.
But in the future if something
happens with you, will be a problem.
OK. I will be arrested.
OK, let's quiet...
Let's calm down a little bit.
Sorry.
No, you and Marco, that is fine.
That's no problem.
I can speak?
Of course you can speak. Please.
No. This question...
Everybody's laughing...
But it's not funny
because we are playing with our lives.
We are riding at 300 per hour.
With bikes, very powerful
and very heavy.
It's not mini-bikes.
So, it's a dangerous sport.
And you have to think
what do you do.
At the highest level,
motorcycle racing
is a display of dangerous brilliance.
The performance of death-defying feats
of skill and daring.
That is the underlying contest.
A dance with potential destruction.
You know that this is dangerous.
When you ride at 100%,
you always risk.
but when you have the feeling
that the situation is under control,
you can push the last 10%.
We know the dangers of racing.
You need to respect
the riders next to you.
You don't know
the last time you'll see them.
We go into races knowing it can happen.
You don't think about it.
If that starts creeping in your mind,
then you leave.
You've gotta take risks
to stay in the game.
When you run the numbers,  
The odds are on the riders' side.  
Over an 18-race season,  
the practice sessions and races  
in the three MotoGP classes  
produce hundreds of crashes.  
Serious injuries are limited  
to a few broken bones most of the time.  
Do you know how many crashes  
there have been this year?  
Six hundred and ninety.  
Six hundred and ninety crashes.  
Fractures and so on?  
I don't know, about 30.  
In my career, also when I was  
young, I don't take a lot of risks.  
I take risks,  
but not more than necessary.  
Graziano took a lot more risks then me.  
Valentino Rossi's father  
Graziano was a grand prix rider  
in the Seventies and Eighties  
who retired through injury.  
Growing up, I learned from him.  
The son learned  
from the father's mistakes.  
Bad memories, a lot of crashes,  
a lot of injuries.  
So, yes, it's scary  
because he's my father.  
It will happen.  
Learning means crashing.  
When you're out  
to extract the maximum  
from a 240-horsepower motorcycle,  
there's no other way.  
Go over the limit  
and then you know where it is.  
A fast rider  
can learn to stop crashing.  
A slow rider cannot learn to go fast.  
You have to do it. You have to crash.  
And you have to learn from it  
if you want to stay around.
There's many examples in this world of a very fast rider, but not smart. And their career's been very short. To be fast is not enough. You need to have a combination of being fast and brave and also be intelligent.

In his rookie year in MotoGP, Jorge Lorenzo once crashed three times in a single weekend. I thought I was invincible. And I was not afraid to get hurt. I was not afraid of these kind of bikes, going at 340 kilometers per hour. I didn't care. It was a normal thing to crash so many times. And then suddenly I realize, OK, I need to stop. I need to change my mentality. I need to be more calm. I need to... to think more on the bike.

We've been looking at the training that American fighter pilots do and also how the Israeli special forces train. The theory is that it's all in the mind so we work directly with the mind of the rider. There is no correct way to ride a MotoGP machine. The objective is to go as fast as possible and stay on the bike. How you do that is up to you. I came from dirt tracks. I came from sliding. I'm more than comfortable when the bike's going sideways. It's one of the mysteries of the sport. How two riders with styles as different as Stoner's and Lorenzo's can go round a three-mile race track within a thousandth of a second.
of each other.
Stoner sideways, shaking and sliding.
Lorenzo as if on rails.
I'm pushing 100%
and I'm going at the maximum.
I am feeling the limit in every corner.
I'm trying to be perfect.
Every time he won a grand prix,
the church bells in Rossi's home town
rang out in celebration.
105 times from 1996 to 2010.
Then he moved to Ducati.
And the bells stopped ringing.
Ducati was an experience.
Let's not say a happy experience.
He suffered.
When Jorge Lorenzo
won the world title in 2010,
Yamaha offered to keep Rossi on
if he'd take a pay cut and accept
number two status in the team.
After a decade, as one of the highest
paid sportsmen in the world,
he might not have needed the money,
but Rossi had always been number one.
Casey Stoner had taken the best bike
available for 2011.
He was leaving Ducati
for Repsol Honda,
the team of his childhood hero,
Mick Doohan.
Rossi now did
what everybody hoped he would.
He said goodbye to his beloved Yamaha
and he moved to Ducati.
The Italian dream team was born.
I remember writing if he wins a race,
it would be like the Pope
winning at Monza in a Ferrari.
And it would be a fantastic story.
But it was an unmitigated disaster.
Casey Stoner had won
23 races for the Italian team.
None of the other Ducati riders
could come close.
In 2009, when I first got on the bike, I couldn't believe how Casey could go so fast with it. Casey had extreme talent. Stoner's success rate at Ducati had declined over time, though. Ten wins the first year, then six, then four, then three. He had also missed three races through illness in 2009. Many thought the declining results were due to his health problems. They were wrong. Stoner wasn't getting worse as the years went by. The bike was. I had a very bad feeling. From the first time in Valencia. And I was very, very... Not desperate, but very worried to make the wrong choice. We copped a lot of flak from Valentino. Not just me but my whole team. Valentino and Jerry Burgess and all that. They'd said so many bad things about what Ducati had done and what myself and my crew had done. It really frustrated me. Rossi was hampered by a shoulder injury from a crash on a dirt bike in early 2010. At first he was in bad shape with his shoulder but then we realized the bike was in bad shape as well. Rossi was 15th fastest at the MotoGP test in Valencia. Stoner was fastest on the Honda. After the test, Rossi went back to Italy
for surgery to repair his shoulder.
Four months later,
it was time to go racing.
Stoner won the first grand prix
of 2011 in Qatar.
Rossi was seventh.
The rain in Spain at the second race
was good news for the Italian team.
The wet conditions lowered speeds
and reduced the forces
which unsettled the Ducati in the dry.
Rossi set the fastest lap in the race
and looked on course for a win.
He just needed to get past
Stoner and Simoncelli.
And now Valentino Rossi
has got Casey Stoner in his sight.
He's taken down Stoner!
Valentino Rossi attacked
from a long way back
and he's taken out Casey Stoner.
Rossi's got back on the track.
Stoner's still having problems.
Hey, how's the shoulder? It's OK?
I'm very sorry.
You having some problem
with your shoulder?
Obviously your ambition
outweighed your talent.
I'm very sorry.
No problem.
I had the helmet,
I didn't hear very well.
What was it?
Your ambition outweighed your talent!
Oh, my golly!
What a thing for Casey Stoner
to say to the nine-time world champion.
I want to say that I don't want
to hear what he said. It was better.
At that time,
I don't think there was truer words.
A big part of why I said it
was I have no respect for someone
who comes into a garage with their helmet on to apologize.
You don't do that.
It's not the way it's done.
So, yeah, it frustrated me a little bit and, erm, you know,
I kind of won't deny that I enjoyed those two years.
Watching him struggle a heck of a lot more than we did on the Ducati.
Bad, bad.
It just got worse.
The longer he was there, the worse the bike became.
They went forwards and then they went backwards, they never got there.
He never said anything bad about it although he must have wanted to inside.
He kept quiet.
We have a lot of work to do.
I lose too much in entry.
I have too much slide.
We try a lot of different things with the setting, but we don't fix.
We're struggling.
We need more experience on this bike.
I am very slow. Very negative.
We are not strong enough.
His face was no longer that smiling, calm face.
I didn't know what to say and nor did he.
We are very, very sad.
I lost the front, but seriously, I don't understand why.
Something wasn't right in the team.
We work together with Ducati.
We try, but at this moment we don't fix a lot.
It can be just a centimeter here or there that makes the difference.
These are the secrets
which only they know.
The first year he crashed a lot
which meant he was trying.
It's not like he wasn't trying,
he was giving it everything.
Rossi wasn't the only one
crashing too much in 2011.
Marco Simoncelli
was chasing his first podium.
Marco Simoncelli is never
gonna have a better opportunity
to win a grand prix MotoGP race.
Oh! Simoncelli's going down!
Someone else gone, it is Simoncelli!
Oh, Simoncelli's gone down!
Marco Simoncelli, he's in line
for a first MotoGP podium
and crashes out at turn one.
There was no secret
that a few of us riders
were a little bit concerned
about his riding.
Simoncelli's gone down!
And he's taken with him Jorge Lorenzo.
I think the problem is that he's not
very conscious about the risks.
Many, many, many riders want
to make him a little calm in that time.
I was technical director at the time,
looking into race direction
and it's very, very similar
to early Lorenzo career
with talented, really, really, hungry
and full of confidence
and wanting to ride aggressively.
For him the race
is to be aggressive.
If you want to win,
the talents are all aggressive.
Valentino, when he started,
was a talent. He was aggressive.
Everybody's aggressive.
Dani Pedrosa was building his
strongest challenge for the title yet.
He took second in Spain and won in Portugal. Going into the fourth race in France, he was just behind Lorenzo and ahead of Stoner in the championship. He now found himself fighting for second place with Marco Simoncelli.

Saturday night, before the race in Le Mans was a weekend that had a lot of polemic on Marco because he's too aggressive. But I say to Marco, "Please, tomorrow, keep attention to all the other guys, because for sure all the people want to look for your mistake."

And he said, "Ah, yeah, yeah, good idea. I understand."

But unfortunately the next day...

Oh! Pedrosa's gone down! Did he catch the back wheel there? He holds his right collarbone. Marco Simoncelli has been given a ride-through penalty for that move on Dani Pedrosa. And Marco Simoncelli, that first ever podium finish in MotoGP has been wrenched from his hand. What happened is I broke my collarbone there.

I had to do two surgeries. I lost the championship. I was out for three races. It was a harsh blow for Pedrosa. He'd only just recovered from breaking his other collar bone in 2010.

I'm so sorry for his crash and for his injuries. But for me, I haven't done nothing incorrect. Had he never done anything wrong before, he probably wouldn't have copped that penalty. It did make him think, his riding
was significantly better after that.
When he did the mistake
with Pedrosa especially,
he suffered very much
because people go to him and say,
"You are a dickhead!"
Because Pedrosa crash
and also have pain another time.
And Pedrosa was very angry with Marco.
And all the people in Spain
was very angry with Marco.
Before the race in Barcelona,
arrive a letter with no signature
with a gun.
Someone from Spain give him
a letter or a mail
with "I wanna kill you."
You can hear boos
as he laps the track by himself.
Dani Pedrosa, not here.
He'll have an operation
on that broken right collarbone.
And I remember that in Barcelona
we have a lot of bodyguards.
Two bodyguards for the weekend.
That makes everyone nervous, no?
He make pole position in practice.
It will be one more lap
for the former 250cc
world champion Simoncelli.
He's protecting that.
He's got pole! Marco
Simoncelli pulled it out of nowhere.
A 142.413! He's been second
in the last two rounds.
And he's pulled that
out of absolutely nowhere.
Marco Simoncelli, the rider who's been
at the center of all the talk,
all the debate, all the discussion
for the last couple of weeks
has now taken pole.
I wonder what kind of reception
he's gonna get
as he wheelies his way around this circuit. Simoncelli, despite all the boos is giving them the wave.
Thank you.
I've got pole. Thank you.
Marco Simoncelli took a careful sixth place in Catalunya.
Casey Stoner won.
Jorge Lorenzo was second.
His lead in the championship shrinking to seven points.
Marco got a little bit too much of an attack from people. So he really backed off.
You saw his results suffering because it was really affecting him.
Three races later, Dani Pedrosa was back.
When I came back, I didn't try to have a talk with him. I kind of avoided.
I regret that. Because life is too short to have enemies.
Simoncelli crashed out of four of the first ten races that year.
But then... things changed. My impression was that Marco had changed during the last races.
He was more conscious of the risk and he was trying to be a more conscious rider.
When he started to come back and his results started to get better, all of a sudden, he's racing like a true racer.
Marco Simoncelli has done it.
Marco Simoncelli has grabbed his first MotoGP podium.
It's well deserved after everything he's been through this season.
It feels unbelievable.
I'm really, really happy and I want to say thanks to everybody
who never stopped believing in me
when I was in a difficult moment.
And everybody who helped me
to arrive here today.
With three races to go,
Lorenzo was the only rider
with any hope of beating Stoner
in the championship.
There were 65 points between them.
The odds were stacked
against the Spaniard.
But you never know,
Stoner might make a mistake.
He didn't.
Oh! Lorenzo goes down.
When he went down,
the fingers of Lorenzo's left hand
were trapped between the clutch lever
and the handle bar.
The lever amputated the tip
of his ring finger.
It was a horrible morning for Lorenzo.
But a great afternoon for Casey Stoner.
Casey Stoner now is closing up
on the 2011 MotoGP world championship.
Simoncelli in second place.
Everybody stands in Phillip Island.
Casey Stoner
wins the Australian Grand Prix.
The 2011 world champion!
I won the home grand prix.
I think it was our fifth in a row there.
Won the second world championship
on my birthday.
That's a pretty special day.
Marco Simoncelli was back
on the podium at Phillip Island,
second place his best result yet.
Casey did a great season this year
and he won the title
because this year
he has been number one,
the strongest rider in the track
in every condition and in every race.
My congratulation and also I want to say
good luck to Lorenzo for his injury.
Stoner might have locked up
the title, but the fight was still on.
For a racer, all that ever matters
is the next race.
There were two to go.
I hope to continue to work in
the right way and finish on the podium.
Maybe I hope, also, to stay
on the first step of the podium.
The next race was
at Marco Simoncelli's track.
His nickname, Sic,
is also the acronym of the circuit
which had seen the biggest moments
of his career to date.
SIC Circuit.
I remember the first time
we went there
we found all these SIC T-shirts.
His mum and I bought loads of them.
Because they were
just the thing for us.
It stood
for Sepang International Circuit
but it was
one of those strange coincidences.
At the end of lap one,
Simoncelli was fighting Alvaro Bautista
for fourth place.
Bautista through.
Simoncelli did well just to bring that
back on the inside of Alvaro Bautista.
Stoner leads by a second on that first
lap, but it's not done and dusted.
This is just what we would have wanted
as Bautista was through on Simoncelli.
Down the straight there is one place
Simoncelli struggles on the track.
Oh, as Bautista
then round the outside...
Colin Edwards and Valentino
Rossi were just behind Simoncelli.
I touch him but I was behind Colin.
I see him just at the last moment.
I saw him crash. I was looking up
in the corner and he's crashed.
I'm gonna duck under and get
a good drive to the next corner.
The next thing you know,
he was right in front of us.
He lost the front.
He was just fighting to get it back.
He's a fighter
and he wasn't willing to give it up.
When I saw Marco crash, I think Marco
go on the outside like normal.
Never coming to the inside.
We saw it happen and we looked away
and we're in the opposite direction
from where that crash is happening.
And it just came back to us.
There was nothing we could do.
We can confirm
Marco Simoncelli died today at 4:56pm.
I went to his father.
And...
Just look at the eyes,
that's all you can say.
All the important things Marco did,
he did in Malaysia.
The worst crash, the only time
he hurt himself was in Malaysia.
On the 125, in 2003 or 2004.
Then he won the world championship
in Malaysia.
He set the fastest lap
in the MotoGP test in Malaysia.
Everything.
And then he chose to die in Malaysia.
It's a strange thing. Very strange.
I didn't want silence.
Silence creates anguish.
Marco would have wanted noise.
He was a noisy guy.
The race never ends.
The new season began in April 2012
in the darkness of the Qatari desert. They were all there. All but one. Did you think about stopping? No, never. It's not a problem of MotoGP. It was a bad thing because I lose a friend, you know? But I never make the link that this can stop my career. I will stop when I don't like any more to race with motorcycles but not for that reason. Everyone in this world knows what can happen. They are not crazy people. That is a fight between those guys and... Death. In the mind of a rider, that is the biggest challenge. They are afraid as any other person, but they decide to have that fight. That fight gives a really strong energy to feel the life, the blood rolling around your body. Since the Roman Empire there was in the Coliseum the gladiators. These are a kind of gladiator. If you ask yourself does it make sense? No. We are crazy to risk the life of young people for what? But it's also true this is part of human culture. It's been like this since the beginning and probably will be like this forever. This reminds us to respect the things we do. And... sometimes you get criticized. This guy... From the sofa, it's very easy to point the finger. But then you see these things and everybody's like,
"Oh, what happened? What happened?"
But it's already too late.
So we are not just some guys
that live the dream.
We are also humans.
This is part of the game.
The game of life.
We're here today,
tomorrow we don't know.
Sometimes in the evening
when the light is fading
you go to bed
and thoughts come back to you.
You re-live certain moments
and it's very sad, very moving.
But the next day,
the light returns, life goes on.
Valentino Rossi
was serving out his time,
the second year of his Ducati contract.
It was hard to see him like that
with out a victory in two years.
To see him like that,
his eyes no longer shining.
To see him unhappy.
It was awful.
Valentino is Valentino.
If they don't give him the perfect bike
the way he wants it,
he can't risk it.
He can't risk his life.
It wasn't safe.
Casey Stoner
had a plan for 2012, do it again.
Win the world championship
and underline the fact
that he was
the number one rider in the world.
The chequered flag
beckons the Australian.
It will be his second successive win.
He leads the world championship
by one point after three rounds.
At the fourth race in France,
the Australian announced the other part of his plan for the year. Casey now is gonna make an announcement. You know this has been coming for a couple of years now. At the end of this 2012 season, I will be... not racing in the 2013 championship. I will be finishing my career at the end of this season in MotoGP. And go forward with different things in my life. How could he do it? Walk away from it all, at the age of just 27, when he's got the best bike, he's the reigning world champion and he's making millions? There were all kinds of theories. The birth of his daughter Alessandra, ironically on Valentino Rossi's birthday. The possible effect of Marco Simoncelli's death. Stoner's loathing of the media and the MotoGP circus in general. I'm sure he would like to live in the Eighties. Much less media people came to the racing. Riders, they don't need to care about any kind of image. They could say whatever they want. Now you have to be very politically correct. And you spend long hours speaking to the press, doing events for your sponsors. All I ever wanted to do was go racing. And unfortunately 90 to 95% of this job became media appearances. Everything else but racing. That's the game now. Every big
sport has a lot of communication and PR activity behind it.
He was just burned out.
It ate away at him inside.
PR appearances, interviews and he took it all so personally.
And I said to him, "Case, just treat it as a job."
I know it's a job.
At the same time you're going out there, risking every day, you gotta have passion in it.
When you lose that, it's hard to find the motivation to keep going out there and doing the same things.
He might be retiring, but Stoner was not backing off.
I wanted to go out wearing the number one plate.
We made a mistake in Sachsenring.
And quite honestly, I was confident I would still win the championship.
A month later, Stoner made a second mistake.
I just made that mistake in Indianapolis and destroyed my ankle and that was it.
The impact tore every ligament in his foot.
He was out for three races.
It was Dani Pedrosa's moment.
He took victory in Germany, Indianapolis and the Czech Republic.
With six races to go, he was just 13 points behind Jorge Lorenzo.
Pedrosa qualified on pole for the next race.
The San Marino Grand Prix.
Ready for battle. Dani Pedrosa.
His fourth pole position of the season.
Round 13.
The MotoGP world championship.
Thirteen points between number 26 and number 99.
What's this? The bike's being taken away for Dani Pedrosa.
Is there some kind of problem for Pedrosa who is in pole?
What is going on?
There is a problem with Dani Pedrosa's machine.
This would not be fair.
This really just would not be fair.
He does not deserve this after the season he's put together.
He's behind the safety car, isn't he?
Please, no problem for Dani Pedrosa because we want to see him and Lorenzo fight it out for the title.
Will Dani Pedrosa get there?
Here he comes.
He's gonna thread his way through.
No, he's not!
He's starting from the back of the grid.
You cannot believe the misfortune.
It's Lorenzo leading, Rossi in second, Bradl in third.
Dani Pedrosa has everything to do on these first couple of laps.
There was some problem with the front brake.
They managed to get it cleared.
It was too late for Pedrosa to catch the safety car, that's why he had to start from back of the grid.
Lorenzo's cleared off at the front.
They come towards La Quercia.
27 laps in this race.
And that's Pedrosa being taken down!
He's been taken down by Hector Barbera.
And that could be the championship right there.
I cannot believe he can't get through a season without something...
Ah, it's just awful.
Casey Stoner was back in time for his home race. They warned me when I came back prematurely, "If you crash and hurt your foot again, you're probably never gonna walk normally again." He took the 45th and final victory of his MotoGP career. But it was Jorge Lorenzo's day. His second MotoGP world title in three years. We're gonna watch Lorenzo come across the line and win! Two weeks after his victory in Australia, Casey Stoner rode his final MotoGP race at Valencia, taking third place. Thank you, Casey Stoner for what you've given us. It's the end of an amazing career. An amazing rider as well in MotoGP. This left a Honda race machine looking for a rider. The Honda Racing Corporation had known for a while who that rider would be. Several years ago, I thought maybe he's able to ride a MotoGP machine. In 2010, Marc Marquez was racing in the junior class and fighting for the title. No sign of any nerves from anybody on the team or Marc Marquez. He is one mature 17-year-old rider and I'm sure he already has a game plan for this race. Instead of winning, he should be going to school. On the warm-up lap, the track was completely dry. Only the last corner was a little bit wet.
When I arrived there, I feel normal.
I didn't see the water.
See Marquez is going fairly quick.
He's pushing to see how much grip
there is... And he's gone!
This could be massive
for the championship.
That's huge.
And he's broken the front fairing.
Can he get the bike back out there?
This could be where the championship
gets decided.
A stupid crash.
You lose all the work in one year.
He's going in, pointing.
He's going back into pit lane.
He had a chance of the championship
and he'd just thrown it away.
There was some panic there,
me and also the team.
He needs the handlebars
working on. There's Juli, his father.
They're saying he's got to go out.
Telling him to get back out there.
Panic stations at the Ajo Derbi team.
The people that flocked
to that motorcycle to help him
get a chance of doing the grand prix,
they saw that he was something special.
In nine minutes,
they repaired the bike.
Marquez, he will start
from the back of the grid.
Nine laps of the Estoril circuit,
could it determine
the outcome of the championship?
Marquez has made a cracking start
from the back of the grid.
Already around the outside,
he goes through.
He knows he has to make a good start.
From seventeenth to fourth.
Marquez is through on Jonas Folger,
now on Pol Espargaro.
This is where he's gonna make his move.
One lap to go.
The most important lap
in the 17-year-old's life.
There he goes. Up the inside
of Nico Terol, Marquez leads the way.
If Marquez wins this
and he's in second place...
Here he comes into turn three.
Nico Terol back into the lead.
Wide on exit for Terol.
Marquez back in front.
Marquez is very, very fast
through the Parabolica.
He's chasing his tenth
grand prix victory of the season.
This could be the ride
that gets the world title.
Marc Marquez wins here in Portugal!
I won the title.
We cannot repeat that. It's impossible.
That moment, that situation.
Anything that could have
happened to Marc Marquez did happen.
He came back, showed everything today
that's needed to be a world champion.
He'd never won
a grand prix before 2010.
He won his first grand prix in 2010
midway through the season.
He won a load on the trot
and he won the championship.
Grown men cried in that garage.
They could not believe it.
Look at Emilio Alzamora.
He's aged about ten years in nine laps.
Today belongs to
the 17-year-old Spaniard Marc Marquez.
Where will this end?
This is the start
of a very, very exciting career.
Marquez moved up to Moto2
in 2011 and went on the attack.
He did everything all the great riders
before him had done, only more. He crashed out of the first three races, then won seven of the next ten. It's going to be Marc Marquez who wins back to back races. He was leading the Moto2 championship with three races to go. His star was rising faster than Rossi, Lorenzo and Stoner's before him. Only Pedrosa had won the intermediate class at his first attempt. Marquez's determination to push the limits of his bike and tires, to find ways to go even faster, saw him running at race pace every second that he could in the practice sessions. At the end of practice before the Australian race, after the flag had come out to end the session, and when the other riders were slowing down, Marquez was still going flat out. He was sent to the back of the grid in punishment. It didn't make much difference. Watching Marquez from the back. He's flown up the middle of that field. So it hasn't mattered one bit, has it really? Who will be in third place? It's gonna be Marc Marquez in third place. Starting from the back of the grid. He's ridden through to third place. Marquez is a very, very happy 18-year-old. A week later, at the penultimate race in Malaysia, Marquez crashed hard in practice. The blow to his head damaged a branch of the optic nerve. Mark could see like this,
it was when he did this
that there was a problem.
If he can't recover 100%,
he cannot do this sport.
Because they're always
looking up like this.
It's a frightening injury.
Marquez watched with one eye
as the Moto2 championship
slipped away to Stefan Bradl.
I was suffering. He's my son.
They say there may be complications.
Marquez ended the year
not knowing
if he would ever race again.
Marc is very positive, so are
the family and the people around him.
He was the one that handled it best.
He must have had his moments
but he never showed it.
It's the kind of person he is.
"Don't worry, give it time,
it'll get better."
It was micro surgery.
They changed
the angle of the muscle slightly.
Now he sees perfectly.
He's cured.
Oh, and they're both
running wide. Luthi follows Espergaro.
Marc Marquez takes over the front.
Oh! Iannone!
There was no way through there,
but through he went.
Marquez comes back at him immediately,
right across the front of him.
That is aggressive, isn't it?
Luthi's gone wide!
They were right next to each other
going into that first corner.
What a comeback by Marc Marquez!
He wins the opening round
of the Moto2 world championship
here in Qatar.
After missing those final three grand prix with that horrible injury. Oh, and that was Tom Luthi. He's really not happy with Marc Marquez there. Marquez went on to win nine races and the 2012 Moto2 championship. His season ended the same way it began, with both victory and controversy. Marc Marquez may have qualified in second place but he will start from the back row of the grid, the new world champion after an incident in practice on Friday afternoon with him and Simone Corsi. That was aggressive contact several times with other riders during practice. It was a recurrence of a number of things that had happened during the year. So that was like an accumulation of penalties. To say, "OK, you cannot ride like this." So he was sent to the back. He's an aggressive rider. He's been involved in controversy all season. Speaking to Emilio Alzamora on the grid, there is no remorse there from his team manager, his mentor, Emilio Alzamora. In his opinion, he can't understand why there was a penalty at all. If that's what he thinks, you can guarantee that's what Marc Marquez thinks, as well. Marquez has already made up about ten, eleven positions or so. And he's tried to weave through heading up towards turn two. What a first few corners. He's already up to about 13th position there. It's not gonna be easy from here.
Yeah, this race is far from over, a long way to go.
Whoa! Marquez and Aegerter both touched in there.
Wow, they've done amazing to hang on, though. Both of them.
Here he comes. He's not gonna be shy about this one, is he? Wow.
Marc Marquez will win his ninth race of the season!
What a ride by the world champion! That is one of the performances of the season in any class of grand prix racing.
That's it! That's his time done in the lower classes.
He's with the big boys now. What an apprenticeship.
Welcome to MotoGP, Marc Marquez.
The rest of you, be warned.
2013, Rossi returns to Yamaha.
Can he still do it? 34 years old.
Two years without a win.
This is his 14th season in the premiere class.
Most riders are at their peak for very few years.
One or two have stayed competitive for a decade or so.
But 14 years in the premiere class and still a winner?
Nobody. Never.
Before the season begins, Honda and Yamaha go testing in Texas.
The structure in any good racing team is to have young riders come in to put pressure on the older rider and to extend their career.
Lorenzo was brought in in 2007 to do exactly what he has done.
To move in and gain experience
from the old bull
and then push the old bull out.
That's exactly what he did.
And off we went to Ducati.
And here we are back again.
The old bull is not
the threat that he once was.
Lorenzo is the world champion last year
and 26 years old
and still enormously talented.
The man's a machine.
I'm surprised by the desire
he still has to go racing
and to put himself on the line.
Dinner at night,
the way he talks about racing,
you can feel
the passion is huge for him.
Still I feel a little bit strange
when I saw Valentino,
when I saw Lorenzo,
when I saw Pedrosa...
Especially with Valentino.
But in the end, they are my opponents.
And we need to be stronger, too.
We cannot say
"OK, these guys are faster than me."
Testing
is the endless quest for more speed.
When you ride, you have
an idea to go as fast as possible
and you have to understand the way
to set the bike to make this idea true.
Everything is adjustable.
The chassis, the suspension,
the electronics.
In the end, all riders
are looking for the same adjustment.
That magic click.
The one that gives you confidence.
In bikes, the center of gravity
is changing all the time
depending on the body.
It's not a fixed center of gravity,
weight distribution...
Everything changes in one second.
It's something magic
between what the bike can be
and what the rider can do.
Dani Pedrosa is coming off
his best year ever.
Seven wins in 2012.
More than anybody else.
Not bad for a rider
once dismissed as too small at 5'2"
to handle a MotoGP bike.
People I don't think realize
that with the body that Dani has
to ride this bike
is a super difficult job.
Because these bikes are big and heavy.
The leverage you can do
moving on the bike
with short arms and legs
is more difficult.
When you brake, you cannot move.
And in the corner
it's more difficult to control the bike.
It's not easy being small,
to get the grip I'd like to have.
Less weight, less load on the tire,
less grip.
The circuit of the Americas
is a new track.
It's the first time here for everybody.
At the end of two days testing,
the Hondas are on top.
Marquez just ahead of Pedrosa.
It's time to go racing.
Who's it going to be?
I believe Dani.
Last year, he won seven races.
The package of Honda's machine,
Dani's riding, skill, and the team,
this package is now very, very strong.
Marc Marquez has a high level of talent,
but he needs more time.
Lorenzo was third fastest
in Texas. Rossi was fifth.
I don't know if Valentino will be able to win again this year or the next one. Because he passed two years in another world and he lose completely all his information from his computer. All the information to be fast. This year he has to begin again. To learn again to go fast. To learn again to win. For Valentino, it's the possibility to be happy again. Yeah, for sure. If it all goes well, are you ready to ring the bells? Don Giuseppe has lubricated the bells. Tomorrow we ring them! Let's hope so! Who's going to finish in second place? Is it the return of the doctor in second place? It is! Rossi's second! Marquez is third! Marc Marquez, can he go a step further and win here in Texas? It's very exciting. Here comes my son. Hey, he's in front, it's even more exciting. He spends the whole session with his fingers crossed. The whole session. Over the crest for the first time. Try holding your fingers crossed for longer than five minutes. Marc Marquez now into second place. He does it for the whole race. He's scary to watch with. Any little movement that Marc will have, he shrieks or makes a sudden movement. It scares me more.
I can't stand next to him.
You suffer a lot
but then if everything ends well
you feel such joy.
Here he comes!
We could be seeing the biggest thing
to hit grand prix motorcycle racing
since Valentino Rossi arrived
in the premiere class 13 years ago.
Rossi will be disappointed in sixth
place. We ride with Dani Pedrosa.
That speck in front of him
is his teammate Marc Marquez.
Oh, Dad's looking on.
Oh, dear. Oh, dear.
Here he comes through turn 19.
One more corner to go.
And the Circuit of the Americas
can acclaim Marc Marquez
through turn 20 he comes.
Marc Marquez, the youngest ever winner
of a premiere class grand prix
motorcycle race wins in Texas!
The crowd rise for the new boy.
And look, Valentino Rossi
shakes hands with Marc Marquez.
And a doff of the cap from the doctor.
Surely, nobody better to present
the birthday cake to him
than his mom, Maria.
Lorenzo, happy birthday!
26 years old today.
Lorenzo's 26th birthday celebrations
included the honor
of having the final corner at Jerez,
the scene of many last lap clashes,
named after him.
Marc Marquez is going
to have a dig at Jorge Lorenzo.
Whoa, Marquez, he was forced
to pick the bike up there.
That could've been both of them.
In 2013, Race Direction
introduced a new penalty system
modeled on the driving license, with points imposed for dangerous riding.

Whoa, Marquez again!
He's so close to the rear. There's inches separating their tires.
Marc Marquez made us think about a point system because he was very close to the limit so many times that we needed a way of accounting for that.

How many times have we told you to take it easy? It's just gonna get worse and worse. Marquez again!

He was up in the air fishtailing all over the place! He's sideways coming into the corner. Modeled on the driving license, everyone understands it. We just formalized the warning. So instead of just a verbal warning, it now becomes a point.

You add up points and you get to four and you have to start at the back. So is there any way through for Marquez? Look at Lorenzo! He gets away beautifully down there. Marquez is going to come through and he's going to run it wide. Lorenzo goes wide with him. Is there another chance at the final corner? Can he do Lorenzo at Lorenzo Corner? Pedrosa leads. Is there any way through for Marquez? He's going to have a go, you know. They collide! They've collided! How many times have we seen it? Marquez has done it! Oh, in that final corner!
It's Pedrosa who's gonna come across the line from Marquez!
Lorenzo is gonna be furious!
- That's Lorenzo's corner.
- Oh, yeah? I didn't think that.
Have you spoken to him?
I tried but he doesn't want to.
I'm sorry. I'm sorry for him.
But I know that he can be angry.
The wag of the finger from Jorge Lorenzo.
Had that incident occurred earlier in the race,
we wouldn't have been so lenient.
But the last corner, the last lap
and Lorenzo left a significant gap
that any rider in his right mind
would attempt to go through.
Last corner.
Two great champions.
The guy behind tries to go in front
and the guy in front doesn't want
to arrive behind.
It happens like this.
It is also the good things of racing.
And I'm very upset
that I wasn't fast enough
to go with Marc.
and to be in the last corner
together with Marc and Jorge
because maybe it is also more funny.
What Marc went through in the first five races
only he knows.
Until he got to grips with the power
and had some experiences with the bike,
he was taking enormous risks
every session.
Every practice, every race,
it was just, "Let's see what happens."
Every weekend I'd go out on Friday
for the first lap at the limit,
and I'd finish the last corner
on Sunday at the limit.
Every session was like, "Let's see if I fall off or if I can do it."
As soon as the camera panned to him, we could see he was crawling.
There wasn't ever that moment of heart-stopping "Is he OK?"
To see him moving immediately even though the visor was off, that was a bit of a God-send, to be honest.
My feelings were with his mum and father who we were with at the medical center. We didn't know how bad his face was. What had happened to his head. We could see the visor was off. They must have nerves of steel, those two.
I get nervous. But I tell myself I must stay calm because in the end you can't fix anything. If you get worked up, what are you going to do? You can't fix anything. You can't help your son if you get nervous.
On Friday evening he was worried because his face was all swollen.
He was icing it. He said, "Mum, how am I going to look?"
I brake at the same point. But just a little bit more aggressive. The front wheel was locking, pushed me to the grass and when I was there, I saw the wall, I was going directly to the wall and I just jumped off the bike. It was better like that.
At which speed did you lose the front?
When I lost the front, 338km/h. Then when I crashed, 300km/h. This now looks not so good, but yesterday it was much worse. He was very lucky there, very lucky. Yeah.
Very, very, very, very, very lucky.
Because it can be a lot worse.
But in the end you say,
"We were lucky. Nothing happened."
Just a shock, on we go back to work.
Round five of the MotoGP
World Championship
is about to get underway
here in Magello.
Marquez was certain to ride.
He never considered
it would be too difficult.
He had a lot of bruising
and a fractured shoulder
but he quickly put the crash
out of his mind
and he rode a great race.
To be honest, I worry about him.
He's very young.
And when you are young,
when you are 20, you don't see the risk.
And I was completely the same as him.
So I understand him.
You have this hunger and this ambition.
And I can do it. I can win
the championship in my first year.
But anyway, every rider's different.
You have to respect
the mentality of the riders.
And this mentality will give him
probably a lot of crashes in the future.
But also will give him
very good results.
Until he finally understands
or perceives a little bit more
this kind of risk.
And that
is Dani Pedrosa who's gone down!
No, it's Marc Marquez
who's gone from second place.
The important thing
is for Marquez to do as Lorenzo says.
With crashes and injuries,
you gain the kind of experience
which led Lorenzo to focus
and become who he is today.
He who plays chess with danger,
with risk, with death,
is always a person with the capacity
to endure injuries.
Your human limits,
the fact of your being mortal,
helps you to climb
the enchanted mountain of your dreams.
Jorge Lorenzo has done
the business. And look at that!
That's why he is number one.
That's why he's world champion.
He's back with a vengeance.
Second place is Dani Pedrosa.
Another podium finish
for Cal Crutchlow.
Lorenzo, Pedrosa, Crutchlow.
Two Spaniards and an Englishman.
Where's the Italian?
The King of Mugello.
Seven-times winner here.
Where is Valentino Rossi?
I'm lucky because I'm OK
because it was a bad crash.
When Bautista hit me on my foot,
And I lose the control of the bike
and I go to the wall.
And, "Fuck", I say.
I was OK,
because I put the bike in front of me.
But the impact was high. Yeah, bad.
The good thing
is that I didn't get hurt.
We'll try again in Barcelona
in two weeks.
I could have had a good race,
I could have been on the podium.
Thank you, everybody.
Nine-times world champion.
Valentino Rossi!
Jorge Lorenzo won again
in Catalunya.
Pedrosa was second ahead of Marquez. Rossi was fourth. He hadn't been on the podium since the first race. Dani Pedrosa was leading the championship. He'd finished first or second at the last five races. If you check the riding style of the guys that are in front, it's a little different from what it used to be before. The rider is much, much, much, much lower. And the bike stays much more up in the corner. If you come from another era, where the bikes were different the riding was different and the tires were different, you have to change your riding style and that's not so easy. Marquez has it down to a tee. He hangs off the bike so far. Lorenzo as well. And I don't know if it be the way... tire development or chassis or how things have gone, but the only way to get it to turn is basically to drag your elbow on the ground. I have also a lot of bad memories from the two years before. And I need the time for recreate the same feeling with the M1. In a sport career, there is a moment which is magic. Everything goes well around you. When it goes by, it's very hard to get back the same thing, because you are not the same guy. These new guys are coming and pushing. I've analyzed Rossi and he's trying harder than ever.
He's changed his riding style completely. This is Rossi when he started in MotoGP. This riding style dates from the Eighties. He's moved his butt, but he's holding his head up. This is Valentino Rossi now. His head is a long way off the bike. His spinal column makes a V with the bike. He's adapted to the new riding style, which the young riders are using, but maybe he hasn't yet understood this style. Rossi crashed in testing the day after the Catalan race. Storms hit the next tests in Aragon later that week. Then the sun came out and things got better. I'm happy. It's a good test. I feel good on the bike. The first feeling is that we make a step. Next stop, Holland. It's round seven! It's the last Saturday in June. I've always had faith. I always expected to see him win again. I knew he liked that circuit. Lap one about to be completed. Here comes Rossi inside Stefan Bradl. And Rossi moves into third place. Very aggressively. Once again he's making the kind of passes that he used to make. Marc Marquez in front of him. Both of them know about winning in Assen. Marquez has won three times here. Rossi seven. He's gone through! He made two or three beautiful passes. It was so exciting to see
how the crowd responded.
I fight with everybody.
I fight with Marc. I fight with Pedrosa.
He was beautiful to watch,
elegant like before.
I'm always a little bit faster
in some places. I feel good.
They cross the line.
There'll be three laps to go.
I waited until the last three laps,
then I went and opened the door
to the bell tower
and turned on the lights.
Then I hurried back to see the end.
He is chasing
his 106th Grand Prix victory.
He hasn't won a Grand Prix
for over two and a half years.
He's half a lap away.
They cannot believe it.
They cannot watch
back at Valentino Rossi's garage.
Valentino Rossi wins here in Assen!
We did wonder if we would ever see him
win a grand prix again.
When he won the last race in Malaysia,
it was his 46th win with Yamaha.
And now, after not winning for 46 races,
he has won again.
So 46 follows us
through good times and bad.
I cannot believe. It was a long,
long time from Sepang in 2010.
In these years,
I make to me also this question.
I can come back
on the first position or not?
It was a tough period.
The bells are automatic.
I went out and forgot about them.
I left them ringing and went to the bar.
We had a bit of a party.
For a long time, a very long time,
he left them ringing and ringing
and ringing.
And Jorge Lorenzo,
he had an incredible weekend.
In Assen from the beginning
I felt even better
than in Mugello and Montmelo.
These two victories
give me too much confidence.
I was overconfident.
That was my mistake.
The corner I crashed, I entered like
I was on the dry. 250km/h.
Jorge's accident in Assen
was about four seconds.
One of the longest accidents we've seen.
The first impact was with the elbow.
That transferred energy
into the shoulder.
That caused the crack in the collarbone.
I was thinking
that I would lose the championship,
I lose two or three races.
Every time I move just one centimeter,
I felt so much pain.
I wanted to get operated
as soon as possible.
I couldn't wait for even one night
because the pain was so high.
So we went to the hospital
close to Assen.
I informed Jorge
that if you operate tonight,
you can do push-ups tomorrow
and we can try to ride on the warm-up.
And to see how it feels, step by step.
He was, "It's impossible, Wilco."
I said, "I've had my collarbone broken
with a plate on it."
You know, it's not a joint.
A collarbone is something fixed.
And as soon
as you have the plate on it,
if you have the support
from the collarbone you can ride a bike.
Finally, after four or five hours, we decided to rent a private plane and go to Barcelona. And in one hour and a half I was getting operated. When I wake up after the operation, I was feeling much better. Much less pain. And we started to think about coming back. Soon as we arrived back in Assen, he said, "If I get green light from the doctor tomorrow morning, we try." It's the medical director at each circuit who decides. I personally advised him not to race. He said "If I lose ten points, it could cost me the championship." There was a kind of euphoria in him, which he communicated to everybody who saw him race. We prepared him from a medical point of view. A few painkillers. But making possible this unimaginable thing, that was all down to Lorenzo's heart. They told me also if I crash again, my career can be over. So they scared me a little bit. He felt quite OK, because he was very fit before the crash and I think that helped him a lot. At a certain point in their lives, they find the strength, the will, the strong desire within them to achieve something impossible. And so there is something mythological about their lives. He's now into fifth place. Crutchlow runs a little bit wide. Is Lorenzo gonna go through? He doesn't need
any invitation whatsoever.
We ride with Jorge Lorenzo!
He's closing up now on Marc Marquez.
I was catching the front group, 
Dani, Valentino and Marc.
I couldn't believe I was doing this
36 hours after my operation.
Fourteen and a half laps
to go. Lorenzo beginning to slow.
It was very emotional,
especially after I finished the race.
After knowing what you did.
I was crying inside my helmet,
because of the pain I felt
during this 36 hours.
But also crying
about the emotion of doing this thing.
Pedrosa still led the championship.
But Lorenzo
had only lost three points to him.
I couldn't believe that I crash
and again
I re-injure the same collarbone.
We change something on the electronic,
the behavior of the engine.
I'm sure that creates this big slide
that I had.
My physical condition was not right
to make some experiments.
So, it was a mistake of me.
I felt again too much overconfidence.
And I repeat the same mistake
with the bad luck that I impacted
the same collarbone.
Another operation. Another surgery.
That damaged his condition much more.
I'm going home.
Good luck.
Lorenzo's misfortune
was Dani Pedrosa's opportunity.
Good luck.
I hope it goes well.
Jorge crashed on Friday.
I had 23 points lead over Marc.
I had like a highway
for the championship.
Everything can change in one second,
you know?
It's broken.
Unfortunately it's my way...
in my career.
You have to think also
about the past.
Dani now has a lot of problems
with his body, bad injuries.
A lot of difficult recovery,
so I think that for Dani
it's more difficult than for Jorge.
With Pedrosa and Lorenzo out,
the championship had a new leader.
Halfway through the season,
the rookie was on top.
So now I'm leading
the world championship.
If you tell me that on the pre-season,
I would say you are crazy.
Big surprise even for me.
But, you know, it's a great moment.
And I for one enjoy
this peaceful moment before.
The first thing
from the doctors was not to ride
because the fracture is there.
And it's only 20% of the bone
remaining together.
If I had a crash,
immediately, full crack.
This collarbone
is very hard to operate, mine,
because already many times
I had problems here.
So I take the risk.
I didn't want to race
in Laguna, to be honest.
But when I saw Dani crash,
I rethink, I am going to Laguna.
The national anthem,
played by 14 time grammy-nominee
Joe Satriani.
Lorenzo extremely wide
coming through turn two.
For me, it was even harder
to finish the race than it was in Assen,
because my physical condition
was much worse
after one month without training.
So, the sixth place for me
was even with more merit.
One point more I take
than him in this race.
But our main rival was winning.
He goes around the outside.
Rossi will try and come back.
Oh, then Marquez goes through
on the inside of The Corkscrew.
The Valentino Rossi Memorial line.
He's at the final corner here
at Laguna Seca.
Marc Marquez makes his debut
at Laguna Seca with a victory.
Opens up a bigger lead
in the world championship.
First rider to win here at Laguna Seca
on his debut.
The youngest ever rider to score
back-to-back grand prix wins.
I say this is a fucking bastard.
While Lorenzo and Pedrosa
were handicapped by injury,
Marquez won four races in a row.
He didn't put a foot wrong
until the morning
of the British Grand Prix.
It was around ten o'clock.
Cal Crutchlow went down
a few hundred yards ahead of Marquez.
The marshals around the track
were waving yellow flags...
...warning the oncoming riders
to slow down.
Marquez didn't see the flags.
Fortunately, the marshals saw Marquez.
He would get two points on his license for irresponsible riding.
He copped two points for nearly taking out the marshals.
That was quite a big safety deal.
Marquez had a more immediate problem. A dislocated shoulder.
It was dislocated.
Some ligaments were a little bit damaged.
The race was at 2:00pm.
He had four hours to recover.
Meanwhile, Jorge Lorenzo was feeling good again.
I felt stronger than in Brno.
So on Sunday morning when he crashed in the warm up, I knew his confidence and probably his physical condition could be worse.
So I say, this is my chance to attack and to win this race.
I knew it before the race that Jorge would push a lot in the beginning of the race because he knew I was injured.
I need to do a good start.
And it was like, he pushed a lot, but I was able to be behind him.
Also I know that the end of the race will be harder for me, because I feel tired from the shoulder.
What happened?
I started better than him. I passed him.
But he was in my ass all the race.
So even injured, he was there.
Not giving up.
I tried to improve my lap time to get away. I couldn't.
Then he came.
He passed me in one braking that I knew he was stronger.
So I tried to study him for half a lap
and I see the occasion to pass him in the braking point.
Here he comes!
Lorenzo's going to lead.
He's not going to give an inch to Marquez.
Lorenzo takes the lead once more.
And in the last lap I went even faster trying to open the lead up.
But the problem is that I entered too quick in the chicane that I lose the front and then he recovers two tenths.
And he makes a small mistake, then I catch him.
So I say he's going to try in the hard braking again.
So I tried to close the door, but then I brake too hard and the rear wheel starts to snake and I was going wide.
I was able to pass him.
Marquez dives for the inside line.
For a moment I thought I finish second.
Then on that last corner when I changed direction, I feel no power, I go a little bit wide.
I have to try. This is my chance. I have to win this race.
It's gonna be a drag to the line between the Yamaha and the Honda.
Jorge Lorenzo wins an incredible battle here at Silverstone!
Lorenzo won the next race in San Marino, cutting Marquez's lead to 34 points with five races to go.
It was Rossi's home race.
He was fourth. Again.
In the second half of the season, he was on and off the podium. More off than on. Almost there, but not quite.
What was it? The bike? Or the rider?
I don't know what's happening inside Valentino right now.
Because, you know, after two years with the problem we know
and after the bad story of Marco,
I don't know
what is rolling around his head.
For that reason, I have more respect for Valentino now.
I consider him a strong person,
not a strong champion. It's different.
For me, it's not important if he win one more championship.
I like the story of Valentino Rossi.
The biggest respect
for a guy such as him.
A question for Vale. Your helmet.
What can you say about the new design?
This time we decide to make something more serious.
Because already quite a long time that Marco is not with us.
But here is his home racetrack.
The circuit is in his name.
So we decide to remember him.
A tribute to remember him.
We made something for Marco not using the brand, the two red stripes.
Only a song.
Valentino sent me the text.
And he chose a part of the text.
And we reproduce it around the helmet.
Every time I read the text, mamma mia, and at the end talking about fear.
The same fear.
How I wish, how I wish you were here
We're just two lost souls
Swimming in a fish bowl
Year after year
Running over the same old ground
Have we found the same old fears?
Wish you were here
It was hard to imagine
people would miss Marco so much.
He really has left a deep mark.
It makes you proud and a little sad.
People's heroes are
the sportsmen that people want to be.
And people wanted to be
Marco Simoncelli.
Not because he won a MotoGP race.
But because
he was just cool, quirky, different,
shunned the society of MotoGP,
stood his own ground.
He said, "I'm gonna do it my way."
But, he's not here
and it's just horrible.
It was a horrible, horrible day.
Five races to go.
125 points on the table.
Pedrosa and Lorenzo were still
in with a chance of the title.
Dani Pedrosa was finally back
to full fitness.
It was his birthday.
There are five races left.
So there is no more time for anything.
You have to put it all on the table
and go for it.
You have to have some good luck.
Pedrosa is all over
the rear of Marc Marquez now.
And Pedrosa is through
and into second place.
He's good and determined.
The strongest we've seen Dani Pedrosa
certainly since that crash in Germany.
This is a race he really has to win.
Marquez is going to get very close.
He's going to have
to pick the bike up.
You could see that a mile off.
And Pedrosa has gone down!
Dani Pedrosa has gone!
Goodbye, world championship 2013
for Dani Pedrosa.
Pedrosa is hurting.
He was putting
all the pressure on Lorenzo.
Marquez had to run it wide as well.
Did they actually touch?
I was leaning and I only felt "clack"
on my rear tire.
I thought he'd touched my exhaust pipe.
After that, I don't remember much.
On the rear of the Honda
there is a wheel speed sensor,
which is part
of the traction-control system.
The electronic system
contours the power delivery.
Without it, the bike is unrideable.
Some part of Marquez's machine
hit and severed the cable
connecting the sensor to the system
instantly disabling
Pedrosa's traction control.
It was the slightest possible touch.
But it carried a knockout punch.
When he opened the throttle
at the exit of the corner,
the engine delivered a massive hit
of power to the rear wheel.
He's done it again.
In front of the home crowd.
He's got one hand now
on that world championship trophy.
Of course he can make mistakes.
We've seen mistakes from him today.
He just seems to be able
to ride his luck all the time.
After the Aragon incident,
Marquez found himself
back in front of Race Direction.
Another two-point penalty would see him
starting the next race from the back.
Good morning. Hi Marc, how are you?
- Fine, thanks.
- What are you expecting?
I don't know. We'll see.
It's a formal hearing.
There's four members of race direction.
We work as a group,
the four of us have a hearing,
the rider gets called in
with his team representative.
We explain what he's there for.
We listen to both sides of the story
and then make a decision.
For Marc Marquez,
we have added one penalty point
to his total for the 2013 season
due to irresponsible riding.
No rider wants to be told
they're doing the wrong thing.
They always have an opinion
that's not the same as ours.
And he can be quite angry.
More and more these days
he understands
why we're saying what we're saying.
Like I said,
for me it was a racing incident.
Just that. It was very bad luck
that I hit the cable.
But if I hadn't hit the cable,
obody would have realized I hit Dani.
The limit is when one guy
puts in danger other guys.
This is the limit.
It was a very light touch.
But fine, they obviously
wanted to give me a point.
And as riders we have to respect that.
Many of us could be more aggressive.
And many of us could be
touching others like this.
But we don't do it.
A lot of people complain,
but it's my riding style.
If I don't ride like that,
I cannot be fast.
Sometimes I try to change.
I try to be smooth,
but in the end if I'm concentrating, if I want to push, I need to be like that.

Dani Pedrosa had the satisfaction of beating Marc Marquez in the Malaysian Grand Prix. It's a great feeling, this one. But Marquez beat Lorenzo for second extending his lead to 43 points. He could clinch the world title the following week in Australia. Marc Marquez has been black-flagged. Honda have made one massive, massive mistake. The Phillip Island track had been re-surfaced since the last MotoGP race there. In the practice sessions, it turned out that the new asphalt gave so much grip that the tires couldn't handle more than a few laps. The rubber would disintegrate over full race distance. Race Direction ordered the teams to make a pit stop during the race when the riders would switch to their second bike with fresh tires. Any rider completing more than ten laps would be penalized. It was a new rule and I was very worried that Jorge would miss the board. So, I went to Race Direction to ask if he missed the board, what then? Black flag, 100%. They've got to come in! Marquez has stayed out there! Marquez has stayed out on the track! I do not believe this! But surely, Marquez has gone a lap too far! Marquez's team was looking for an advantage.
An extra lap with a clear track and a light fuel load could provide that. All we know is that part of the team had made a mistake on the counting down of the laps. A part of the team knew already from, "Hey, ten! He has to come in."

And part didn't know, they thought, "No, no. It's the end of lap ten."

So, they were a little bit confused. It's embarrassing for us. It was a mistake that was made.

We take it and move on. I hope it doesn't affect the championship. If it does, it'll come back and haunt us and that's the way it is.

- How many fingers do you see here?
- I see ten.

Then you can work for Repsol Honda.

Jorge Lorenzo won the Australian Grand Prix from Dani Pedrosa and Valentino Rossi. There were two races to go. Fifty points on the table. Just 18 points between Lorenzo and Marquez.

Then a typhoon hit Japan the week of the grand prix. The weather wiped out practice on Friday and Saturday. Everything, practice and the race, happened on Sunday.

Marquez had a single session to figure out the track on a MotoGP bike. And to endure his 15th crash of the season.

If he were to win the race today and Lorenzo were to be third, then he would be the youngest ever world champion in the premiere class. Jorge Lorenzo had other ideas. He led the race from start to finish.

Marc Marquez thought, hoped, prayed,
he'd capture the world title.
But it's not gonna happen here in Japan.
A classic ride from the world champion Jorge Lorenzo who wins here in Japan.
Thirteen points between them.
It was down to the final race in Valencia.
Two things had to happen for Jorge Lorenzo to take the title.
He had to win the race and Marc Marquez had to finish fifth or lower.
All that Marquez needed was a safe run to fourth place or better.
Lorenzo had a plan.
Get to the front and then slow down.
Make the riders behind bunch up.
And hope that Marquez tangles with another rider or makes a mistake.
If another rider got in front of him, Lorenzo would have to retake the lead, then repeat the process of slowing down the riders behind him and trying to make life hazardous for Marquez.
It was the first time that I have to be slower to get something.
A good start from Jorge Lorenzo yet again!
He just hooked it up really nicely as the light went out.
And look at that! Pedrosa is past Marquez.
Lorenzo had to reckon with Dani Pedrosa.
He could derail the plan by doing what he naturally wanted to do.
Dani wanted to win the race and wanted to be as fast as possible.
I tried to move forward and every time I make a pass he was ready to pass back.
Lorenzo fighting back
already! Into turn two!
He forces Pedrosa wide!
And retakes the lead!
I tried to change
my passing points,
so it was harder for him
to get back on me.
But he always finds a way.
Oh, they almost touch
as they come through there.
Pedrosa pushed wide once more
by Lorenzo.
He just doesn't want to allow
the Honda a moment.
Again, Marquez was so close
into the back of Pedrosa there.
Pedrosa is through once more
on Lorenzo, into turn eight.
And he's actually done it at a place
where it's not easy
for Lorenzo to get straight back.
What can Lorenzo respond with?
Here he comes! He almost takes
Dani Pedrosa's right leg off
as he comes through turn eleven.
He was way too aggressive.
My leather at the end was more black
than white from his wheel.
Oh, he's gonna force
Pedrosa a little bit wide.
That's not my style.
I understand that my two actions
were close to the limit.
In these circumstances I felt a little
bit like David against Goliath.
I was trying to beat Goliath
doing everything I could do.
Lorenzo fights back.
There's no way through that time.
There is! He's pushed.
He's pushed Dani Pedrosa wide!
He's pushed him right off the track,
as well. He had to do it.
And now Marquez takes over
at the front.
You had the best view of
the battle between Jorge and Dani.
How many penalty points do you think
Jorge deserved with the passes?
You know, I already said in the past
and I will say now,
we are here for racing, for fighting
and the races are like that.
I tell you,
Lorenzo is riding as aggressively
as I've ever seen him ride.
He has to.
He will try
and rough up Marquez now at the front.
And here he comes!
Into turn two this time again.
He's very strong in there once more.
And he takes the lead from Marquez.
He's gonna have to try
and slow things up.
But the writing was
on the wall for Lorenzo.
The other riders were falling back.
The other riders,
apart from our three,
they were too slow
to stay in the group.
And when I look behind
and I see that they were too far,
I thought to win this race,
to go away, and that's it.
He's definitely changed
the tactics, hasn't he now?
He's gone from slowing, let's get
everybody involved in the party,
to let's see
if you can run at my sort of pace.
Of course, Marquez doesn't need
to be sucked into this.
It was difficult
because something inside me say,
"You need to fight."
I understand
that it was much more important, the championship than one race.
Number 93 now has four kilometers, 2.5 miles left.
That was maybe the longest race in my career.
Last lap I was so careful.
He's gonna win his debut season in MotoGP.
But hats off first of all to Jorge Lorenzo.
Jorge Lorenzo wins his eighth grand prix this season.
But now we await for the arrival of Marc Marquez!
He's done it! He's done it! Twenty years old, 266 days!
The youngest ever winner in the premiere class.
The first rookie to do so since '78.
I want to say thanks to Honda.
To all my team.
To all the people who help me. To my family because they are always there.
I don't know what I can say because I feel so good.
Behind that smile there is the courage of Marquez.
The courage of one who says, "I'm here. I'm a kid, but I can win."
So, Marc did some incredible things.
I expect he have to do some more mistakes during the first season.
He has all the potential to become the greatest of all time or better than me or win more than me.
He has great skills and is also very young.
But now is very early to say. It's a long way.
But he has 100% of possibility.
It's as big as it gets, there's nothing bigger.
He's won the toughest championships in the world.
He's the fastest rider in the world right now.
All the riders hope he's already close to his top level.
Because if he improves a lot from here from now, for the other guys, it's a big problem.
He's the same son as always.
He might be the champion, but he's the same.
It's so great.
That's the lovely thing, the essence of the family.
At least he hasn't talked about leaving us yet.
I have been fortunate.
This is the message.
In the motorcycle world, anyone who falls, like Lorenzo or Marquez, who races with broken bones, demonstrates that one can come back from injury to continue to breathe the intoxication of a dream.
It's not so much about reaching a goal, it's the challenge, the journey of becoming ourselves in life.
We must share the scent of victory and make those around us happy by our example.
At one point, I used to think that I'm very unlucky if I compare myself to the other riders. Much more often to hospital. And much more often I have Race Direction problems.
But, you know, I think now completely different.
I completely see that I am a very fortunate guy.
I live every day the dream of my life.
There is a very high level of competition and I'm still there through now eleven years and this makes me proud. Sure, numbers could be a little better but I'm enjoying it. You have to work it out. I think Rossi, for example, he's trying also. It will never be the same because in life there is a constant change, in you, in the rest, in everything. But you have to work out the best to find your happiness and the best balance for you. When you go home and you are at rest and out of this, it's not the number that you get. It's the experience you felt when you were doing it. My father once told me, when I was 14, before I started world championships in 2002, before my debut. I crashed in Montmelo. So when my dad see me like this, unconscious in the ambulance, we went to the hospital. He told me, "Son, let's stop this shit, because, it's a shit." "You know, it isn't worth it." But I say... I was crying at this moment. I say, "No, no, Dad, I will continue." Everybody has his way to interpret racing. Some riders do it because they want revenge on their world. Some others, it's very important to give the maximum. For some others it's for fun, others because they like the adrenaline.
So I think that everybody has his way.
And all the ways are good. Yeah.
Was that 100%?
Yeah. Maybe a little bit more.
A little bit more, as always.
We're at Misano,
the Marco Simoncelli circuit.
I talk with Paolo many times.
Ask him to build a team
in the style of Marco Simoncelli.
Because, he was involved
in the racing life of Marco.
And he was able to take him to the top.
He has to find a new energy
to go ahead.
Not in the memory of Marco,
but in the style, Simoncelli style.
This is the first year,
but they're doing well.
We'll see what we can do next year.
I think having the relation
with the riders, the two riders,
if one of the two becomes stronger,
for sure he can jump on the next
category and then jump and jump.
We will see.
The circle that was broken in a way
now is complete.
Every Sunday,
as night begins to fall on Coriano,
a flame ignites
and burns in memory
of Marco Simoncelli for 58 seconds.
Grand prix motorcycle racing
is the process
of turning fire into speed.
The combustion of fuel
and air in the engine
and the fire in the heart of a rider
willing to risk everything...
...to win.