

RENYA BECOMES A 12TH (WO)MAN

A Renya Tale about the 2014 Super Bowl

My man Ran & I knew what we were heading into when we departed our home base in New Mexico on Friday, January 31, 2014 for Ft. Collins, Colorado....Winter Wonderland.



Leaving behind the warmth of Abiquiu wasn't easy, but we were on a mission to drive 8 hours into anticipated snowstorms to join Ran's extended family for Sunday's Super Bowl. Not in a million years, would I ever have guessed that I would be gearing up to watch a football game, never mind the Super Bowl!

I have never understood the appeal of football. What's to like about a bunch of men pounding up on one another? It always seemed ridiculous to me. Recently a dear soul sister offered a different perspective when she remarked, "the only thing I like about football are the buff bodies underneath the uniforms." I do see her point.

So, you may be wondering why all of a sudden am I open to watching football? The key word here is 'open.' Ever since I departed on my cross-country journey a year ago, I've become a different person, approaching and experiencing life with new eyes, a new heart, a new palette. It's like eating organic chicken, lamb, and buffalo. What? Me? I've been a vegetarian for over 30 years! The choices of my past have given way to my willingness to live the present moment fully where judgment melts away in the presence of openness. I have to tell you, living this way is so freeing!

A couple weeks back, Ran invited me to watch the NFC Championship game between the Seattle Seahawks (his favorite team of all time) and the San Francisco 49ers. The outcome of this pivotal game would decide which team would go to the Super Bowl. My initial instinct was, "no thanks." Those old conditioned default thoughts of what I do and don't do, based on the past, popped up to visit me. Flipping myself to the present awareness, where Ran & I are drawn to experiencing things together and supporting one another on every level of our relationship, I had to ask myself, why not in this way?

In the spirit of openness, I decided to give it a whirl and say 'yes.' In the recesses of my mind agreeing to join Ran didn't necessarily mean that I was going to watch the entire game - snippets perhaps. I packed up my laptop to take it along on the chance that I might need a diversion from the game. Not having a TV in our simple off-grid home, we headed for QB Sports Bar located 50 miles away. My picture of a sports bar looked like too many people, too many TV screens, and too much stimulation. Yup, I was right, that was the sight upon entering my first sports bar. In Ran's wonderful way of mindful consideration, he ushered me into a small room adjacent to the large crowded area where most folks were seated. This room was nearly empty. Only three people were seated there.

Now about that laptop. Well, I opened it once and closed it right back up. As it turns out, I got into the spirit of the game and tuned into Ran's excitement for the Seahawks.

I didn't know that Ran was even into football until Seattle surfaced for the playoffs. Ran is a Seahawk fan all the way. How can he not be when the Seattle area was his home turf for many years. As for me, I've never been one for competitive sports other than watching my son play basketball in school. Even when watching the Olympics, I have no investment in one country winning over another. Oneness is where my allegiance stands.

With that said, I feel kinship with Seattle, and find myself becoming a Seahawks fan. I make connections to everything through association and, therefore, it can't go unnoticed that I resonate with the Seahawks colors of blue and green. I also have a love for the sea and hawks. Oh yeah, and I just discovered that the Seahawk cheerleaders call themselves Sea Gals. Living a good bit of my life by the sea, most definitely I am a sea gal.

Ran's excitement over the Seahawks winning the NFC Championship game, and heading to the Super Bowl has jumped over to me. Perhaps because I traveled with him to Seattle last year, enjoyed a fabulous there, met Ran's son, daughter, and handful of friends, suddenly I find myself joining the Seahawk fan tribe.

Excitement is in the air and it looks like we'll be heading back to the QB Sports Bar for the Super Bowl in a couple weeks. But wait! A text message has just arrived from Ran's extended family in Ft. Collins, Colorado. It's an invitation to the Super Bowl. Oh wow, what fun that could be.

Ran & I, Seattle Seahawk fans, with a family of Denver Bronco fans. Despite the full day driving distance between NM and CO (located far north almost to the border of Wyoming), and the prediction of heavy snow all the way, we decided to take the leap and go for the adventure. Yup! That's right. This road trip is all about Super Bowl XLVIII (48).

Friday morning, January 31st, here I am with Ran, Colorado bound to watch my first ever Super Bowl. As we navigate our way through New Mexico to Ft. Collins we are in snowstorms galore. Even in areas of white-out, no weather is too harsh for Ran's 'White Rhino' Dodge Ram truck. It's endured many Alaskan snowstorms.



Along the way, passing by a highway exit for Garden of the Gods, brought me to full circle remembrance of a time in the late 70's when I lived in Colorado Springs. All of a sudden I'm traveling through flashbacks of memory, and following the thread of past experiences to where I am in my life right now. What a colorful montage the journey of life is.



Flashing forward, we have arrived at our destination. Everyone is stoked about the game. Ran & I are of course the minority in Colorado, rooting for Seattle. Based on expert predictions, and past track record, the Denver Broncos are favored to win.

The more I learned about the Seattle Seahawks the more I began to understand my inclination to support them as the underdog team. Seattle is a younger franchise than Denver. Going into the Super Bowl the Seahawks were regarded as lacking depth. They are not known for having a strong offense, like Denver. Within the football community, there exists a general consensus that a strong offense team will win over a strong defense team, like Seattle. Supposedly a stronger offense team has the potential of scoring more points. In hearing this, I say, “don’t be so sure. Things are not always as they seem based on the past. The power of change comes to us all. The ways and means of yesterday can suddenly be altered. All of this hearsay just might be a stigma.”

The much anticipated moment has arrived. It’s Super Bowl Sunday, and I would imagine that the air is painted thick with collective excitement everywhere. Munchies have appeared on the countertop like most every other family in America. While seated around the TV screen ready for the game to begin, one of the daughters in the family we are visiting appear before us with fingernails and toenails painted Denver Bronco colors. Her sister appears before us next, opening her closed fist to extend us a handful of Bronco-colored M&M’s. Go Broncos! Go Seahawks! Game on! In the spirit of the game, Ran & I are displaying #12 on our foreheads. I just knew that someday that barely used eyeliner pencil I’ve been carrying around in my bathroom pouch would come in handy for something!



Now, about the 12 on our foreheads. If you don't know, as I surely didn't up until the NFC Championship game, there's something very unique about the Seattle Seahawks team. Unlike any other professional sports team in the country, the fans are highly influential in the motivation of the team, and sometimes the game's outcome.

In December, 1984, the Seattle Seahawks retired the #12 jersey in honor of their fans. The reason being that their fans were having such a powerfully positive influence on the team that it was like having a 12th man on the field.

Normally, the impact of the 12th man only happens at home games, because the majority of fans don't travel to other cities to watch the team play. However, during this Super Bowl, thousands more Seahawk fans made the trip to New York than Bronco fans. This became apparent the moment Denver attempted their first play of the game, resulting in a missed snap of the ball, and Seattle scoring 2 points. After missing the snap, Denver Quarterback, Peyton Manning, walked to the sideline and was heard saying several times, "we just couldn't hear" which lasted throughout the game. If you watched the game, you noticed that Manning was constantly moving up and down the line in an attempt to call the play to his teammates, because he couldn't be heard standing behind the center.

Earlier in the season, Seattle had set a Guinness Book World Record as the loudest stadium crowd registering over 134 decibels. This extremely loud decibel level is the equivalent of standing on an aircraft carrier next to a jet taking off.

The impact of the 12th man was well-known before this year, and yet it came as a surprise to many that it ended up being such a factor so far from Seattle's home stadium. Seattle went on to win the Super Bowl 43 to 8. There's no doubt this year's Super Bowl will be recorded in football history as a game that took many by surprise and stunned millions. Seattle's incredible defense, known as the Legion of Boom, dominated the game allowing for the incredibly lopsided score.

On Monday morning with lots of buzz in the air, and the Seahawk management, team players and fans no doubt still partying hearty over their victory, Ran & I jumped in the truck to head back home to New Mexico. On Tuesday night, as the chartered plane carrying the victorious Seahawks taxied up to the terminal, the 12th man flag was seen waving from the pilot's window. The Seahawks have returned to the Pacific Northwest carrying the Vince Lombardi Super Bowl trophy home to the Power and Spirit of the 12th Man. On Wednesday, we tuned into the Super Bowl Parade & Welcome Home Celebration on the computer. As we sat in awe watching the massive crowds of 700,000+ filling the streets of downtown Seattle, and two stadiums seating approximately 50,000 sold out seats each, we are celebrating right along with each and every one over the Seahawks outstanding season and championship.

During the celebration festivities, Seahawks coach, Pete Carroll, told the crowds that this victory is not just about winning one year. It's about a team's relationship with community as a family, creating something bigger than a team. Additionally remarking that they are just getting warmed up and the 12's passion cannot be silenced! Seattle's governor, Jay Inslee, declared 12:12 pm to be a moment of LOUDNESS in honor of the 12th Man!

Hearing Coach Carroll's poignant words made me realize that behind choosing teams and taking sides there's wisdom behind this win for everyone. *The inter-connected relationship, unlike any other professional sports team in the world. *The spirit of dedication and believing in yourself, no matter what. *The power of community, and the potential of what can happen as a result of unified connectedness. The greatest thing that I have come away with is that the Seahawks bring a new pioneering spirit to the world of competitive sportsmanship.

During the celebration, numerological references were cited through the news media. I find that absolutely amazing! Bill Wixey, reporter at Q13 Fox News in Seattle, reported the following factoids of the *significance of 12* during the parade celebration coverage:

*Super Bowl XLVIII (48) $4+8 = 12$

*Seahawks scored a safety 12 seconds into the game

*Player, Percy Harvin, scores a touchdown 12 seconds into the second half.

*Marshawn Lynch scored exactly 12 minutes into the 2nd quarter.

*Seahawks scored a total of 43 points ($4 \times 3 = 12$)

*The Seahawks victory in Super Bowl XLVII was the 12th playoff win in franchise history and Denver Quarterback, Peyton Manning's 12th career playoff loss.

*The Seahawks retired the #12 in December, 1984 in honor of the fans. The retirement ceremony happened before a game in the Kingdome in the 12th month of 1984 ($8+4 = 12$).

*Russell Wilson's total passing yardage was 206, as is Seattle's area code. $2 \times 6 = 12$

*The victory parade/ celebration held on 2/5/14 (or $2+5+1+4 = 12$).

I did a bit of research myself on the Power of 12 as it relates to numerology:

Numerology is the language of numbers and their symbolic meaning. Each number has its own vibration and its own vibratory influence. Everything in the universe vibrates at its own particular frequency. By finding the vibration rate of any object, you can establish the qualities and energies associated with it. The roots of numerology can be traced back some 10,000 years to Egypt and Babylonia. Pythagoras, who developed many of the basic theorems that form the foundation of modern mathematics, is credited with formally organizing the field about 2600 years ago in ancient Greece.

Significance of Number 1 – Leader and pioneer of new beginnings, a dominating and exceptionally powerful number representing unity consciousness. Characteristics are intensely original, creative and individualistic, strong-willed, courageous, progressive, self-reliant, efficient, determined and focused.

Number 2 – a vibration carrying the energy of partnership and cooperation, sensitivity and caring, seeking balance and harmony.

Number 12 (1+2=12) – relates to completeness, that which forms a whole, perfect, and harmonious unit. Alert to every situation. Sensitive, tactful, diplomatic and cooperative, very determined to complete tasks.

Well, if all this doesn't add up to a different perspective in which to view this year's Super Bowl, I don't know what else to say, except for perhaps this...

There's something undeniably powerful to be said for a team that just last year at the Seahawk draft picks scored an F with the so-called experts, who couldn't believe the choices Seattle's management made in the draft. This team, comprised of a collective of seeming misfits, went on to win 15 games in the regular season and dominated the Denver Broncos in every aspect of Super Bowl XLVIII, playing nearly a flawless game.

To wrap it up, Seahawks Quarterback, Russell Wilson, tells the story of when he was growing up his father would say to him, "There's a king in every crowd, why not you?" This has become a slogan and a reality for the Seattle Seahawks.

CONGRATULATIONS

Seahawk Champions!

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