

## **When The Game Stands Tall**

**By: Quincy Sullivan**

### **Derek:**

Derek is the youngest of 3 siblings with his others being TJ and JJ. All 3 of the siblings just finished their college football careers waiting to be drafted to the national football league. When the Arizona Cardinals were on the clock, Derek got a phone call. He started smiling and mouthing to everybody

“It’s the cardinals they’re going to draft me,” Everybody was shouting in excitement, happy for him in all. He tells everybody to be quiet as the Arizona Cardinals were making their pick. The Commissioner of the NFL says “With the 6th Pick of the 2022 NFL Draft, The Arizona Cardinals Select Derek Jackson, Tight end Oklahoma.” He starts to tear up in happiness knowing that this was his dream since the day he was born. He has been through a couple of leg and arm surgeries but that has not held him back from achieving his dreams. He was really happy for this opportunity so now it’s time for his other brothers to get drafted as well.

### **TJ:**

TJ was the middle child of the kids. He is a football player along with his brothers but he was the better one out of the 3. He was arguably the best college football player of all time. That's how good he was. The same night Derek had got drafted TJ and his other brother. TJ was an outside linebacker from the reigning college football champions the Alabama Crimson tide. When the Pittsburgh Steelers were on the clock, TJ was getting a phone call from a random number as well. When he answered the phone he heard the Steelers coach say

“This is Mike Tomlin from the Pittsburgh Steelers we’re about to draft you Congratulations,” being a Pittsburgh Steeler has been TJs dream because that has been his favorite team ever since he has been able to watch football. He was finally able to play with his hero growing up Ben Rothlesburger. Him and his family were celebrating his big accomplishment.

JJ:

JJ was the final brother waiting to get drafted but that wasn't really surprising because he wasn't particularly the best football player in the family. He was still good and put up some pretty good numbers in the CFB(college football league). It was just his health that everyone was concerned about. JJ has been through too many injuries that made everyone think and worry. He has been through 7 injuries in his 21 years of life. JJ was worrying if he was gonna get drafted or not until he got a call from the Philadelphia Eagles saying that they were going to draft him if he's still on the board. By the time the Philadelphia Eagles were on the clock they kept their word and they were saying

"With the 128th pick in the NFL Draft The Philadelphia Eagles selected JJ Jackson, Defensive End, Georgia Tech," as soon as they announced JJ shouted

"Lets GOOOOOO IMA PHILADELPHIA EAGLE!" very loudly. Everyone could tell that he wanted to be an eagle because that's all he talked about. He loved the city of Philadelphia with his whole heart and always wanted to live or play there.

Derek:

Derek was excited to start his career as a Arizona Cardinal. Everyone on the team welcomed him warmly and gave him gifts, so he knew he was going to love this team. He was very down that he wasn't on the same teams with his brothers but he knew sometime down the road he was going to be on the same team with them. His first practice with the team went very well. He is trying his hardest to earn the starting spot on the team. He knows that his coaches were very hard and heavy on competing for a starting spot for everybody so Derek wanted to make sure nobody could come close to the starting spot that he wanted. He has put in work day in and day out working out and training for football.

TJ:

TJ's first few weeks with the Pittsburgh Steelers have been alright. He's just getting used to the weather because in Alabama it wasn't as cold as Pittsburgh. He has been putting in some work as well. He has been training with Former NFL Legends and they see the improvement. He was thinking about how cool it would be to play with his brother like they have dreamed of since they were little kids. He was wondering if he should try and get in touch with the team's general manager. He wasn't going to let that affect his goal on getting started in the first game of the season. When he was at practice he heard someone call "TJ Come here" . It was his coach. The coach wanted to congratulate TJ for winning the starting spot and being the best player on the defense during training camp and he can't wait to see what he does during the regular season. TJ was ecstatic about that he texted his brothers saying "Guys guess what" they replied with "what happened" TJ says "I GOT THE STARTING SPOT AND COACH SAID I WAS THE BEST DEFENSIVE PLAYER ON THE TEAM DURING TRAINING CAMP". JJ and Derek sends TJ a voice message saying "Yessirrr We're proud of you and we're proud of the man you've become we expect big things coming from you this season".

JJ:

JJ's start of the season didn't really start off like his brothers. JJ wasn't really progressing; it just looked like he was regressing. He was doing really poorly. A lot has been on JJ's mind because he has been suffering from depression ever since he was a little kid so that has kinda held him back a little bit. He's been trying to work on trying to fight through it. When he was a little kid he and his brothers were raised around alcoholics and they traumatized him when one of them passed away right in front of him. Nobody knows that he's going through anything because they don't want anyone to worry.

## 2 Years Later:

Derek:

Derek is currently the best player on his team and the best Tight end in the league. He is currently against the Dallas Cowboys and he has 8 receptions (catches) for 256 yards and 2 touchdowns in the first quarter. He was running to the end zone then all of a sudden he felt a tear in his leg. He has just torn his ACL. He can't feel anything in his leg, he can't even move it anymore. He's crying and yelling "WHYYYYYYYY, WHY ME". He gets driven to the hospital in an ambulance and he is upset and crying. When he gets to the hospital the doctors look at his X-Ray and say, "it looks like you might not be able to play football ever again. He was worrying and overthinking about him not being able to do his dream, not being able to play football anymore. TJ and JJ get the text and call him immediately. They are crying seeing their brother hurt and in pain.

## TJ:

The Coaches forced TJ to play the game this week even with what he's going through with his brother's health. He was very frustrated with the team for having him play under these conditions. He did not play well that game because he had his brother's injury on his mind. The injury impacted his performance for the next couple of weeks. He made it known to everybody that he wasn't happy with the team and that he was requesting a trade somewhere else. A couple days later a few teams have shown interest in TJ one being The Philadelphia Eagles the team his older brother JJ plays for. TJ told the general manager that he thinks the Eagles are the best team for him and to make the trade to move him over there. TJ's agent calls him saying "The trade has gone through and you're officially a Philadelphia Eagle." JJ proceeds to call him and he says "This is what we wanted ever since we were little kids. We've always wanted to play together on the same team, on the same field. Let's do this together. For Derek who probably can't play ever again." That motivates TJ and he starts to think that for now on, everything he does in the league is for Derek.



**JJ:**

After TJ comes to Philadelphia he introduces him to his teammates on the eagles. The first day at practice TJ and JJ looked unstoppable together. They knew that this would be a good next couple of years together because they were good together and highly motivated. A few months later TJ, JJ and the rest of the Philadelphia Eagles are in the super bowl playing the buffalo bills and they're down 27-24 with 1 minute left. JJ causes a game winning fumble for touchdown to have them win the game 31-27. JJ ended up winning the Super bowl MVP and all he said was "This is for you Derek, I won this because of you." It looks like Derek getting hurt gave them even more motivation to win the super bowl for him.

**The End...(or is it)**

# Authors Statement

My name is Quincy Sullivan. I am the author of this story and I hoped you enjoyed it as much as I did writing it. This story was showing how family impacts each other. As you could see Derek's injury caused TJ and JJ to play better because everything they wanted to do was for him and to make him proud. This story also shows that family means everything to most people and people can't really get far without the people they need and love in life. The Perspective I did was of TJ, Derek and JJ and their point of views with their own team and how they feel about everything going on. The Dialogue shows how the characters feel with their emotion and just how they are as a person. The Snapshot of the story would be when Derek had got injured because that was a really sad and down part of the story and for me i had to slow it down a little to show it dramatically. The Injury also shows dramatic irony because the way it was wrote was dramatic but also crazy at the same time