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opening extract from

# Just a Bit of Fun

written by

## Robert Swindells

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by

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Barrington Stoke Teen books

# Chapter 1

## All Right For You

I'm Harley.  That's my first name, and I bet you can guess my second.  Go on – I'll give you three tries and you'll only need one.

Yes that's right – Davidson.  Like the bike.  My dad called me after a motorbike.  Feel free to laugh, by the way.  It's all right for you.

People always laugh.  I don't care anymore.  I tell myself it could be worse: I could be called Honda Ninety or Yamaha One Two Five.  That'd be worth laughing at.

I'm a boy too. That's the other joke people have. They think Harley's a girl's name.

Anyway, I'm in Year Ten at Sorley Hill.  It's Thursday afternoon – RS with Miss Lake.  It's Halloween next week and Miss Lake's dead against

Halloween.  In the middle of the lesson, she starts slagging it off, same as every year.

“There’s our world,” she says, “and the spirit world. Demons dwell in the spirit world – unclean demons with evil plans who like nothing better than to creep into our world and spread their evil.”  She stops and waits a minute or so.  She looks at us over her half glasses.  “We’re lucky it’s not that easy for them to reach us.  They need a portal – a door-way between the worlds.  But some of the things we humans do open up such portals – things like gazing into crystal balls, trying to contact the dead and celebrating Halloween.  Halloween is nothing but an excuse to make money.  The shops make children think it’s alright to do the sorts of things which open deathly portals and let dark forces invade our lives.”

Dave Watson's hand goes up. Old Lake looks at him and he goes, "Bit over the top Miss, don't you think? I mean come on – Halloween's just a bit of fun, right? Doesn't hurt anyone. It's not like shooting smack or putting yourself on the outside of eight or nine vodkas."

It's no good of course – nothing's going to change old Lake's mind. She's a fossil. Her brain is set in stone. Every year there's a Halloween Disco in the gym, and every year Miss Lake does her best to try and get it stopped. We all have a laugh at what Dave says, but all it does is set the teacher off again. The lesson drifts by and we don't learn anything new.

As for me, I can't wait for this year's Disco. There's something I've got to do that night.