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**Project Story: I love this game**

It’s the final game. There’s a time out. You are tired. You can barely breathe. 5 seconds on the clock. We’re down by 2. Your team has the ball. The coach explains the move. “Ricardo, you will do the shot”. The time out is over. You’re nervous and a little scared. You enter the court. It’s your time. You look at the crowd. You see your mom there, supporting you. You look back at the court. You need to concentrate. You do the move: pass through the screens, receive the ball, do a fake jump shot, dribble the ball, step-back… Your free to shoot. You do the shot; the ball gets to the rim. The time is over. Will the ball get in? Will you score and win the tournament?

Just a year ago, you barely knew what basketball was. You are a regular student in the Gimnasio Campestre school. You just care about your grades. You wake up at 5 o’clock in the morning. You get ready and have the breakfast cooked by mom, calmly. You arrive to school at 7 AM, and you enter to class. Assignments will be finished and grades will be good. The day passes as usual. You feel something, you don’t know what it is. Emptiness? No time for that, you remember something, you have a doctor’s appointment, you need to leave school. You get to the pediatrician, where your mom is waiting for you. You don’t want to go in. “You have to, Ricardo” your mom tells you. Finally, you go inside, waiting for the doctor to tell you were overweight, you can tell that.

You wake up at 5 o’clock in the morning. You get ready and have the delicious breakfast calmly. You remember yesterday’s doctor’s appointment. You have to choose a sport to lose weight. You don’t like sports. You don’t even like the gym. You’re getting late to go to school, you have to think about that after. You get to school at 7:05 AM, you’re five minutes late. You’re pissed about this, but you let it go and enter to class. Assignments will be finished and grades will be good. At the recess, you see some of your classmates playing basketball. You remember you need to exercise. You have nothing to do and the opportunity is right in front of you. Why not? You ask if you can play. They give you the ball. You feel weird holding it. You shoot as you saw them doing it before. The ball gets in the hoop and you hear the rip of the net. You found the sport.

Six months have passed. You wake up at 4:05 in the morning. You need to wake up at 4 o’clock, but in those five minutes you are on cloud nine. You have to rush to get ready. You wolf down the cereal (which isn’t so good) and exit the house. You get to the school at 5:30 AM to train. You’re sleepy, you barely can open your eyes. But it all fades away when you get to the coliseum, to train, to hoop. It’s 7 AM, you need to go to class, the training is over. So quickly? Yes. You feel the tiredness again. You enter to class. Some assignments won’t be finished, and grades aren’t so good. The day passes as usual, you play basketball in the recess. Classes end, and the exhaustion disappears, you have training again. You play and train with your teammates, your friends. You get to your house at 7 in the evening. You’re exhausted. You hardly do any homework, and you just watch NBA matches, almost until 11 PM. You go to sleep.

You wake up at 4:10 in the morning. You know you should wake up earlier, but every minute counts when sleeping. You have to rush to get ready. You serve your breakfast; you are going to wolf it down. But your mom is in the dining room. Something’s wrong. “You can’t keep training like this, you’re failing many subjects, and you are not getting enough sleep and food”.

No, no, NO! You are desperate. You are overwhelmed. How can you not play basketball? Why would someone encourage you to do a sport and then snatch it away?

A week has passed. You wake up at 5 AM. You get ready and have the breakfast cooked by mom, calmly. You arrive to school at 7 AM, and you enter to class. You feel a hole inside of you. You really miss basketball, and you know it. You go to class, but it doesn’t matter now. You don’t care. The day passes as usual. You leave school at 3 in the afternoon, watching your teammates, former teammates, training. You get to your house at 4 PM. There is a lot of time to spare. You turn the TV on to watch the NBA channel. During the ads, you check your grades in Phidias on your phone. They aren’t good. You feel more down. You throw your phone away, and just stare at the TV. There is an ad of NBA cares. You see the little children, in poor neighborhoods, that can’t train. They barely have a proper education. You turn off the TV. You are confused. You are angry. You are angry with yourself. How could you be that lazy and ungrateful, while millions of kids would give everything for something as you have? How could you not take advantage of the opportunities you had? You could not do that; you need to change.

A month has passed. You wake up at 4 o’clock in the morning. You quickly get ready and eat breakfast, with some calm. You manage to get to school at 5: 25 AM, a little early for the practice. Yes, you managed to do it. But not without some effort and dedication. Even though you are tired, you make an effort to focus and work. You advance on some assignments in recess to be able to train in the afternoon. You get to your home at 7 PM. Now, you just have some homework missing, and you can go to sleep and eat on time. You did it. You proved you could train, be healthy, and have good grades. You proved that you love this game.

The ball is already out of your hands. As you see it go to the rim, all the journey to get there passes in your head. The effort, the downs, the difficulties, your teammates. It all comes down to this. That’s why you know it will get in. You close your eyes for an instant, and you hear the rip of the net. You scored. We did it. We fucking did it. We won the tournament.