

FOOTBALL (SOCCER) IS MY LIFE

My childhood was spent mostly on a field or court since those places were an escape from what happens in my neighborhood drug violence, gang violence and shoot outs. To some people this would be a movie. But this was real life for some reason I've always had a ball at my feet cause this how my life and problems would go away it was how I would disappear into another world.

This one time I recall when I was ten years old I went to play football at a turf field to escape a shootout (gun violence) I was walking to a train station Kensington and Allegheny known as zombie land due to drug addicts and homeless that sleep there this I would say this is the final border I have to cross I go in the station I see my septa key card as my ticket I scan it to cross the door I wait for the train I see it coming very fast I see the doors open and breathe calmly knowing that I am safe of seeing any bullets or hearing gunshots on the train I always loved the daydream I have on trains for some reason I've always have the dream to leave Philadelphia and move to somewhere in Europe like Spain, France or Italy to play soccer since my favorite players like Lionel Messi, Paolo Maldini, Francesco Totti, Zlatan Ibrahimović play in those countries and made names for themselves I have dream that I will play in F.C. Barcelona professionally my favorite player Messi plays for Barcelona but even if he did not play for Barcelona I still would play for them since that team is my family's favorite of course it is I always hear the story of my Catalan ancestry and that is why my family and I support Barcelona back on the train I am two stops away from reaching the football pitch I finally get to 30 & Market my destination as I walk to Penn Park I see beautiful scenes of Drexel buildings and then I see the University of Pennsylvania logo and the football pitch when I seen the pitch I laced up my football boots and touched field it felt like I was at a stadium so I treated it like one I seen a shot dummy and picked it up and started to shoot like my favorite free kick shooter David Beckham his technique is called "Bend it like Beckham" is when you shoot the ball forty five or fifty yards from the net and it curves upper ninety (top corner) of a football net it took four tries for it to go in the net but the result at the end was well worth it as I start to work on my dribbling there is a group of older players playing pickup football with other older players I see that one of players is looking at me dribble the ball and how my skills with the ball at my feet are amazing you could say I like study the way Messi dribbles close control and lots of touches on the ball. One of the players called me over and asked if I wanted play with them I said yes with excitement as a ten year you don't really deny matches like this. If you score on older players or cross them with a scissor (football move) or nutmeg

another football skill they feel embarrassed since it was done to them by a younger player as I stay compose in defense I see one player dribbling up to me so I proceed to start to playing defense on him I notice where he trying to go with the ball so go in that direction and slide tackle him and steal the ball doing that I remember that was one of the things I seen Paolo Maldini do in a "UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE" match but back to myself now I have to worry how I am going to score since that is what the game of football is mostly about right so I start dribbling I encounter defenders the skills I want to do are mostly from Brazilian players like Pelé Ronaldinho, Kaká and Neymar Jr they have skills that are to die as a football player or football fan so as I decide on that which was zig zags , elastico , scissors and stepovers when I beated one of the defenders on me with a elastico since it is quick and simple for me. The next defender I beat with "Cruyff Turn" a move created by Johan Cruyff a well known Dutch football player and football club manager. Lastly the last defender I beat with a "Maradona" a move created by the best Diego Maradona "EL PIBE DE ORO" or to many Argetinian people "D10S". After I see I defeated all the defenders I see the goal but for I can earn that goal I have another player to beat that is the goalkeeper I am five yards from the goal so I decide to do favorite type of finish or shot another thought popped up in my head let me finish like the greatest of all time (goat) Lionel Messi outside touch with my left foot and shoot with left upper ninety since I seen Messi do this in "THE CLASICO" (F.C. Barcelona Vs Real Madrid) this match is the ultimate rivalry in La Liga (Spain Football League) due to history with Barcelona being a Catalan independent team and wanting independence while Real Madrid is more of the Monarchy of Spain team hence the name Real Madrid real in this context means royal in Spanish. Again back to me I shoot the ball like Messi as I see it travel in the air like a airplane going to Camp Nou (F.C. Barcelona Stadium) I see what every football player likes when they shoot a ball the goalkeeper going the opposite direction the ball is going to I see the ball go in the net upper ninety like I wanted to I celebrate like Messi but you see me and Messi similar why we celebrate like he does it for his GrandMother who passed away and I do it for my GrandFather who passed away while he was on earth he only seen me play once since he lived in Dominican Republic and I live in Philadelphia so I only use to see him once or twice a year every I seen him he would give me wise advice and motivate me to do more in football. The celebration is do the sign of the cross and point your two fingers to the sky and look up at their spirit. Every time I do it I feel the excitement of my Grandfather or "Papa" in the sky. So back to the goal I hear one of the players say "Que crack ese niño" it means in Spanish that means that kid is amazing since I am Afro-Latino and Spanish was my first language I ask where he is from In Spanish he told he is from Barcelona and I was amazed myself someone from Spain said that about my football skills we stopped playing and start conversing about F.C. Barcelona and Messi and the football scene in Barcelona and how compared to America Spain is better I said I agree with him since football is not that popular here in America I tell him it is so unpopular I have to travel thirty minutes on a train he said "Madre Mia" which means like oh

my god he said in Barcelona there is a football court or pitch anywhere and very accessible thinking in my head I said that's why I can't wait to go to Barcelona he said he has to go we got each others social media info and said a common good bye in Spanish "Chao y que dios te bendiga" which means goodbye and god bless you .To end this memoir on a good and positive I say football is my life because I am learning about life with a ball at my feet and saved me from cross fire in my neighborhood due to gun violence help me not hang around a bad crowd and not becoming a drug dealer or doing drugs.Or even worse getting inside of juvenile detention center since most of my classmates in middle school were once in a place like that.