Good evening and greetings to each of you.pdf
Edward Earl Bell

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Good evening and greetings to each of you. It is always a good evening, when I have the opportunity to speak to and with young men who adorn the skin that I am in, and whose sags and confidence disturbs common understanding—and whose hair and all its nappiness and naturalness, signals individuality and creativity—But, India Aria, who said it best—I’m not my hair—I’m not your expectations; I am the soul that lives within.

I am fed with hope and seeded with admiration, when I see a gathering of young black men defying the odds, being nurtured, loved, and protected by bold and courageous Sisters!

I often say, I couldn’t have been all that I am without a strong mother in the home! A grandmother, whose wisdom kept me focused, an aunt, whose intellect, a Delta by the way, embodied a ‘Delta Girl’, (uplifting somebody else)

A Delta girl….directs her activities and all that she may control toward lifting somebody else. YouR! Soror, Mary McCleod-Bethune.

Thanks to the Deltas for uplifting the Brothers! A job well-done!

I am thankful to those who watch, care, protect, provide for these young men—the parents, the guardians, uncle’s, aunt, grannies—all the adults—who stand with these young men! Continue with your covering and protection!

With all that being said, thanks to my friend, Betty Jenkins for this moment—and to---Mrs. Reid, for having the confidence to invite me. And to the Delta’s for this National Initiative, Embodi!
Now enough of the pleasantries!!!!

Now…let’s get to the matter at hand! My Brothers! My Young Brothers! My brothers who wrestle with misunderstandings, and who live with perceptions, opinions, untold----my Brothers. Hear my story----and to the parents I dedicate the reading to you: [Read the book]

You see, regardless of the lazy title, I always know my success wasn’t determined by labels, but by my actions.

I am reminded of Kendrick Lamar: My “Wings begin to emerge, breaking the cycle of feeling stagnant. I became free, ending the internal struggle” of being call lazy, I wasn’t lazy, I was trapped. Just trapped in my world.

Understand, that I wasn’t a football or a basketball player. I was just me, the caterpillar, who became the butterfly. As Kendrick Lamar reminds us—the caterpillar are one and the same.

You see, I was just waiting. I am the lazy Dr. Bell, with published books, and over 30 written pieces—Never permit any one to tell you that you can’t achieve; as the caterpillar goes through stages—you too; you must be staged driven, with the adults understanding that you have the DNA for success.

I tell you these things to remind you that dreams do come true; they need not “fester in the sun.” Langston Hughes reminds us:

What happens to a dream deferred?
Does it dry up
Like a raisin in the sun?
Or fester like a sore--
And then run?
Does it stink like rotten meat?
Or crust and sugar over--
like a syrupy sweet?
Maybe it just sags
like a heavy load.
Or does it explode
Your raisin shall not dry up! Your dream shall not be deferred!

Now, if I were talking to my son, I would say: What shall I tell my black boy who lives in a skin of blackness; but to you, I will say, what shall I tell these young black men on this evening? What shall I say---What shall I say! I shall tell them the truth. (Skit)

No edits were done to this speech!