

GIANTS STAND TALL

Written by

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EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM - FIELD - DAY

NOAH DEANTONIO, 17, weighted down in his shoulder pads and helmet, takes a deep breath as he holds the football in hand. COACH ANDERSON, 52, BLOWS the whistle.

COACH ANDERSON  
What are you waiting for? When I  
blow the whistle, that means go!

Noah runs forward towards the end zone with several players holding pads on each side of him. He breaks through the first set of pads and then gets knocked back on the second.

COACH ANDERSON (CONT'D)  
I want to see more intensity,  
DeAntonio.

NOAH  
I got this, Coach.

He runs the drill again, gets shoved to the turf. NICHOLAS, 47, stands on the sideline, shakes his head.

NICHOLAS  
Pull him out, Coach. He isn't  
strong enough for this.

NOAH  
Don't listen to him. I said I got  
this.

Nicholas leaves. Noah runs towards the football pads with full momentum. He plows through the line, and reaches the end zone.

COACH ANDERSON  
That's what I'm talking about!  
Great job, DeAntonio.

NOAH  
Thank you, Coach Anderson.

COACH ANDERSON  
Now, go clean up all the cones and  
meet me in my office in ten.

NOAH  
Yes, sir.

The HAWKS FOOTBALL TEAM, picks up the practice equipment and leaves. Noah runs around the perimeter of the field, and picks up the cones.

EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM - PARKING LOT - DAY

Noah stands in the parking lot with air pods in his ears as CARRIE, 39, pulls up in an old beater of a car. He walks up to the car door and throws his bags in the trunk.

CARRIE  
How was practice, dear?

NOAH  
It was great, until Dad opened his big mouth.

CARRIE  
Don't mind him, he can be bitter at times.

NOAH  
Right. Let's just hope I make the all-pro team for the championship game.

Noah hops in the passenger seat, and they drive off.

INT./EXT. CAR - LINCOLN DRIVE - DAY

Carrie taps Noah on his shoulder to get his attention. He pulls the headphones out from his ears.

NOAH  
You're killing my vibe, Mom.

CARRIE  
Oh, I'm so sorry to kill your vibe. What do you think Coach Anderson will say?

NOAH  
Honestly, I have no clue, I pray that Dad didn't ruin my chances.

CARRIE  
Believe in yourself as I always have. Worry about you, no one else.

NOAH  
Thanks, Mom.

They pull up in front of a dome-shaped office building. Carrie slams on the brakes as it startles Noah.

CARRIE  
Let me know how everything goes.

NOAH  
Jeez, Mom, you could've at least  
given me a warning.

CARRIE  
You'll do fine. Knock em dead.

Noah exits the car and walks up to the building. Carrie pulls off.

INT. ATHELETIC BUILDING - DAY

Noah walks through the double doors. Coach Anderson sits at his desk, and swings his chair around.

COACH ANDERSON  
Welcome, good sir. Thanks for  
coming in.

NOAH  
Of course, Coach.

Noah sits down in the chair across from Coach Anderson. He clenches his right leg as he taps his foot on the floor.

COACH ANDERSON  
I'm not going to hold you up. I'd  
like to give you the starting  
position for tonight's game.

NOAH  
Are you serious?

COACH ANDERSON  
You bet. I've seen the fire in your  
eyes for the game. A passion I once  
saw in myself a long time ago.

NOAH  
Thank you, Coach. You will not  
regret this decision.

COACH ANDERSON  
I hope not. Looking forward to  
having you in the line-up.

They both shake hands. Noah walks out with a huge smile on his face.

EXT. ATHELETIC BUILDING - DAY

Noah sits on the bench as his phone VIBRATES in his pocket.

A text from Nicholas reads:

"Son, we have important matters to discuss about your future."

Noah puts his phone back into his pocket and stares off into the distance.

INT. DEANTONIO RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Noah enters as Nicholas sits on the couch with a letter in hand. Noah walks towards the stairs. Nicholas grabs Noah by the arm.

NICHOLAS

Do you know what I have in my hand?

NOAH

A letter, obviously.

NICHOLAS

No need to get smart with me.

Nicholas pulls the letter from the envelope.

NICHOLAS (CONT'D)

This is in regards to your academic meeting.

NOAH

I have other plans tonight.

NICHOLAS

You really need to start taking things more seriously. Football isn't the answer!

NOAH

I'm not you, Dad. Can't you be happy for me?

Carrie enters, and places her keys on the table. Noah storms out.

CARRIE

Real smooth.

NICHOLAS

I don't want our son going down the same path I did.

CARRIE

How would you know where he ends,  
if you don't let him make his own  
choices? He's got to learn from his  
own mistakes.

Carrie grabs the keys from off the table and walks towards  
the door. She exits, and SLAMS the door shut behind her.

INT. DEANTONIO RESIDENCE - GARAGE - DAY

Noah curls into the corner. He throws a glass bottle against  
the wall and it SHATTERS. Carrie enters, and places her arm  
around his shoulder.

CARRIE

Your father only wants what he  
thinks is best for you.

NOAH

I know what I want, Mom! I've  
worked hard up to this point.

CARRIE

Of course, my dear. He will come  
around, eventually.

Carrie reaches in her purse, and pulls out an old photo of  
Nicholas dressed in a football uniform. Noah reaches for the  
photo, confused.

NOAH

What is this? Dad played football?

CARRIE

Yes, he did. He stopped playing to  
pursue his field of engineering.

NOAH

Is that why he's been hard on me  
all this time?

CARRIE

He loved the game just as much as  
you do now. Your father's heart is  
in the right place.

Noah continues to gaze upon the photo. Carrie gets up, and  
walks towards the door.

CARRIE (CONT'D)  
Regardless of what he thinks, you  
need to do what you feel is right  
in your heart.

NOAH  
I really appreciate it, Mom.

CARRIE  
That's what I'm here for.

Carrie leaves. Noah places the photo into his pocket.

LATER THAT NIGHT

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

Noah walks from around the corner dressed in his football  
uniform. He stomps his cleats into the ground to pump himself  
up. NATHAN, 18, high school quarterback, walks over.

NATHAN  
You ready?

NOAH  
As ready as I'll ever be. Let's get  
this W.

Coach Anderson enters with his clipboard in hand.

COACH ANDERSON  
The time has finally come. Let's  
work together as a family.

Coach Anderson WHISTLES to get Noah's attention. Noah walks  
over.

COACH ANDERSON (CONT'D)  
Listen, I don't know how to tell  
you this, but your father called.  
He pulled you out of the game.

NOAH  
But, why?

COACH ANDERSON  
I'm sorry, I really wish there was  
something I could do. It's his  
call.

NOAH  
I've been training so hard for  
this.

COACH ANDERSON  
This is out of my reach.

Noah clenches his helmet, and throws it across the room. He  
BURSTS through the double doors.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Noah weeps as he slides down onto the floor. Nicholas BARGES  
through the front door.

NOAH  
Why must you continue ruining my  
life?

NICHOLAS  
You have to start making smarter  
choices for yourself.

NOAH  
What? Like you did?

NICHOLAS  
I take it, your mother showed you  
an old picture of me.

Noah pulls out the photo from inside his shoulder pads. He  
throws it at Nicholas.

NICHOLAS (CONT'D)  
I don't want you to make the same  
mistakes I did.

NOAH  
How would you know?

NICHOLAS  
Believe me, I know. I went through  
the same exact thing you did.

NOAH  
You assume I'll fail just like you  
did!

NICHOLAS  
No, Son. I don't want you to  
embarrass yourself.



Nicholas sits down on the bench. Noah stands with his arms crossed.

NICHOLAS (CONT'D)  
To play football takes more than  
heart and dedication.

NOAH  
I have the passion and skill.

NICHOLAS  
I thought the same thing as you  
back in the day. You have to be  
realistic.

Noah sits down next to Nicholas. He laces up his cleats.

NOAH  
You have to at least let me try.  
Without failure, how will I learn?

NICHOLAS  
How about I'll reconsider, and let  
you play as long as you continue to  
focus on your studies?

NOAH  
You have my word, Dad.

Nicholas and Noah stand from the bench. Noah reaches out and places his arm around Nicholas. They hug.

MOMENTS LATER

EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM - NIGHT

Lights beam down on the field. The scoreboard with only one minute left. Noah charges through the tunnel. The CROWD, cheers as it ECHOS through the stadium. Nicholas slides next to Carrie in the stands.

COACH ANDERSON  
Took you long enough, DeAntonio.

NOAH  
Let's just say I had to take care  
of a few things.

Coach Anderson raises his hands to call his final timeout. He pulls out his clipboard, and plans out the next play. Coach Anderson grabs Noah by the face mask.

COACH ANDERSON

Get in there and show the world  
what you can do.

NOAH

Yes, Coach!

Noah lines up in the slot position, and goes into motion. Nathan hikes the ball on the second count, and throws a pass to Noah in the flat. He catches it and makes his way up field.

COACH ANDERSON

Go! You got this.

Noah accelerates through the first tackle near the fifty yard line. He spins as two defenders fall to the turf. Two teammates lead in front with a block. The ANNOUNCER, hypes up the Crowd.

ANNOUNCER

DeAntonio has the break away! He's  
at the forty, thirty, twenty, ten!

Noah leaps over the last defender, and spins in the air. His feet cross the plane, and makes his way into the end zone.

ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

Touchdown, Hawks!

CROWD

Noah! Noah!

Coach Anderson looks up to the scoreboard as thirty seconds remaining, down by two. He calls out special teams to set up for an onside kick.

COACH ANDERSON

DeAntonio, get in there and recover  
the ball.

NOAH

It's as good as mine, Coach.

The kick is underway as it takes a high bounce. A large pile is on top of the football. The referees clear the pile. Noah reaches the ball in the air.

ANNOUNCER

The Hawks have recovered the onside  
kick!

Coach Anderson draws up one final play on his clipboard. He calls Noah over.

COACH ANDERSON  
This is it. All or nothing.

NOAH  
We can win this, Coach.

Noah lines up on the outside. Nathan hikes the ball as Noah propels upfield. He catches the ball, and is forced out of bounds at the thirty yard line.

COACH ANDERSON  
Field goal unit!

The Hawks line up for one final play. The kicker launches the ball into the hair.

ANNOUNCER  
This could seal it folks!

The ball hits the upright and bounces off.

ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)  
That's the game. Hawks fall short to the Rams, twenty-five to twenty-three.

Noah kneels in the turf with his head in his hands. Nicholas, and Carrie walk over to him.

NOAH  
I couldn't do it. I failed.

NICHOLAS  
No, Son. You have made us both very proud.

CARRIE  
You gave it your all.

They walk off the field together, hand in hand.

SCREEN GOES TO BLACK

NICHOLAS (O.S.)  
Giants stand tall.