

I grit my teeth and twist my body back into the proper form as I barrel forward toward the heaven called the finish line. Every second I come closer. Every minute drags me farther from my personal record. My feet almost drag, but I catch myself to make sure I don't trip or stagger, it would cost me precious moments. Right angles, don't drag, breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth, keep it up.

"You can do it!"

"Keep going!"

"Keep it up! You're doing great!"

I hear the ongoing shouts of the parents and supporters on the sidelines cheering me on. Every step is painful and exhausting. Every breath I am trying to force air down my lungs, every thought is to keep going until I reach the end. Then there are the not so amazing thoughts. The ones that beg me to stop. The ones that plead me to walk and forget about my stupid personal record. The ones that tell me to forget it and quit, but I don't give in.

Turning the corner, I spot my mom and beside her, one of my coaches. My mother's brown hair flaps in the wind and my coach smiles hugely as she yells positive support with my mom. I have only a short bit to run till I reach the end. I try to run harder as the cold air makes me short breathered.

"Go! Go! Go! Kick it into high gear! Finish strong" I hear my mother scream encouragingly, pointing towards my final destination. I don't want to go faster, to try harder than I already am. I want to collapse on the ground or go home and lay in my bed, I don't want to run any harder than I am, but I don't want to give up either. I suck in a large breath and open my strides so I'm covering a farther distance faster. I reach the last turn passing my mom and coach. It's just ahead. That little opening that means everything.

In, out, in, out. I check my breathing once again and try to absorb the screams and cheers from all around me. The crowd blurs into a mixture of colors as tears sting my eyes from the cold wind.

"Come on!"

"Almost there!"

The finish line is right in front of me. I propel myself forward glancing at the clock beside the blue tent behind the finish line. I am so close! I can't stop now. I dig my feet in the ground and drive myself straight ahead. My gut's sore, my muscles ache in places I didn't even know I had muscles, and my lungs burn as my breathing turns heavy. I estimate it's about ten feet ahead. Ten feet ahead till I can

relax. Nine feet ahead till I can stop. Eight feet ahead till I can sit. My nose is running, and I can barely think straight. I just want to walk, to relax and curl up into my blanket.

“Come on, Breanna! You got this!” My mother’s voice pierces through the air and reminds me to focus. She’s supporting me. My family’s supporting me. My team’s supporting me. My coaches are supporting me. They all believe I can do this, now I just have to believe in myself. I speed up faster than I thought I could ever drive myself to go. Panting and feeling the salty sweat drip down my face, I race to the heavenly spray painted white line that signifies the end and leap across.

The cold bites my ears and stings my eyes. I hunch over and place my hands on my knees filled with adrenaline more than exhaustion. I see my breath come up in clouds and then disperse into the grey sky and I feel little wet sprinkles fall on my face. I wipe the water mixed with sweat off my face and look at the ground. The same ground so many have walked and run on. I had accomplished something on this ground too. I stare up with a shiny, exhausted smile at the clock tied to the metal post as the numbers become my new personal record.