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When the Game Stands Tall

By Scott Marshall Smith

This program was founded
on certain ideals.
They have been drowned by the noise
and distraction of fame.
We got lost, caught up in the hype...
...the celebrity, the glory...
...and the relentless pressure
to keep the streak alive.
The sophomore goes back
to set up the screen for Tucker.
Tucker got a block. Tucker has space.
- Tucker breaks a tackle.
- What a move!
Forty-five up the middle.
One man to beat.
Throwing one deep down the middle,
going for Jones. Touchdown De La Salle!
Absolutely unbelievable.
The greatest high-school performance
I've seen in 15 years.
De La Salle High
has won three titles in a row.
Their 48th consecutive victory.
To the fans, it's quickly becoming known
as "The Streak."
Tonight, they break a 22-year-old win
record held by a Michigan high school.
Talking about streaks,
there's a lot of pressure-
Coach Lad has done an amazing job.
De La Salle has been winning
for the past 11 years, straight.
Welcome to the 2003 Northern
Conference Sectional Championships...
...where powerhouse De La Salle
brings their 150-game win streak...
...against their rivals,
the Pirates of Pittsburg High.
- Hey, Bob. Bob.
- Marty, you live under the stadium?
Bob, 25 years coaching this team...
...favored to win your 12th championship,
150 wins. How did you pull it off?
Well, winning a lot of games is doable.

Teaching kids there's more to life,
that's hard.
Come on. You turned this team
into a winning machine.
How long you think
you can keep the streak alive?
The streak was never our goal.
Yeah?
Well, then, why do you keep winning?
This program's a lot of things.
It's not just a football team,
or win-streak machine.
It's a family.
A brotherhood which is based in love.
Put simply...
...love means you can count on me,
in good times and in bad.
Ladies and gentlemen, here to play for
their 12th straight championship win...
...the De La Salle Spartans.
Go Spartans!
I love this part.
Totally freaks out the other team.
I know I'm not supposed to say this,
let alone think it.
This streak's our legacy.
We will never experience
anything like this again in our lives.
You guys are all my family...
...but after tomorrow night,
this will never be like this again.
I'll never forget my time on this team,
or with you.
Spartans for life!
Spartans for life!
Streak, streak, streak!
Terrance Kelly takes the opening kickoff
on the five-yard line. Gets a block.
Terrance Kelly
is the best prospect on the field.
Sees a wedge
and shoots up the middle over the 40.
Brought down on the 49-yard line.
All right, I got Cam's card.

"Training goal:

after practice every day." Done.

"Practice goal:

Perfect.

"Game goal:

two touchdowns...

...and average 15 yards

after every catch."

Did you hear that?

That is a perfect commitment card.

Big goals that stretch his abilities,
but doable when giving a perfect effort.

- You go get those, Cam.

- Yes, sir.

Gonzales throws a long, deep ball
to Cam Colvin...

...who out-jumps the defenders
for De La Salle's first score of the game.

Colvin is a coveted

Division 1 prospect...

...who's drawing interest
from top programs in the country.

Not asking you to be perfect every play.

What we're asking of you...

...and what you should be asking
of each other...

...is to give a perfect effort
from snap to whistle.

Cam Colvin just pitched the ball
back to Kelly.

The most athletic play

I've seen all year.

I got T.K.'s card. "Three extra sets,
cleans, every day after practice."

Blue 18! Set, hut!

Throw the ball!

Yeah, that's it!

- I got Howard's card.

- This is Jimmy's card.

- Nice! Great block.

- "Two hundred fifty push-ups..."

- ...after workout."
- "Get to the second level on sweeps."
I have Chris' card.
"Training commitment: Ten extra
tire drags after practice every day.

Game goal:

Two running touchdowns."
Their middle linebacker's
gonna be covering you, Chris.
You have way more speed than him.
Gonzales, under center,
takes the snap.
Pitches out to Ryan,
who's got room to run.
Sheds a tackle.
In for the touchdown,
which makes the score 27 to nothing.
So, Mickey, does Chris wanna break
this record as bad as you?
- Yeah, he's getting there.
- Thanks. Good block, good block.
You see number 34? Ryan?
Chris Ryan? Write that name down.
When Cam Colvin and Terrance Kelly
are gone, he's the whole team.
I mention he's gonna break
the state's scoring record next year?
If there's anything anyone wants to say,
now is your shot.
Look, I just wanna say...
...in my four years here
I played a lot of games.
But none is more important to me
than tomorrow's. My last game.
I love you, guys.
We always say to finish strong, right?
Tomorrow I'm playing
for Cam's mom...
...who loves this team
almost as much as Cam does.
Love you, boy.
Love you too, man.
I know some of you guys

already know this, but most of you don't.
My grandfather has cancer.
He can't come to our practices anymore,
he can't even make the games.
But every day, he waits for me
to get back from practice...
...just so I can tell him
how we're doing.
As simple as that sounds...
...that's one of the things
that keeps him going.
You know,
our progress keeps him going.
I'm grateful for that.
None of the juniors share their emotions.
Just the seniors.
- I know.
- Second string, you're in.
Coach Bob Ladouceur
is putting in his juniors.
These young men
have big shoes to fill...
...if they plan on continuing
this undefeated streak.
Tayshon Lanear
missed an easy block...
- ...Chris Ryan pays the price.
- Let's hit out there!
Yo, Tayshon.
If it isn't too much to ask, pick it up.
- Chill, man. I'll get you on the next play.
- Don't get it right, don't get a next one.
Hey, easy, little Lad.
Your pops is the coach, not you.
Hut!
Go Ryan! Bring it in!
- Chris Ryan with another great run.
- Attaboy, Chris!
- Huh, 34.
- Yeah.
Four, three, two, one!
De La Salle! De La Salle! De La Salle!
De La Salle pushes their winning streak
to 151 games.

We're number one!
We're number one!
De La Salle's streak
continues.
We're number one!
We're number one!
Streak! Streak! Streak!
Great game, coach.
Half a dozen schools want us
to come for official visits.
- He deserves it, Mr. Kelly.
- Thank you, coach. Great job.
- Hey, T-Gram.
- Great job, Coach Ladouceur.
Hey, this is crazy.
There's my baby.
T- Gram! That's cool.
Get off of me, you big bugger.
- Pops.
- Great job.
- Good stuff. I love you.
- Love you too.
- Hey, coach.
- You're doing it.
You're doing it.
Getting my baby out of Richmond.
- He's a very special young man.
- Thank you.
T- Gram, I'm gonna come see you
every chance I get, right?
I don't want you back
in that Richmond mess.
We coming to see you.
Quitter! Hey.
Hey, boss.
- Morning, coach. Keep the streak alive.
- Morning, Pete. The streak alive, yeah.
Michael, cut it out. All right? Seriously.
You kidding me?
- I'll break that.
- Guys, guys!
Come here! Give me that horn!
Come back here, you little-
Here he is. Good run?

- Hey, Terry.
- Hey, there he is.
Cal State. What do they want?
It's just a coaching offer.
You're throwing it in the trash?
A job offer. We don't get to talk about it?
College coaching. It's not what I do.
But we should at least discuss it, Bob.
- Terry.
- Hey, great pancakes.
Wow, okay.
You, Louis Armstrong, in your room.
Practice.
You, million things to do.
Gotta take the tree down.
I've been up since 5. I'm just like...
Make sure your room is clean,
Michael.
You should at least consider it, Bob.
Great pancakes.
He acts like it doesn't mean anything
to him...
...but he's got a diary,
just counting down the TDs.
- A diary?
- She's a chronic liar.
- A very, very ill young woman.
- Really?
Did I mention delusional?
- You have a diary.
- It's a playbook. At least my earrings...
- ...aren't bigger than my girlfriend's.
- Sure. Okay. That's mean, but true.
Yo, my fellow Spartans.
I gotta mind my etiquette.
You're officially Captain Chris I'm-Gonna-
Break-the-State-TD-Scoring-Record now.
Well, at least the vote was based
on ability...
...not family connections, little Lad.
Like how I'm gonna be starting
wide receiver and not you?
Hey, man. It's cool. We'll see.
Oh, look out. Here comes the luckiest

cornhusker in Contra Costa County.

- Beasie!

- What's up?

- How's it going, fellas?

- Hey, girls.

My big man on the line.

- Gotta bring it for me.

- To the house.

- Okay.

- Okay, OK9)'-

- I'm gonna go freshen up. Wanna come?

- Yes.

- How much fresher can she get?

- Too fresh for you.

Sassy.

Why do they do that? Go together.

- How did you get with her?

- She asked me out.

- She asked him out.

- Tell me you're jumping all over that.

No, we're- We're waiting.

- They're waiting.

- Yeah.

- For what?

- The big day.

We took a purity pledge.

Son. What's the name of the cult
that you're in?

Pleasant Hill Baptist.

That boy's taken one too many shots
to the head.

Sounds like all the other college offers.

- A nice house?

- Yeah.

The kids going to college for free?

What was I thinking?

Look, the players are handpicked,
self-motivated, smart...

...eyes fixed on their bright futures.

They don't need what I do, Bev.

They don't need a coach

who knows the game inside and out?

Who knows how to teach kids

to become honorable, accountable men...

...with self-worth?
Bob, you do it and I've watched you do it
brilliantly since I was 23 years old.
I wouldn't be helping anyone.
I mean, shouldn't it be easier?
Don't you deserve that?
I've seen the schedule
for college coaches.
You think it'd be easier, less grueling?
It would not.
You don't know. How do you know?
I just want you happy and healthy...
...and yeah, home every once in a while,
just playing football with your own kids.
Going for a stupid walk
for hot chocolate...
...maybe more than, you know,
twice a decade.
You- You're gonna get your record,
bro.
Even if Mickey has to steal it.
Forget about your dad.
You're 37 touchdowns away
from breaking a state record.
All right, it's about you.
Us.
- Our year.
- Our year.
- Hold them high, boys. Hold them high.
- T.K.
- What's up, big guy?
- To your year. Chris, you-
You're captain now. My man Danny
over here, he grew up on the team.
Has all the credit,
he doesn't need a title.
Kind of makes me wonder.
About what?
If it's gonna be your year,
or some other team's year.
- K, we haven't lost a game-
- I know, believe me.
I'm just saying, you guys gotta
open your eyes. You ain't ready.

On skills, you have half the team we did.
On attitude, most of y'all got big heads
or just wanna wear the jersey.
So you gotta step up.
You gotta become real leaders.
You have to motivate your players
to get their game even tighter than ours.
Next year is on you.
Take care, boys.
- Peace, man.
- Yeah.
It's time to deal
with the De La Salle problem.
Last year, De La Salle out-scored
league opponents...
".326 t027.
Their average score
against league teams was 47 to 4.
How, Bob? How are we supposed
to compete against a program...
...that pulls in the best players
with the wave of a scholarship?
For the hundredth time...
...De La Salle High's code of conduct
forbids scholarshiping athletes.
Explain to me why
the best wide receiver in my district...
...rides a bus for a solid hour
up to De La Salle.
Our program attracts great athletes,
plain and simple.
No matter how you get your players,
you're stacking your team with talent.
- That's not cheating?
- Let me get this straight.
You wanna penalize
us for building a winning program?
I'm done with this! Nobody wins 151
football games straight without cheating.
We will not play De La Salle
next season.
Great. Done.
We don't wanna play you either.
We'll play our five league games...

...then we'll fill our open slots with
tougher teams from bigger conferences.
Gee, seems like I heard
the 49ers already have a full schedule.
Who's left?
Long Beach Poly.
Eidson, Poly's the number-one
high-school team in Southern California.
Yeah. Isn't it great?
Poly?
- We talked about this.
- Never said you set it up.
Nationally, we're number one.
They're number two.
They've been trying to get us
on their schedule.
They're not afraid of us.
Guys, can't wait to see you play Poly.
Good luck.
You can thank me later.

In Luke 6:

...Luke says,
"Give and it will be given to you.
Good measure, pressed down,
shaken together and running over...
...will be poured into your lap...
...for with the measure you use,
it will be measured to you."
Any idea what Luke is saying here?
Arturo?
You reap what you sow.
Like, whatever you do, good or bad,
comes back to you.
Anyone else think you give to others...
...and the blessing is returned
in equal measure?
Salinas.
I've worked hard to do the right thing,
and I've been blessed.
- How's that?
- Getting to play on the streak team.
You ain't in line to be starting quarterback
on the streak team...

...because you've done the right thing.
It's because you're 6'2"
with a cannon for an arm.
So, Tayshon, what do you believe?
Well, down where I sleep, the dealers
in Richmond make mad money.
My aunt was an ER nurse.
Worked her whole life helping people.
Time came for her to get hers,
they up and fired her...
...six months
before they gotta pay her retirement.
Dog-eat-dog. Take what you need.
They don't care how good you've been.
You sitting around waiting for somebody
to pay you back, you going hungry.
So why does a guy like Luke,
who's a doctor, painter, writer, historian...
...take the time to invent a lie?
It ain't a lie.
Your pops dies, five-0 puts your mom
on trial for it when, oops...
...our bad, the shipyard poisoned him.
Pressure gives her a stroke
and now she ain't got long.
Easy. Everyone knows the story.
So tell me, homey.
You really been that bad
to deserve all that's come your way?
Can I speak to Cam?
Cam.
Yo, Coach Lad.
Yo, Jamal.
Cool, thanks.
Coach.
You know how you like to talk and talk...
- ...and sometimes holler?
- That's right.
And one time,
Cam said you said the S-word.
I remember that time.
Well, here, you gotta be real quiet.
My mom's resting.
Not a peep.

- Hey, coach.
- Cam, look.
Man, that is tight.
Watch Mama, all right?
See, Mama?
How is she?
The nurse say...
...it's just a matter of time.
And that's it.
That's the last of my Mohicans.
You have Jamal.
The boy don't know it yet...
...but he's going down to San Jose,
stay with my cousin.
They should be good to him,
but ain't got no room for me.
I got nobody left.
Well, family isn't just blood relatives.
It's anyone
who loves you unconditionally.
"To Coach Lad...
...I promise to live the rest of my days
by the lessons you taught me.
'Give and it shall be given to you...
...for whatever measure you use, it shall
be measured back to you in equal-"
Why is this happening to me, coach?
What did I do?
I'm trying.
I'm making my perfect effort.
It don't matter. Ain't enough.
What if Tayshon is right?
Maybe God don't see me,
or he don't care...
...because I ain't worth his time.
Don't make no sense, coach.
I'm alone.
I got nobody left.
No, you're not.
You've got Jamal...
...me and 60 brothers.
I'm just gonna nap for 10 more minutes,
then get up.
Don't snore.

I'm not laughing.

What did I ever see in you? Bob?

Bob? Bob?

Bob, Bob, please. Bob? Bob?

Danny!

Bob, what's going on?

Bob? Oh, my God, Bob!

- Danny!

- Yeah, Mom.

Danny!

- Mom, what's wrong?

- Danny, please call 911!

- Oh, my God! Call 911!

- Mom! Morn!

- Dad? Where is the phone? It's not here.

- Danny, tell them it's a seizure.

- Find the phone!

- Where is it?

Oh, my God. Look at me.

Look in my eyes. Look in my eyes.

Oh, my God, you okay?

You okay? Breathe.

- Hey, Amani. Thanks for coming.

- Hey, Amani.

- Oh, one for me. Just- Just one second.

- Cool.

Hey. Who's in there?

Currently paying his respects

to the coach, Maurice Jones Drew.

No way.

Coach, make sure I get you tickets

to come see me, all right?

I want 100 from you.

I still can't believe it.

Coach Lad smoking.

- Mrs. Lad. Good seeing you.

- So great to see you.

- Take care of the big guy for me.

- Okay, I will. Thanks for coming, Maurice.

- Hey, you.

- Hey, Dad.

Don't look so tough now, huh?

Mr. Ladouceur.

Eighty-three percent occlusion

in your PLA descending artery.

We call that the widow-maker.

- You're a very lucky man.

- Yeah.

- So, what happens next?

- Recuperation.

Near-term, I'll be happy

if you're in good condition by April.

That's spring practice.

Not for you.

You've got five stents

and one shot to heal.

Stepping onto a field before summer?

Don't even think about it.

Dad, you're gonna coach me

next season, right?

Danny.

Danny.

Hey, Michael...

...wanna go harass

some more doctors?

Come on.

Danny's just worried about you.

This really scared him.

It's a lie.

What is?

Me. I got caught up in work

and the streak and let it nearly kill me.

I talk character, honesty, perfection...

...commit to each other, your teachers,

your friends, your family.

Was I committed to you?

Was I committed to my children?

I've been a lousy husband

and the worst dad.

Danny's not angry because he isn't

getting the chance to play for you.

He's angry

because he wants a chance to know you.

What do I do now?

Spend as much time with your family

as you do the team.

See you later, babe. Call me tonight.

Hey, T.K. Heads up.

- Over here.
- Who wants it?
- Me.
- All right.
- Me, me, me.
- Right here. Right here.
- What's all this?
- All for you.
This is Coach Little. The rules say
you can't keep any of it yet.
You're getting looks
from other schools.
Peek at what you look like in our gear.
If I'd have had these,
I'd have been All City.
Newest model from Nike.
Mrs. Kelly, maybe you wanna open
that last bubble package.
Hey, what you got, T-Gram?
Diploma.
- With your name on it.
- What?
What? What?
No matter what, four years from now,
when you have your real diploma...
...it will reward you and your family
for the rest of your life.
- Yeah, sure.
- So you've got a lot of offers.
What's it gonna take to get you
to play for Oregon next year?
Say yes.
- Yes.
- Cam Colvin comes with me.
We offered a full ride.
We know his mother passed away,
but haven't heard back.
Done deal. Full ride.
Oh, we did it, man.
Yo, the great black hope.
- Cam here?
- He's in the back.
Y'all come on
and get something to eat now.

- Oh, coz, what's up?

- What's up?

You get a full ride from Oregon
and dodge my calls. That's what's up.

Look, man, I ain't going to Oregon
or any place near you.

I'm going to Miami.

Miami?

- t's best for me.

- Best for you?

Since day one,
we've been doing what's best for us.
You and me, together.

- We were 14.

- We were friends.

Whatever.

Man, get up! I'm talking to you, dog!
Get off me! As smart as you are,
you don't know what you don't know!
You still got Landrin, T-Gram,
you got everybody.

All I got left is Jamal.

I gotta make it to the league
so I can take care of him.

- Cam, I know how hard this has been-

- Don't!

You're just making it harder.

Don't you see?

You see me?

I'm cursed.

Everyone I love-

I can't lose nobody else, man.

T, I gotta let you go, man.

Man, you done lost a lot of folks,

Cam...

...but you didn't lose everybody.

- Man, Why'd you bring me this?

- It's proof.

We dreamed about playing college ball
since we was kids.

We prayed for it.

And now here we are,

damn near grown.

Cam, what you're holding,

that just ain't a jersey, man.
It's an answered prayer.
Look at me, dog.
You and me.
Brothers for life, dog.
Come on.
Brothers for life.
All right, team, bring it in.
Everyone settle down.
Coach Lad is on his way in
to say a few words. Bring it down.
Alumbaugh's pulling the team together.
Okay. Good.
I talked to my doctors...
...and they don't feel that I should
come back to coaching you.
But rather than
drawing this whole thing out...
...I'm just gonna be truthful with you.
I'm not sure when I'll be able to return.
I expect you seniors to step up
and lead this team.
And I expect you guys
to continue to give a perfect effort...
...every game.
Not your typical trumpet number, huh?
No, not typical.
Getting the hang of it?
- Me or Michael?
- You.
Anything else I can help you with?
No. Think you're doing great.
Just remember, I like mine rare.
You got it.
- You want the other half of this?
- Yeah, sure.
I've dropped more passes this summer
than the previous three years combined.
You're not seeing the ball
into your hands.
- You're looking up-field before you catch.
- I know.
I try to stop, but-
What should I do?

You gotta work on that
with Coach Alumbaugh.
I don't need Coach Alumbaugh.
I need you.
My senior season is here, Dad.
My last shot.
Danny, I'm not your coach.
But I wanna spend some time together,
get closer.
- I found a river-rafting outfit-
- River rafting?
Afterwards, we'll win
the father-son three-legged race.
This is perfect. The whole time
I needed a father, I got a coach.
And now I need a coach
and all I've got is a lame dad.
Exercise?
Running again.
- How are my test scores?
- Better than expected.
Your heart has made an unusually strong
recovery, Mr. Ladouceur.
You're free to return
to normal activities.
Coaching?
Keep the stress down, but, yes.
Wow, that's great.
It must be such a relief.
Yeah.
She said I could go back to coaching.
So is that your plan, Bob?
We'll see.
Hey-
What's that?
What?
Smells good.
Me or the sauce?
The sauce.
I was hoping it was me.
Ready, and go.
Hey, butt kicks.
Ready, UP-
You're late.

Yeah, I been busy.
Well, that explains yesterday.
You missed an entire practice.
I got a note from the nurse, little Lad.
How insensitive of us, Chris.
He had a tummy ache.
And you call me that again,
I'll drop you.
Now, that's funny.
Nobody misses practice
without clearing it with the captain.
Well, I ain't nobody.
On JV, man, I played both ways.
Caught 38 passes and five picks.
How much practice do I need?
It's not about
It's about us. This team.
Both of y'all can go ahead
and kiss my-
Push me? Team?
Ain't no team. Truth is, it comes down
to four or five of us bringing our game.
Say what you want, Chris, Danny.
This team thing don't mean nothing now.
- Back off!
- Hey, hold up!
"Team" means everything right now.
Look around. To be successful,
you'll have to scrap for everything.
Wanna be a scrappy team?
You're gonna have to respect each other.
Now, get back to practice.
High kicks.
That's how you do it.
That boy do football and basketball.
Y'all got nothing on him.
Hey, I want you.
I want you, boy.
Where the police at?
Because y'all getting robbed.
He just schooled you, man.
Y'all see it. Come on, let's get it.
- Hey.
- Catch you later.

That's how it's done.
That's how it's done, boy.
So when you headed up to Oregon?
First thing tomorrow, man.
Don't forget about us, homes.
Course not, baby.
Of course not. Come on.
Man, all y'all horrible.
Just straight garbage on the court,
no game.
Have you heard from him?
Boy's got to get up early in the morning.
Okay, Mama.
Yo, Pops, what's up?
- You didn't forget to fill the car, did you?
- No, I just did. Supreme.
All right. Home in 10.
He on his way.
Let me go get his cornbread ready.
Yo, what did you forget?
It's me, coz.
Lamarco, you high, dog?
I lost my ride, man.
Where are you?
- Yo, Lamarco. Come on, man.
- One minute. Let me cop these digits.
- Get them and come on. I gotta get home.
- One minute, coz.
You gonna give me them digits, or what?
You see my ride here.
Lamarco, come on!
I'm coming. I'm gonna call you.
School me, player?
Nah, school you.
Oh, my God!
Call an ambulance, man!
We have an 18-year-old
African-American with gunshot wounds.
Mama, you stay here.
Oh, God.
Jesus Christ. No, no.
Oh, no, no, no! That's my son!
- t's all right.
- No!

Let me go! Let me go!
T.K.!
T.K.! That's my son!
Is that our baby?
Oh, no! Oh, no!
Hold on, help is on the way
God hasn't forgotten you
Be not dismayed
Through the rough times in your life
Everything will be all right
Just hold on
'Cause help is on the way
And without further ado,
Coach Bob Ladouceur.
Thank you, Coach Ladouceur.
Minister.
I remember the first time I saw T.K.
He was that...
...awkward freshman, all arms and legs,
with an infectious smile.
A coach couldn't help
but notice the smooth grace of his...
...athletic ability.
People always ask me
what it's like to never lose.
Today, I am lost.
Lord, have mercy.
It's as if life has taken
more than it gives...
...and I don't know if I can handle it.
Lord, I'm struggling.
I wanna understand why.
- Why Terrance?
- Yes, Lord.
Why now?
If we are to call ourselves Christians,
we cannot ask these questions...
...because to do so is to question
your benevolence, your divine wisdom.
But today I am lost.
Mr. Kelly.
T- Gram.
I can't even imagine your pain
right now.

But you raised the kind of young man
we all strive for.
We ask our players...
...to learn and embrace ideals...
...perfection, commitment...
...compassion, brotherhood, faith.
From the first time T.K. came
across that field, I saw it.
A kid whose grace
wasn't just athletic...
...but genuine in so many ways.
He embodied those ideals.
Yes, Lord.
You never gave up
on anything or anyone.
And I did not teach you.
You taught me.
Thank you...
...because when on some other day
I am lost...
...and struggling to keep my faith,
I need only remember you.
And for reasons we are not privy to,
God wanted T.K. home.
He is with him now.
May God bless you.
Cam.
Doesn't make no sense, coach.
I don't know what I'm supposed to do
anymore.
You stick to the plan.
Go to Oregon.
Mowing the lawn?
What are you doing out here?
Dancing at our wedding.
With your dad.
He grins, looks over.
You were talking with the priest.
I remember, he leans in and said:
"if you didn't know better, which one
puts the collar on every morning?"
The music stops.
The dance is over.
And I'm heading over to rescue you.

And he said something
I still remember.
What's that?
"I hope you won't be too lonely."
Your dad raised you.
He loved you...
...but when he died...
...I think he felt like
he didn't really know you.
Till a minute ago,
I thought that might happen to me too.
I was sitting up, watching you sleep,
and it hit me.
Some people don't know
who they are...
...all that they have.
They just know something's missing.
So I was just sitting out here...
...getting ready to let you go again.
No, still way too slow.
You need to blow off the ball.
Faster step. Strike with intent.
On Friday, we play a football team that's
been preparing for this game for a year.
You're not hitting with intensity,
conditioning with discipline.
Salinas, pull your weight. Come on.
Oh, you're dogging it.
You're dogging it.
- Commitment.
- Bellevue is bigger and stronger than us.
Accountability. Perfect effort.
Finally, love.
This bond is what has led Spartans
to achieve far more than anyone...
...including themselves,
believed they were capable of.
Six, seven.
Without it,
you may continue to win games.
Rep it out, Tayshon. Four more.
But you will have lost the chance
to become Spartans.
Eight's good.

Welcome to Seattle,
where the 2004 season opens...
...with a matchup
between two of the best teams.
Come on!
Let's go, let's go, let's go!
The powerhouse De La Salle Spartans
and their national record...
- ...151-game winning streak...
- Keep the streak alive.
...taking on defending
Washington State champs, Bellevue.
Down, set, hut!
Strong right, lead at two.
Veer, pass, drag. Let's go.
Strong left! Strong left!
- Open back 11. Back 11.
- Down, set, hut!
Rick Salinas
throws a perfect pass...
...connecting with Danny Ladouceur
for a 13-yard gain.
Sixteen mid-line on one. Ready?
Go get them, Beast.
Chris Ryan. This man has the size and
speed to play anywhere in the country.
Red dog! Red dog! Set, hut-hut!
Go, go, go!
Come on, Chris! Come on, Chris!
Come on, Beast! Come on, Beast!
Come on, Beast!
That's it! Yeah!
Chris Ryan, showing off his ability,
breaks a 45-yard run...
...to give De La Salle a 7-to-0 lead.
That's a great run, but our left tackle
needs to seal that backer better.
Ryan has been a scoring machine,
amassing 52 touchdowns...
...in his sophomore and junior seasons.
He is now 36 touchdowns away...
...from breaking
the California career touchdown record.
Twenty-two. Hut, set, hut!

Beasefl

This is like the drill we run every day
at practice!

Shed that block
and get to the ball carrier!

Okay.

They're changing it up.

They're in man to man,
then dropping to cover two.

Why don't you simplify it?

Read the free safety.

Free safety's gonna tell you everything.

What? Someone break one?

Stop him! Stop him!

Get after him!

Jeez!

Bellevue's Taylor King
breaks a 76-yard touchdown.

This Bellevue team
is not afraid of De La Salle.

We may just have a game here.

And yet another completion.

First down, Bellevue.

They're playing exactly like us.

This Wolverine passing attack
is shredding De La Salle.

It's a three-deep and you got beat?

Your responsibility is the quarterback
when they run the option.

Right? We practiced all of this,
come on, now!

You have to break down
to make that stop.

Don't get caught flat-footed.

No, no, no!

Stop him! Stop him!

Oh, God!

Here's something nobody expected.

The Wolverines are controlling the line
of scrimmage against De La Salle.

They're beating us off the ball
on every snap.

- Down.

- Blue 22! Blue 22!

Set.
Go left! Go left!
Hut!
Bellevue scores to give
the Washington State champions...
...a 28-to-7 lead
over powerhouse De La Salle.
We're gonna lose.
Hit Danny on a 12-yard curl in the seam
between the linebacker and the safety.
Down, set, hut!
Danny Ladouceur drops a pass.
His dad will not be happy about that.
Gotta get it to the players.
He's gotta catch it, Bev.
Ready. Set, hut!
Ladouceufs hit
and coughs up the ball!
Gotta hold on to that ball, Danny!
Bellevue recovers. Bellevue recovers.
- I don't care how good you think you are!
- I'm the best receiver on this team.
I ran my route, they attacked, man.
Ran the ball right by you.
- Come on! Let's go, let's go!
- Eight, seven...
...six, five, four...
- Down, set, hut!
- ...three, two, one.
And that's it.
The streak is over! The streak is over!
The longest winning streak
in sports history is now over...
...as the Bellevue Wolverines
have shocked the De La Salle Spartans...
...in perhaps the biggest upset
in high-school football history.
Are you okay? It's okay.
Hey, hey! We don't do that here.
We don't do that.
Reporters, friends, family, strangers.
They're all gonna ask the same thing:
"What happened?"
This is a question

that's gonna follow you.
"How did you lose the streak?"
And every time,
you're gonna answer the truth:
"Bellevue played better than us
and we lost a high-school football game."
That's football.
But it's not you.
Don't let a game define who you are.
Let the way you live your lives do that.
Coach.
I truly believe
that life's most impressionable lessons...
...are ones where something bad
happens to you...
...or something challenging
confronts you.
No one can climb into your head and
hear what that little voice is saying to you.
Is it saying,
"Oh, no, we lost the streak"?
Well, what's it gonna say?
After today, you're gonna find out
a lot about yourselves.
And you know something, we're all
gonna find out what this team is made of.
The effort you put in
during the off-season was commendable.
But it has not translated onto the field.
You've got to decide
what you wanna be.
I get the feeling from you as a team
that you just wanna hop on that throne...
...and place the championship ring
on your finger.
That you're at De La Salle
and deserve that.
For the most part we're inconsistent,
mistake-prone, ragged...
...and not very physical.
That's where we are.
As much as you don't wanna hear it,
that's my assessment.
Do I feel like you can pull this off

and earn the right to that throne?

- Yeah, I do.

- Attaboy, attaboy.

I'm not hoping you play well
against Clayton Valley.

You have to.

You have to play well this week.

Even if you step it up and play
at your ability level, it still won't be easy.

You're gonna have to fight
for victories in those games.

All right, that's it, that's it!

Oh, he's got a seam! Go, go, go!

- Nice work.

- Oh, for-!

Despite a well-played game,
De La Salle comes up short...

...and after two games,
is still winless in this young season.

Bob Ladouceur's gonna have to figure
something out to get this team on track...

...if they plan on making it
to the playoffs this year.

Pick up your heads.

Meet me at the locker room tomorrow.

Eight a.m.

What's up, Alex?

- Miss you. I'm all sweaty.

- It's okay. It was a tough game.

Party is tomorrow, if you wanna go.

Maybe. I don't know. If you do.

- Are you kidding me?

- Dad, please.

You let some punk pull you down
at the two-yard line.

- I scored three touchdowns.

- How many did you promise?

- Mr. Ryan, please.

- Laurie, stop.

Forty-one blast. Run it, now.

- Dad, it's midnight. I'm tired.

- So am I.

- Forty-one blast. Run it, now.

- You run it.

You listen close.
I want that record.
He's not gonna get it for you
with a busted rib.
Now let him go.
Hey, coach. Let's you and me
huddle up for a second, okay?
I don't usually huddle up with parents,
Mick.
You think
this is gonna freak them out?
I certainly hope so.
- Good morning, Carol.
- Hi, Bob.
Nurse Ballard is a friend of mine.
She's in charge of the entire nursing staff.
Today, we will be following her orders.
Coach Lad and I worked at the
Juvenile Detention Center in Richmond.
It was a little longer ago
than I'd rather admit.
So you guys play a tough game.
Anybody ever been injured?
You've never been injured?
It's part of the game. You don't think
about it, you bounce back.
You're very brave.
This is not that.
Here, nobody bounces. Break into three
groups. When you hear your name...
...follow the nurse who called it
to the appropriate unit. Let's go.
Nurse Adams is in charge of the Recovery
Ward, and she will take over from here.
Good afternoon, gentlemen.
Welcome to the VA Recovery Ward.
So here we specialize in transplants...
...amputations and general rehabilitation
for limb recovery.
Our focus here is on full recovery,
body and spirit.
If this is too hard for anybody,
don't come in.
Why would it be?

All our patients
are here for rehabilitation.
Our job is to help them recover
from injuries received during combat.
It's long and difficult, but we're dedicated
to getting them back to functioning lives.

- Hey, Ma)'-

- Hey.

Hello?

I'll be right there.

Hey, would you do me a favor?

Would you finish up?

Thanks.

What are you looking at?

Oh, no, no, I just...

- You just what?

- Nothing.

What's the matter, boy?

Get on. Pace me.

- What?

- You do speak English, right?

Get on, pace me.

What? What did I do? Did I hurt you?

No, I'm just messing with you, man.

I can't feel anything.

Man, I-

Sometimes my legs hurt so bad,

I'd wish I didn't feel anything.

No, you don't.

No, I don't.

- What's wrong with you, boy? You blind?

- My bad, man. I didn't see you.

No, man. I swear I didn't even see you.

Hey, what the-? Hey! Hey, man!

Is that-? Was that pee?

Well, it sure ain't no Gatorade.

Heck, no!

Hey, nurse!

Come on, man!

Come on, Danny.

You gotta speed this up.

All right. Let him catch up, though.

Oh, great. You're a real gentleman.

On, baby.

Stop. Salinas. Quit it.
- Salinas, enough.
- I don't know if it is fast enough.
Show me what you got.
Let's go, Danny.
Show him what you got.
One night we get overrun.
I just curled up, waiting to die.
Till somebody dragged me
into this deserted mosque.
I look at the guy who just saved my butt.
He's just some hillbilly kid from Arkansas.
Hey, at least you got out.
If they could put me back together,
I'd go back today.
For what?
My unit.
Listen, half of them are still over there.
That don't make no sense.
It's simple. Over there,
who you are in the world don't matter.
Fighting for your country don't matter.
What does?
The guy next to you.
It's a brotherhood.
Let's go, boys.
You're running. Come on.
Come on, Danny.
Spartans for life, baby.
Live together. Die together.
Pick it up. Pick it up. Pick it up.
You wanna go faster?
Let's go faster.
Don't let us down, baby. Come on.
Let's go, baby. Come on, Danny. You
got this, dog. Don't stop, baby. Come on.
Do not stop on me. Do not stop.
You're a Spartan. Don't stop, Danny.
I can't. I can't.
- What?
- He's gonna go forever.
No.
Not forever, Danny.
Just a little more than you.

Long Beach Poly.
By every measure, the best high-school
football team in the nation.
Offensive line,
average over 300 pounds.
Their starters. Beaser.
Meet Buster Matthews.
Three hundred and thirty pounds
of pure aggression.
Poly runs 60 percent of their plays
behind him.
And you're gonna face him
the whole game.
But we have speed, right?
Their number-one wideout
clocks a 4.440.
I don't think we have anyone that fast.
Their key player?
Strong safety Darnell Bing.
Just committed to SC and plays
like he's been there three years.
Tayshon. You're a better match
for this guy's speed.
You're gonna start against Poly.
You're going into the most physically
demanding moment of your life.
Drive, drive, drive!
Let me go again! Let me go again!
Way to go, Beaser! Way to go!
All the way to the line.
One tradition...
...that defined this program
is the willingness of our players...
...to share their emotions
at the end of these meetings.
This team hasn't done that.
You guys are still carrying around the
stigma of losing the streak. Forget that.
Forget it.
Open up.
Talk to each other.
My brother was captain
of the 2000 team.
In four years, he never lost one game.

When we blew the streak,
I couldn't look him in the eye.
I'm done with that.
Everything we've been through
was for a reason:
To bring us together.
I love you guys.
I will die on that field
before I let you down.
Collapse. Not die.
It's just a high-school football game.
I've been on this team four years.
I've never once played
in a varsity football game.
I mean, I'm not good enough.
And that's okay, because
the greatest moments of my life...
...were the times I've spent on this team
with you.
I've never been prouder of anything
than being a Spartan.
When we first watched Poly's film,
and I saw Buster Matthews...
...I was scared.
Then I remembered something Coach
Lad told us on my first day of practice.
"Face your fears."
That night I pasted Buster's name and
his number on my ceiling above my bed.
And every night since,
no matter how tired I was...
...I've been saying:
"Buster Matthews, number 79...
...you are mine."
A hundred times every night.
I promise you, GUYS-
We're not gonna lose
because of Buster Matthews.
My old man is insane.
My mom used to keep him in line,
but he wore her out.
Once I made the team,
I thought it'd be better.
He became an animal.

I hated him.
Funny thing is, what-
What saved me
was being on this team.
I used to play as hard as I could because
I thought that would make him happy.
And then I'd be happy.
You guys love me
whether I'm scoring touchdowns or not.
I was missing that,
and you guys gave it to me.
I could never repay you for that.
But come tomorrow...
...I don't play for him.
L Play for you.
Welcome to Veterans Stadium, home
of the Long Beach Poly Jackrabbits...
...where the De La Salle Spartans
of Concord, California...
...have traveled to the Southland for this
matchup of powerhouse programs.
At the end of last season,
these were the top two teams...
...and this was hyped as the game
for the national championship.
Dude, these guys are giants.
Poly is riding high
on 34 straight victories.
De La Salle's 151-game-winning streak
ended two weeks ago...
...and the Spartans come into this game
with an abysmal 0 and 2 record.
This team is struggling
and is nowhere as talented...
...as previous De La Salle teams.
This is the toughest game
on their schedule...
...and the most pivotal
of their season.
If they can't get a win...
...they will go into league play 0 and 3
and with zero momentum.
And here we go.
The first nationally televised

high-school football game is underway.
Ryan takes the opening kickoff.
And it's gonna be hot as the temperature
on the field has reached 95 degrees.
Poly is big and fast. Their offensive and
defensive lines outweigh the Spartans...
...by over 50 pounds per man.
Set, hut!
Chris Ryan gets pounded into the turf.
That's all you got?
Set, hut!
Salinas drops back, and his first pass
of the day goes to Tayshon Lanear.
- Darnell Bing lays a big lick on him.
- Twenty-two power pass throwback.
Get leverage on the corner,
occupy the free safety.
- Chris will be wide open behind you.
- Let's go.
Hut!
There he goes! That's it, that's it!
Go, go, go!
- Touchdown!
- Chris Ryan somersaults...
...into the end zone,
giving the Spartans a six-point lead.
Ryan is a force on the field
and has D-1 size and speed.
That's one, Chris.
I need two more from you.
Chris. Nice run. Dive in the end zone
one more time and I bench you.
We're not a celebrating team.
- Yes, sir.
- Go.
We knew they were quick.
Now we've seen how quick.
Settle them down. Let's show them
real speed. Hit Jones on a one. Go.
Go, red 27, red 27, set!
Hut!
Lawrence launches a bomb
to Derrick Jones...
...and he just can't hang on.

Yeah!

You know why he dropped that? He ain't been dragging truck tires all week.

Yeah!

Beaser! Only second down.

Keep your head in the game.

The heat on the field is brutal, but this Spartan team has come to play. They are banging heads with 300-pound linemen out there and holding their own. What they lack in size...

...they make up in quickness off the ball, determination and toughness.

Reverse!

- No! No!

- That's how you play football!

Poly gets its first score of the game, tying it at 7.

On-field temperatures have soared to 100 degrees.

On the pre-game show, De La Salle's assistant coach Terry Eidson said...

...the heat could be a factor in today's game.

He wasn't kidding.

Down.

Over me! U 52!

Set, hut!

Salinas fires a 29-yard pass to Tayshon Lanear...

...for his first touchdown of the game.

- Yeah! Yeah!

- De La Salle, back in the lead, 13 to 7.

With eight minutes left in the half...

...De La Salle's two-way players are struggling to get back up.

And because Poly has a hundred-man roster, nobody plays both ways.

This could be a huge factor in today's game.

Five-forty down! Fifty-fifty!

- You know why they call me Buster?

- You're stupid enough to let them?

Set, hut!

Nice hit.
Joe Beaser sheds a block
by big Buster Matthews...
...and makes a huge stop
on fourth down.
Split! Split!
Doubles!
Hut!
Stop him! Come on!
Tayshon Lanear reels in
his second touchdown of the game...
...putting the Spartans up 21 to 7.
Lanear has been playing both ways
the first half...
...and is exhausted down
on the De La Salle bench.
Offense, get in there!
Big third down here for Poly
as the clock is under a minute to go.
Did you see that? Did you see that?
Get off of him, man!
Come on, guys! Let's go, let's go!
Fourth down
and after that big play by Chris Ryan...
...Poly is going for a field goal.
From 34 yards out,
the ball is up and good.
Poly cuts the De La Salle Lead
to 21-10.
Eighteen seconds on the clock.
Poly is spread wide.
- Looks like they're kicking away.
- Onside! Ball, ball!
No, it's an onside kick.
The ball is on the turf. There's a pileup.
Officials are diving in, and...
- We got it! We got it! We got it!
- Our ball.
- Poly has the ball.
- You have got to be kidding me.
A perfectly executed onside kick
with 12 seconds left in the half.
When he lines up,
they're gonna throw to him.

Well, I can't go out there
and play for them. Pass! Pass!
Set, hut!
Lawrence finds his big tight end
as the clock expires...
...in one of the best first halves
you will see.
Long Beach Poly has pulled
within four points of De La Salle, 21-17.
You need water?
Move. Open that window, man.
Water!
Where's that ice bucket?
Here, give me that.
Give it to him. All right.
- Take it. Put it on the neck.
- Yeah, yeah. I got it.
All right. Lay him down.
On his back here.
Watch his head, watch his head.
How are you doing?
All right, take it easy.
Terry. Our guys are gassed.
Poly's coming on strong. There's no way
we can start Beaser or Chris...
...or any of our two-way players
in the second half.
Empty the coolers,
check the concession stands.
Grab all the ice they have.
You've got two minutes.
- Right.
- I need your help.
There is no a.c. in here.
Assess the kids' physical condition.
Determine if they can play.
You're gonna handle substitutions.
- Okay, coach.
- Rotate in the second-stringers.
I don't want any kid on that field
that's not fit to play.
I don't care if it costs us the game.
The Spartans are literally dragging
themselves back...

...on what has become
a 100-yard blast furnace...
...as the heat continues
to be a major factor in this game.
Hey, Poly.

Anybody so much as waves
at your moms, you're on suspension.
There is nothing to celebrate, yet.
Finish these guys. They're fading.

- Long Beach!
- Poly!
- Long Beach!
- Poly!
- Long Beach! Long Beach!
- Poly! Poly!

Sanchez, Antoine, Lance. Come on.
Coach Bob Ladouceur
is buying some rest for his starters...
...by sending in his second-stringers.
Down, set, hut!

- Come on, you guys!
 - Here we go, here we go, here we go.
- Hut, hut!

Poly is pounding
on De La Salle's second string.
Can somebody please make a tackle?

- Get in.
- Coming in for De La Salle...
- ...number 25, Arturo Garcia.
- Right here, right here.
- You got it, buddy. Come on.
- Here we go, Spartans.

Set, hut!
Poly executes a perfect screen pass
for an eight-yard gain.

- Hey, hey! What was that?
- Oh, man.

Buster Matthews has crushed
one of the smallest players...
...on the De La Salle team.

Arturo Garcia is listed
at only 147 pounds.
That's gonna cost the Jackrabbits
15 yards, making it third and long.

Oh, man!

Arturo Garcia gets revenge...

...making a huge tackle to keep Poly from making a critical first down.

Get up, Arturo.

Spartans' second string is playing tough against the bigger Poly team...

...and made them scrape for every yard.

The question is, how much longer can Terry Eidson leave these guys in...

- ...before Poly's offense explodes?

- Great!

That was amazing. Amazing.

Poly lines up for a field goal.

High snap.

The kick is up, and...

- ...no good.

- Yeah! Let's go!

See that? That's on you.

If you don't make that stop, they don't miss that field goal.

Poly misses.

The score remains 21-17.

Yo, coach, coach. Yo, take a look at us, man. We ready to go.

- Beaser?

- I'm ready.

- Tayshon?

- I'm ready.

- Ready?

- Let's do it.

Bob. They're ready.

- You sure?

- Absolutely.

- All right, D, 40 cover two and go.

- Let's go, man. Let's go.

It looks like the starters are running back onto the field.

This is no longer about who the bigger, faster, stronger players are.

It's about who plays with more heart.

- Relax. We're good.

- That's right.

- Fifty!
- Draw right.
Set, hut!
Go, go, go!
No! No!
The Jackrabbits have come back...
...and now lead 24-21
over an exhausted De La Salle.
Chris is getting blocked by 280-pound
guards while playing linebacker...
...then being tackled by 300-pounders
when he's running the ball.
- That's how you wrap them up! Good job!
- Get off of him!
- How are they still on their feet?
- Those linebackers are flying out of there.
Run the draw. Go.
Set, hut!
Come on, Chris! Come on, Chris!
Yeah! Go!
Chris Ryan's spectacular run
puts the Spartans back on top, 28-24.
What do you think?
You can't play with the Beast.
You can't play with the Beast.
With two minutes left in what is a classic
high-school football game...
Hut!
Shed these blocks!
These guys are half your size.
Start playing like the number-one team
in this country before you aren't!
Derrick Jones makes
an unbelievable fingertip catch...
...at the Spartans' four-yard line
as 15,000 fans go crazy.

With 1:

Long Beach Poly has a first down...
- ...on De La Salle's four-yard line.
- Hold them.
Blue 32. Blue 37.
Set, hut!
Tayshon Lanear with a monster hit

on first down.

- Textbook!

- This kid has played a terrific game...

- ...in his first start.

- Double-tight rocket special. Go.

Looks like Foster is injured on the play as he limps off the field.

You're in that corner for Foster.

That ball goes up, come down with it.

Okay.

Pulling out all the stops, Lara is sending in sophomore fullback Jason Knight.

At 257 pounds, this kid is bigger than most pro running backs.

Bang them. Do not let them score.

Blue 72. Set, hut!

Pass! Pass! Pass!

Yes!

Wow, what a save.

The tight end was open

in the end zone...

...but Danny Ladouceur comes out of nowhere...

- ...to make a huge play.

- All right.

- Watch the sweep.

- Break for 22.

Set, hut!

Spartan linebacker Davis makes another big stop, but Chris Ryan is down.

This would be a huge loss for De La Salle.

- Let me see. Let me see.

- Get away.

Get out. Get out, come on.

Only way I'm going out of this game is on a stretcher.

- All right, hold on.

- Fourth and goal, folks.

This game has come down to one play.

A critical play, not just for the game, but for the rest of the Spartans' season.

Poly lines up in a Power I.

Green 37. Green 37.

Down.

Forty back. Watch out for 2.

Come on, D. Come on, D.

Yeah! Yeah!

Yeah, Spartans! Let's go!

De La Salle started their season 0 and 2
and lost their win streak...

...but have come back

to stun the football world...

...by knocking off the number-one
rated team in the country.

Folks, I have played football
and gone home exhausted...

...I have broadcast games
and gone home elated...

...but today, I go home inspired.

The De La Salle Spartans
have a new lease on life...

...as they go into league games
in Northern California.

Hey, coach. Coach Ladouceur.

Can I get a comment?

Danny.

- Hey.

- Hey, Dad.

You made a heck of a play
on second down.

You saved the game.

Thanks, coach.

Yeah!

Fantastic. Everyone looks great.
Tonight, the feeling is electric.
The team's rolling up right now,
it couldn't be more exciting.

This is what these people...

...have been waiting for.

Tayshon, come on.

- Beaser, take that sign down.

- Yes, sir.

Come on, buddy.

Don't be shy, chat with us.

Hey, man, take it down.

How does it feel to go from being

the biggest loser to the biggest winner?

- t's great.

- Great?

Dude, you are on your way
to a new streak!

No, no.

Streak!

Our goal is to go out
and give the perfect effort on every play.

Perfect effort? The secret?

But we a team, and Chris Ryan is like-
ls dope, no doubt,
but, look, man, you are a star.

You're the man who's gonna lead DLS
to the next what?

- The next what?

- Streak!

Streak! Streak! Streak!

Another streak, baby!

Yes! One hundred and fifty games!

- Streak! Streak! Streak!

- Let's go.

Streak! Streak! Streak!

Streak! Streak! Streak!

There he goes!

Growing up is tough.

It's not easy.

That's what our program's about.

It ain't about the football.

It ain't about scoring the touchdowns.

It's about moving you...

- ...in a direction that can help you grow up.

- And forgive us for our trespasses...

So when you take your place
out in the world...

...or out in our community,

you can be depended on.

You guys are rock stars!

Great game, Chris!

- Hey, streak 2.0!

- It's a streak, man.

Faculty housing is also subsidized.

What's the offer?

Three hundred fifty thousand.

Three years. Firm.
Performance bonus. Car.
Stanford sees you
as a valuable investment.
Hey, coach. Great game Friday.
Three more touchdowns for the Beast.
Yeah, he played well.
- Whole team did.
- Hey, Chris!
Over here! Hi!
What's up?
Get ready to break that scoring record.
Got a place for the trophy
all picked out.
- Hey, Mickey?
- Yeah?
Did Chris show you the thesis he wrote
for my class on Matthew 23:12?
Amazingly insightful
for someone his age.
Really terrific. You should read it.

Matthew 23:

What's he talking about?
We're on our way to a championship,
a state record.
Those who exalt themselves
will be humbled...
...those who humble themselves
will be exalted.
- Exalted?
- Yeah.
You get 37 touchdowns in the season,
then you'll be exalted.
Do you realize what winning this record
is gonna mean for you? For your life?
Do you have any idea
how people are gonna look at you?
How they're gonna respect you?
Breaking this record,
you'll have something...
...that nobody can ever take from you.
Nobody.
That's why I push you so hard.

It's not about me, it's about you.
You're a salesman, Dad.
I'm a what?
You sell cars.
Don't try and sell me.
This is for you.
I'm just another one of your trophies
you keep in your case.
Like all the medals you've been collecting
to show everybody when they walk in.
I am sick of it.
What are you trying to say?
You don't want this record?
What do you care?
It's always about what you want!
You little punk.
Don't you ever talk to me like that!
While you live in my house,
you will do as I say...
...and you will show me the respect
I deserve! You understand me?
Now you tell me
with that mouth of yours...
...you promise me that you'll go out
and get me that record.
Promise me, Chris.
Okay.
No, Chris.
I wanna hear you say it. Say it!
I promise I'll get you that record, Dad!
Attaboy.
And in local sports, we toss it to Jim,
who's standing by at De La Salle high.
De La Salle Spartans pulled off
one of the greatest comebacks in sports.
After a devastating opening...
...they're poised
to compete for their 13th championship.
Dad, look.
It's about the championship game.
All around me and very excited
are the new generation of Spartans.
- What grade are you guys in?
- Sophomores, play on the JV.

You're riding a nine-game streak.
What do you think about that?
If we go undefeated
in our junior- and senior-year season...
...we're gonna push this streak
to 33 games in a row.
Thirty-three, 33, 33!
Thirty-three games in a row.
- Thirty-three, 33, 33!
- Back to you.
Thirty-three, 33, 33!
Bob?
Hey, you.
Yeah, I couldn't sleep.
Are you seriously considering that?
You know, when we started this
25 years ago...
...there was no Internet.
No high-school football on TV.
Not every kid alive was a celebrity.
It's all changed now.
Maybe the kids have changed too.
All the things I've taught
and believed in.
I don't know
if I'm still doing much good here.
I better get some sleep.
Is this mine?
Who else's would it be?
Of course it's yours.
How do I look?
- Real cool, man. Real cool.
- Thank you.
- Oh, my gosh. Okay, I'm dying, I'm dying.
- Thank you again.
Get dressed. Let's go to the game.
De La Salle staged
a miraculous comeback...
...for an unprecedented 13th shot
at the sectional championship.
On the line for running back Chris Ryan
is a personal quest...
...as he takes the field only three
touchdowns away from breaking a record.

Let us begin.

Our father, who art in heaven...

...hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread
and forgive us our trespasses...

...as we forgive those
who trespass against us.

Lead us not to temptation,
but deliver us from evil. Amen.

- One, two, three.

- Spartans!

This season is ending
with De La Salle in a familiar place:

Competing for their 13th
North Coast section championship.

Danny Ladouceur is slammed
to the turf...

...but somehow holds on
for a De La Salle first down.

- Yeah, Danny boy!

- Huddle up. Get it to Chris. Let's go.

De La Salle is a favorite
to win this game.

And most eyes are on Chris Ryan's
quest for a touchdown scoring record.

Yeah!

Yeah, that's it! That's it! Way to go.

One down, two to go for the record.

Two more touchdowns for the record.

Chris Ryan's historic run
at the state touchdown record...

...continues with another touchdown
as De La Salle takes a 7-0 lead.

Pick him up!

No!

Why didn't you tackle him?

It is a contact sport.

You can hit someone.

It's encouraged even.

Yes!

With just a little over five minutes left...

...in the second quarter in this hard-fought

championship, the score is tied, 7-7.
Beaser, you need
to keep him contained!
Hut, blue one, hut!
Reverse! Reverse!
- Contain the runner!
- Contain the runner!
Amador Valley dips into its bag of tricks,
but Joe Beaser isn't fooled.
The senior defensive end
played that perfectly.
De La Salle is up 14-7
here in the fourth quarter.
The Spartans have the ball
on the Dons' 35-yard line.
Chris Ryan is one touchdown away
from tying the state record.
Danny.
Coach.
Watch the defensive back.
He leans inside a lot.
When he does, beat him to the corner.
Give him a hard fake on your first move.
Finish strong.
Corner.
Thirty-four, 34. Give it to 34.
Chris, Chris, Chris!
Down. Set, hut!
- Yeah!
- Chris Ryan won't be denied.
He scores again to give De La Salle
a two-touchdown advantage.
He is now just one touchdown away
from breaking the state record.
One more for the record.
Set, hut!
Salinas.
This is your final drive as a Spartan.
Coach?
It's yours. You call the plays.
Chris, Chris, Chris!
Strong right, 16 midline on one. Ready?
Chris, Chris, Chris!
Down. Set, hut!

Go, come on!
Come on, block for him!
Give him some help, will you?
Come on!
One more for the record.
Give it to the Beast. Give it to Chris.
Down.
Set, hut!
Booyah, baby!
Hey, good catch, dog.
Come on, come on. There's still time.
Still time. Let's get it to Chris.
Chris, Chris, Chris!
Break that record, son. Let's go.
Here we go, baby,
41 blast into the record books.
Here we go.
It's the last play of the game, dog.
Make me proud.
Time out.
- What are they doing?
- I don't know. It's their drive.
- What are you doing?
- Coach Lad's doing this for me.
- He won't say-
- Dude, what are you talking about?
I just- I don't want my last play
as a Spartan to be about me.
Why not?
You trained to get here, you deserve it.
Look, it's an easy shot.
He never took the easy shot.
Coming back to coach us,
he could have died.
And what have we done for him?
Won a few games? A championship?
No, he's right.
While we've been staring at the dirt,
coach has been saying look up.
It's about time we did.
It's time for us to stand tall.
Victory formation.
No, no, no. You gotta do it.
All right.

Boys, no matter where we go
or what we achieve...
...nothing's gonna come close
to what we have right here.
You're all my brothers.
Spartans for life.
Spartans for life.
Shotgun formation, direct snap,
on me, on one. Ready?
De La Salle is lining up
in shotgun formation...
...but Chris Ryan is quarterback
instead of Salinas.
This is a formation we haven't seen
from De La Salle.
Look for Ryan to run this in for his
record-setting 89th career touchdown.
Maybe this wasn't the best time
to give Salinas free will.
Down. Set, hut!
- There's the snap, and Ryan...
- What the hell was that?
...takes a knee.
Wow, rather than running in
for his 89th career touchdown...
...Chris Ryan instead opts
to take a knee.
What are you doing, coach?
Let him run it. Forty-one blast, come on.
There's still time. Run it! Run it!
- Mickey, Bob's not calling the plays.
- You don't understand football.
It's not about football.
Your husband is costing my son
this record.
My husband's turning your son
into a man.
- You're the only person who doesn't see.
- Down, set, hut!
No, no, no. Come on.
- Ryan takes another knee.
- Time out. Stop that clock, Ladouceur.
Stop that clock and run that play.
Run the play!

Let him get the record! Come on!
What could've been a record-shattering
night has now turned into a tribute...
...to the man who took them here,
Coach Bob Ladouceur.
- Why didn't that boy get his record?
- Because it's not about the record.
- Nine, eight, seven, six...
- it's about the team.
...five, four...
...three, two, one.
Yeah!
For you.
Come here.
DLS, DLS, DLS!
Remember one other thing:
Nobody on this staff expects you
to play perfect tonight.
That's impossible.
But what we do expect...
...and you should expect
from yourself and each other...
...is a perfect effort.
I'll say this about Bob Ladouceur...
...that he's a better coach
than our big-time college coaches...
...and he's a better coach
than our big-time pro coaches.
Everybody stands up as an individual
and says, "My name is DJ Williams.
I commit to 20 carries, 150 yards,
seven tackles and no dropped passes."
Once you say that, you hand the card
to somebody, and you shake hands...
...and they say,
"I hold you to that commitment."
To the Kelly family,
Landrin and Bevelyn.
My heart breaks for your loss,
and I pray for your recovery.
God bless you both...
...and please,
take some solace in the fact...
...that you did a fantastic job.

I told you before,
this is the last thing I'm gonna say.
Growing up is painful.
It's not easy.
But that's what our program is about,
in case you haven't figured it out.
It ain't about the football.
It ain't about scoring touchdowns.
It ain't about the win streak.
It's about moving you in a direction...
...that will assist you
and help you grow up.
So when you can take your place...
...out in the world, and out in society,
and out in our community...
...you can be depended on.
Lad said it. He goes:
"You know,
if, you know, Terry wasn't on my staff...
...I wouldn't be doing this right now."
There's a tremendous bond
of trust and friendship that's there.
They share a commitment
to their players.
No matter what's going on,
the players come first...
...and that means the team.
They will never sacrifice the team
for the individual.
And all they wanna do
is create a community...
...have a common goal,
and play the game.
We're De La Salle.
Some guys wanna call it a curse...
...I say that's the blessing
of De La Salle.
You gotta go out every week
and prove it.
So when you show up tomorrow,
whatever it is that excites you...
...whatever it is that's gonna get you
to bring your A-game and your A-heart...
...you bring it and you do it.

I don't know what that is for you.
What is it that gets your heart swollen.
Hopefully, it's gonna be
that last chapter in the book...
...that you've written for yourself
this year.
And I'd like to say, I'd like to just call
that last chapter just what-
Just what Coach Eidson called it.
Last chapter of the book
isn't the NCS 3A title or San Leandro.
It's "Brotherhood."
That's what it should be titled.