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Opening extract from

Come on Danny (gr8reads)

Written by

Andy Croft

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Chapter 1

Not again

"Not again!"

Danny pulled his football kit out of the bag. It was still damp and muddy. He hated playing in wet kit. The Year 8s were playing Benton after school. Benton had beaten them twice last season. Danny wanted to win this one.

There was no time for breakfast. Anyway, there was no food in the kitchen. Just a lot of empty bottles and cans. His older brother, Mark, was in last night with his mates. Danny would get some crisps at the shops.

There was no sign of his mum. She must be still in bed. Danny stuffed his muddy kit into a plastic bag. He let himself out. It was raining. It always seemed to be raining.

Baz and Lee were waiting for him outside the shops.

"You done that maths?" asked Danny.

"Yeah, right!" said Baz.

Lee looked at Danny as if he was crazy. "God, I hate school," he said.

"Only three more years …" said Baz.

Baz and Lee hated school, because they always did badly. All Danny's mates hated it. At least they said they did. For some reason they wanted Danny to hate it too. But Danny liked school. He always had. Sometimes he pretended he didn't like it. Just so the others wouldn't call him a teacher's pet.

Danny liked English best. He liked reading. And he liked writing stories. He wrote about all kinds of things. Being a hero. Being grown up. Being happy. Seeing his dad again. Anything could happen in a story. You just made things up. It was like making a wish …