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Radio

By Mike Rich

Here in the upstate, things don't
change much.

Fall means football season.

Being married to a coach
means measuring things...

... mainly by wins and losses.

Except for that one year.

Jimmy Carter declared
that if elected...

... he would do everything possible
to clean up the government.

In South Carolina weather, late night
and early morning low clouds...

- Come on, let's go.

- No, Mom.

What's wrong with you, boy?!

Get out of my way!

Damn!

Laird, son, how many years
you been playing for me?

- Two years, coach.

- You want to make that three?

- I suggest you start paying attention.

- Yes, sir.

We do things as a team, gentlemen.

One player doesn't execute, it's the
difference between 6 yards or 6 points.

Honeycutt, what say we do
some up-downs as a team...

...so we can further appreciate
that concept.

You heard the man!

Get them feet chopping now!

Get it up nice! Get those knees up!

Get them legs going!

Get it up!

Get it up, right now!

Come on, get them up! Get them up!

Get them up!

Let's go! Come on, now!

Hey, you.

Now, might any of those X's and O's
be for me tonight?

- How's it coming?

- Almost done.
Mary Helen home yet?
Mary Helen's been in bed
for an hour, Harold.
Y'all do have a week before you
actually have to play this game, right?
- Right.
- I'll be right up.
Ah, the first "I'll be right up"
of the season.
Ready! Set!
Hut!
Let's go, now.
Team, full speed! Live to the ball!
Ready!
Blue, 24!
Set!
Hey, Einstein. Why don't you try
picking the ball up.
Yeah, you, dummy. What, you deaf?
Yeah, pick it up. There you go.
Throw it over here.
Come on, throw it!
What are you doing? Hey, coach!
He took our ball.
Wha...?
Run it again!
- See you tomorrow.
- Okay. See you later, Mary Helen.
Bye.
You're getting home late.
Oh, hey, Daddy.
I tried calling a couple times,
but the line was busy.
Your mama's asleep.
I'll talk to her in the morning, okay?
All right.
- Night.
- Good night.
Heard Mary Helen made
varsity cheerleader.
- She's really excited.
- I'll bet. I'll bet Linda is too.
Yeah, I guess so.

Do it again!
- One more time!
- You got them running something?
Hit it!
Come on, dope.
- Hey, boy!
- Watch this. Watch this.
- Bring them in.
- Gather up! On the double!
Well, is someone gonna
tell me what's going on here?
How about it, Johnny?
Nobody move.
On, no, no, no, no.
Oh, gee.
I just want to help you.
I'm just gonna cut the tape off you.
You've gotta hold still.
Just try to hold still, now.
You gotta hold still. Look at me.
Hold still. I'm not gonna hurt you.
Hold still. I don't want to cut you.
My God. It's all right.
Calm down a little bit. It's okay.
I got it. Gonna get you
out of this mess.
Okay, you're free.
Anybody got anything to say?
Tell your folks practice's gonna
run late tomorrow.
Mary Helen tells me the cheerleading
squad's got itself...
...what, half-a-dozen new faces
this semester, isn't that right?
I also hear the athletic director...
...has to take the top spot
on the pyramid at pep rallies.
Isn't that right?
Harold, why not stop by and see what
kind of no-good your daughter's up to?
Yeah, sure.
You got a couple phone calls, Daddy.
From who?
Bobby Taggert's folks. Frank Clay.

I wrote them down for you.
- What'd you tell them?
- That you'd call back.
Have you decided what you're
gonna do about these boys?
Not yet.
I'm sure most of them have never
done anything like this before.
You didn't see the look
on this young man's face, Linda.
He was terrified.
Coach Jones?
Go on. Good idea.
Might I have a minute of your time?
Y'all, excuse me.
Anybody ever said no to you on that,
Principal Daniels?
Nobody still working here.
He scores!
- What can I do for you?
- I hear we had an incident yesterday.
Yes, ma'am, we did.
You taking care of it?
Let's just say today's practice won't be
the shortest one we've ever had.
Good. Good.
You know, Harold...
...that boy has been rolling by here
for a long time now...
...minding his own business.
Never caused any problem
for anybody.
I need you all to keep it that way.
I appreciate it.
No, I don't want the football.
I just want to tell you I'm sorry
about what happened.
I thought you needed to hear that
from someone.
I don't want the football.
You keep it.
Why don't you bring it by practice
later.
I'll find you something to do.

Maybe you can help us out.
Nothing more is gonna happen, son.
I promise you.
See you later. All right?
All right, the nine of you.
You know who you are.
Get on down there.
Take your shoulder pads off.
Line up on the chalk.
Let's go. Hustle up!
Well...
...what do you want to do?
Run them.
How long?
Till I say stop.
On the line now!
Where you're going to be.
Ready.
All the way to the line, coach.
Don't quit on me now!
Don't you quit on me!
All the way through that line!
All the way through!
- Hi.
- Hey.
- Long day?
- Yeah.
How was yours?
Long.
So the report is that Mary Helen
got off to a great start in lit class...
...but she's struggling with math.
- Well, the lit part sounds good.
Come on, Harold.
It's bad enough when a parent
misses a conference.
It's worse when the parent's
a teacher.
The parent's a teacher,
he knows how his kid's doing.
What?
Please just tell me
that you forgot to go.
You know I had to deal

with those boys.
Oh, those boys.
Can't you make room
for your daughter and those boys?
Don't lecture me. I'll go see Ms. Marks
tomorrow if it'll make you feel better.
Make me feel better?
This is not about me.
She's a junior, Harold.
I mean, she's got this year
and next.
And then she's gone.
Go!
- Y'all ready?
- Yes, sir!
Yes, sir!
Close your eyes for a minute.
I want you to listen.
You hear that?
Imagine what that'll sound like
after we've all done our job tonight.
And then...
...I want you to imagine what
that's gonna feel like.
I want you to picture your man
right across from you.
You see him?
You make the effort on every play,
you'll beat them.
You play smart,
you're gonna outthink them.
You play with heart and character...
...and give your teammates everything
you've got on every play...
...you can walk off the field calling
yourselves a football team.
Let's play with Hanna pride and never
stop believing in each other.
You win your battles...
...we'll win our war.
What's say let's have some fun
and get it done.
Your Hanna Yellow Jackets!
Let's go, Jackets!

The kickoff is high and deep...
... and sends the Jackets' Johnny Clay
back near the goal line.
Johnny Clay behind a convoy of Hanna
blockers. Heads up the right sideline.
Go! Go! Go! Go!
Get up there!
Finally knocked out-of-bounds
at the 42-yard line.
Throw right 63 flag. Come on.
Come on!
First and 10 for the Jackets.
Marcum back to pass.
Finds Hawkins in the right flat
for another Jacket first down.
Get over here. Come on. Come on.
Thirty-six crossbuck.
Once you get the ball, I don't wanna
see nothing but the back of your jersey.
All right. Get out there.
The handoff is to Clay.
Finds a big hole. Now cuts outside.
Beats one tackler. And another.
- Get upfield, son. Turn it on!
- He may go all the way.
- Touchdown, Hanna!
- Yeah! All right.
Johnny Clay with a 30-yard run
gives the Jackets the lead!
- Less than two minutes to play.
- That's what we want.
That's a 30-yard run, son!
That's our ball game!
That's our ball game!
- Evening, fellas.
- Hey, coach.
- Harold.
- Honeycutt.
Del. Don.
Kurt. Dennis.
Just brewed that pot 10 minutes ago,
coach. Got yourself the first cup.
All right.
Well...

...didn't exactly thump them...
...but it wasn't too bad
as far as season openers go.
Frank, your boy, Johnny,
had a heck of a run.
Give him the ball,
he'll make you a smart man.
That's right.
Did notice a few things
we need to work on.
You reckon these are the boys
gonna take us back to state?
Come on, Clive. Little early
for that kind of talk, isn't it?
I hear Easley has a pretty
decent crop of speed this year.
I guess we'll see about that
next week.
Think you might want to throw
the ball a bit more?
I think about a lot of things.
Listen, boys. Last thing coach needs
is us asking him a slew of questions.
Especially after how he got
those young men to play.
We got them revved up, didn't we?
So how do you plan on beating those
Easley boys Friday night?
Well, Frank, if I was to tell you
that...
...y'all wouldn't have a thing to talk
about all week.
Boy, that's a good cup tonight, Del.
Thank you.
Come on, turn it up! Turn it up!
Turn it up!
Good job! Good job!
Hey, Honeycutt.
Yeah?
See that young man over there?
What do you figure he wants?
I don't know.
Come on, Spaulding,
bring it around there!

I think maybe he's thirsty.
Well, go on.
All right. Five minutes.
Get yourself a drink.
Get on special teams.
How you doing?
Yeah, you. No, wait, wait.
It's all right.
Settle down. I ain't gonna
give you a hug.
Just got a little water here. See?
I'm dropping something off here.
Little something from Coach Jones.
Got a name, son?
You ain't gonna talk to me, are you?
All right.
Go ahead. Go on, give it a squeeze.
Set! Hut!
- Come on, now!
- Good job, Justin.
All right, bring it in!
Hi.
Glad you came by.
Thank you. What's your name?
Why don't you come on in.
I got some hamburgers coming.
Get your buggy. Come on in.
Really good burgers.
Oh, you found some music
you like. Good.
Hey, look who's here.
No ketchup, no onion.
Thank you.
- He tell you his name yet?
- He doesn't talk too much.
But he's sure taken a liking
to that radio of yours.
Radio.
Radio, huh?
You know, it's just sitting there.
You can have it as far
as I'm concerned.
Hey, you hear that...
...Radio?

Coach Honeycutt says you can take
that home with you if you like.

Hey, are you hungry?

Would you like a hambur...?

You want something to wash it
down with too? Root beer? Coke?

Coke.

- Man knows what he wants.

- Coke, it is.

Well...

...which way's home, Radio?

There's nothing wrong
with a good country station.

But I can get used to this too,
I guess.

You know, the boys call me

Coach Jones.

Coach Jones.

You can call me what you like
when you get around to it.

All right?

I hope you can come by practice
tomorrow.

The same time. All right?

See you then, okay?

Afternoon, ma'am.

I'm Harold Jones. I coach the football
team over at Hanna High.

I was just giving your boy
a ride home.

Come on in now, baby.

Look.

Hey.

- Hello.

- Yeah.

- Look.

- I see you got yourself another one.

Look.

Oh, look at that.

You get that from him?

Yeah. Coach Jones.

Look at that one.

He a nice man?

Yeah.

Good.

I think it's time you got washed up for dinner. You hungry?

- Yeah.

- I made you some fried bread.

All right. Get yourself washed up for dinner.

Set!

Set!

Get in there! Get in there!

Bring it in! Come on, hustle up!

Let's go.

Come on, hustle up!

Bring it in. Good job. Good job.

Good practice, men.

We got a lot to think about this week.

Easley's got a ton of speed.

Defense, containment. We gotta keep them from getting outside.

Offense, ball control. We'll grind it out, keep their offense off the field.

Now, there's one other thing.

See the young man over there?

Believe some of you already know him. He goes by Radio.

He'll be helping us out for a while.

We will not have a problem with that.

No, sir.

Call it up, Danny.

- One, two, three!

- Beat Easley!

- What's he doing?

- That's it. Get your knees up.

Look at him out there.

That one! That one!

That one!

Careful.

Sorry.

I'm sorry, Johnny.

I'm sorry. I'm sorry, Johnny.

I'm sorry.

You okay.

Hanna!

Hanna!

Hanna!

What the hell is going on out there?

Yellow Jackets still looking to
get on track. Marcum back to pass.

Intercepted!

Don't quit! Don't quit!

Don't quit!

Go! Go!

That was a good one.

I liked that one.

Radio!

Hi, everybody. Hi, everybody.

Hi, everybody.

Quite a show you put on tonight.

Just wondering if you were running
a football program or a social club.

Radio, I need to talk to your mama.

That okay?

She right there.

- Hi, Mama.

- There's a sandwich in there for you.

- I'll be in there directly.

- Okay, Mama.

Ma'am.

I was wondering if we might carry
your son tomorrow on the team bus.

Got us a football game.

What your boys done to my son
was wrong...

...but I don't expect you
to make up for it.

The boys are taking to him real good.

They're still boys, now, ain't they?

I'll keep a good eye on him.

I guess it's all right with me.

I don't mean to pry, ma'am...

...but I was hoping...

...I might be able to ask you
what exactly is wrong with him.

Well, the doctors never could
give me a name for it.

Say he the same as everybody else,
just a little slower than most.

I got a older boy, Walter.

He's fine and all.
And their daddy?
He died a while back.
I'm sorry.
You got your hands full.
Well, they got me working 10 hours
a day at the hospital. Some days more.
So I'm wondering where he's at
half the time...
...and worrying all the time.
Because I figure they only gonna need
one excuse to put him away.
James is a good boy, coach.
He got himself a good heart.
Most folks just don't take the time
to see it, is all.
James.
James Robert Kennedy.
Thank you, ma'am.
No, he is not getting on that bus.
Harold, he is not a student.
You don't even know how old he is.
Look, he has a handicap
we know nothing about.
What if he has some kind
of a seizure?
He's not the one who's
gonna have the seizure.
This has nothing to do
with any of that.
If you're saying
I'm overly concerned...
...about my students being with
a severely handicapped black man...
...I assure you that I am.
But my concern is not necessarily
for my students.
I'm not so sure we're trying to help
somebody here...
...or whether he's being used as
nothing more than a glorified mascot.
You know me a hell of a lot
better than that.
Put your game face on.

Wipe your smile off your faces.
Start thinking about football.
- Coach Jones. It raining hard.
- Radio. Radio.
- Gonna be wet out there.
- It sure is.
Listen, we're not gonna be able
to take you on the bus today.
Some folks, they don't think
it's a good idea.
They just don't understand yet,
but they'll catch on. Believe me.
I'm sorry.
I'm really sorry.
I'll see you tomorrow. Okay?
And in local sports...
... Hanna's Yellow Jackets travel
to Wade Hampton tonight.
With a 4-4 record, they need to win
both their remaining games...
... to keep their playoff hopes alive.
Clock winding down now
in the fourth quarter.
The Yellow Jackets have trailed
all night long...
... but now within striking distance,
trailing 14 to 13.
Danny Marcum barks out the signals.
He's back to pass.
Incomplete.
Second down now.
Still time to mount one last drive.
And there's the draw play.
Playing up the middle.
To 5, 10. First down, Jackets.
Jackets will go for a field goal
to win it.
Less than a minute to play.
- Here's the snap. The kick.
- Kick.
No good!
The Jackets' last-ditch efforts
fall short.

Final score:

Hanna, 13.

Here, here. Use a spoon.

There you go.

- I'll get some of these out of your way.

- All right.

Thank you, Grace.

- Which cobbler you got today?

- I got so...

- I'm not done.

- Don't talk with your mouth full, now.

- Peach and blackberry.

- Peach and blackberry.

What's it gonna be, Radio?

Both.

Give the man both. I'd like some more coffee too, please.

Yeah, I take both.

- Radio, look at me.

- I want my pie.

You got mustard on your cheek.

Get it for you.

There you go.

Football season's just about over.

- You know that, don't you?

- One more game.

Yep. One more game.

You gonna be okay with that?

- Where my pie?

- Don't worry, they're coming.

She'll bring you your pie.

Don't worry.

- I like both.

- She's got your order.

Football. I like football.

Some of us felt pretty bad about leaving you off that bus last night.

We're gonna find a way to make it up to you.

How you gonna do that, coach?

Your Hanna Yellow Jackets!

Jackets!

All right!

- We're having fun. This is a good one.

- This is a good one.
Nothing like archrival Westside
to get Jackets fans stirred up.
Winning this one would even Hanna's
record at 5 and 5...
... and though a far cry
from early season hopes...
... salvage a measure of pride
for the home squad.
Here we go. Here we go.
All right, 4 right,
24 flank and reverse.
- Third and 6 on the 40.
- That was a good one, coach.
- We'll see.
- Ready!
That was a reverse! Reverse!
Reverse!
Come back here.
What...?
He's telling the play!
Westside defense calling an audible,
brings in both linebackers.
- Danny, check it off.
- Reverse!
Jones signaling for time, but Marcum
doesn't hear him.
Marcum rolls right, pitches it
to Hill on a flank and reverse.
He is crushed in the backfield
and fumbles the ball.
- It's recovered by Westside!
- Daggum it!
Come on.
No wonder! They knew the play.
They knew the play!
Defense, get out there.
Radio, listen to me. You can't let the
other team know what we're gonna do.
- How they know that, coach?
- Tommy, get out there!
Good God.
Set! Hike!
Snead back to pass for Westside.

It's broken up, but a flag is thrown on the Jackets' cornerback.

No!

- Got him in the back, coach.

- Are you kidding?!

- You blew that call and you know it.

- You need to move back.

- Don't do it. Don't do it.

- That was a chickenshit call.

- Fifteen more!

- Oh, come on!

Another penalty on Jones.

- Chickenshit! Chickenshit!

- Fifteen more. Go to the white line.

Chickenshit! Chickenshit!

- Radio! Get him out of there, Honeycutt!

- Get him back.

Unsportsmanlike conduct!

Just called a third penalty

on the Jackets' bench.

It looks like a train wreck down there.

Honeycutt, get him off the field.

How many flags you got?!

You got any more flags?!

- Get him back!

- A total of 45 yards now on the play.

- There goes my evening.

- Come on, Radio.

Let's go, buddy. Here we go.

Any chance I can get the ball?

Nobody speaks in here

unless Coach Jones says he does.

Sit down, Clay.

There your ball.

Now that we got that taken care of...

Jackets trying to hold Westside in the fourth quarter.

They've stiffened here in the second half and still trail by only 4.

Here comes the Jackets' blitz.

- He got him! He got him!

- He got him!

Go!

The ball will go back to the Jackets
with time for one last drive.
Hut!
Marcum keeps it.
Pitches to Smalls.
Bounces off one tackler
and breaks free. Touchdown, Jackets!
Good job. Come here.
Flanker right, split left. Twenty-four
Z post. Get on your horse, now.
Hey, Honeycutt...
...I got a good feeling about this one.
Good feeling. Good feeling.
Set! Hut!
Marcum fakes the handoff
and drops back to pass.
Looking long.
Mitchell's open.
Touchdown, Yellow Jackets!
- Oh! That was a good one!
- Good one! What'd I tell you?
With less than a minute to play, Hanna
has overtaken rival Westside...
... with a stunning 37-yard touchdown.
That's the way the game's
supposed to be played. Good job.
Settle down, now. Listen up.
That was a great team effort out there
tonight. Great comeback.
Y'all played your hearts out.
I'm proud of you. Good job.
Honeycutt.
For standing behind us all season long,
especially tonight...
...the game ball...
...goes to Radio.
- Can you sign this?
- Yeah, sure.
- There you go.
- Thanks.
- Hey. How are you?
- Much better now.
Yeah? You want me to bring
this home tonight?

You only got one of them?

- I had a lot to choose from, didn't I?

- No kidding, huh?

- You going over to the shop?

- I suspect so. Shouldn't be too painful.

Well, don't forget to bring some of that unsportsmanlike conduct home.

All right.

- Evening, fellas.

- Harold.

- Irv. Clive.

- Nice win tonight, coach.

- I'll make us a fresh batch.

- Well, this will be fine, Del.

Well, I know a .500 season isn't what we all had in mind...

...but I did see some things tonight

I think we can build on.

The boys made good adjustments at halftime...

...and Danny Marcum finally got the offense moving.

- He sure did.

- He sure did, coach.

I'm real proud of all the boys.

Always good to beat Westside, and it's nice to win the last one.

Wasn't long ago we were winning most every one.

There something you need to say, Frank?

Well...

...I think we got too good a team to be losing half our games.

Anybody else?

It's all right, you can speak up.

Well, if nobody else is gonna say anything, I sure as hell will.

You got yourself a distraction needs dealing with.

A distraction?

That what you think Radio is?

Well, you're damn right I do.

Come on, now, Frank.

You know, I think I'm gonna
do us all a big favor...
...and let you all finish this one
on your own.
Coffee's been better, Del.
Sorry, coach.
Well, now you show up.
You chickenshit.
I figured I'd just be in the way.
How'd it go?
That good, huh?
I'm afraid we've got
a disgruntled booster on our hands.
Banker Frank?
Yeah, he says we got a problem
with Radio being on the sidelines.
What do you think?
I think that one's up to you.
How's the basketball team looking?
Just fine long as Johnny
stays healthy. Why?
Oh, I just thought Radio
might need something to do.
- I reckon we could use some help.
- Good.
I'll see you Monday.
Hey, what you got now, boy?
Football. Football.
A football? Coach Jones
gave you that?
Yeah.
Wait a minute, now.
What's the matter?
- We all done.
- Oh, now.
We all knew the season
was gonna end sometime. Yeah?
But look what you got.
A football...
...and a sweatshirt.
And lookie here. Look at all of this.
Look at that.
- That Radio.
- Yeah.

See, now, next fall gonna be here
before you know it.

Promise.

Now, give Mama a hug.

Boy, what's that?

I want me a hug.

I'm always here for you, baby.

President-elect Carter met President
Ford today at the White House.

Also meeting with CIA boss
George Bush.

The New York Post has been sold to
Australian publisher Rupert Murdoch.

- Morning, girls.

- Morning.

Free agent Reggie Jackson signed
a five-year deal...

... to play with the New York Yankees.

- Hi, Nicole.

- Hi.

Coach Jones.

- Good morning, Lou.

- Good morning.

What brings you around here?

Seeing as you never drop by my office,
I thought I'd pop up for a visit.

- And how is everything?

- Everything's fine. Why?

A little bird says Mr. Kennedy's spent
time with you inside the building.

Yeah, that's correct.

Do you see that
as a problem?

Disrupting a football game
is one thing.

Disrupting a classroom
is a different matter.

I want him with you all the time.

Okay?

Yes, ma'am.

- 1-0.

"Radio."

And that's how you spell it.

Here, you want to try it?

You want to do it?
Look. It's easy. You just take
the chalk and it writes right on there.
All right, well, we don't
have to do it right now.
Radio.
Blueberry and pumpkin today.
Pie, not cobbler.
Both.
Coach Jones, you're needed
in the office.
All right, everybody,
just keep working.
Radio, keep everybody under control
while I'm gone, now.
Keep an eye on everything.
No talking. No talking.
No talking. No...
Well, now, how long
would you say Mr. Kennedy...
Well, now, how long
would you say Mr. Kennedy...
...has been in
an actual classroom setting?
Well, let's see, about a month.
And the thinking behind that?
He was doing fine with the team.
I didn't see any harm in it.
Mr. Tucker, I know you got a job
to do...
...but is me having Radio in the
classroom really worth all this trouble?
That's what the school board
would like to find out.
This is a young man who's been
spending his entire lifetime...
...wandering around all by himself
out on the streets.
Which is quite different than being
inside a public school. Right?
Yeah, well, that's the point,
isn't it?
Mr. Tucker...
...I am well aware of the liability risk

we are running here.
Harold will be first to tell you, my list
of reservations is longer than most.
I'm sure that's the case.
But the fact of the matter is,
none of us has any experience...
...with having a severely retarded man
wandering the halls with our students.
The risk is enormous.
- Please keep that in mind.
- I will.
Ms. Daniels.
- Mr. Jones.
- Thank you, Mr. Tucker.
Well, this is a hell of a position
you've put me in.
Yeah, I suppose it is, Lou.
But Radio's not gonna do anything.
Harold.
Why on earth are you doing this?
Same reason you are.
- Defense.
- Defense. Come on.
- How you doing?
- I'm good. I'm good.
- That's in. That's all right.
- Looks like Radio's doing okay.
Long as there's a ball.
How you doing?
Hell, Honeycutt, you know me.
Get near Christmas, I start
counting the days till next season.
Here you go. Watch this.
Look at him, Honeycutt.
Wasn't long ago you couldn't get
a word out of him.
Yeah, I miss those days sometimes.
I'm going to shoot that one.
I'm going to get that one.
Yeah, I got that one. I like that one.
Okay, here we go.
All right, bring it in.
I'll get it.
- Hello?

- Hey, Mrs. Jones.
- It's Radio.
- Hi, Radio.
Is Coach Jones there?
Just a minute, Radio, I'll get him.
Harold!
Mom? Have you seen my red clip?
- My red hair clip.
- Yes, on the washer.
Harold!
Radio, can I help you
with something?
What pants I put on?
Didn't your mama lay out
clothes for you?
No, she not here.
She working tonight.
Just pick something out and put it on.
I'm sure it'll look fine.
- It's a big night.
- We're doing the Christmas tree up.
- That right?
- That's right.
So just grab something
and put it on.
Harold?
Is that Radio?
How about this one?
What?
How about this one?
- Tell him those look fine.
- Those look fine.
Okay. Radio gonna put them on.
Put it right there. There.
Big Radio in there, Mrs. Jones.
That's a big Radio.
- I'm gonna get a cookie.
- Don't eat too many, now.
All right.
- Little something for Radio.
- Great, thanks a lot.
- Have a great one. Merry Christmas.
- Merry Christmas.
- I'm taking these presents to Radio's.

- Of course you are.
- I'll go with Carolyn.
- All right. Thanks.
- He sure cleaned up this Christmas.
- Oh, yeah.

Thank you. Merry Christmas
to you.

- Merry Christmas, coach.
- Have a good one.
- Merry Christmas. Thank you.
- Merry Christmas.
- Hey, Daddy.
- Hi, honey.

These are from Mr. Wagner's store.
Thought Radio might need shirts.
Great, thanks.

This is nice. You getting folks
to help Radio out.

No shortage of people
feeling sorry for him.

We're not asking people
to feel sorry for him.

That's the last thing he needs.

Look, Mary Helen...

...I know we haven't had much
chance to talk lately.

There's been plenty of chances,
Daddy.

You just don't take any of them.

It's all right.

Radio needs what you're doing
more than I do.

- Look...
 - Time to go, Coach Jones.
- Time to go. Time to go.
- Merry Christmas, Mary Helen.
 - Merry Christmas, Radio.

Presents.

- A bunch of them.
- Yeah. So beautiful.

Christmas.

Good night, Daddy.

I'll see you at home.

You all set to go?

- Merry Christmas, coach.
- Merry Christmas.
- I can't wait till Mama see these gifts.
- Yeah, she'll be surprised.
I can't wait to get home.
This is so beautiful. I'll tell Mama
about the tree.
- Think we'll fit them all in the house?
- No.
That's a big one.
I can't wait to open these.
These are all beautiful.
Think it'd be all right to open
one tonight?
- Sure. Yeah.
- Which one I open?
I got one right here. Open this one.
- Who that from, coach?
- Mrs. Jones, Mary Helen and me.
It is?
I hope you like it.
It's a radio.
- It's a radio.
- Turn it on, see if it works.
It's working, coach.
It's a good one.
It's working on there.
Mama, it's working. Come on, Mama.
Come on, Mama. Dance.
- Dance with me. Come and dance.
- All right, all right.
This is a good one. Come on, coach.
- It's Christmas. Come on, coach.
- Oh, come on. Come on.
All right. All right.
Go, Radio, go!
- Go, Radio, go!
- Dance.
I like that one.
I like that one.
- Thank you, coach.
- You're welcome.
Thank you, coach. Merry Christmas.
That's a good one.

Oh, hush now.

Lord, we ain't never seen
no Christmas like this.

- You cut a pretty mean rug, coach.

- Oh, come on.

That's where he gets it.

Well, he may not get everything I try
to teach him, but he did get that.

The hospital's got me working 16
straight, right through Christmas Day.

At least tonight I get a little bit
of holiday with my boy.

Good.

You know, coach,
it wasn't that long ago...

...I see you drive up
in that truck of yours...

...and be wondering
why you doing what you doing.

So why are you doing
what you're doing?

I figure it's the right thing to do.
There's a whole lot out there that's
right. Don't mean we always do it.

No, ma'am, it doesn't.

James has been telling me next year's
team shaping up as a good one.

Well, we're hoping. If all works out.
You'd let me know

if he was a problem?

He's no problem at all, believe me.

How does it feel to be out
from behind bars, Angels?

Good night, darling.

From all of us, to all of you,
a very merry Christmas.

Cloudy and cold today, so stay by that
fire and keep it right here on WAIM.

We'll keep you warm with
your favorite hits commercial-free...

... all morning long.

Merry Christmas.

- Quite a load you got there.

- Yeah.

Right there. Put that right there.
Mind telling me where it came from?
Presents for me.
Put that right there.
Hold up.

- That's a pretty decent Christmas...
- No, no, no. That's for me.
- What's your name, son?
- Radio.

Radio, huh?

Hey. Keep it here.

- No.
- I said, keep it here.
- No.
- I said keep...
- No.
- Stay still. Come on.

Let's go.

- Radio.
- Yeah, you got your radio. Come on.
- That you, Newdall?
- Yeah.

We got a sandwich if you're hungry.

- You see how much they paying Dr. J.?
- How much?

You're making this harder
than it has to be, son.

Can't be for one season.

Ain't nobody makes a half a million
dollars for playing basketball one year.

- Who you got back there, Kojak?
- I'm not sure. Won't tell me his name.

He ain't been here a week,
got himself a John Doe.

Let's go see who it is.

When was the last time we had
anybody here on Christmas?

I don't know.

Oh, shit.

Hey, Radio.

I want to go home.

We're gonna get you out of there.

- That's Dr. J., Radio.
- Dr. J.?

That's a good one.
Did you like that?
Like that right there.
He put the basket.
Well, it's the Doctor's team this year,
no question about it.
- Why don't you wear your hair like that.
- My hair.
Morning, Irv. Hey, Radio.
Oh, hey, Coach Jones.
We're watching Dr. J. there.
Dr. J.
Harold, you meet Officer Newdall yet?
No, I don't believe I have.
I need more presents. I need more.
That's a good one.
I'm gonna put this one up here.
Put that right there.
Come on. Come on.
What else down there?
Give me another.
Oh, that a good one.
- Morning, there. Merry Christmas.
- Merry Christmas.
There you go. Here you go.
That's a good one. Give another one.
Give another one.
Hey, Coach Jones.
- Presents all gone.
- I see that.
Brought your buggy home
and got you some food.
- Thought you might be hungry.
- Okay.
So how you doing? All right?
Okay.
Your brother Walter's inside.
He'll stay till your mama gets home.
I like the french fries.
- When do I start school again?
- Real soon.
Miss Winniver will let me in 11 th grade,
right?
That's right.

You remember we talked about you staying close to the teachers.
Don't want you wandering off on your own.
That was a good thing you did today.
That was a good thing you did today with the presents.
You didn't do anything wrong.
You understand?
Radio did nothing wrong.
I'm real proud of you.
Proud. Proud of Radio.
- Good morning.
- Hey, Radio.
Come on in.
- Come on, Radio. We gotta go, man.
- Let's go. I'm ready. We ready to go.
Good morning.
- Morning, Radio.
- Morning.
- You have a good Christmas?
- Coach bailed me out of jail.
No running. Stop! No running.
- I'm sorry.
- I'm the hall monitor.
- Oh, but that's okay.
- Thanks, Radio.
Morning. How you doing?
Get your man!
Jump, Jackets, jump! Jump way up!
Outside pass to Clay.
Clay pulls up for a 17-footer. Good!
I'm sorry.
Cover the screen!
The screen! The screen!
You gotta keep Radio on the bench.
Stay on the bench. Stay on the bench.
- Who?
- You.
Bring it up!
Take a pick!
Clay working off the pick.
Drives right side.
- No basket! No!

- Offensive foul, Johnny Clay.
- 15 out of control.
- You're killing me. Time-out! Time-out!
Ref! Did you think about that?!

Morning.

- Morning.
- Morning, Radio.
- Morning.
- Morning.

Radio. Where's my hug?

There it is.

- Who'd you catch running in the hall?
- Billy Samson.

Swear, you have turned out
to be quite the hall monitor.

Morning, Hanna.

You know who this is? This is Radio.

Today our menu is Salisbury steak.

- French fries.
- French fri... Oh, I like them.

Black-eyed peas.

- Black-eye... We got black-eyed peas?
- We sure do.

We got black-eyed peas.

- Brownies.
- We got brownies.
- Hot rolls.
- We got hot rolls.
- And pear halves.
- And what?
- Pear halves.
- We have pear halves.
- Hey, we'll see you later.
- Yeah.

Hey, yo.

Radio.

- Hey, how you doing?
- What's going on?

Hey, where's Honeycutt at, man?

- Coach Honeycutt, he around?
- He gone.
- He's gone. All right.
- Yeah, he gone.

Coach Dalrymple's got a couple things

next door she wants you to come get.
Mrs. Dalrymple.
Don't worry, it's just her.
She's alone. Girls are gone.
I can't do that.
All right, man. All right,
but she's gonna be real disappointed.
You don't want to let her down, do you?
- Okay, Radio.
- See you.
Mrs. Dalrymple?
Mrs. Dalrymple?
Radio!
You can't be in here.
Bad Radio. Bad Radio.
Coach Jones. Coach Jones.
Coach Jones. No, Radio.
No, Radio. No.
It'd be one thing if you had done
something like this before on your own.
Radio, listen to me.
It's important that you tell me why
you went in the girls' locker room.
- Mrs. Dalrymple needed me.
- What for?
- She wanted me to pick up stuff.
- Did she ask you?
Did she ask you?
- No.
- Who did?
No.
Radio, who asked you to go
in the girls' locker room?
Who asked you?
No.
I don't know what I'm supposed
to do here.
Be mad at Radio.
Be mad at Radio.
You're willing to do that?
Take the blame for someone else?
You're a better man than me.
I'll say that for you.
Hey, Johnny, what's up?

I got a letter last week from Clemson.
They're looking at me for a full ride
after next year.

- That's great.

- Excuse me, gentlemen.

Excuse me. I need to speak
with Mr. Clay.

- See you, Johnny.

- What's up, coach?

It's one of those days I wish I wasn't
a teacher so I could lay into you.

What you talking about?

What's gotten into you?

I thought you'd learned something
the past few months. I was wrong.

- What are you talking about?

- Don't speak unless I tell you to.

You might think you're clear because
Honeycutt was gone, but this is my call.

There's no way you're suiting up
tomorrow night.

Right.

- What did you say?

- Coach Jones. Mr. Clay.

- What seems to be the problem?

- You hear the problem.

Young man, students do not tell me
what I do and do not hear.

He said I can't play tomorrow.

- Is that what you're thinking, coach?

- That's what I'm saying.

Well, then, seeing that Coach Jones
is the athletic director...

...I say you are not playing.

Ma'am, this is Westside.

If we win, we're in first place.

That's all the more reason for you
to cheer on your teammates, isn't it?

Anything else?

Yeah, tell your boy that I said thanks.

Radio didn't sell you out, son.

There are plenty of other people
willing to do that.

Yes, sir.

Well, I appreciate
your understanding.
We'll talk soon. Thank you.
That's the last of them.
You talk to Mary Helen yet?
Yeah, she's fine. She knows
it wasn't Radio's idea.
Oh, Harold.
Harold, you are too close
to this.
It's not that Johnny talked Radio into
doing it, it's that he did it.
What if it's something worse
next time?
- He'll know.
- Are you sure?
Hell, I'm already
under a microscope anyway.
I got a school to run, a thousand kids
I'm responsible for.
I need to know
where all this is going.
I don't know, Lou.
That may not be
good enough anymore.
I'm sorry. I've been trying to call, and
I haven't gotten ahold of either of them.
I tried several different places.
Here he comes right now.
I'll tell him.
- What's the matter?
- It's Radio's mama, Daddy.
- What happened?
- She had a heart attack.
Oh, no. Is she all right?
No, she's gone.
I was trying to call you or Mom,
but I couldn't reach anybody.
And they're telling me
that he won't come out of his room.
I don't know what to do, Daddy.
All right. Put your coat on.
He's just sitting there in his room.
You got it?

Irv.
Coach, thanks for coming.
Walter will be here in a few minutes.
- How's Radio?
- He's pretty upset.
Tore the place up pretty good too.
Radio?
It's just me. It's Coach Jones.
It's just coach.
Coach.
Coach. That's Radio.
Yeah.
- That's you.
- Radio right there.
There's Mama there. Mama said
we got good football this year.
Yes. Yeah.
That's what Mama said.
We got good...
Radio, ain't nothing I can say is
gonna make you feel any better.
Mama.
Your mama was a fine,
beautiful woman.
She loved you with all her heart,
didn't she?
Oh, boy, did she love you.
- She still does.
- She love the Radio.
She said she's always gonna
be there for Radio.
James...
...look at me.
Look at me.
She will always be there for you.
All right? She will.
You understand that?
Always be with you inside,
right in your heart. All right?
We're gonna be all right.
All right, boy. Come here. Come here.
Where's my mama?
Hold on just a second.
I want to tell you something.

Something I never told anybody.
When I was about 12,
I had a paper route.
Crack of dawn every day.
Wasn't many houses
around here then...
...so I had to cover quite a lot
of territory...
...and I used to cut through
the woods on this little dirt road.
And one morning, I was riding
through there...
...and I heard this noise.
Sounded like a rabbit or something,
you know, caught in a trap.
And then I realized it was coming from
one of the houses set back in there.
I kind of walked over there...
...and didn't seem like anybody
was home, so I walked on up.
It had, you know, chicken wire and
barbed wire around the bottom of it.
I figure to keep the critters out,
you know?
And then all of the sudden, I saw
these fingers coming through the wire.
And I put my bike down...
...and got down
on my hands and knees...
...and I looked under there,
and there was this boy about my age.
I don't know what was wrong
with him. Something was.
They used to keep him under there.
And I looked right at him.
He looked back at me.
We just sat there staring
at each other for a while.
I ran that route for two years,
Mary Helen.
And I never did a thing.
I just wanted you to know that.
Thanks, Daddy.
- How long before he comes back?

- I'm hoping tomorrow.

His brother Walter's moved in with him.

Honeycutt says he let loose on that house pretty good.

Says he's not the only one that knows about it either.

The man had just lost his mother, Lou.

I didn't ask why he took a swing at his wall. I asked you if you knew about it.

Why are you asking me that?

Our friend from the board is back.

He wants to see you.

With his mama gone, it's all different.

Every bit of it.

Good luck.

In the last month, how much time has Mr. Kennedy spent alone?

During the day at least.

Mr. Jones.

Past few weeks? Everybody's been keeping a pretty steady eye on him.

So we talking an hour a day?

Or two?

An hour, maybe.

Well, it could be a half-hour.

Well, as you may have guessed...

...the board has received reports of Mr. Kennedy's inconsistent behavior.

What kind of reports? From who?

Reports of resisting arrest...

...tearing up his home,

barging into the girls' locker room.

Oh, barging?

- Who's been feeding you this crap?

- I'm not here to argue with you.

I'm not arguing. It's a simple question.

Who's been feeding you this crap?

I ask because those were all instances in which he wasn't being supervised.

Says who?

Says who?

Bottom line, with Ms. Kennedy gone,

James faces some rough times ahead.

- To keep him in a school setting...

- Let me tell you something.

This school is the reason he's doing as well as he is.

But to keep him in a school setting...

You take him out of this school, you may as well take his life.

- I've compiled a list of care agencies.

- Oh, I'll bet you have.

Yes, ma'am, I will take care of it personally.

Yes, I will.

Yes, ma'am.

Yes, ma'am.

Is that a fact?

That's some serious money.

Well, all right. Yes, I will.

All right, now, you too.

- Harold.

- Hello, Frank.

- It's been ages since you were here.

- Yeah, it sure has been.

So...

...what can I do for you?

- What are you trying to do?

I'm afraid I don't understand.

Yeah, you do. Calling the school board, making complaints about Radio.

This is you getting back at me for cracking down on your boy.

Now, let's not go off making this all personal.

- It is personal.

- It's not. Besides which, if it was...

...most of the guys at Del and Don's wouldn't feel the way I do.

Yeah, what way is that?

You're one of the finest coaches in the upstate.

And with Johnny and the boys we got coming back next year...

...it's just better if we do things the way we used to.

You just want to be the one
runs Radio out of Hanna.
At least I know where you stand.
Radio. That's the O.
Big, round circle.
Yeah, you try it now.
Come on, it's all right. It's okay.
There you go, take the pencil.
You can do it, I know you can.
That's it.
There.
Look at that. You did it.
Congratulations. Good job.
Radio right there. Radio right there.
- Hey, look who's back.
- What's up, Jimmy?
Johnny, welcome back, man.
What's this?
He brought that in a little while ago.
Sorry Coach Jones got mad at you.
He got real mad.
Yeah, he did.
Yeah. Real mad.
Jackets playing tough D.
And there's a steal by Walker!
Honeycutt calling the play
as the Jackets walk it up the floor.
Two!
Jackson has it in the corner.
Finds Clay, who drives foul line!
Great pass to Cunningham.
Underneath for an easy 2.
All right!
Johnny Clay, doing it all tonight.
Down the floor, up the score!
We want 2!
Now Clay from deep.
Good!
Johnny Clay has 17 points.
And that's the end of the first half

with the score:

That's a good first half, boys.
That's a good first half.

You gonna stick around?

Save my seat.

- All right, bring me a drink, will you?

- Yep.

I talked to Mr. Tucker

and his colleagues...

...and we all agreed that we should
get together and have a meeting.

Well, I don't want to talk about him.

Harold.

I know what you're thinking.

- I thought we were together on this.

- I must find the best possible solution.

- It's not about who...

- What is it about?

You remember asking me

where all this was going?

Do you?

I still don't know.

But I do know this. I won't sit back and
let Frank Clay make the rules on this.

Clay saves it off the tip.

Underneath to Henry.

Great teamwork! And the Jackets
go up by 7.

Clay off the screen. Jumper!

Good!

Johnny Clay in the zone now.

Easley working the ball upcourt.

And Clay with the steal.

Great pass by Clay to Greer
for the easy 2.

And the Jackets are running away
with this one.

Feels good, don't it? Feels real good.

Settle down, settle down, settle down.

Now, I've coached a lot of basketball
over the years.

But I've never had a team play better
than you all did tonight.

Johnny Clay, it's nice having you back.

- Yeah, it is.

- It's good to be back.

Good. Good.

We're still in this race, so rest up tomorrow. We'll hit it hard Monday.

All right? Get some sleep.

- Play him, you got a shot.

- Believe it.

- There's my boy.

- Always a pleasure to see you.

- Good game, son.

- Thirty-two.

What's with all the passing?

With the defense they were playing, you could have gone for 50.

You gotta take advantage of these chances, son.

- Bye, everybody.

- See you, Radio.

Bye, Johnny. Bye, now.

See you later.

What's that?

It's nothing.

Look, son, we got a whole lot to look forward to next year.

And I don't want anything or anyone getting in the way. You understand?

Radio's not the one getting in the way, Dad.

That Frank, he's just scared you got it in for his son, is all.

When Gloria was a baby,

I never left her alone.

Wherever I went, I made sure

Edith stayed with her.

I forgot to tell you Honeycutt called.

Yeah, some of the parents asked for a meeting with Lou on Sunday night.

Just Lou?

Yeah, I don't think they're interested in your side of things, do you?

No, I guess not.

What the hell kind of a father...?

What the hell kind of a father are you?

Hell. Maybe the whole thing's just a big mistake.

Radio would've been better off
if we'd just gotten him some help.
Help? And what you've been
giving him has been...?
Couldn't have been easy
on you and Mary Helen...
...me spending all this time
with Radio.
Harold, wait.
You can't believe that's been
a mistake, you being with Radio.
- You've been so great for each other.
- Yeah, well, look where it's got us.
Where it got you is a school
full of kids that love him.
And Mary Helen feels the same way.
And anything that Frank can do or say
won't change anything.
It's never a mistake to care
for someone.
That's always a good thing.
Right?
- Thank you, Reverend.
- God bless you.
God bless you.
That was quite a sermon.
Indeed. Praise the Lord.
- God bless you, Radio.
- Praise the Lord.
- Coach.
- Praise the Lord.
I love that sermon.
I like that.
All hands are Jesus' hands
I like that.
I like the way everybody singing.
Yeah, that was a nice service.
A nice service.
I need to talk to you
about a little something here.
You remember telling me
about being in 11 th grade?
You talking about Mrs. Winniver.
Yeah, I like Mrs. Winniver.

There's been some talk about
maybe you going on to 12th grade.
That'd be something, wouldn't it?
You know, have you graduate.
Radio, listen to me.
Put your... Take your radio d...
Radio, put your radio down.
Look at me. Look at me.
There's nothing wrong with moving on.
Everybody gets to it eventually.
No. No, I like the 11 th grade.
I like the 11 th grade.
No. No.
I do the menu in the morning.
I say, "We're gonna have
hamburgers and mashed potatoes."
And then I see people in the hallway,
I say, "Hey. No running.
Everybody, no running." Everybody
know that's Radio. I'm there.
Everybody like that.
They say, "Hi, Radio!"
All right, listen. We'll talk about it
when we get closer to the fall.
Let's not worry about it right now.
Radio like the fall.
That's when football come.
It's football. We'll exercise,
and everybody have T-shirts on.
And Coach Honeycutt, he be,
"Let's see some Hanna spirit!"
Yeah. Hey, coach, you say,
"Let's get the quarterback."
And Radio, he defense coach.
I'll be defense coach.
That's right. We'll go all the way.
- That's right, Radio.
- We gonna go all of the way.
Because we got the spirit.
We gonna go all the way.
We gonna go all the way.
This man is a disruptive force
in our community...
...and represents a threat

to our students.

Thank you, Mr. Clay.

Okay, Okay. I understand how
some of you might be feeling.

All I am asking is that if we decide
that there's no other way around this...

...that we dole out as little hurt
as possible.

Fine. Honeycutt, is there anything
you'd like to add?

- Evening, Del. Don.

- Harold.

- Evening, everyone.

- Evening.

Hi, Lou.

- How you doing?

- I'm good. I'm good.

- How are you?

- Good.

I was gonna call you.

- You got a crowded shop tonight, Del.

- Yeah, coach.

I think y'all know my wife, Linda,
and my daughter, Mary Helen.

- Evening.

- Evening, ma'am.

Well, I had a talk with Radio
this morning.

I told him, in not so many words, that
we might be looking at some changes.

It didn't take long to see
the more I talked...

...the more he didn't understand me.

We got a lot of that going on around.

When I was playing, I had a coach...

...he used to tell me to keep
my priorities straight.

He'd say, "Son, you figure out what's
important.

You push everything else aside."

I love football.

I love everything about it.

I love Friday nights when
you look for a win...

...and Saturday morning
when you found one.
But that's not what's important
right now.
We got ourselves a young man
we're not thinking about.
The same young man who could
hardly talk when we first met him...
...and now he's making
announcements over the loudspeaker.
Same young man who got himself
a football letter last fall...
...but never wears it, because
he can't afford a jacket.
Now we're asking him to leave.
- Harold, we are not asking...
- The man's not done, Frank.
I know some of you don't know
or don't care...
...about all that Radio's learned
over these past few months.
Well, the truth is...
...we're not the ones
who've been teaching Radio.
Radio's the one been teaching us.
The way he treats us all the time...
...is the way we wish we treated
each other even part of the time.
I know something's gotta happen here.
I know some changes gotta be made.
And I know I can't let what happened
last season happen again.
So I've decided to step down
as head football coach.
See what you've done, Frank.
I'd like to keep teaching,
if that's all right.
I'll keep an eye on Radio,
make sure he stays out of trouble.
And I'd like to spend more time...
...with a few other folks
I've neglected over the years...
...while I still have a chance to.
Much as I love this game, it's not

half as important as setting that right.

That was a pretty good cup, Del.

- Thank y'all.

- Good night.

This what you wanted?

Is this worth it?

- That was a crazy idea.

- Weren't expecting that, were you?

I can't believe you're gonna stop coaching football.

Found it. Under the mattress with everything else.

All right.

You look great, Radio.

Thanks, Mary Helen.

- I'll see you out there.

- All right.

- There she go.

- Get your collar down.

You look good, now.

You look really good.

You know where we'll be, right?

All right.

- Do a good job. I'm awful proud of you.

- Okay, coach.

- There I go.

- Hey, Radio.

Oh, hey, Johnny, how you doing?

- I heard you got yourself a letter.

- Yeah, they gave me a letter.

Me and the boys thought you might need something to put it on.

- That for Radio?

- Yeah.

- How you like that one?

- Looks good on you, man.

Thanks, Johnny. Thanks, Johnny.

Hey, congratulations, man...

...and thanks a lot.

Patricia Ann Yearwood.

Patricia Ann Yearwood.

Thanks, Radio. You're the best.

Thank you.

I would also like to extend

a special thank-you...
...to our honorary graduate...
...Mr. James Robert Kennedy.
Yeah, Radio! All right!
Who has decided to return
this coming fall...
...as an 11 th-grade student
at Hanna...
...where he will be welcome for
as many such years as he so chooses.
- You got your assistant coach back.
- Yes, we did.
In that moment,
my husband was prouder...
... than if his team had won
a state title.
Radio was now officially
a part of Hanna...
... and a part of our lives forever.
So if you're ever in Anderson on
a Friday in the fall, get there early.
You'll see the man
they call Radio...
... leading the Yellow Jackets
onto the field.
Radio's in his 50s now...
... and he's the most beloved coach
Hanna's ever had.
Coach Harold Jones.
Harold Jones?
He was recently inducted into the
South Carolina Coaches Hall of Fame.
He's retired from teaching but still
maintains his special friendship...
... with Hanna's favorite 11 th-grader.
Ready? Ready! Set!
Touchdown!