*Fast and Free*

*687 words*

Sandy sighed and smiled. Monday afternoon track meets were the highlight of her week and even though she was easily the worst runner on the varsity team she still loved it. It made her feel as if she were flying, skimming the ground as an eagle skims the tops of the trees. And today was Monday.

She pulled on her running shoes and jumped up and down. Even if she wasn't great at running she was enthusiastic, and better yet she loved it. Bang! And she was off! Sandy, who was falling behind as usual, looked down at her feet. They looked as if they were moving fast, but apparently not fast enough. She pumped her legs and told them to go faster, but it was no use. She resolved that she would not be the fastest today, or ever. She doubted that her dream of going to the Olympics would ever come true but she would still try. The team finished and she returned to her old Subaru in the parking lot. She was happy, but she felt like a loser; she wasn’t accepted into her team as much as she would have liked. She had to get faster!

The next week at the track meet she put on her shoes and did her usual warm up. She knew that she was still far from the best, but over the week she had been training. She wondered if it would make any difference. Bang!  They were off again but this time instead of lagging behind, she whizzed in front of everyone else with terrific speed. It was effortless. Everything was nothing but a smudge of color. She glanced down at her feet and saw nothing but a blur. She turned but did not see anyone around. Instead, she found herself at the start line. She ran about a three second lap and without knowing it she had run three laps already everyone else on the team stopped running all together and watched her as she whizzed around the track.

When she was finished, after staying far in front the whole time, she got into her car and wondered how it had happened. It couldn't possibly be a result of her training over only one week. She decided to wait till the next track meet and see if it would happen again. Three more weeks and the same thing happened. After thinking it over, Sandy determined that she had some sort of superpower that enabled her to run with unnatural speed. She was pumped! Her dream of someday running in the Olympic 400 meter race might actually come true.

**3 Years later**

It was Sandy’s first year of official Olympic training. It was amazing to think that just three years ago she was the worst runner on her track team and she had thought that her dream of going would never come true. Yet here she was with her team training for the Olympics.

After weeks of training the very last day finally came. She imagined herself standing on the top of the podium kissing her shiny gold medal. Sandy pulled on her running shoes. Bang! She ran her last day of training fast and free. She was so excited.

The first day of the Olympics finally came! She gathered up her shoes and everything else that she would need for her big race. She ran up the stairs to the indoor track. Her foot slipped on the stairs and she felt her ankle break with a sharp crack. She screamed with the pain in her foot, her head hit the cold, hard concrete stairs and she felt blood flow over her face. Sandy heard muffled voices and that was the last thing she knew.

 Sandy woke up to find herself lying in a hospital bed. Everything was foggy and uncertain but as she lay in her bed, she knew that she was certainly not going to be able to run in the Olympics this year. She wondered if she could run in the next Olympics in four years or if her superpower would still even exist?