

## Illness Strikes - Day 2

*Both have won four, lost one, and drawn one. It's very tight up there at the top. But only one team can win. Only one team can win tickets to the Champions League final!*

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*'D'you think we'll make it?'*, said Wil as they gathered at home after the match.

*'NO WAY!'* said Clara, *'they're much too good for us, we won't stand a chance in the replay!'*

*'Well'*, said Jaz thoughtfully, *'if we continue on the way we are doing, we do stand a chance. We have to play all the teams again, including Butterfield, but we are improving. Just look at the results.'*

They all stood staring at the table Jaz had laid out before them. Played six, lost one, won four, drawn one.

*'And we're improving. That was a great goal on Saturday!'*, said Freddy, looking admiringly at Jaz, who had headed the winner at the weekend.

*'And we've got our lucky pennant!'* he added.

*'What's a pennant?'*, said Clara.

*'A kind of flag, show them, Wil'.*

Wil's chest puffed up proudly as he remembered the most amazing day of his whole life. He pulled a small triangular flag out of his sports bag. Arsenal FC.

*'Wow!'* they all said, as he unfurled the pennant.

*'Yes!'*, said Wil as he laid it out on the table.

*'Tell them, Wil...'* said Freddy,

*'Shall I? Why don't you do it?'*

*'Yes, tell us, Wil, tell us about the card!'*

Wil looked over at Freddy, as his golden skin started to turn an embarrassed shade of purple.

*'Not the card! The flag!'*, Freddy said, laughing.

*'Ah, yes, the flag...'*, said Wil nervously. They gathered round closer as he began their story.

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*'Well, you know we went to Auntie Annie's at half-term? We did. Well, she picked us up from home in her big car, I don't know what it is exactly but it was really shiny and big...'*

*'It is a Rolls Royce, Wil',*

*'Well, anyway, it is really shiny, big, and you sink down in the seats so you can't see out of the windows. Anyway, you know Auntie Annie, she's a bit small too, and she couldn't really see out of the windows either. And she was driving. Anyway we sort of got there OK, although we were stopped by the police twice. We ended up at her house in London.*

*'When we arrived, Auntie Annie showed us up to our room, the normal one with the big big bed and the huge wooden wardrobe, and told us to get ready because she was going to have a party. Then after about half an hour she said 'Yoo hoo, you two!', and we had to go downstairs. Loads of people were coming into the house, and Auntie Annie was giving them drinks and we had to smile and be nice and stuff'.*

*'What happened next?', said Hardy, intrigued.*

*'Then it was kind of boring. Three ladies came up to me and patted me on the head, and said 'haven't you grown?', and a gentleman passed me a tray and asked me to serve the drinks. And I'm only seven. I told them that I wanted to be a great footballer and that drinking alcohol was not good if you wanted to be a great footballer. The gentleman said 'You're not wrong there, laddie!' and then took two more glasses from the tray, balanced a third one on top of the two, and waddled off uncertainly. He waddled into a lady with a hat. Her hat fell into the trifle. Then, you'll never guess what happened...'*

*'JoJo popped up and gave you a Valentine's card...?' said Hardy, mainly to be annoying.*

*'Well...no, I can't really tell you...y'see what happened was...'*

*'Tell us about the card, Wil!'*

Wil looked at Freddy who nodded back to him.

*'OK, O...K! I'll tell you about the card. Here it is! It's from JoJo! So what?'*

Predictably, Hardy grabbed the card and opened it, with Clara. He sang the little poem inside. The two of them grinned and gurned and gabbled like goblins as they read it. Wil just squirmed and smiled in embarrassment.

Then Freddy took over the story from his dumbstruck brother.

*'What happened was that we were standing around watching the people when the door opened again. Standing in the doorway were a man and a woman, the man smartly dressed in a grey suit and the woman elegant in a long dress. They both looked strangely familiar. Our Aunt rushed over,'*

*'Ah Theodore, my dear chap, Melanie, I'd like you to meet my nephews Wilis and Freddy'.*

*'Then the man spoke, quietly, to Wil'.*

*'Ah, Wil, my friend, your Aunt said you would be here. She tells me you look like me and play like me. I wonder if you would like one of these?'*

*'We looked up, but only a little, at the familiar figure standing in front of us. Out of his usual kit, he*

*looked different, but it was definitely him. Standing in front of us, talking to us, and giving us this flag...’, Wil held it up for emphasis, ‘my hero... Theo Walcott!’*

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