



BANI THE WANNABE BASKETBALLER

BANI ALWAYS GOT PICKED LAST WHEN HIS CLASS PLAYED BASKETBALL DURING P.E. HE WAS GOOD AT DRIBBLING, AND HE WAS A FAST RUNNER, BUT HE WASN'T THE BEST AT SHOOTING. EVERYONE THOUGHT HE WAS TOO SHORT TO BE ANY GOOD AT BASKETBALL, SO THEY PICKED TALLER BOYS TO BE ON THEIR TEAMS.

ONE DAY, BANI NOTICED A POSTER IN THE HALLWAY AT SCHOOL. IT ANNOUNCED TRYOUTS FOR THE SCHOOL BASKETBALL TEAM -- THE REAL ONE. HE STOOD THERE FOR A COUPLE OF MINUTES, STARING AT THE POSTER AND THINKING ABOUT WHETHER HE SHOULD BOTHER TRYING OUT FOR THE TEAM.

ETHAN, THE TALLEST BOY IN HIS CLASS, PASSED BY AND NUDGED HIS SHOULDER. "YOU'RE TOO SHORT TO EVER MAKE IT. BUT I'M GONNA BE CAPTAIN, JUST YOU WAIT."

BANI'S SHOULDER'S SLUMPED. ETHAN WAS PROBABLY RIGHT.

ON THE WAY HOME FROM SCHOOL, BANI'S DAD ASKED WHAT WAS BOTHERING HIM.

"I'M TOO SHORT TO PLAY BASKETBALL," HE SAID.

"WHO TOLD YOU THAT?" HIS DAD ASKED.

"ETHAN."

"WELL, ETHAN IS WRONG." BANI'S DAD TURNED INTO THEIR DRIVEWAY. "IF YOU WORK HARD, I KNOW YOU CAN MAKE THE TEAM."

BANI SPENT THE NEXT WEEK PRACTICING FREE-THROWS, LAYUPS, AND DRILLS EVERY DAY AFTER SCHOOL. HE MADE THE TEAM, AND HE BECAME CAPTAIN INSTEAD OF ETHAN.

