

## **Blood is Thicker...**

It's been said that no two snowflakes are the same. I think that it's like that with people too, or at least that's how it was with my twin sisters Nina and Anna. Despite their genetic similarities, they were as different as two people who shared a womb could be. Nina was a recognized athlete in our community. We all expected her to attain a scholarship on one field or another, but she lacked a certain edge to her reasoning. Anna was on a first name basis with every librarian in town, but she had all the grace and poise of a two-legged table. They had found few occasions to relate with one another and grew distant. Had I not lived with them, I would not have known them to be sisters.

They did, however, share a drive for success that seemed to blossom around the same time during senior year. After a sensational track and field season, Nina was offered a full ride at a reputable state university near our home, so long as she maintained a 3.0 GPA. Anna was frying bigger fish: she was one perfect report card away from seizing the title of valedictorian from her rival, Chet Goodweather. Anna had worked relentlessly her whole life for this honor.

The future seemed bright for the twins. It was the end of the sixth Wednesday of the fourth marking period. All the students reported to their homeroom classes before dismissal. They were going to receive their progress reports. As the sisters unfolded the printouts in their respective homerooms, their smiles turned to tears. Nina was getting a D in science and Anna was getting a C in gym class.

As they were used to doing, the girls went their separate ways to cope. Nina sat under the bleachers and lamented her fate. She was particularly upset by the fact that she had just purchased a sweater from the university with her babysitting money. She kicked up a dirt cloud. "Now I'm going to feel like an idiot wearing that hoodie," she muttered. Anna was at the library. She tried to share her dilemma with Clareece, one of the librarians, but Clareece just kept shushing her. Anna checked out some books on sports and left.

Nina and Anna came home at the same time and were surprised to find one another disappointed. They each had expected to be the center of emotional devastation at home tonight. Both were dismayed at having to compete for this attention. As they bickered with one another about who suffered the greater misfortune, they realized that the other's problem sounded easy to solve. Anna barked, "Your problem isn't even really a problem. I could pass that test sleeping and I can show you how as well." Nina retorted, "Yeah, well, all you need to do to get an A is to shave five or ten minutes off of your mile time. Two weeks of training with me and the coach will try to have you on the track team." The girls exchanged glances and came to a tacit agreement.

Every morning for the next two weeks Nina woke Anna up at 4:30 in the morning to run. At first Anna was barely moving, and Nina was able to review her science vocabulary while jogging alongside her. But two weeks later, Nina actually had to sweat a bit to keep up with her. Every day after school, Anna would drag Nina into the library. The girls would chatter excitedly as Nina caught on to a difficult concept during these marathon study sessions. Clareece would shush them.

Nina and Anna were the closest they had ever been during that two weeks. On the morning of Nina's science test, Anna walked her to her classroom. She quizzed Nina with index cards along the way and encouraged her as they parted. Nina struggled to complete the test, but she could tell that studying with Anna made a big difference. She knew all the stuff that they had studied. Nina finished the test in time to watch Anna's final run. Anna ran the mile in under than 8 minutes, almost twice as fast as before she started training. As Anna crossed the finish line, Nina was waiting there with a bottle of water.

Final report cards were distributed the Monday before graduation. Nina and Anna agreed to meet up at the library after school to open their report cards together. The mood was tense as they arrived. Each girl had wanted to peek at her grades, but both stayed true to their word. When they finally opened up their report cards, their dreams came to life. Nina got a B in science class. She would meet the terms of her scholarship. Once again she could wear her college hoodie with pride. Anna got an A in gym class. She had edged out Chet Goodweather. She would graduate as the top student in the class. The girls screamed in excitement. Clareece was there too, shushing right along the whole time.

1. Which of the following is best described as the inciting incident of the story?
  - A. The girls get bad progress report grades
  - B. Clareece shushes Anna for the first time
  - C. The girls agree to help one another
  - D. Nina and Anna achieve their goals
2. Which of the following is best described as part of the climax of the story?
  - A. Nina regrets buying her college hoodie
  - B. Anna beats Chet Goodweather
  - C. The girls agree to help one another
  - D. The girls get bad progress report grades
3. Which of the following is best described as part of the exposition of the story?
  - A. The girls get bad progress report grades
  - B. Nina has a sensational track season
  - C. Anna beats out Chet Goodweather
  - D. Anna runs a mile in just under 8 minutes
4. Which of the following is best described as part of the rising action of the story?
  - A. Nina passes her science test
  - B. Nina jogs with Anna at 4:30 AM
  - C. Nina and Anna study in the library
  - D. Nina sat under the bleachers and felt bad
5. Which of the following is best described as part of the resolution of the story?
  - A. The girls get bad progress report grades
  - B. Anna beats Chet Goodweather
  - C. The girls agree to help one another
  - D. Nina and Anna study in the library
6. Which of the following is best described as part of the falling action of the story?
  - A. Nina has a sensational track season
  - B. The girls get bad progress report grades
  - C. Nina and Anna study in the library
  - D. Clareece shushes Anna for the first time
7. Which best describes the sisters' relationship at the **beginning** of the story?
  - A. They are best friends.
  - B. They hang out quite a bit.
  - C. They hate one another.
  - D. They are distant from one another.
8. Which best describes the sisters' relationship at the **end** of the story?
  - A. They are very close.
  - B. They have grown distant.
  - C. They are impartial to one another.
  - D. They learned to tolerate one another.
9. Which term best describes the following: modern day, at a library, and in a school?
  - A. direct trait
  - B. indirect trait
  - C. motivation
  - D. conflict
  - E. setting
10. Which term best describes the following: *a girl may lose her scholarship due to academics.*
  - A. direct trait
  - B. indirect trait
  - C. climax
  - D. conflict
  - E. setting

11. The turning point in the story	A. rising action
12. Events after the climax	B. falling action
13. How the story ends	C. resolution
14. Events before the climax	D. inciting incident
15. The moment the conflict is introduced	E. climax