**THE ATHLETE**

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She jumped over the pole of the toll booth with a solitary halogen shining towards the ground, illuminating the area. The booth, fortunately had been defunct for about a year thereby making up for the dearth of a place to practice.

One day her father promised to her as they dined to fulfill her wish to see cinema. A rare luxury, the remote town did not present many sources of amusement to the poor citizens of her village. She and her father chose to watch the 9 PM show of Bhaag Milkha Bhaag.

Engrossed, her eyes wouldn't budge from the screen. The ravishing graphics, the cloud of emotions and the undying spirit compelled her to absorb each frame and moment of the 3 hour long story. She was impressed and at the same time overwhelmed at the incredible presentation of the athlete's life. His feats stirred her insides budding a zeal to imitate by his life. She couldn't stop thinking about him. Even as she slept back home she would see him sprinting sitting amongst the awed audience.

Her father was surprised when a day later she demanded a gift. This girl of 7 years had been a humble, obedient child with no vices of an infant. He was awestruck and happy to sanction her want. She demanded a pair of athletic shoes.

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Since that day, it was all she ever dreamt of. It was all she ever cared about. She was fortunate enough, the government had abandoned due to 'program complexities', their plan to build a toll booth. The clever and resourceful girl that she was, now practiced on the abandoned road which was her very own theater of dreams.