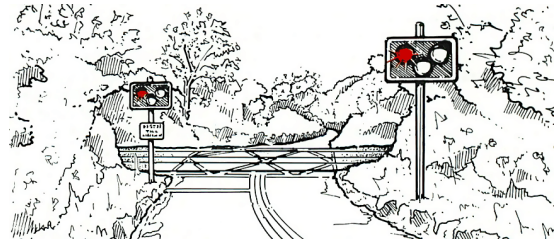


Keep off the tracks!

“Don’t go playing near that railway track!” Jake’s dad warned, “You know it’s dangerous. That’s why it’s illegal!”

Jake and Nazeem nodded in agreement, but then grinned secretly at each other as they turned to go. Whilst they raced through the park on their bikes, Nazeem shot off, shouting, “Last one to the tracks buys the ice creams!”

Jake set off in pursuit, puffing and panting. They both zipped under the barrier onto the railway track just before it came down. Nazeem punched the air triumphantly like Usain Bolt. Victory! Up ahead, brambles choked the stony tracks, an old shopping trolley lay discarded and empty crisp packets were pinned to the thorny hedge. The tracks gleamed, reflecting the harsh, midday sun.



There was nobody to be seen so Jake dropped his bike and went to explore, ignoring the bright red warning signs. Without a care in the world, he balanced like a tightrope-walker along the cold, rusty rail.

Suddenly, he felt vibrations shudder through his body. The train was coming! At that moment, his foot slipped and jammed painfully in the sleepers. “Ow!” he howled, desperately tugging at his foot. It was stuck fast. There was no escape.

Nazeem span around and, with his heart pounding, ran to rescue his friend. He pulled with all his might but to no avail. The colour drained from Nazeem’s face; this was serious! Panicking, he scrambled down the track and screamed for help. As he heard the train rumbling closer, he spotted Jake’s dad screeching to a halt in his red car. Desperately, Nazeem blurted out the problem.

“Where is he?” Mr Newton shouted frantically. With fear in his eyes, he ran as fast as he could to his son’s rescue. With all his might, he tugged on Jake’s leg, dislodging his trainer. Jake was free! A second later, an Intercity 125 sped past in a blur with its horn blaring.

After their narrow escape, Jake’s dad ranted at the shaken boys. They bowed their heads in shame.

That day, they learned a valuable lesson: playing on railway lines is insane. And, of course, there were no ice creams ...