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Jordan Simon is dead. Dead of a steroid-related overdose. An overdose that could've been entirely avoided if only someone had taken initiative. But with whom does that responsibility for initiative lie? Jordan's mother? Jordan's track coach? Jordan's school? Jordan's best friend? Such questions comprise this complex case concerning steroids and the shadier side of athletics.

Jordan Simon, track star at Hilliard Academy, lived with his mother, Kelly Simon, after his father died, whose life insurance policy left Jordan with a sizable trust fund. Recruited onto the Hilliard Academy track team, Jordan attended the pricy school on funds stemming largely from one of Hilliard's own scholarships, and Jordan's best friend, Morgan Pearce, also sprinted with the track team under their coach Terry Swift. All was well until Jordan's senior year, when after a few years of mediocre times, Jordan miraculously began shaving the seconds off his runs; athletically, Jordan excelled, but a weak immune system, inexplicable nosebleeds and a withdrawn countenance plagued the young star. Then everything screeched to a halt: Jordan, pumped full of the steroid EPO or erythropoietin, was found dead.

The trial commenced with each side's opening statements tossing the metaphorical hot potato of blame back and forth, and then the plaintiff called forth three witnesses: Kelly Simon, Morgan Pearce and Dr. Lynn Roper, an expert in the use and abuse of steroids. Dr. Roper testified of the obvious EPO symptoms Jordan manifested: the nosebleeds and the weak immune system. Stating that Jordan's EPO blood content was a 1000 times greater than the average

person's, Roper then declared anyone with a background in athletics (including Kelly Simon, a track star in her heyday) should have noticed Jordan was under the influence of steroids. Morgan Pierce, who did indeed notice the oddness of Jordan's behavior, brought her concerns to Coach Terry Swift, thinking he would take care of the matter.

Which brings us to the defense. Terry Smith, Jamie Hagar and Aubrey Brady testifying as witnesses brought unique perspectives to the trial. Smith's credibility as a witness was called into question, having been involved in a drug and steroid scandal at USC along with his own severe style of coaching. However, the coach did try to confront Jordan about his potential steroid use, sitting the boy down to discuss the matter and the consequences. Consequences Swift only knew too well, losing his job over his involvement at USC. Jamie Hagar, assistant principle and athletic director at Hilliard, along with Aubrey Brady, an expert athletic consultant, presented to the jury the practices the school had and should have had regarding drug prevention. Hagar admitted that the school's drug education program, a one week freshman class, lacked force, and Brady revealed many of the school's technical flaws in adhering to the legal requirements regarding drug and steroid usage and prevention.

Both sides presented logical arguments in their favor, and the jury is now required to sort the information, weigh the evidence and discern the truth. Who is culpable? Who should've taken action? And who should bear the responsibility for watching the young track star waste away his potential and life? The jury now holds the outcome in its hands, and both sides anxiously await the ruling.