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Chapter One

In the Park

‘I’m telling you, blood...’

Devon leant over the smaller boy. Devon could see the nerve pulsing in the boy’s forehead, see his eyes widening as they tried to look around, tried to find a way out. Devon smiled. These kids were so stupid, so scared!

‘No one’s here for you, you get me? Jus’

hand it all over.’ Devon made his voice hard. Even though this kid wasn’t going to give them any trouble, Devon felt the rush he felt every time.

Devon tightened his grip around the boy’s wrist and felt the bones under the skin.

‘Hear me now?’

‘Let go! Let me go!’ The boy’s voice was high and girlish. The trousers of his new school uniform flapped over his shiny new school shoes.

‘Give him the phone then!’ Ash leant in towards the boy too, almost growling the command.

‘I can’t!’ The boy squealed. ‘He’s got my hand.’

Devon shook the boy’s hand away but stayed close. The boy fumbled in his pocket and a blue five pound note fluttered almost

to the ground before Ash picked it up. The phone wasn't so great but the iPod that came out with it was a beauty. A woman passed with a pushchair, but she looked straight ahead and sped up. She was scared of them too, Devon could feel it. No one ignored Devon.

'No!' The boy was trying hard not to cry, Devon could see that, and he smiled down at him, waving the iPod in front of his face. He felt like he had the power to make anything happen.

'S'not yours anymore, see?'

Devon flicked a look at Ash and they jog-trotted away out of the park and past the astro turf into the estate. Then they sat down on the wall under Ash's balcony and laughed.