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James woke up on another peaceful day in the Eagles country. He rose to start his morning routine. As he was making breakfast, a new news story aired on the television. *Eagles game pushed to Monday due to team sickness*. A strange feeling rose in the air as James went about his day. Everyone seemed a bit on edge. James assumed that due to the lack of a Sunday bout between the Eagles and the Cowboys, the nation was feeling a lack of spirit. After all, they rally behind their team to unify all of the citizens. As he went to check his phone he saw no new posts from the Quarterback or any of his favorite players. James began to grow upset at the lack of news on the upcoming battle between nations.

As he left his house to get on his way to work he felt a cool breeze. He recognized the transition from summer to fall, the transition into football season. James continued his walk down the same street that he took every day. He noticed that a lot of people look different. Something was wrong. No one had a jersey on. James realized that he was one of few people wearing or showing any national pride. James took pride in his team, his country, and what it stands for. James starts thinking back to the great division.

He remembers the country lines being drawn. People being divided into these nations fueled by sports and rivalries. James remembers a time when the United States were...united. This was before the leagues rose up against the government and turned people against each other based solely on sports. This made James think a lot about his family. Divided along national lines. He hasn't spoken to some aunts, uncles and cousins in years. These are people who he used to love and be so close with. His mother is the person who he loved the most. She now lives in the Cowboys nation. James really misses their relationship. He keeps a picture of her on his

nightstand to remind him of all of the good things that they went through together. Next to the picture he keeps his dad's super bowl ring. His dad was given the ring while he was enlisted in the Cowboys nation army when they won the super bowl.

James walks into work. As he sits down he can't get his mind off of his mom. *What am I doing? I'm losing my mother all based on politics. This team vs that team, my nation vs yours. What is wrong with this stupid system?* James's face grows bright red with frustration. He realizes, *I am going to be the one who has to fix all of this.* He realizes that the system has him caught in a loop. The same routine, the same people. With no purpose.

As he walks home he starts thinking more about how he can start to move back to the way that he and his family used to be. James thinks about memories and all of the fun times that he had with his family over the years. James remembers the parties, the food, the wings...his mom loves wings. He grabs his phone to invite his mom and the rest of his family over for a super bowl party. Hesitating before he sends the text. He ponders sending the text on his way home. When he gets home he turns on the tv and reads the headlines. *Eagles game rescheduled for Sunday night.* James began to think, *This is my opportunity. Maybe they would want to come over.* He glanced over at the picture of his mom. Flashbacks from when they lived together. His mind wandered over to his dad's ring. What if the Cowboys win? All hell is going to break loose.

As he continued to think about the idea, the news on the tv started to change. "A new story tonight as the Cowboys nation begins their long awaited invasion of Eagles territory." Said the news anchor. "This news comes 3 days before the rivalry game." James looked up at the images of war torn countryside. He recognized some of those houses. They were in the area where he grew up. His mind started to wander. The Cowboys had been on a power trip for years. Taking territory from each nation on their way to Philadelphia leaving just the capital cities

untouched. As they bordered up on Eagles territory the people of the Eagles nation had been restless ever since, but now the fight was on. James began to worry that the fight may reach Philadelphia before the big game. He worried that he would have to cancel the party or maybe even fight in the war himself. His eyes glanced over to the ring. He started thinking about what his dad may have gone through. The more he thought about it the more restless he started to grow. *I may as well send the text I've got nothing to lose at this point*, he thought. As he looked at the send button all of the thoughts went back through his head. "Bloop" it was done. As he started to wind down for the day James started to worry about the invasion. *Will the war get here? How long will it take? Am I gonna have to fight?* James decides that he is going to do his best to make the party enjoyable and leave the war and politics out of it.

The next day James wakes up in a cold sweat. He couldn't stop thinking about what his mom would think. As he looked at his phone, he saw no messages from any family members. He begins to worry. He starts to worry about the war and if his family is involved at all. He sees on the news images of really violent battles taking out houses and buildings. Yet still no news from the president of the Eagles nation. Suddenly he receives a text from his cousin. *I am down for a party, what time?* James quickly replied out of excitement. *"The game starts at one...so noon sound good?"* James's face lit up with excitement. He was still holding out hope that the rest of his family would show up. "I would love to join you all as long as politics are left out of it." Said the next text from James's brother. "I'm in." Said his aunt. Finally the text James was waiting for came through. "I will join you all only if politics are left out." Said his mom. James' face grew bright red. This was the most excited he's ever been. He immediately dropped everything he was doing and began to prepare. He set up the living room to accommodate his family. He went out

to the store to get supplies to make food for the party. He made sure to get balloons in the color of each team. James was ready.

James wakes up bright and early in the morning realizing it's Sunday. He began to get ready and make sure everything was in the right place. When he looked on his phone he saw that all of his family members had texted that they were on the road driving to Philadelphia. James began to worry that they could get caught up in a military checkpoint trying to get out of the Cowboys nation. He had seen these checkpoints on the news but didn't know where they were. As the hours passed people began to text "1 hour away" "30 minutes away" James could feel his heart beating. He hadn't seen his family in years.

James heard a knock at the door. He was sure that it was his family arriving. As he opened the door a tall man in a military uniform appeared. James grew quiet. "Hello sir, would you like to enlist in the armed forces?" Said the man. "No, I'm not strong enough to fight, and I don't even know what's going on in the war right now." Said James. "The Cowboy forces are advancing on Philadelphia as we speak in anticipation of the big game. Their invasion is proving more successful than we thought. We need more troops to fight." Said the man. "I have no weapons and no fighting experience sir. I'm not fit to fight." Said James. The man quietly left with a look of disappointment on his face.

As he was leaving a car pulled into James's driveway. His mom, dad, uncle and cousins all got out of the car. James was elated. "You made it." Shouted James. "How are ya." Said his cousin. James could tell that everyone was happy except his mother. "Come on guys I've got food, drinks and everything. I think the game is about to start." Said James. As they all went and got settled in, the game began. The Eagles took an early lead. James could tell that his mom was becoming more unhappy by the minute. "What's wrong mom?" Said James. "I just don't like all

of the politics and fighting,” said his mother. “Me either ma, that's why I invited everyone over. We haven't talked in years and I miss when we were all able to coexist without all of this football politics drama stuff.” As he said that an emergency broadcast came on tv “Attention all citizens of the Eagles nation.” Said the reporter “The Cowboys front lines have advanced almost all the way to philadelphia. Prepare to evacuate or fight to keep the city under our control.” Said the reporter. As he said that James and company could hear booming noises coming from the south. “I don't know what to do.” Said James “We don't have time to evacuate if we can hear the fighting.” His cousin replied “We can either hunker down here or fight.” “None of us are fit to fight.” Said James's father. James replied “Well then we have to get to the basement and just hide there.” As they all rushed to the basement they could hear the noises getting louder and louder until finally one big KABOOM.

Everything was flattened in seconds. Amidst the rubble was a shiny ring and a broken glass picture frame. The Cowboys had launched a missile that hit Philadelphia and everyone in the city. All of it. Lost in seconds. The debris covered everything. Nothing moved. An entire city now lifeless and conquered.