

LUCKY GIRL

Lessons on Overcoming Odds
& Building a Limitless Future

SCOUT BASSETT



Nashville • New York

CHAPTER ONE

BAD LUCK

Here's the thing about luck.
I believe in luck.

But also, I don't believe in luck.

Let me explain.

GOING UNNOTICED

Growing up we went to this hardware store down the street from my house owned by a man who attended our church. He had a three-legged cat named Tres that hobbled up and down the aisles, seeking—with some degree of success—the attention and pets of patrons. Like I said, before coming to America, I had never seen a cat or dog before. I want you to imagine that first

moment when I saw a furry creature slinking up and down the aisles. I freaked out and hid behind my mom's legs. I didn't have the words yet to articulate what I wanted to say, but it was something to the effect of, "WHAT...HAIRY...WILL EAT ME!"

So, yeah. The first time I saw Tres, it was a little terrifying. But over time, he and I came to an uneasy truce—you don't touch me and I won't touch you. When we saw each other, we would only exchange glances of hello and goodbye.

On one visit to the store, I noticed Tres was missing.

"Where's Tres?" I asked.

The man looked around like I'd spoken, well, Chinese. "Tres? He's...Hmm, I guess he's missing. Now that you mention it, I haven't seen him in a few days."

I was maybe ten or eleven, and I was floored that the guy hadn't even noticed his cat was missing—the cat he shared four walls with every working day.

"Who's Tres?" my dad asked.

"The cat," I clarified. "The cat that's here every time we've ever been here."

My dad shrugged. So did the shop owner.

At my school, I was Tres. Because I was disabled and Asian, I was an oddity that eventually became a comfortable fixture—like a mascot or a store pet. I was different from every other kid in my school or community. If you *did* notice me, it was only because of those differences. But for the most part, I wandered the halls like Tres wandered the aisles, unseen.

If Tres were capable of feeling complex emotions, I bet he'd agree—going unnoticed makes you feel both unlucky and unimportant.

Like Tres, I was completely forgettable unless I did something unexpected...like win a spelling bee.

C-H-A-M-P

Not to brag, but when I was in sixth and seventh grade, I won the school-wide spelling bee two years in a row. I even went on to win the regional spelling bee that second year. I was one word away from making it to the national spelling bee in Washington, DC, but I came up short on “affogato.” (Affogato is an Italian dessert made with coffee, and even though it smells like you'd imagine heaven tastes, homegirl refuses to try it on principle.)

I know what you're thinking—*Of course you won the spelling bee, Scout. You're Asian. We'll get to that.* But I'm not your typical Asian—or even the typical Asian American. The first year I won, I'd only been speaking English for about five years—less than half my life. I don't think anyone, including me or my parents, saw those wins coming. I can promise you my classmates and teachers didn't see it coming.

Most of them never saw me at all.

So, how did the Tres of Trinity Christian School become the dark horse of the middle school spelling bee before she was even fluent in the English language? In a stroke of absolute luck, were

the handful of difficult words I knew the only ones I was given to spell? I'll let you decide.

When you're twelve and thirteen, all that matters in life are friends. Who is hosting the sleepover Friday, who made the basketball team, who messaged who on social media, what did they say, how could they, and do we still like her now? That's what matters.

Since I didn't have any friends, I needed a way to keep my mind entertained. And you know how they say when you lack one sense, the remaining senses improve? Like how, when you're blindfolded, your hearing sharpens and your sense of taste becomes keener? That's how it's been with the loss of my right leg. My mind has raced to the places my missing leg has been unable to go. For every step it missed, I've had one thousand thoughts. Books, and more specifically, words, became a coping mechanism for me as soon as I could read. (Which, by the way, was far later than the majority of kids in the world, and almost all kids in America.)

I entered that first spelling bee with so much confidence because I knew I had prepared more than anyone else in the entire school. This was before I received my running prosthetic, so what else did I have to do with my idle time and overactive brain? I spent hours every night going down the list of words, studying my Merriam-Webster dictionary, memorizing origins and roots, and writing down tips for each of the words like little cheat codes for ways that would help me to remember how to spell them.

There wasn't a word on the practice list I didn't know how to spell.

I got on that stage knowing that I was ready. That I had done everything I could possibly do to give myself the best outcome I was capable of.

I came to America just shy of my eighth birthday and was stuck in a kindergarten class. And at the time, I still stumbled over usage and sentence structure. The translation of Chinese words to English would sometimes get lodged somewhere between my head and my mouth. To think that I would be capable of winning a spelling bee? The odds were *not* in my favor. Not by a long shot. I didn't even have average odds. I was operating from a deficit.

And yet...I won. Not once, but twice. Was I just lucky?

The words I spelled were words I either remembered or knew how to guess at based on my mental cheat sheet. To that, I guess you can attribute some measure of luck. But the true source of my "good fortune" was my extreme nerd-ism—that's what changed the game for me. In a sense, I redefined my own odds by putting in the work, making the next right choice over and over, and sacrificing my time to raise the ceiling of my potential.

I'm not saying that winning the spelling bee changed my future. But I am saying that I learned a discipline as a preteen that has served me my entire life: If you don't like your odds, change them.

LOTTERY LUCK

Don't get me wrong—I have certainly experienced pure, dumb luck before. That's what I call lottery luck. You buy a scratch-off ticket and win fifty dollars? That's lucky. No strategy involved. No way to improve your odds other than spending more money to buy more tickets. Lottery luck can be significant. In January 2016, three winning lottery tickets were sold across the United States to win the Powerball prize that was valued at \$1.59 *billion*. Billion with a “b”!

Now that's luck.

But even in lottery luck, players have to play the game to win. They have to believe that winning is possible for them. And the money they pay to buy a ticket is a sacrifice they make for a chance to win. Are you seeing a pattern?

Let's look at another aspect of luck—the *appearance* of luck.

THE APPEARANCE OF LUCK

I went to school with a girl I'll call Hayley. Hayley was a cliché: blond, cheerleader, smart, and popular. She also had two functioning legs, which is more than I could say for myself. I spent years wishing I could be more like Hayley. *She's so freaking lucky*, I would think, watching her ponytail bob up and down as she talked animatedly in the hallway. *Some girls really do have all the luck*.

When we were in eighth grade, I overheard my parents talking in the kitchen. The word “foreclosure” was mentioned in the same sentence as Hayley's parents' names.

“Wait, what?” I asked. “Hayley’s house is going to be foreclosed on?”

My dad nodded. “Her dad’s an alcoholic,” he said, always to the point. “Looks like he’s in jail for another DUI. Won’t be getting out any time soon. I guess her mom can’t pay the mortgage.”

That was the end of the conversation, but certainly not the end of my thinking about it. I watched Hayley for weeks after I found out she and her family were getting kicked out of their home and that her dad had gotten sentenced to six months in jail for his third DUI. (I read the local newspaper for fun, too.)

It was difficult for me to conceive that something so incredibly bad—so *unlucky*—could happen to someone so seemingly shiny and strong. From my limited perspective, some people were just born with better odds. They were born in the “sunshine” of life while I was born in the rain. Have you ever felt that way? Like some people are just born with advantages that you weren’t? Like some people have all the luck?

That’s how I felt about Hayley. In my middle school brain, all that existed was what I could see in front of me. Hayley was always surrounded by other kids who seemed to feel the same way about her that I did. She answered questions in class with confidence. She was pretty. And honestly, she even seemed nice. Which was the hardest part to accept.

But I hadn’t learned yet that adversity spares no one in the course of life. I hadn’t learned to look for the coping mechanisms,

to assume I don't have the whole story, and I didn't have the awareness that none of us are offered perfect odds.

We all have to overcome obstacles in order to create a limitless future for ourselves.

But even as an adult, I'll catch myself in that same middle school mindset. I'll think, *They're so lucky. They get all these opportunities. They have a great family. They have a support system. They have money. They have luck.*

WAVES OF ADVERSITY

I don't know why we tend to do this as humans—look at someone else's odds and tell ourselves that they've got it better or easier than we do. We'll talk a little later about comparison, but I'm a firm believer that any time we compare ourselves to someone else, we all lose. Because we're not seeing each other as people—as humans. Instead, we're seeing each other as lists of often-temporary circumstances.

The truth is we have no idea what another person has been through—or even what they're currently going through. We don't know what demons they've faced, what tragedies they've suffered, or what hardships they've had to wade through. We constantly feel like we're the “only ones” who have the odds stacked against us, but that isn't true. It's actually a pretty selfish mindset, honestly. It's a perception that only takes into account *our* experiences. And it's a limiting perception. If we

view ourselves as victims, that's what we are—powerless and without recourse.

If you spend enough time on this planet, and you choose to see life as it really is, you'll learn that our human experience really isn't that different from anyone else's. Not at its core, at least. Adversity comes for all of us. Sometimes in small doses. Sometimes in a rush. But adversity does come, over and over, like waves in the ocean.

When I was in my mid-twenties, I received my first micro-process prosthetic knee, which is basically a computerized knee system. It completely changed my life. I could do things I had never done before, like squatting, climbing up and down steep hills and stairs. But the best part of this new type of knee was that it allowed me to walk into the ocean for the very first time on two feet.

I had read books, heard stories, and watched movies where people either talked about or actually did get caught up in the waves of the ocean. I could never quite understand how that was possible until I was a quarter of a century old, standing in the Pacific, with two feet planted in its sandy bottom.

It's the tide that makes the difference. Not necessarily the waves themselves—until you wade out farther, obviously. But as I stood there, I was surprised by the tug—the pull toward the deeper, more treacherous waters. All while the waves lap against you, coming one after the other, after the other.

I had the thought while I was standing there that the ocean has the same effect on all of us—kind of like life. It doesn't

matter how strong you are, what your background is, or your race, economic status, or gender—the waves keep coming, pushing and pulling you.

That's how adversity is. It keeps coming and coming and coming. We'll think to ourselves, *When is this going to stop? When are things just going to be easy?* The answer? Never. Things *can* get better. Things *can* improve. But life will never be easy. And fair? That's not something life promises, either.

Now, before you go thinking I'm about doom and gloom and bad news, I'm not. I'm trying to tell you what I wish someone had told me when I was younger: Adversity doesn't stop. Life isn't easy for anyone, nor is it very fair. But life can still be beautiful, meaningful, and joy-filled *if* you learn to create your own odds.

CREATING YOUR OWN ODDS

I've been a die-hard Braves fan since my childhood summers spent in Atlanta. Like, if the Braves are having a bad season, check on me. Because I am unwell.

But the Braves did *not* have a bad 2021 season. Not bad at all. In fact, the Braves won the 2021 World Series, shutting out the Houston Astros in Game 5, 7–0. But the Braves should have never even made it to the playoffs.

Atlanta entered the postseason with the worst record of any other team still in World Series contention. After a mediocre season with just eighty-eight wins, a season where their best

player (and my personal favorite) Ronald Acuña Jr. injured his knee with a complete ACL tear, *and* their best young pitcher tore his Achilles tendon—twice—there was no reason any Braves fan should have expected to see success postseason. In fact, for more than two-thirds of the season, the Braves had a losing record.

If Atlanta would have been in any other division, they wouldn't have made it beyond the regular season. But they did. And they kept winning. Not in a big, sweeping fashion like you see in the movies where a veteran player stands up and gives a rousing speech that unites a previously divided team. Where some 1990s metal riff hits and all of a sudden bats are cracking and gloves are smacking. That's not what happened.

Slowly, there was a shift in momentum. A change in the wind.

The Braves organization took a chance on themselves. In baseball, the season is long—it's a grind. It lasts over a six-month period for 162 games. The World Series takes place in October. There's a trade deadline that usually falls in the last days of summer where teams have one last chance to either offload expensive players in hopes of a better season next year, or buy or trade for players to carry them into playoffs. The decision to buy or sell is absolutely critical. Get it wrong, and you can cripple a franchise for years.

If any team should have been sellers in 2021, it was the Braves. They absolutely should have been punting and looking ahead to Acuña's return and a better roster in the coming season. But guess what? The Braves decided not to be sellers. They decided to be buyers. Because they expected more from themselves. And they

closed out the 2021 season with a World Series trophy for the first time in over twenty-six years, breaking the “Heartbreak Atlanta” streak of Atlanta sports clubs. I even got to watch a World Series game in Atlanta, and homegirl had no chill at all about it.

The Braves changed their own odds by betting on themselves. When no one else believed in them, they did. They didn’t give up on themselves, even though statistically they should have. And there’s a lesson to be learned here. In a post-victory interview, another one of my favorite players, Dansby Swanson, said this about their win: “There were times where it seemed bleak...There were times where you couldn’t see the light at the end of the tunnel. But we knew that if we kept working and if we were able to kind of put together a team—which we did after some of the injuries—that this would be possible.”¹

The secret to the Braves’ “lucky” win proves that maybe luck had very little to do with it. As Swanson said, “But we knew that if we kept working...” See, the trick is to learn to view obstacles as just that—something to overcome. But as long as you keep working, you don’t give up, you still have a chance. You reframe your problems, struggles, and challenges as opportunities to grow. As opportunities to prove others wrong. As opportunities to get the bigger win.

Because maybe the “lucky” people aren’t lucky at all. They are people who have learned to create their own odds by refusing to accept the hand of cards they’ve been dealt in life. The Braves had every reason to hang up their cleats, but they didn’t. Instead

of allowing adversity to bury them, they leveraged adversity to elevate their work ethic and they got their ring and their title.

BETHANY HAMILTON

I've always been fascinated by the story of American surfer Bethany Hamilton. Hamilton started surfing when she was just three years old. Five years later, at age eight, she entered her first surfing competition. By the ripe old age of ten, Hamilton secured her first sponsorship deal.² I don't know what you were doing when you were ten years old, but I was studying spelling words and meeting animals for the first time. If I'd have known of Bethany Hamilton, I would have thought she was the luckiest girl on earth.

You may have heard this part of Hamilton's story: In 2003, when she was barely a teenager, Hamilton was out surfing one morning along Tunnels Beach on Kauai, Hawaii, with her best friend, Alana. She'd probably done this same routine a thousand times before, but this one would be different. It would alter the trajectory of her life in drastic, permanent ways.

Bethany was lying belly-down on her surfboard, chatting with her bestie with her hand trailing in the water beside her, when a fourteen-foot-long tiger shark attacked her, biting and severing her left arm just below the shoulder.³ After Bethany was paddleboarded to shore, Alana's father made a tourniquet out of a rash guard to stave off as much of the bleeding as possible.

By the time she was rushed to the hospital, Bethany had lost over half of her body's blood content and was in hypovolemic shock (which basically means very sick due to blood loss). Ironically, Hamilton's dad was already at the hospital getting prepped for knee surgery. She took his place in the operating room.

Years later in an interview with ABC News's Chris Cuomo, Bethany said, "And then, I was holding on to my board, with my thumb, because I probably didn't want to get pulled under. It was like pulling me back and forth, not like pulling me underwater. Just like, you know how you eat a piece of steak?...It was kind of like that. And then it let go. And then went under. Then I looked down at the water, and it was like really red, from all the blood in the water."⁴

Miraculously, Hamilton survived. But if I'd heard her story in the days following the attack, I would have said, "That's horrible. For a shark to attack someone so young, someone with so much potential. Out of anyone in the ocean that day that shark could have attacked, it chose an up-and-coming surfing star. What are the odds? I guess she just had bad luck."

When I think about stories like Bethany's, I realize that bad luck happens and there's not much to be done about it. We're just people living through the human experience, which plays out with both favorable and unfavorable circumstances that are out of our control. So instead of talking about being unlucky or focusing on our odds, we need to shift our attention to the adversity, confront it, and decide how we're going to get beyond it and overcome it.

Just twenty-six days later Hamilton got back on her surfboard. Within two years she had won her first national title competing against able-bodied surfers. “If I thought of myself as disabled I wouldn’t be where I am today,” she said in a 2020 interview. “I was on a mission to become the best surfer I could be, regardless of what my body looks like.”⁵

For obvious reasons, I relate to Bethany’s story on a gut level. Though I don’t know what life was like before I lost my leg, I imagine I wouldn’t be a fraction of the competitor that I am today without the adversity—or “bad luck”—of being disabled. Who knows if I would have ever even become a *runner*? Was the “unluckiest” thing that happened to me (losing my leg) really the unluckiest event of my life? I don’t think so.

But that’s because I’ve chosen to not worry about luck and reframe what adversity means in my life. Instead of viewing adversity as a setback that limits me, I choose to view adversity as a setup that will make me better, push me further, and create new opportunities for me if I endure, persevere, and learn. Because if I can endure, persevere, and learn, I create my own odds.

ALIGNMENT

After over a decade as a professional athlete, I still find myself in very “unlucky” or adverse situations. Being a female in sports is tough. At the college level, men’s sports have historically gotten more attention and more funding than female sports, especially

when it comes to the championship events seen as the school's big moneymakers.

A 2021 report by the law firm of Kaplan Hecker & Fink highlighted the discrimination against female collegiate athletes. It revealed that the NCAA spent \$4,285 for men's Division I and national championship participants, excluding basketball. For female participants, the NCAA spent about \$1,700 less than that during the season (2018–2019) in question.⁶

The gap is even larger when it comes to single-competitor sports, like wrestling and beach volleyball. The NCAA spends \$2,229 more per athlete for the men's championships than for the women's.

The stats don't get better in our postcollege careers. Though the women's US soccer team *did* just settle a gender discrimination suit for \$24 million,⁷ if you're a girl in professional sports, you're just not going to get the same amount of respect as men. I continue to hope the future of female sports will become more progressive and equal. We put in the same number of hours—if not more. And our working conditions are often way tougher.

So on top of being a professional female athlete, I'm also a para-athlete. And a minority. In other words, adversity is just another day on the track. But in 2017, something incredible happened for me. If I'd ever use the word "luck," I'd use it to describe that season of my career. I experienced luck—or better called *alignment*—on an entirely new level than I ever had before.

In 2017, I broke the world record in the 400 meters. And at some point that season, I also broke the American record in both the 100 and 200 meters. Later that summer in July, I won my first of two global medals in para-athletics track and field by winning bronze in the 100 meters and in the long jump at the World Championships.

It was a season where I felt untouchable.

Everything my team and I did was the right thing. Every button we pushed was the right button. It seemed like every week I got better and better, and my race times started coming down. You couldn't tell us nothing that season. I even walked around with a little swagger. My confidence grew even as the challenges ahead grew.

So I went into the World Championships feeling the same way I did when I took the stage at the middle school spelling bee. Like, *My gosh, this is very doable. I've put in the work. I've done everything within my power to set myself up to be successful. I can win a medal.* And at that time I really thought only the 100 meters medal was on the table. But I was wrong. I ended up winning one in the long jump, too.

Now that isn't to say all of this came easily to me. There's nothing worse than competing in the rain, because it causes so many variables you can't train for. To say it rained during those championships would be like comparing the sun to a desk lamp. There was a torrential downpour. I mean, it was actually hailing during the long jump. I remember being at the start line before my first jump thinking, *This is absolutely insane and crazy.*

Surely, they're going to call it. They didn't. And yet, I was still able to have a performance worthy of a medal.

Was it luck that I'd won? Or was it *alignment*? After all, I had trained for it.

With alignment, you improve your probability. You exit off the highway of mediocrity, and through endurance, perseverance, and humility (an openness to learning new things), you put yourself in the pathway of good outcomes.

The same way difficult times and hard seasons shape and prepare us for the more critical adversities we experience in life, my practices, hours in the gym, mornings and nights spent on the track brought about something I call "alignment."

So 2017 was my year of alignment—when all the work I'd put into training lined up with the right timing and the right team to create the very best chance I had to win.

See, when we put in the hard work, when we do all we can to be diligent and responsible on our end, we increase our chances for success. We create our own odds. It's not enough just to hope your outcomes improve. It's not enough to check all the boxes of the status quo, showing up for school and work and doing the minimum to get by.

No, if you want to advance, you've got to do more and you've got to do it with intentionality. This is how we create the opportunity for "luck" or alignment in our lives.

If I were to have to provide an equation for alignment, these would be the factors:

TRAINING + TIMING + TEAM = ALIGNMENT

Training

People who are able to overcome challenges with grace possess something called a “growth mindset.” When confronted with adversity, these people shift their thinking from *Why me?* to *What can this teach me?* It’s the difference between being focused on the right now and being able to have a futuristic mindset.

After a particularly tough day on the track, sometimes I’ll have to take an ice bath. An ice bath is fifteen minutes of absolute torture. It’s so painful. You may have seen these on TV, and they’re pretty much what they sound like. You strip naked and climb into a trough-like tub filled with ice-cold water. Ice baths reduce inflammation and improve your body’s recovery time by changing the way blood and other fluids flow through your body.

They are also freaking cold and I absolutely hate them. But I know that if I can endure the fifteen minutes of momentary pain, it will pass and I will be better because of it.

Suffering produces strength. And embracing pain in the moment for the glory of tomorrow is a mental toughness skill that every single athlete has to develop within themselves. In practices, in workouts, and in competitions. It’s part of our training to compete, and it’s just as important as our physical training.

Trust me—I’ve thrown myself some pretty lavish pity parties over the years. But what might surprise you is that I’ve never really felt disadvantaged because I am missing my leg.

I've certainly recognized how much better our country and world could do at serving and including people with disabilities, but I don't have a memory of ever having two legs. It's a fact I accept wholly and radically. I've never allowed being disabled to define me, and you don't have to allow any inherent quality about yourself define you, either. But you may have to compensate through training.

Who your family is, what economic status you were born into, how you grew up, or even how well you did in school—none of that is an excuse to forfeit the game. Learn to view these adversities as training opportunities.

How can being raised in a dysfunctional home make me a better parent?

How can being dyslexic make me more intelligent?

How can being hearing impaired make me a better listener?

How can being unpopular make me more empathetic to others?

Look—you have a choice. Adversity can make you bitter or it can make you better. Those who choose to get better are the very ones who appear to be “lucky.”

Timing

Timing matters to us only when it's off. Right? We don't even recognize all the moments that have aligned in our favor because they pass us by without calling for our attention. But doesn't it always seem like we're waiting for an unspecified moment in the future for us to be happy, satisfied, or content?

For me, I struggle against living from race to race. I've wished away days, weeks, and months that I'll never get back, holding my breath for my next opportunity to compete.

One thing I've had to work on is understanding that not every single moment can be *my* moment. I've got to take my off seasons with my on ones, and I'll be a whole lot happier if I can find a way to find joy in both.

Whatever you're waiting for right now, whether it be a job, a relationship, an answer to a prayer, a degree, a child, don't allow waiting on that thing or person to rob you of right now. Whatever time it is on whatever day it is that you're reading this? You'll never get the opportunity to live this moment again. See? It's already gone. Time is a nonrenewable resource. We all get an assigned amount and none of us know how much or how little that is.

Learning the discipline of being present in every day and every moment will make you a happier and more peaceful person. It will also give you the space to prepare yourself for when the timing *is* right.

Team

We'll talk about building your team in more detail later, but there is almost nothing more pivotal in your life than the people you choose to spend time with. That goes for friendships, coaches, mentors, even the people you look up to on social media. There's something powerful that happens when our story collides with someone else's, and even more so when we choose

to walk through life alongside someone. Just know that there are no static relationship dynamics. The people in your life are either driving you toward your goals or pulling you away from them. Be aware of who you invite onto your team.

I have a team of women around me right now who are actual rock stars. I would be nowhere near where I am personally or professionally without them. How do I know? Because I haven't always made the best choices when it comes to agencies and management. A team who isn't for your best interest is not a good team. And let me add that sometimes you don't even know what your best interests are. Just because someone tells you "no" doesn't mean they shouldn't be on your team.

Now, I know you may not have paid agents and managers, but you do have people who give you advice. Even if they don't directly sit you down and say, "Okay, here's what you should do," you watch how they live their lives and you are influenced by their choices and actions—whether you realize it or not. These are your teammates. Pay attention to your team. Choose them carefully. They're improving your odds or stacking the deck against you.

Training. Timing. Team.

These three factors aligned in 2017 to create an electric atmosphere where I excelled. Was it luck? No, it was something better: alignment that I had trained for. And this alignment isn't

something that's unique to Scout Bassett. No, it's something you can work toward, too.

Remember earlier when we said that the “lucky” ones are the ones who choose to reframe adversity as opportunity? They don't compare their lives to others' because they know that like the waves of the ocean, adversity tugs and pushes at us all.

Lucky girls are not kissed by sparkling unicorns before they're born and given a carefree life. In fact, some of the faces you see on TikTok, Instagram, ESPN, and TV are the faces of people who have endured a lot. *A lot.*

Addison Rae, Kim Kardashian, Adele, Lady Gaga, Leonardo DiCaprio, Lizzo, Demi Lovato—all names of celebrities who have openly admitted to struggling with mental health issues they've had to overcome to achieve alignment.

So what adversity is training you right now?

Maybe your parents don't get along.

Maybe you have feelings for someone who doesn't feel the same way.

Maybe you've experienced racism, misogyny, or some other type of discrimination.

Maybe you feel unnoticed and invisible.

Maybe you feel like you should know what you want to do with your life by now, but you don't.

Maybe you've experienced moral failure you don't think you can come back from.

Scout Bassett

Maybe you feel like you're too much. Maybe you feel like you're not enough.

Maybe you just feel like you don't connect with anyone. You feel lonely. Hopeless.

Honestly, I can relate to every one of those examples of adversity. Of "bad" luck.

But starting today, we're going to stop viewing these circumstances as ones that define us forever. We're instead going to leverage them to ask, "How can this make me better? How can I work on aligning the right areas of my life—training, timing, and team—so that I can grow in confidence and expect good things?"

I want you to face every day with the knowledge I had onstage at the spelling bee and on the track in 2017. If you do the work, good luck will come your way. And really, it won't even be luck at all.