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For weeks I had been racking my brain for a time when I took a stand against injustice, but I could not seem to remember any significant moment. I began to think I may not even be able to enter an essay in the contest, seeing as I had no way to answer the question: when did you take a stand against injustice and what was the impact? But then, during a volleyball camp, it hit me.

“Ouch!” I yelped instinctively. My back stung in the spot where it had just been slapped.

“Sorry! I was just excited, that was a really great hit!” the offender said. I was standing in a huddle on volleyball court 4 and we had just won the first point of the match.

“My name’s Emily,” the short blonde girl said. Since this was a training camp right before tryouts, we were all focused on improving fast and hadn’t bothered with introductions when the coaches first put our temporary team together.

“I’m Becca, This is 17s right? I wasn’t sure what court to go on but I recognized the coaches,” I said, referring to my age group.

“Yeah, it is but some of these girls don’t really seem like they should be playing on this court, like look at that girl over there,” Emily pointed to the girl farthest across from me. I recognized her from a previous camp. I couldn’t remember her name but I remembered her being shy and unsure of herself. She was the textbook definition of a shy girl: her eyes down as she fumbled with her hands.

“Her name is Megan and she doesn’t know what she’s doing! She can’t hit or pass either!” I was trying to think of how to respond, when I was saved by a volleyball rocketing over the net towards Emily.

As the ball rocketed toward Emily I ran up to the front of the court, right next to the net. This is the best place for the setter to be, as it gives them the option to set all three hitters. But Emily was not ready for the furious ball. She misjudged where the ball would land and was too far back causing her to have to fling herself towards the ball. The awkward pass started flying down to the middle of the court, significantly reducing my setting options. I realized the only place I would be able to set properly was to the outside hitter. I lined my body up with the far

right corner of the court and lifted my hands over my head. I felt the ball fall into my hands and I sprung them, launching the ball back up and towards the direction of the outside hitter. My eyes followed the ball's route and as it was coming down I realized that my outside hitter was not in a good position to hit the ball. Megan was too close to the net, forgetting to transition off after she blocked, and so the ball was falling straight on top of her head. She attempted to swing at the ball but she was so close to the net that she had to reach behind her to touch the ball and caused her to be off-balance, sending the ball flying backward away from the net. As the ball touched the ground, we lost the point. Immediately I ran over to Megan and talked to her. "Hey good try! You totally got the next one!" She smiled, "Just make sure you transition off the net before you hit, otherwise you won't be able to get behind the ball and properly contact it," I finished, hoping the advice could help her. She looked relieved that I hadn't yelled at her, but as I turned to return to my serve receive, I saw Emily shoot her a glare. I walked over to Emily to get in my position and she said, "did you see that she totally shanked the ball!" I looked over to see if Megan heard what Emily was saying but she was staring down at the ground seemingly focused with her shoes. "I think she's just starting volleyball," I replied, "Cut her some slack" Emily shook her head and focused on the server. Emily was saying mean words but they would not hurt the other Megan if she didn't hear them, right? Emily wasn't a girl I would want to be friends with, but arguing with her would not help. That's what I thought, until I was on defense and received the first ball. The ball began hurtling towards Megan and she looked ready and determined to pass it. But as the ball collided with Megan's forearms, Emily ran into her, causing the ball to fly off in the opposite directions and us losing the point. "That was my ball!" Emily yelled at Megan. Megan looked down at the ground, probably feeling embarrassed. As Emily began to berate Megan, I turned to her and told her to stop, I could not take it anymore. "Megan had every right to pass that ball, it was closest to her and it was unreasonable for you to get it. You were the one who collided with her and messed up her pass," I said. Emily sulked back to her corner and Megan smiled at me. After that, I noticed a difference in Megan's playing: she was so much more confident which made her passing, serving, and hitting much better.

After that experience, I learned how important it is to take a stand against injustice, no matter how small.