

“To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Matthew Jeffers. I am a senior at Towson University majoring in acting, and I have been a die hard Ravens fan since Baltimore welcomed you with open arms in 1996. As you, the Ravens, continue to battle through tough losses and heated criticism, allow me to share some thoughts with you. You are in uncharted territory. You (and us) have had the gift and pleasure of consistently winning for years, and frankly, you have spoiled us. You have maintained a level of professionalism and inspiring play for so long that we have lost touch with what it feels like to have our feet in the mud. And I'm sure it is an even worse feeling for you, the ones on the field, than it is for the ones in the stands. And let me let you in on a little secret. Life doesn't care about streaks. It does not care about 3 game losing streaks, or 4 game win streaks. It does not care if you WANT to win, if you NEED to win. At the end of the day, life is simply unfair. I am short statured. I am 21 years old, but stand only at 4'2. Over my lifetime I have endured 20 surgeries, some small, others life-threatening. I have had a tracheotomy, I have had blood transfusions, I have spent summers in a hip spica cast, and I've had to learn how to walk again. My last surgery was in 2003, and I acquired the naive mindset that I was free from the bondage of heartache. I had the mindset that I had "done my time". And then, in February of 2011, my mother was diagnosed with a stage IV brain tumor. As I write this, the doctors at JHU are determining whether or not the next step should be Hospice care. So you tell me, is life fair? When you give every ounce you have, and all you have to show for it is a loss in overtime, is that fair? When families in Newtown CT go into their child's room, but have no child to kiss goodnight, is that fair? We live in a painful world, no doubt about it. But let me tell you this: The ONLY disability in life is a bad attitude. The ONLY disability in life.....is a bad attitude. A positive attitude is the most powerful combatant to life's misfortune. The will to fight, to survive, to win. It is the secret weapon I use, and I think I'm turning out ok. When you play on Sunday, let it not be to win a division, or to silence the critics, or prove somebody wrong, or end a losing skid. Let it be a dedication to that simple yet powerful notion that life can be conquered with the right outlook. And I promise you, I promise you that everything else will take care of itself. Go get 'em on Sunday. I wish you all the best on your journey to The Lombardi.”

---Matthew---