**SHORTCUTS SHORT SUCCESS**

**(Prakriti Shetty, 9th JK)**

As he completed his essay on ‘Shortcuts short success’, title did Rohan know that he was about to set upon a journey challenging the truth in the statement.

He got a call from the gym nearby and then there he was ready in shorts and trainers to begin his workout. A few days ago, in light of certain body shaming incidents he had faced, he had decided to cut down as much of the flab as possible as fast as possible.

It began. Hours of treadmill, jumping jacks and weightlifting was followed by preparing an intensive diet plan, ranging from small food cravings at midnight to a full-, fledged meal. It wasn`t as easy as Rohan had thought it`d be. He had to give up the things he loved, and being a weak willed person, it was proving to be very hard for him.

One day, after a particularly long day at the gym, as he lazed about on the couch, he chanced upon a paper that had fallen to the floor. He picked it up and the advertisement for a protein-shake blared out at him. Attractive rates, a list of advantages, positive customer reviews, all was crammed into that paper to not give any loophole to the customer to decide against buying it. Rohan fell into the trap.

After a few days of speculation and convincing himself that he was right, he finally brought home the protein-shake he had taken a fancy to. It was then that he noticed that the shake was not branded and quiet a weird smell seemed to emanate from it, but he could not pinpoint what was wrong. Even if he could, he wasn`t ready to accept that he was in wrong- so might as well forget about it.

It worked pretty well for him at the start- he lost almost fifteen kilos in two weeks, but as Shakespeare says ‘They are as sick that surfeit with too much’….Delighted at his success, he began replacing water for his protein shake and soon it took a toll upon him.

From the one day he forgot to take his protein input, the tables turned over. All the kilos he had lost were resurfacing and in a week he gained back all that he had lost. Quite contrary to his body his face was devoid of the chubby cheeks he was known for and the skin now drew tight over his bones. Whether it was the fault of the unbranded product or the problem of having used it too much, Rohan didn’t know and didn’t want to know, but the high fever he caught as a result of that became so severe that he had o be admitted to the hospital.

As he lay on the hospital bed, fighting to resurface, he suddenly thought of the safe methods of gym he had given up in search for something faster and effortless. He had been at a fork in his path, and whilst both paths lead to the same goal, he chose the smooth, rose-strewn path to the rugged stony one- and that choice of his was his downfall.

Then that thought he had tried to suppress rose above all shackles as he was reminded that ‘Shortcuts cut short success.’