

CHAPTER 13

‘DODGE BIZ’

Inside of the Saint Mary’s school gymnasium the atmosphere was electric and alive, as swarms of children ‘BU’ ‘BU’ ‘BUZZED’ about the place like bees inside of a beehive! Students stood and sat on bleachers to the left and right of a large basketball court waiting for the day's dodge ball confrontation to begin, as many kids engaged in animated conversations with a classmate or a close friend! On the court stood ten players beneath each basketball court rim preparing to put on a dodge ball show, just as soon as coach Gruff's whistle blew-signaling that it was time toGO GO GO!

Mya and her little friend Katey- both made their way up the bleachers in their official Alexis garms, wearing a pair of pink socks with cut out star designs over their arms. They took seats at the very top of the bleachers- on the left side of the gym, between a girl named Becky Sue- and another named Susie Kim.

"Hey Becky!Your coming to my party right?", asked Mya- of the girl to her right, who wore a pair of orange socks over her arms.

"Probably notI'm supposed to be going to Wacky World with my cousins this SaturdayAnd it's a family thing, so I gotta goSorry!", replied Becky Sue.

"Okay- but your going to miss out on the chance to hang out with Alexis!She's coming- you know!", chimed Mya.

"ALEXUS!", tooted Susie Kim- from the left.

"WOW- I can't miss that!I'm there!", exclaimed Becky Sue- with a sudden glow in her eyes, as excited echoes of Alexis's name began to **'WA' 'WA' 'WHISPER'** throughout the near crowd!

"You got Alexis to come to your party?", exclaimed Katey*It was news to her- it most certainly was!*

"Well- not yet!But once I give her this invitation I'm sure that she'll want to come!", reasoned Mya- as she opened her Kimby Doll lunchbox and removed a white envelope with a little red heart sticker seal.

Meanwhile- down on the court.....

"You ready to do some damage Hoag'ster!Time ta get 'em Gee!", sang out Cindy- as she stretched her arms out and began **'JA' 'JA' 'JOGGING'** in place.

"I guess", replied Hoagie- with no energy at all. Hoagie then looked across the court toward Louis, who locked eyes with him and winked. Hoagie winked right back- he did!

"YO- I just wish Alexis was here to playShe's probably out sick or something, or maybe they drafted her to some football league as a field goal kicker!", chimed Cindy.

"We're better off without her", piped Hoagie.

"WHAT!YO- your growing strength like the Cowardly Lion Gee!I always knew you'd come around!Winning is all up here!", she said- while pointing up at her lucky number five ball cap that she wore twisted upon her head.

"True Cind!But win- or lose, let's just agree to have fun okay!Because in the end- It's really just a stupid game", stressed Hoagie.

"WHAT!YO- that's teacher talk Hoag!Your sending me mixed signals over here geeLet's just win this thing and get our pizza- okay ...All we gotta do is stick together and have each others backNow give me some Gee!", chimed Cindy- before she extended her right fist out toward Hoagie for a pounding. Hoagie quickly bumped his left fist into hers, hearing the **'KNOCK'** of deception- echoing throughout his trader ears. It was like a hammer against steel- it was!

Coach Gruff stood to the left court line wearing a super tight gray and blue Saint Mary's Lone Wolf gym shirt, above an even tighter pair of gray gym shorts and hairy wolf legs. He lifted a small whistle that hung from his thick neck by a black string and readied it near to his mouth. **"GET READY!GET SET!"**, he shouted out- just before **'TOOT'**ing it as loud as he could.

All twenty of the kids on the court took off like jets and sprinted toward the resting dodge balls placed near the center court cones, as the excited gymnasium crowd **'CHA' 'CHA' 'CHEERED'** them on!

.....IT WAS ON LIKE DONKEY KONG!