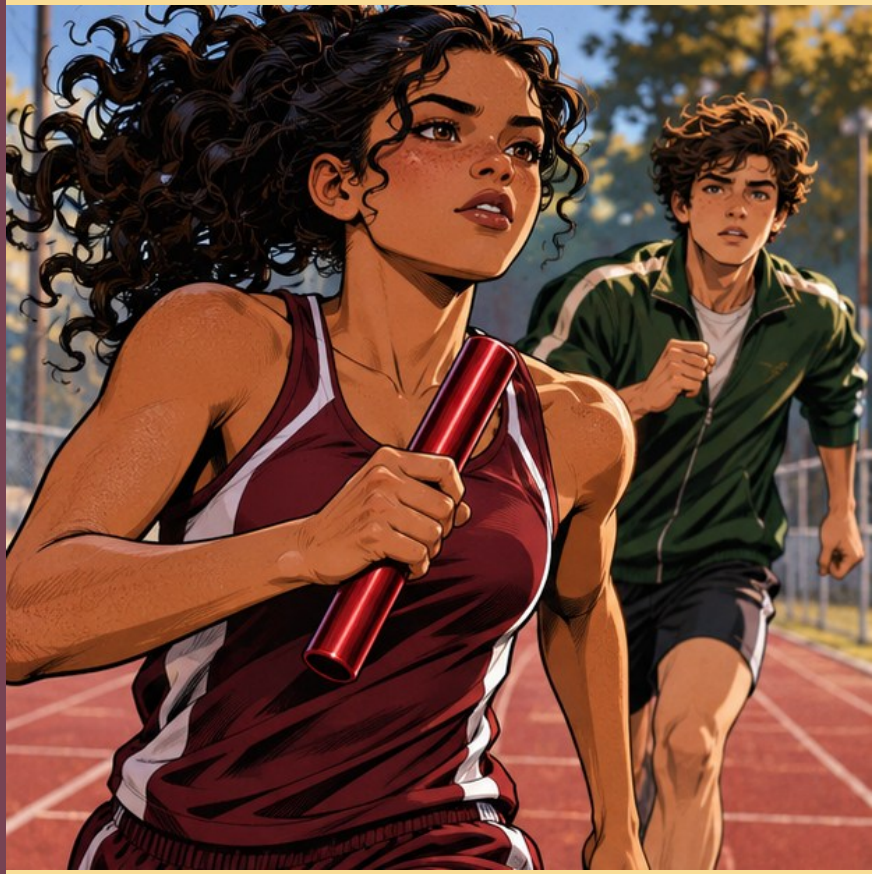
VOKLA / TEEN READERS

# Two Chalk Marks

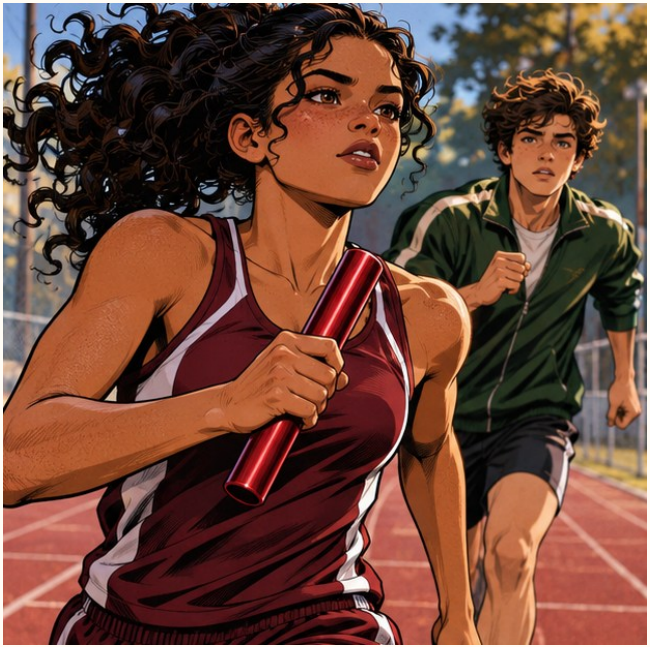
ENGLISH STORYBOOK / A2



VOKLA Press

Free student edition

# The fastest pair



At relay practice, Luz and Ben always ran the fastest laps. Together, though, they kept losing time. Ben started running when he heard Luz shout. Sometimes he left too early. Sometimes they almost ran into each other. On Thursday the red baton hit the track and rolled under a bench. Nobody said anything for a moment.

# A bad idea?



“Maybe we need a louder word,” said Ben. Luz looked across the field. Three other runners were already shouting. “I have a quieter idea.” She drew a chalk line on the track behind Ben. “Watch my feet. Start when I reach this line.” This time Ben moved so early that Luz could not reach him with the baton.

# One shoe closer



Ben picked up the chalk. He made a second mark one shoe length closer to his starting place. They tried again. When Luz reached the new mark, Ben began to run. After three steps, he held out his hand. The baton arrived. They tried twice more. Each time the second mark worked a little better than the first.

# The white shoe



On race day a little rain washed both marks away. Ben stared at the wet track. Then Luz took off her spare white shoe and set it on the grass beside the place they remembered. Ben watched her feet reach the shoe. Three steps later he felt the baton. They finished second. Back at school, Ben put the shoe on the team shelf. “Our quietest coach,” he wrote on a card.

AFTER THE STORY

# Back to the story

1 **Why does a louder word seem unhelpful?**

2 **What does the shoe do on race day?**

YOUR TURN

Explain the team's first problem and its solution in three sentences.

THREE WORDS FROM THE STORY

relay • a race that teammates run in turns

baton • a short stick runners pass

mark • a sign on a surface