



Joey

I drop my bag of chips and run. I can hear them, shouting after me. Telling me to stop. Four of them – all older than me, all of them angry. The biggest is about six foot four and he’s snarling like a wolf.

“You’re dead, white boy!” he shouts.

I twist my head, to see where my best mate, Momo, is. He hasn’t moved, and my attackers ignore him. They want me ... only me ...

I see Momo reach for his phone, and hope that he’s calling the police.



“Oi – watch where you’re going!”

I don’t see the man until too late and dodge past him, almost stumbling. He’s swearing, but I don’t care. I have to get away.

“Check out Running Man!” jokes someone outside the Kebab House. Other people, standing on the pavement, start to laugh. No one tries to help me.

Like every other Friday evening, the High Street is packed. Loads of blokes are gathered outside the mosque at the bottom of the road, enjoying the warm weather. The dome shimmers in the late sunshine.

A gang of teenage girls stand on the corner of Draper Street, all short skirts and bright make-up. Ordinarily I’d look again, but I have to keep going. No time to admire the scenery. The lads who are after me won’t stop. They want my blood. They’re animals ...

An African man glares at me, as I barge him out of the way. I shout an apology and keep going. I run between two parked cars and weave through the heavy traffic. I want to get far ahead of my hunters. I can lose them in the streets near my house. Is that stupid, leading them back to where I live?

Are you wondering who they are, the people chasing me?

Easy. They’re my girlfriend’s brothers ...