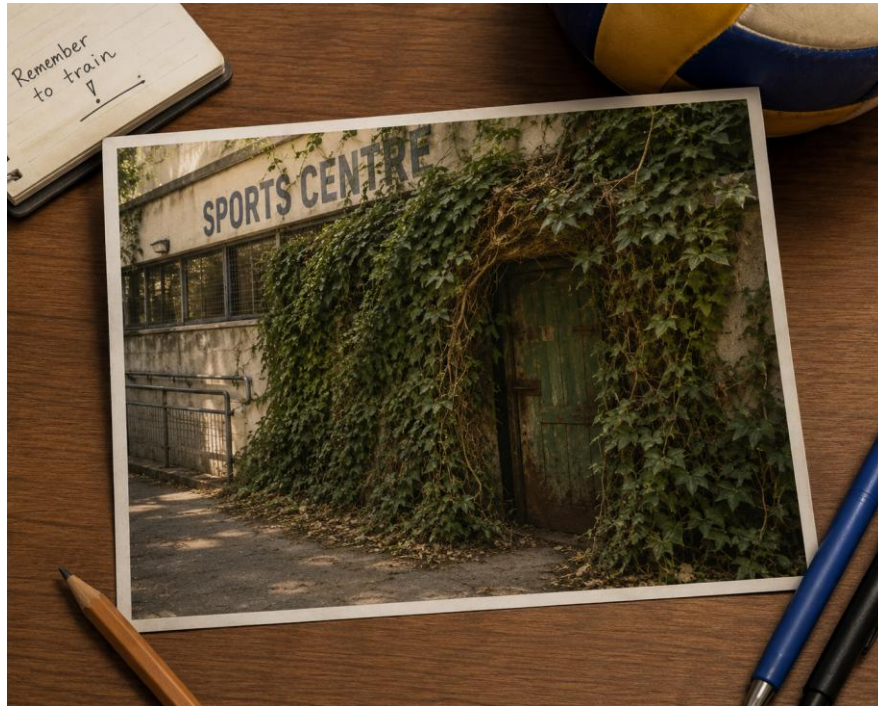


Group 9

The Adventure Behind the Photograph



Luuk looked at the old photo on his desk. At fifteen, he was much smaller than his classmates, but on the volleyball court, his speed made up for it. The picture showed a mysterious, hidden door behind the local sports centre, covered in thick green vines. Determined to find it, Luuk grabbed his volleyball and ran outside. To his surprise, the door was real. He turned the rusty handle and stepped into a secret underground room...

When he stepped in, the first thing he saw was a volleyball court. There was a book.

In the book, there was a story. A story about a boy named Max. He lived in 1989. Max also played volleyball and he travelled all around the world to become a pro volleyball player. In the book, there was a route with all the places he went. Luuk decided: he was gonna make the same journey together with Lucas.

The first location was France. Specifically, Lyon.

They went to the volleyball court to do training with their new teammates. When they met their new teammates, they didn't get along very well. When the first training session was over, Lucas and Luuk went to buy a baguette and a croissant.

They sat on a bench near the street and talked about the training.

"I don't think they like us," Lucas said.

“Maybe they just don’t know us yet,” Luuk answered.

Then Luuk opened the old book again. A small paper fell out of it. On the paper it said:

“A good player doesn’t play only for himself. He plays for the team.”

Luuk and Lucas looked at each other. They understood that maybe this journey was not only about volleyball, but also about learning how to work with other people.

The next day, they went back to training. This time they tried to talk more to the other players. Luuk passed the ball more, Lucas tried his best even when he made mistakes, and slowly the team started to accept them. At the end of the training, one boy from Lyon said, “You played better today.”

Luuk smiled because he felt proud.

After France, the next place in the book was Italy. They travelled to a beach volleyball court near the sea. It was very hot, and the sand made it harder to move. Lucas fell many times, and everyone laughed, but not in a bad way. He laughed too. Luuk helped him stand up and told him, “Don’t give up.”

In Italy they found another message from Max inside the book. It said:

“Losing is not the end. It is part of becoming better.”

They played a match that day and they lost, but they were not sad. They knew they had tried their best.

The journey continued to Spain and then Germany. In every country they met new players and learned something different. Some players were very strong, some were very fast, and some were very clever. Luuk realised that being small was not always a bad thing. He could move quickly and save balls that others could not reach. Lucas also improved a lot. He was still new, but he was not afraid anymore.

Finally, they came back home. Luuk went again to the secret room behind the sports centre with Lucas. The old book was still there. On the last page, there was one final message.

“You don’t have to be famous to be a champion. You just have to believe in yourself and never stop trying.”

Luuk closed the book and looked at Lucas. “So, was Max real?” Lucas asked.

Luuk smiled. “I don’t know. But I think his story helped us.”

From that day, Luuk and Lucas trained harder than before. They were not perfect players, but they were better friends and a better team. Luuk stopped feeling bad because he was smaller than the others, and Lucas stopped feeling like only a rookie.

The old photograph stayed on Luuk’s desk. Every time he looked at it, he remembered the secret door, the book, the journey and all the lessons they learned.

It was not just an adventure about volleyball. It was an adventure about friendship, teamwork and following your dreams.

Students: Assimina, Nikoleta