

Cold, Wet, and Happy – Day 3

'League table for this season so far. Looks good for us'.

Hardy, Wil and Freddy joined Jaz on the floor and started to analyse the results of their first season.

'Shhh!'

Jaz looked round to see who was making the noise.

'Shhh!'

Wil looked around to see who was making the noise. He whispered to Jaz,

'What's her problem...?'

'SHHHH!', shouted the woman. Wil looked at Jaz, hunched his shoulders, and turned back to the books they had spread out on the table. The woman turned to her pile of books behind the desk and started to organise them, busily.

'Shhh!', she said again, head still buried in the pile of books.

Jaz and Wil laughed silently to themselves. They were the only people in the library.

Having spent time the previous day looking through their results, and the very respectable three wins and one loss so far, Wil had started dreaming of the ultimate prize – a trip to the Champions League final in May.

The snow and wind had brought down some cables in the road opposite, and one whole side of the street was without electricity, including Jaz's house. Although they couldn't cook, and could only light the house with candles, Jaz's main concern was that he was without his beloved electronic equipment. No music, no computer, no Internet.

So they had gone to the library, mainly to check out the reference section for maps and guides to Athens, where the Champions League final would take place, on May 23rd.

Wil had led the way into the small stone building which housed Springhurst's public library. The entrance area had racks full of leaflets and flyers for various local events. Only one had caught Wil's eye as they entered. It was entitled *'Kidscapism – Football Stories for Children – Read today'*. Wil picked it up,

'Hey, look – this is interesting! Stories about football for children!'

'Nah, who'd want to read about a bunch of kids in a football team?' replied Jaz, perhaps a little harshly.

They walked into the main room, which was empty apart from several million books, and a faint smell

of oldness. Wil sniffed the air deliberately, trying to work out what the smell reminded him of.

'Shhh! No sniffing. No snorting. No talking. No telephoning. No belching. No burping. No food. No farting.'

'Wow, lots of rules!', Jaz had said, quite quietly.

The small lady looked down her pointed nose over the rim of her rimless glasses and glared at Jaz. Her whole body appeared to be quivering with rage at the sight of two customers.

'Erm, excuse me, can you show us where the maps are, please?'

'Show you, show you? SHOW YOU? I'm a librarian, not a tour guide! Over there.'

She waved her hand in the general direction of the right side of the room.

They sat silently, hunched over the maps they had eventually found, staring at the images of Athens, the ancient Parthenon sitting high above the city on the Acropolis, and the magnificent Olympic Stadium where the final would be played. In hushed tones, due to both the awesome information and the fearsome librarian, they discussed what they had found.

'It says the the cradle of democracy, what does that mean?' Wil asked Jaz.

'It is where European civilisation is supposed to have started, where people first started seriously on education, on making laws, on giving all the citizens a chance to participate in decisions affecting them'.

'Right...', said Wil uncertainly, *'and what about the stadium?'*

'72,000 people. Home to the legendary Panathanaikos'.

'Pana-tha-what-kos?'

'Pana-than-I-kos', Jaz spelt out slowly, *'Greece's most famous football club!'*

'And we're going there, are we?'

'Well, that all depends, doesn't it?' replied Jaz, clearly a bit frustrated by Wil's failure to understand that they would have to win the league first.

'If we win, we'll go!'

Having agreed that they were going to win the league, the rest of Friday was spent with Freddy and Hardy, discussing who might be in the Champions League final.

'Definitely Barcelona', Jaz said, *'been to the last two finals, beat Arsenal, got Ronaldinho and Eto'o.'*

They'll be there again.'

'What about Chelsea? Best English team in it!', said Hardy, who often claimed that he was John Terry, especially when he was playing in defence and wearing his full Chelsea home strip.

'Chelsea – I don't think so!' replied Freddy.

'Arsenal, Arsenal, A-R-S-E-N-A-L!', Wil chimed in noisily, adjusting his hair slightly at the front, *'...and I look like Theo Walcott'.*

'Pity you don't play like him!', shouted Hardy,

'Hey that's not fair! You might look like John Terry, but you play like Terry Wogan!'

Freddy took over.

'Stop arguing. We're going to win our league because we're a great team. OK, so we've got Walcott and Terry', he said, looking over at his brother and friend scrapping in the corner, *'and we've also got Thierry Henry'*, he raised himself up tall to look over at the mirror on the wall and smiled, *'and we've got Michael'.*

'Who does Michael look like?' said Jaz.

'Not sure, he's sort of unique, really...'

'Well Clara looks like Robbie Savage!' said Wil extracting himself from Hardy's headlock.

'Definitely savage!' said Freddy, *'and Alex looks like...well...Alex, and Jaz, you're a kind of Mido'.*

'And JoJo...hmmm...like an exotic bird, eh Wil?'

Wil blushed, and turned back to the table where he was laying out a large sheet of blank paper.

'What're you doing now?' said Hardy.

'Planning...' said Wil quietly.
