

PART 1

END OF YEAR 6

We walk across the last few metres
of the playground
for the last time
together
me and PS and Caleb.

Can't believe it, PS says.
Can't believe we're 'ere for the last time.

Caleb goes: *I know, man, crazy, innit?*
Good times! I shout, *Good times!*

PS gives me a little push on the shoulder,
starts runnin ahead of me,
shouts, *For sure!*
Many more to come though, eh, Nate?
Let's go, man, let's go!

And I'm by his side Caleb catches up
out through the gates
into the big wide world
into summat strange and new.

And there's Jax and Auntie San
waitin outside the corner shop with freeze pops
smilin.

Then I hear him,
NAAAAATTTTTEEEEEYYYYY
I'M FLYYYYYYYYING!

*I can touch the
SKYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYY!!!!!!
I'm SPIIIIIIIIIIIIDDDDEEEYYYYYYYYY
MAAAAAAAN!
NAAAAATTTTEEEYYYYY!*

High as a kite on the swings in the park,
Mum wavin from the bench
and he sees me God knows how but he does.

As we reach 'em Mum's on her feet
and we're gone both of us all of us
and now Dylan's 'ere and he's hot and sweaty
and loud and
Dylan's 'ere, man, Dylan's 'ere.

*Chinese tonight to celebrate, eh, Natey? Mum says.
Have whatever ya want,
we'll live on toast for a week if we have to.
We've got so much to celebrate.*

*All I want is number 27 and 53, Mum.
Food of the gods.*

She looks at me all confused
but still smilin anyway.

And she's just about to speak
when I think I hear someone shout my name
from far away across the park

and I look over

and there's a silhouette
of a man
and he's shoutin my name

and he's walkin towards us

and I stare

and I swear
as he steps outta the sun
the man looks

like

Jesus.

And just like that, he's gone

I blink hard as the rest of the school
swarm out onto the park
screamin and wailin
and kids are huggin and cheerin
and jumpin all over each other.

And on the far side
there's nothin but sun

and shadows

and a single swift
blazin a trail across the sky.

Y'aright, Natey?

Mum says
strokin my fringe.

Ya look like you've seen a ghost or summat?

She's starin deep into my eyes,
little wrinkles of concern on her face.

Yeah, Mum, I just...

I just thought... I... saw... summat.

Dun't matter...

was nothin... I s'pose...

Just me bein daft.

**HEY, NATEY! COME AN' PUSH
MEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!**

Comin, Dyl! Comin my brother!

And I turn back to check
again

Nothin.

I shake my head

like I'm shakin water out my hair,
like I'm shakin the mist
of a half-remembered dream away

and walk back towards my family.



Later that night, when Dyl's in bed

and Jax is hammerin the controller
and bangin in goals on FIFA
and Auntie San's doin that mad eyes-closed
dancin thing by the speaker,
I'm in the kitchen tidyin up the last of the Chinese
when Mum comes in to get another drink.

*Ha! What a night, eh, Natey?
Can ya believe that kid, eh?
It's like nothin's happened.
Like he's brand new!
He's a miracle, inee?*

She cracks a can and sparks a fag,
blows the smoke outta both nostrils
leans her head right back
and she's laughin to herself
and swayin to the music.

*Mum, ya know at the park before
when ya said I looked like I'd seen a ghost?*

She puts the can on the table and turns to me.
*Yeah, I was proper worried for a minute, love.
Ya went white as anythin,
thought ya were gonna faint.*

*As if we need owt else dramatic happenin
after this year!*

I put the last plate in the sink.

*Well, maybe I did see summat, Mum.
Not a ghost... but... summat...*

I turn around
and she's already swirlin away
off out towards San and the music.

Aw, San, it's our song! Turn it up girl, c'mon!

I stand for a second.

*Nah, man,
c'mon, Natey,
get a grip, dude.
It
couldn't
have
been

him.*