

Chapter 1

I've finally got to the front of the line. Even from here, I can see the bus is packed. It's always full on a Saturday evening. I check my watch. Nearly 5:30. I've been shopping in Renton all afternoon. Now I'm going home. It's October and it's already getting dark.

I get my ID card out, ready to show the driver. I shake my head. The photo was taken two or three years ago. I had a mega-dodgy haircut back then. A black, spiky bog brush. I could be Simon Cowell's secret son. It's not a good look. My hair's a lot better now. Longer, sort of shaggy. A bit skater-dude.





Soon, I'm stepping onto the bus. It's good to be out of the cold. I hold up my ID.

"Half single to Lenby, please," I say.

The driver is a bloke in his fifties. He's got greasy, grey hair and a big, saggy face like an unhappy bloodhound. He looks at my card, then looks at me. He nods slowly and taps the details into the ticket machine.

"£1.45," he says.

I hand over two pound coins and wait for my change. With my ticket in my hand, I head along the gangway. There aren't any spare seats. I puff out my cheeks. It's a long trip home and it looks like I'll have to stand. I've almost given up hope. But then I see, over to the left, two empty spaces. I can't believe my luck. I won't even have to share.

Quick as a flash, I'm in there. I put my shopping bags down and stretch my legs out under the seat in front.