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Junior Level Entry
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How Could He Do This?

Period 1

Fictional Story

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Why did he get the money? He didn't do anything. He had done nothing to deserve $635.

Jonathan Vick had to ask himself these questions. After his basketball team had escaped a close victory over the University of Duke, Jon found an envelope in his left hand pocket with 635 dollars inside.

In his game, Jon, known as "Big Jon," had managed to make two key free throws with just twenty seconds left in the game. The free throws had put his BYU Cougars ahead by four points. Duke had made a quick lay-up and tried to steal the ball on the inbound play, but had failed to do so. When the ball had come inbounds, the Duke players had no choice but to foul. They had fouled Jon and again put him back on the free throw line to shoot two more shots. He had missed the second shot. The shot was rebounded by the Duke players and they quickly dribbled the ball up the floor and shot a desperation shot at the half court line. The ball had bounced in, then out.

Nothing unusual had happened except missing the last free throw. Jon had made all of his free throws under pressure so far in the season. His total free throw percentage was 93.8%. It was the best in the country. He had made all of his free throws in the final three minutes of every game until now.

But why had he been given money after that game. Why was that game so special? Was he given the money because he missed the final free throw? All of this was a mystery to him. What about the rest of the team? Had they also been given money? These questions were all running around in his head at a million miles per hour.

Jon pondered these questions while walking 'home' from the Marriot Center, where the game had been held. When He arrived at his apartment, he took a shower and changed his clothes. He had a huge project due for finals the next day.

"I need to get this finished early," he thought to himself, "I need a good night's rest."

He smiled to himself. He knew that the whole team would probably come to his apartment and celebrate the victory just like all of the other games that they had won. Although they had never actually planned a party at his apartment, they always ended up in his living room. This time he was prepared for the party. He had bought a bunch of chips doughnuts and pop right before the game. All of it was sitting inside his refrigerator.

An hour later, Jon was starting to get bored. The team had not come to his apartment. Nothing had happened. The only thing that had been worth

noticing was a group of patrol cars flying past the apartment complex. He started thinking of what could have happened. Could they have actually gotten to bed early for finals? No, it couldn't be! They didn't care about finals the first semester, so why would they care about the finals for this semester? It didn't make sense. Did something tragic happen to one of the players? If so, why hadn't he been called? He didn't know, nor did he care, so he went to bed earlier than normal.

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The next day, while Jon was getting ready to go to his first class of the day, his roommate, Shaun Marion, explained why the party never took place.

"Did you hear the group of patrol cars pass last night?" Shaun asked.

"Yeah." Jon replied.

"Well, the cars came to the Marriot Center looking for Trent Meier." Shaun said.

"Why?" Jon asked.

"Apparently he had made a deal with a huge group that pays players to try to lose games for their team." Shaun said.

"Wow! He actually wanted to throw away our chance at having a perfect season just for more money?" Jon thought out loud.

"Yeah. It's kind of a scary thing to think about," Shaun replied, "It makes you wonder if it has happened to more people then just him. Apparently, Trent was approached by them two weeks ago and told that if he could make the game closer than five points that he could make some big bucks."
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“It makes sense,” Jon said, “He threw the ball away three times within the last five minutes. That’s the worst I’ve ever seen him do.”

“Yeah, that’s what I thought too.” Shaun said.

“Well, I’m going to be late if I don’t leave now,“ Jon mumbled, “I’ll see you later.”

“Uh-huh, see you later.” Shaun said, obviously deep in thought.

As Jon walked to his class, he thought about what had just been explained to him. He now remembered being approached by a short Korean man who explained that he wanted Florida to win the NCAA Championship game. With BYU standing in the way, the Florida Gators could not achieve this goal. Could this man have been hinting at an intentional Cougar loss to Duke? He was the one who had put the $635 in Jon’s left pocket the night of the game. Jon suddenly became scared. What if they found the head of the group. Would he bring up Jon Vick’s name? Jon had no idea what to do. Should he tell his teammates? Should he tell his coach? Should he tell the police? He had no idea.

After his last class, Jon decided to go talk to Coach Delfino. On his way, Jon tried to decide what he should say to Coach.

“Hey Coach,” Jon thought, “I want to tell you that I was involved in the scandal and that I want to be arrested and thrown in jail.”

Jon couldn’t think of a way to tell Coach without ending up in jail or suspended for half of the season. While he was playing the scene out in his

mind, Jon noticed a familiar face to his left. The anonymous Korean man appeared to be walking towards him.

"Nice game on Tuesday," he exclaimed.

"Don't bother me!" Jon Vick commanded.

"What the heck is wrong with you!?!" the Korean man asked surprised.

"I don't want your money," Jon said, "Don't give me anymore, I didn't try to do anything wrong. I didn't try to make a deal with you. I didn't mean to miss a free throw in the last three minutes. Take your money back and don't bug me anymore."

"Whatever you say Bub." The Korean man said as he took the money and walked away.

Jon sighed. He felt much better after taking his anger out on the suspicious visitor. Maybe he wouldn't need to talk to Coach Delfino at all. He took care of the whole thing.

Jon felt relieved as he walked to his apartment. He could actually fall asleep tonight.

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The next morning, Jon awoke early and made a hug breakfast of waffles, bacon and eggs for himself and Shaun. When Shaun finally woke up, Jon was on his way to his classes.

"See you later," Jon called to Shaun.

"Sure. Thanks for the breakfast." Shaun said obviously grateful.
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After his long hard day of schooling, Jon went to the Smith Field House for practice. The indoor complex was used for a variety of sports and activities. Many students were running, jogging, or walking around the six-lane track that ran around the perimeter of the courts.

The courts had evidently been used for intramural volleyball. Nets were set up and volleyballs were everywhere. After cleaning up the courts, Jon was allowed to shoot around while waiting for all of the other players. When all of the team arrived at the complex, Coach Delfino led the way into the Men's Locker Room.

When the whole team was inside, Coach said solemnly, "I know you have all heard about Trent's decision to betray our team. He had a promising future in the BYU basketball program but he threw it away by making a deal with an organization that wants to throw players' futures away. I want you all to try to forget what has happened and try to focus on the task that we have ahead of us. We will be playing Florida, the reigning national champions. We will have a hole in our starting line-up now that Trent is gone. We will need someone to step-up and take his place."

As the players started to get up, Coach Delfino said, "I have one more thing to say. If any more people from the organization come and try to make a deal with you, decline it. Do not let them manipulate you with money. If any of them do try to make a deal with you, tell me. I need to know who they are targeting so I can pass on the information on to the police."

Throughout practice, Jon was confused. Coach seemed not to care about Trent's disappearance. It seemed to have barely phased him. All of the players acted like robots on the court because of it. They had all noticed the Coach's strange actions.

After practice, Jon decided that he should go talk to the coach about Trent's disappearance.

"Coach," he said as he walked into the coach's office, "Are you here?"

"Yeah, I'm here," Coach yelled from the back of his office, "What did you want?"

"Well, I wanted to tell you something about a 'deal' that I accidentally made with the organization that you were talking about." Jon replied.

"What do you mean 'deal'?" the coach asked.

Jon explained the whole thing. He explained how the deal was accidentally set and how he had found the money in his left pocket after the game against Duke. He explained that he had given the money back to the suspicious Korean.

After he was finished, Jon waited for Coach Delfino to reply.

"Well, I think that the public is going to need to know about all of this," he said, "You should tell the police, the newspapers, and you will need to explain the whole thing to the TV reporters."

"Do I really need to tell that many people?" Jon asked.

"If you really don't want to be suspended, then I'm afraid that you will need to." Coach said seriously.

“Ok,” was all that Jon could say.

“I’ll even set up the whole thing for you,” the Coach said.

“Whatever,” Jon replied, “See you later Coach. Thank You!”

“Sure, anytime Jon.” The coach said, “See you tomorrow.”

As Jon walked home, he was deep in thought.

“I’ve never heard of anybody having to tell that many people,” Jon thought, “Something has to be wrong with Coach. I’m going back to talk to him.”

As he walked back towards the coach’s office, he couldn’t help but notice a short man walking in the same direction. Finally realizing the suspicious Korean, he hid himself in some bushes. He watched as the Korean walked into Coach Delfino’s office.

Jon quietly tiptoed towards his coaches office. Once at the door, Jon looked around warily. He wanted to make sure that nobody was watching. When he was sure that nobody was watching, he opened the door and started to listen to the conversation.

“I made a deal with Big Jon,” the Korean said, “He just gave me the money back and told me to leave him alone.”

“He’s the Team Captain,” the coach replied, “If he goes down, then the whole team will too.”

“Well, I’m not going to bug him anymore, he’ll hurt me!” the Korean said.

“Well, at least give the money to another player,” the coach said, “I need to break the whole team up. They are the difference between $250,000 or being $250,000 in debt.”

The coach continued but Jon turned away. He couldn't stand to hear Coach Delfino talk anymore about breaking up the team. He needed to talk to the rest of the team. Jon walked away from the office and started calling his teammates. He told each of them to meet him at an on campus restaurant close by. Once the whole team had arrived, Jon explained to the team what he had heard.

"We need to tell the police," he said, "Our coach is behind the deal made with Trent Meier. I'm sorry to say that we need to have our coach put behind bars."

"I agree with Big Jon," Shaun yelled, obviously excited, "We need to bust our own coach."

"How do we do that?" one of the players asked.

"Well, some of us will need to go get the police, some will need to follow the coach and some will need to follow the short Korean dude." Jon replied, "I need three people to go with me to get the police."

"I will need six people to follow the coach with me," Shaun yelled, standing up.

Rashaun Broadus jumped up and called to the rest of the group, "I'll follow the Korean guy. Everybody who doesn't want to follow Coach or go to the police, come with me."

With everybody split up, Jon started to explain what they needed to do.

"Whoever is following the coach or the Korean guy, stay away from them so they won't see you."

Jon and the other players jumped into their cars and took off to their various destinations. When they arrived at the police station, Jon and his group went straight inside and talked to the first officer that they saw.

"We know who is behind all of the deals made to basketball teams," they yelled, "It's our coach!"

"You're trying to tell me that your coach is offering his team money to make their them lose?" the officer asked.

"Yeah!" they all screamed.

"I don't believe it. You guys are crazy!" the officer said.

"Seriously!" they yelled, "Our coach owes someone $250,000 if the Florida Gators lose the national championship."

"Now I'll believe that," the officer said, "Come on, let's go see what your coach has to say about that."

They all took off in a patrol car.

When they were almost on the campus of BYU, the police officer asked, "Where are we headed?"

"Well, I'm not sure," Jon replied, "Let me call Shaun."

After thirty seconds, Jon was talking to Shaun, "Hello, Shaun?...yeah, where are you guys and where is the coach?...On the way to the creamery?...alright, we'll be there in a second…see you later."

Upon hearing this, the officer spun the wheel around and turned in the direction of the creamery. About thirty minutes later, the group had arrived at the creamery. They quickly realized that they were in front of the coach so they

started walking towards him. When the coach saw his players and an officer walking toward him, he realized that he had been caught. When he was taken into custody, he confessed that he owed $250,000 if Florida did not win the national championship. He explained that he had made the bet and then had been hired as a basketball coach for BYU. When the Korean was in custody, he also confessed that he had helped Mr. Antonio Delfino with tearing apart the team.

After all of this had happened, and after Coach and his Korean assistant had been put behind bars, Jonathon Vick and Shaun Marion walked to their apartment.

“I wonder who will become our new coach,” Shaun said, thinking out loud, “How could he do this to our team?”

I have no idea but I’m sure that we will have a new coach by our next game,” Jon replied, “But for now, I think that we will actually be able to get a good night’s rest.”

That night, Jon was able to sleep like a baby.