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Mr. Lane

Language Arts 3

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### Coming Back

It was the final practice before the conference meet. I was a junior and was expected to place at state. I worked all summer to accomplish this. The will to succeed kept me moving forward. Step by step I kept moving forward to accomplish my dream of one day becoming a cross country state champion. I ran along the sea wall feeling the cool fall breeze wash over me. The breeze sank into my lungs throwing off my steady breathing pattern. My team mates and my coach ran right along side of me. I heard the loud waves crash against the sea wall and my team mates soft breathing. I turned around heading back towards the school taking long steady strides. Our coach wanted us to take it slow and steady to be ready by Thursday's meet.

I skipped over the curb crossing the street. As I reached the other side of the street I felt my body moving forward but my knee was fighting my body not wanting to cooperate with it. My knee gave a tug to the side sending shocks of pain through out my whole body. I feel like every nerve in my body was about to explode. I tumbled to the ground screaming with distress. My team mates and coach quickly hovered over me. They had blank expressions not knowing what to do.

Coach Johnson grabbed my arm helping me up. It was almost impossible to stand up even with support but I fought the pain and eventually gained my balance. Both of my arms were resting on my teammates trying to get weight off of my leg relieving the pain. They walked with me resting on their shoulders all the way back to the school. What even hurt worse than my knee

was the thought that was going through my head at the moment. It was like someone pierced a knife through my brain. What if I can't run in the conference meet to go to state or even worse what if I can never run again?

These thoughts hit me like a semi smashing a slug bug. The realization of reality that I might never run ever again was unbearable to think of. Everything in my body was in extreme pain. My mental thoughts hurt even worse than my physical pain. I felt like I was sinking in a deep hole that I might never get out of. I tried to get all those negative thoughts out of my head so they didn't overtake me but trying to get them out was like trying to get gum out of hair. Running was my life, my future, my dreams, my motivation, and most importantly it gave me hope. I didn't know what I would do with out it. The voices of Coach Johnson and my teammate Allie pushed all those heart wrenching thoughts aside for now.

I was overwhelmed by all the questions they were asking me.

"Where does it hurt?" said Coach Johnson.

"What exactly happened?" asked Allie.

I could not absorb all their questions. I remember making a very faint remark that reassured me everything was going to be okay. "I will not let this be the end, I will fight until till I succeed my dreams no matter what the consequences are. Not anyone or anything can stop me."

"Jessica you stay with Skyler while I go get my car. Allie go call Skyler's mom and tell her to meet us at the Emergency room," said Coach Johnson.

Without waiting for a reply coach ran to his car. Jessica and I were sitting on the curb waiting for coach to arrive. I remember feeling so many different emotions while sitting on that curb. I have never felt so many emotions at one time. I was like a sponge and the emotions were

the water. I absorbed the feelings of anxiety, uncertainty, uneasiness, apprehension, fear, and the feeling of lost hope.

The wait for coach Johnson felt like an eternity. I tried to occupy my mind with happy thoughts but they quickly disappeared when Allie sprinted up to me. She was breathing very hard when she approached us. I could barely decipher what she was trying to say but eventually comprehended her urgent message.

“Your mom is on the way to the emergency room, she told me to tell you to hang in there and stay strong Skyler,” said Allie.

“Okay,” I said with a shriek of pain.

I heard the loud rumbling of coach's car round the sharp corner. It stopped abruptly right in front of the curb. Coach jumped out of the car. He sprinted to me with a great sense of urgency. Allie stood up and grabbed my arm. Coach grasped my arm on the other side. With great effort they both pulled up letting out gasps of air. They slowly walked me to car. Jessica came up behind us opening the car door. Jessica grabbed my leg setting it on the floor of the car. An enormous excruciating pain rushed through my body again. Coach and Allie carefully lifted me into the car and shut the door behind me.

Coach and Allie ran around to the other side and swiftly got into the car. With Jessica sitting in the passenger seat and Allie sitting right next to me we were finally ready to go to the emergency room. As I was looking out the window I saw how quickly everything was going by me. I saw one thing for a split second than it was gone like it didn't even exist. It disappeared just like my hope that one day I could become a state champion.

There was so much promise that I would place at state last year but that particular day changed everything. I saw my confidence, hope, faith, and my will to succeed bypass me like I

was driving past it at 100 mph. I started to question if I really had those qualities before I injured myself. The promise, motivation, determination, faith, and hope felt like it was only there for one single second.

We finally reached our destination. Coach, Allie, and Jessica all got out of the car. They rushed over to my door to help aid me out. Jessica held my leg up while I scooted closer to the edge of the seat so reach Allie and coach's shoulders. I balanced myself trying to maintain my balance while I got out of the car. I got out of the car thinking I just accomplished a huge task. We gradually proceeded our way to the door.

When I entered the E.R. front desk my mom was right there waiting for me. She briskly walked over to me and gave me a big hug. She whispered in my ear and told me everything was going to be okay. I wish I could believe that but I knew the reality. The reality was that I did something very serious to my knee that I may never come back from. This made me doubt my future as a runner. That is if I would ever have a future again as a runner.

Still balancing on coach's and Allie's shoulders we walked up to the receptionist desk.

"What is your emergency?" asked the receptionist.

"She fell down and her knee is in unbearable pain," said coach Johnson.

"Patient's name please," proclaimed the receptionist

"Skyler Ann Martin," retorted my mom.

"Here is paper work that needs to be filled out, straight ahead to the left is the waiting room, a doctor should be with you shortly." said the receptionist.

The waiting room smelled like a mixture of aerosol and lavender air freshener. Everyone was dead silent waiting with anticipation for the doctor to arrive. After a few minutes a middle aged plump man with a brown beard approached us. He said "Hello my name is Dr. Kane and I

will be helping you today.” My mom and I followed him into a room that I assumed was where they gave people MRI’s. I told him every single detail of what happened. He nodded his head in acknowledgement and later asked my mom to leave so I could receive an MRI.

Laying on the bed attached to the MRI machine startled me with a feeling of unexpected danger. The machine was so big and intimidating. I felt like I was going to get eaten up by it. I remember how isolated I felt than. It was like I was stranded on an island with no one within a thousand miles of me. I hear Dr. Kane’s voice through the microphone say, “ Don’t worry this will only take about 10 minutes. Just relax and it will be done before you know it.”

I close my eyes trying to relax while I heard the machine beep every few seconds. Every beep represented every speck of hope I had. When the MRI was done there was no beeping. I have lost every ounce of hope I had. I tried to mentally prepare myself for the worst. It didn’t matter how much I tried I just couldn’t get myself to face reality.

My mom and Dr. Kane walk into the room with looks of dejection and despair. I know the news will not be pleasant. Dr. Kane walks over with my results. He tells me with great damper or disappointment I have an acl injury. He points to my Anterior Cruciate Ligament and told me I tore it. Than he told something I will never forget in my life. He told me that it is very unlikely that With my knee structure I may never be able to run again. This hits me so hard. I feel like an anchor was tied to my foot and I was sinking, sinking , sinking into the deep depths of darkness. Running is my life. What would I do with out it?

My past was replaying through my mind as I crossed that finish line. I watched as the ribbon fall to the ground. I have just done it. I am Iowa’s 3a cross country state champion. I thrust my hand into the air showing all my doubters that it really just happened. I screamed and yelled with satisfaction. You bet I did! This feeling was as good as it gets. The last year of

training, the hard work, the desire, the discipline, passion, and the motivation all compressed itself into 13 minutes and 42 seconds. The glory of looking up at that clock was primal and the feeling was so great it couldn't be described. I am history now, no one will forget Skyler Martins come back and fight to success. I am part of the most amazing, thrilling, exciting, and inspirational come backs of all time,

I sent a message to all those people that think they lost every single ounce of hope, and think they will never succeed their dream. I have told them the sky is the limit. Nothing is impossible. You have to dream big. The bigger the better.

I have learned two very important lessons. I have learned the direct connection between what you put into something and what you get out of it. A year ago I walked out of that doctor's office feeling lost and like I was sinking, but with the little hope I had left I took and made it much greater. I swam and did therapy twice a day until I came back from the injury. It was summer time when I began to run again. When I ran again I worked so hard until the point were I was certain I was to go to state. It made all the gut sucking practices, waking up early, and all the sore muscles worth it.

The most important lesson I learned is with hard work, with belief, with confidence, and trust in yourself and God anything is possible. I wouldn't be a state champion if it hadn't put my faith in God. I learned that what you give to God he gives back ten fold. Yes, he definitely gave back ten fold! I am a cross country state champion! After I crossed that finish line I knew I came above water. I was no longer sinking. I came back. I came back to become a state champion.