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Dear Jonathan Eig:

Luckiest Man really opened my eyes to how short our time on earth is. Lou Gehrig inspired me to be thankful for everything that I have. He played baseball with class and appreciated every moment he spent with his teammates, family, and friends. Toward the end of his career, Lou developed the horrible disease that now bears his name. Being a very private person, he tried to hide his illness from others. Yet, the day came when he felt he had to make it known. Upon learning of his coming retirement, the New York Yankees held a day of appreciation for him. Throughout the whole ceremony, he hesitated to even look up. Finally, he worked up enough nerve to deliver a speech. He started, "I am the luckiest man on the face of the earth..."

Jonathan, thank you for your portrayal of such a great and humble man. Your book has made me think "What would Lou do?" in numerous situations since reading it. Any baseball fan can see that Lou was an extraordinary baseball player, but underneath those New York Yankee pinstripes was a man with incredible character as well.

I felt awed at how Lou handled himself after his diagnosis. When he went to the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, he signed autographs and played baseball with kids for hours at a time. He never lost sight of who he was. A lot of people lose their way when they become famous or a big change takes place in their lives. After learning about Lou's response to his peers, I told myself that I should never change who I am for anyone.

Lou exemplified the qualities of respect and reverence better than any person I have ever known. He is one of the best baseball players ever, but receives little recognition for his accomplishments on the field. He was always the first one to arrive at practice and the last one to leave. In addition, Lou taught me to listen to what others have to say without judgment. Another thing I noticed about Lou was if a reporter tried to give Lou the credit for a big win, he would shift the spotlight to his teammates and coaches. That influenced me to give credit to others around me. Reading your book helped me to realize that my parents and friends make me who I am. Lou never forgot where he came from. He built a strong relationship with his parents that lasted his entire life.

How can a man tell the whole world he is the luckiest man alive when he's on the verge of dying? That statement from Lou's speech on his appreciation day gave me goose bumps. It was the perfect beginning to Luckiest Man. Thank you for writing such an inspiring book on a man who made the most of his time on earth. Your in-depth descriptions allowed me to get a glimpse of a man who made me realize how lucky I am to be able to wake up every day.

Sincerely,
Matt Runde

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