

The Worst Shot Ever

(Story word: roll)

Liz was a starting player on the Kent High Raptors. Basketball played a huge role in her life. During the fall and winter, the Raptors practiced five days a week, and in the spring some of the players like Liz ran track to keep fit. The Raptors were a tight-knit bunch of friends who supported each other in good times and bad.

Sometimes Liz liked to remember her worst game ever. She was only in sixth grade. It was just after the second half of the game, and she was guarding the opponent's best player. She was excited to have some time in the game because mostly she was on the bench. Somehow she snatched the ball and found that she had a clear path across the court to the hoop.

On the bleachers her mom and brothers were shouting, "No, Liz, no!" And her coach was shouting, "Stop, Liz, stop!" But Liz didn't hear a thing. She was focused on her dribbling and took the shot. The ball swooshed through the net. Liz was elated because this was the first basket she had ever gotten in a real middle school game.

Coach Chang called time out. Some players were confused, some were looking sympathetic, and two of the seventh graders were smirking and rolling their eyes. Coach Chang said, “Unfortunately, Liz’s basket will count toward the score of the opposing team. I know this is upsetting, and I can see that Liz is upset. I’ve seen this mistake occur many times before after teams switch sides at half time. Let’s shake it off and get back in the game.”

Seeing some of the seventh graders smirk was too much for Liz. She burst into tears. Other girls hugged her, and Liz spent the rest of the game cheering from the bench.

Liz was a great teammate on the Raptors. Whenever they had a setback, Liz loved to tell the story of her worst shot ever. She loved to say, “Cheer up, so long as we don’t score on ourselves, we’ve still got a fighting chance!”