8. SAHARA

The London Marathon brought in 20,000 pounds. The money was used to set up a training room in the rehabilitation centre in Cambodia.

From then on I received many letters of support. There were also invitations from charity organizations to take part in other races. Two months after the London Marathon, I ran in a half marathon in Lyons, and then in another one in Stockholm.

I worked hard for charities and for my own company. Despite my busy schedule, I spent as much time as I could with Alison. In the evening, she and I cooked supper together. Pork ginger and salad was one of her specialities, while mine was pasta. We both enjoyed a beer with our meal. Those evenings were a lot of fun. We grew ever closer together.

I later took part in marathons in New York, Cambodia and Mozambique. When I was confident enough that I could run a full race, I decided to take part in the Great Sahara Marathon in April, 1997. My aim was to collect money for a Red Cross Artificial Leg Centre in Vietnam.

In the Great Sahara Marathon, you run about 220 km across the Sahara Desert in seven days. The distance varies from day to day. Water is provided by the sponsors. All other necessities must be carried in a backpack. These rules make this race special.

I started the race together with 355 other runners from around the world. The 27 km run the first day were quite easy. After reaching the goal, I slept in a tent with eight other runners. During the day we were competitors, but in the tent at night we did our best to encourage one another.

The second day we did 30 km. For 15 km we ran over hot, soft sand. Sand got into my left shoe and I ended up with a large blister on my heel.

On the third day we ran 26 km. All day we ran along a beach. Every step I took, my artificial leg got stuck in the sand. At each step I had to pull it out of the sand. My progress was painfully slow.

The fourth and fifth days were a climax to the race. We had to run 80 km through the desert. It was the only time we were permitted to run at night. I decided to run from 8.30 am until 5.30 the following morning.

I started to run, but on the dunes I seemed to make no progress. Soon I could see no other runners. Alone in the desert, I put my head down and silently kept going through the night. When the dawn eventually came, the beauty of the golden sand slowly raised my tired spirits. I shall never forget that scene.

On the sixth day we did 42 km. I was tired. I had no desire to eat. If I tried to eat, I felt sick. By then my face was thin. I don't recommend that extreme way of dieting.

Then came the last day, on which we only had to run 19 kilometres. I gave it my best from the start. As I neared the finish, seven other runners joined me. They had been waiting for me. They wanted us all to cross the finishing line together. It was a great moment.

I finished 283rd out of 355 runners. My time was 47 hrs 46 min 30 sec. I took about 30 hrs longer than the winner, but I finished ahead of 72 runners. I was the first runner to complete this marathon with only one leg. For this I received a silver medal.

EXERCISES (8)

Ａ　本文の内容に合うものにはＴ、合わないものにはＦを書きなさい．

(1) I did not cook supper because I was too busy. ( )

(2) In the Great Sahara Marathon, all the necessities are provided by the sponsors. ( )

(3) During the day and in the tent at night, other runners and I were competitors. ( )

(4) I received a silver medal because my time was great. ( )

Ｂ　日本文の意味に合うように、（　）に適語を入れなさい．

(1) そのチャリティー・コンサートはたくさんのお金をもたらした．

That charity concert ( ) ( ) a lot of money.

(2) デザインは年によって変わります．

The design varies ( ) year ( ) year.

(3) 結局、私はレースで２位だった．

I ( ) ( ) second in the race.

(4) 最初、彼は進歩がないように見えた．

At first, he seemed to ( ) no progress.

(5) 前方にゴールが見えた．

I could see the finishing line ( ) of me.