

The Secret



By Jessica Larsen
Based on a true story

“There is something all can give”
(Children’s Songbook, 236).

Not Ivy! She’s a *girl*,” Braden whispered behind Adam.

But Adam was team captain for dodgeball for the day, and he had made his choice. “I pick Ivy,” he repeated a little louder. Tyler, the other team captain, smirked. Even Coach Garcia looked surprised at Adam’s second pick.

Ivy looked surprised too and then shyly stepped forward. Braden groaned.

Ivy wasn’t just any girl. She was

the smallest girl in the class. She didn’t look very fast, and the ball seemed bigger than she was. “She probably can’t even lift the ball,” Braden said as Ivy walked over.

“Maybe she’ll be our secret weapon,” Adam said, trying to sound sure. But that’s not why he had picked her. Ivy had once told Adam she didn’t like it when they played sports because she was always picked last. The other boys teased Ivy, but Mom and Dad had told Adam that boys should show respect for girls. So he picked Ivy. As

he watched Tyler pick the biggest boy in class, Adam hoped he had made the right decision.

After everyone was on a team, Coach Garcia blew the whistle, and the teams ran to opposite ends of the court. Coach Garcia handed Tyler the ball, and Tyler scanned Adam’s team before he focused on Ivy. He pulled back his arm and let the ball fly.

Bam! The ball smacked the ground and bounced without hitting anyone. Adam blinked. Ivy had moved just in time. Everyone around

Weapon



Everyone had underestimated what Ivy could do.

him seemed surprised, but Adam just smiled. Maybe picking Ivy had been a good idea after all.

The game continued. Tyler kept trying to hit Ivy with the ball, but she kept dodging and diving out of the way. No one could hit her with a ball. Tyler and some of his teammates were so busy trying to get Ivy out that they didn't spend much time aiming for anyone else. Adam grinned—Ivy's size actually made her *better* at dodgeball because being small and fast made her harder to hit.

At last Adam's team won the game. "Secret weapon was right," Braden said. "Ivy's pretty good."

"Yeah," Tyler said. "Next time, she's on *my* team. We'll win for sure!" Ivy smiled as she walked back to class, surrounded by teammates.

Adam couldn't stop smiling as he followed the group. He had been nice to Ivy, and he had helped the other boys respect girls a little more. The greatest secret weapon wasn't a secret at all—it was just being kind. ■

The author lives in Arizona, USA.



NO ONE IS DESTINED TO FAIL

"Every person is different and has a different contribution to make. No one is destined to fail."

President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, "Help Them Aim High," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2012, 60