

LITTLE
PLAYER

GOT GAME



By **Matthew K. Weiland**

You may not recognize the face
Perhaps you've never heard the name
The little player down the bench
Who's never in the game

The last to be picked and the first to sit
The last to go in — It's an awkward fit
A mouse among lions, a shrub among trees
A mountain of high-tops, a forest of knees

Shelved and forgotten
Dismissed from the start
Smallish of stature — yet...

Giant of heart

So try and look past the miniature frame
For this Little Player has mighty big game.

Little Player's all about the hustle, you see
About making the stops with tenacious D
About hands-up, help-out, be aware of the ball
About taking the charge and standing tall —

— *Oooooooooooooooooof* —
Even if sometimes you're knocked through the wall.

Still, Little Player just sits and waits for a chance
To get in the game and be part of the dance
And cheers on the team, day after day
And keeps faith in the dream to make the big play.

But mostly...Player sits
And waits patiently
(Though waiting's not all it's cracked-up to be).

Until one night, it happens at last
The Little Player they all had looked past
The one they'd all forgotten about
Is called to go in
When the team half fouls out.

Yet (Gulp) Little Player feels small
While the crowd sounds so huge
!!!!!!And the-game-flies-so-fast!!!!!!

What's a player to do?

Just remember the basics (whispers a voice)
The hustle and flow you've practiced before
From...baseline...to...baseline...
And then running some more

So know you're all set to make your debut
For none on the court can out-hustle you.

You dive for loose balls,
You step-up in the key
You never let-up, you hustle on D
You lead the fast break with razzle and flash
Then dazzle the crowd with a sweet no-look pass

It's your night, Little Player, you're on the marquee
As you square-up and take aim, draining the three.

And with time ticking down — From the **5** to the **4**
You step-up — Swat a shot —
It flies down the court floor...

You speed toward the ball — As the **4** becomes **3**
And catch up with the rock at the top of the key
Setting and squaring — The **3** becomes **2**
You shoot with your legs with smooth follow-through

The ball travels high...arcing...
and...then...
The **2**...becomes...**1**...
And your shot.....It...It...It...

IT GOES IN!

The crowd goes berserk!
They're chanting your name.
Little Player steps-up
And wins the big game!

Little Player's a star.
Little Player got game.

So on whatever court
in wherever you play...

...a playground...
...a backyard...
...the YMCA...

Remember that some nights
You're destined to win
Because each little player
Has a big game within!



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