

“Don’t go playing near that railway track!” Nazeem’s dad, Mr Seeall, warned as he adjusted his cap. “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, who was a magnet for trouble, shot off.

“Last one to the tracks buys the ice creams!” he yelled tauntingly as he zoomed ahead.

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, rustling in the wind. The tracks gleamed, reflecting the harsh, midday sun.

There was nobody to be seen so Nazeem, who loved to explore, dropped his bike, ignoring the bright red warning signs. Without a care in the world, he balanced like a tightrope-walker along the cold, rusty rail. He felt vibrations shudder through his body. The clickety-clack grew louder. The train was coming! Momentarily, the sun blinded him. At that moment, his foot slipped and jammed in the sleepers. “Ow!” he howled, hopelessly tugging at his foot. It was stuck fast. There was no escape.

Jake 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 Jake’s face. This was serious! Panicking, he scrambled down the track and screamed for help. As he heard the train rumbling closer, he spotted Nazeem’s dad, screeching to a halt in his red car. Desperately, Jake blurted out the problem.

“Where is he?” Mr Seeall shouted frantically, whilst holding on to his cap, as he sped towards the boys.

With fear in his eyes, he ran as fast as he could to his son’s rescue. Determined, he tugged on Nazeem’s leg, dislodging his trainer. Nazeem was free! A second later, an Intercity 125 sped passed in a blur with its horn blaring. After their narrow escape, Mr Seeall, now a raging fire, ranted at the shaken boys. They bowed their heads in shame.

That day, they learned a valuable lesson: it is foolish to risk your lives to play on railway lines. And, of course, they never were given their ice creams...