

Winslow Coleman

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Multi-narrative Story

Basketball Dreams

Jason

BEEP BEEP BE-SLAP! Jason smacked his alarm across the room as he jolted awake. He rolled out of bed and stood up. The floorboards creaked under his bare feet as he opened his shades. He squinted his eyes as bright beams of sun washed over his face. It was a sunny Friday morning and he had to prepare for basketball practice. He hurriedly went over to his closet, and after rummaging through all his dirty clothes, found a clean pair of joggers and hoodie. He rushed out of his room to see his brother sitting at the dining room table eating a bowl of cereal. "Practice starts soon, we have to get going!" said Jeremy.

Jeremy, his twin brother, was shorter than Jason with a mound of highlighted curly hair which he permed every couple of months.

"Put on your shoes, we're going to be late!"

They walked towards the elevator and pressed the lobby button. The button turned green as the elevator slowly descended.

"Are you ready for the championship today?"

"I'm always ready," Jason replied.

"You weren't ready when you got posterized yesterday and almost lost us the game!"

Jeremy fired back.

Jason shrugged off his brother's teasing thinking it was too early for this. They walked out their apartment door where he was greeted by an array of honking and angry drivers trying to get to work. Just a typical day, he thought, trying to keep his mind off the championship game which he was still worried about. He and Jeremy headed toward the bus stop, they entered the bus and walked towards the back. Jason looked out the window as the bus drove along Main Street toward school. Despite Jason saying he was always ready, he wasn't. He was worried sick about their game and almost wished he had the confidence of his brother. Despite Jason being a better player, he was known to crumble under pressure. A couple of minutes later the bus came to a stumbling halt in front of Myles Vieira High School. Jason saw one of his friends Dante and made his way toward him. Dante was also on the high school basketball team, and just like him was very nervous about the game. Just thinking about it and possibly losing put a lump in his stomach. They had spent almost three hours on Facetime last night talking about different plays and techniques they would use during the game. Everyone knew Jason was the obvious star of the basketball team. He had been playing since he was young and devoted all his time to it. Dante and Jason made their way through the crowded hallways to the gym. As they walked in the coach (his dad), greeted them.

"I see someone slept in," his dad said.

"Well, I'm here, right?" Jason responded.

His dad chuckled and walked over to talk to Jeremy. Jason walked over to the bench and started lacing up his KD 14 basketball shoes that his mom had got for him on his last birthday. He looked at them and smiled. These shoes have been through a lot, and they still serve me well, he thought to himself.

Kenny

Kenny was the first one up in his house. He quietly made his way to the kitchen and made himself a quick cup of coffee. It was around 5:00 in the morning. He grabbed his keys and gym bag and made his way to the elevator. He pressed the lobby button and waited as the elevator slowly descended to the first floor. The lobby was completely deserted except for the security guard who was asleep at his desk. He made his way outside and entered his car. He liked to get up early to beat the morning traffic and to set up the gym for the players. He put in his keys and pulled out of the parking lot. After driving for around 15 minutes he pulled in front of Myles Vieira High School, the school where he coached. He got his basketball gear out of the trunk and walked towards the gym.

Kenny had some worries about his son, Jason. The night before, he couldn't help but overhear him expressing his concern about the basketball game. Kenny knew despite basketball being a team sport, Jason and his confidence were essential to their winning. His other son Jeremy, despite them being twins, was the complete opposite. Jason was a very reserved, quiet, and respectful person who kept to himself a lot of the time and focused on basketball. Jeremy was the louder, cockier, and more aggressive of the two; He wasn't as devoted to basketball as his brother. But Jeremy is a very talented player in his own right. It was both of their senior seasons and it would be the last time he would ever coach his two sons. He had taught them basketball since they were almost three years old. Kenny's dad had taught him how to play basketball at a young age as well. Both of his parents were immigrants from China and provided a lot for his interest in the sport. He flicked the gym lights on. They flickered and then burst to

life, illuminating the entire gym. He had more reasons to worry about tonight's game because of a rumor that had spread around the school saying a writer from Sports Illustrated was coming to the game. It was vital for Jason and their team to perform great in front of this kind of company. It also didn't help that Jason had no offers from any Division 1 colleges, and he knew that if this news writer was impressed, he could put in a good word for his son. Kenny sighed and walked out of the gym to get a drink and get ready for the rest of his day.

Jeremy

Jeremy followed Jason and Dante into the gym. He was probably the only one on the team who wasn't worried about the championship game. He casually strode to the bench and laced up his shoes. Then made his way over to the coach and his teammates. Kenny told them to start off with laps around the gym and then some stretches. Jeremy's shoes squeaked softly as he ran his lap. He couldn't stop daydreaming about the game. He couldn't wait to be under those bright lights and cheering fans. Once they were done with warmups, coach Kenny made teams for a skirmish. As usual, his dad put him and Jason on opposite teams. Jeremy liked to face his brother; it gave him a real challenge that he enjoyed. Jeremy started dribbling down the court. The ball felt good in his hand as his brother closed in to guard him. Jeremy knew that Jason was easy to fake out and once he did that he could get his team an opportunity to score. Jeremy faked a pass left. It worked. Jason moved to the side a tiny bit, but it was enough. Jeremy drove on his weak side. There were two defenders in the paint with Jason behind him. Jeremy dribbled forward, and he pushed off of his left foot into the air, both defenders jumped up to attempt to block but Jeremy was ready for them. He brought the ball down as he soared passed his two

defenders and laid it into the basket. "Get laid!" Jeremy yelled as he pushed past the two defenders. He started jogging to the other side of the court high-fiving his teammates as he went.

Jason

People began filing into the stands. Lights were flashing everywhere. He could feel sweat forming on the palms of his hands. It was 10 minutes before tip-off and the coach had them all huddled around. He took a second to look over at the opposing team. They were good, really good. He recognized one of them. Adrian Smith was ranked as the third-best player in the country and was one of the best scorers in high school basketball. He looked around and spotted the Sports Illustrated reporter in the crowd. He got even tenser as he knew the impact that this game would have on his life. The buzzer sounded. Time for tip-off. His team walked to their positions on the court. "Bzzzzt!" The ball was thrown into the air. Ivan, their center, tapped the ball toward Jason. Alright, he thought, Game time! He looked up and saw who was guarding him. He wasn't surprised to see Adrian Smith, who played the same position and was a ferocious defender. The game went by in a blur. One second he was shooting a 3, another second he was blocking a shot, and another second he had the ball with his team down by 2 with 10 seconds left on the clock. He slowly dribbled around the 3-point line. He could feel the entire crowd looking at him. He took a dribble to the left side and fired a 3-pointer. The crowd went silent as the ball flew through the air. "Swish"! His heart jumped as the fans erupted in excitement. He stuck his arms in the air as his team grinning from ear to ear surrounded him and carried him around the court.

A few days later Jason got a letter in the mail. He was alone at home and thought it was a package he had been waiting on. He sat down at the dining room table. He tore the top of the envelope off and took out a piece of paper that read:

"Dear, Jason Lee I am the head coach of the University of Michigan men's basketball. I was very impressed with your basketball skills and would like to offer you a scholarship and a chance to see our school. Sincerely, William Copeland"

Jason could do nothing but smile.

Artist Statement

I wanted all of the perspectives to be similar. I wanted all of these characters to have different personalities despite them all being family. I chose a father and two sons on a basketball team. I wanted to focus on each individual, for instance, Jason, when he wakes up and you get to see what happens in the morning. Another example is Jeremy, where his perspective is taken more during the school day instead of in the morning at home. I wanted each character to live a specific section of the story.

I wanted to make the story about family by incorporating sports into it. I always thought a father/son, player/coach relationship was very interesting. I got inspiration from the documentary *More Than a Game* which focuses on a father/son, player/coach dynamic. I also wanted to include two brothers who were twins but had very different personalities. I like having each of them play basketball in their own way, and how focused they were on it to a different degree.

In the section of the story where Jeremy was going to do a certain basketball move on Jason, the reader hears what Jeremy is going to do. I incorporated dramatic irony in order to explain what Jeremy was thinking and to show how he has long-time experience playing against his brother and knows him well.

One example of a thought shot is when Jason felt the nervous sweat on his hands. Another example was when Jeremy acknowledged that his brother was a more skilled player than he was. A third example is when Kenny sighs as he leaves the gym, thinking about the

championship game and his son's future. An example of a snapshot is when Jason thought about the championship game and the thought put a lump in his stomach. A second example is when you can hear the squeaking of Jeremy's shoes when he is running laps.

My motif was Jason's recurring worry about the championship game. It is brought up a lot from his perspective but is also mentioned when Kenny expresses his concern for Jason's lack of confidence. As for my dialogue, I wanted to focus on how Jeremy and Jason had different ways of speaking, like how Jeremy is more talkative and likes to speak out, while Jason had to force himself to speak confidently. My favorite part of my story was writing the different perspectives. I had some challenges making it short enough, but I am ultimately happy with how it turned out.