



ARRIVAL

This was the kind of trip that Mr. Frank liked. It was all freeway and there was very little traffic to contend with this morning. They would soon be arriving at their destination.

“We’re 30 minutes from the gym,” Coach Dunn announced. “Everyone, wake up, get out your scouting reports, and let’s go over them one last time before we get to the gym.”

Most of the players reached into their backpacks for their scouting reports and starting mindlessly reading through it.

“You know what one of the best things about not playing much is?” Demetrius asked his roommate Bobbi. “Scouting reports don’t matter to me. I don’t have to stop watching Netflix on my phone when Coach says to go over scouting reports.”

“What if I get in foul trouble and coach is desperate and has to put you in?” joked Bobbi. “Won’t you need to know what is going on?”

“That’s funny. If I get into the game, it’s over and it won’t matter who’s a shooter, who’s left-handed, or what kind of screens they do on such-and-such play. When I get into the game, it’s pickup basketball. It’s AAU. It’s intramurals. Whatever you want to call it. But for me, it’s ‘don’t matter time’ for Demetrius.”

Bobbi just looked at his roommate with a mix of sadness and astonishment.

“Just trying to help. I want to see you ready in case your opportunity comes.”

“My opportunity came when I was being recruited and I didn’t choose someplace else. That is what I should’ve done. That was my opportunity. Coach isn’t giving me any chances here. But I’m stuck now. Between my major and the fact that I haven’t put up any stats, I can’t leave now.”

“I wouldn’t want you to leave, either. I’d have to find a new roommate. Think of how scary that would be. Especially if my new roommate didn’t have a car. How would I possibly get to Walmart?”

As Bobbi and Demetrius chuckled at that thought, Bobbi began looking at his scouting report and Demetrius clicked on the next episode of the binge-worthy show he was watching.

The two players had clicked on Bobbi’s visit last year. The ironic thing is that they played the same position and Bobbi was a highly regarded freshman. Despite the fact that they were competing for the same job, they ended up bonding over things outside of playing time and minutes. Even though Demetrius wished he was playing more, he didn’t seem to be jealous of Bobbi or hold it against him in any way.

Nearly thirty minutes later, Coach Dunn announced that they’d arrived. He gave the team final instructions about getting to the locker room, where the training room was, and when they’d need to be ready for pre-game warmups.

“Remember, just because we’ve lost a few games lately, this is a game that we can win. It’s a good matchup for us. We’ve given you everything you need to know in those scouting reports. Get yourself mentally prepared in the next 90 minutes to break this losing streak. Now, let’s go.”

After half-listening to Coach Dunn’s instructions, the players exited the bus pretty sure they knew the outcome already.