

Chapter 1

Chris in trouble

It was Monday afternoon. School was over. Most of the students and teachers had gone home. Chris Jones sat on the wall of the teachers' car park. He was a tall, thin boy with dark brown hair. Two girls from his class sat next to Chris. They were talking and laughing loudly. Chris tried not to look at them. He watched some boys kick a football across the car park. There were only three cars in the car park: a small white one, a small red one and a big dark green one. Sometimes the ball hit one of the teachers' cars. Every time that happened, the girls laughed louder.

The ball hit the red car.

'Hit that one again,' Chris called. 'It's Mr Smith's car. I don't like him.'

'Kick the ball! Hit the car!' called one of the boys.

All the boys started calling, 'Kick the ball! Hit the car!'

The boy with the ball kicked it hard towards the red car. It hit the car. Chris heard a classroom window open. An angry voice shouted, 'Stop that!' Chris looked up at the window. A man was looking down at the students. He was wearing a white coat.

Chris picked up the football. He kicked it. The football flew through the air. It just missed the green car and hit one of the windows in the classroom. The window broke. The girls stopped laughing.

'That's the science room window,' Chris said. 'We're in trouble now.' He jumped off the wall.

'Let's go!' said one of the boys. He ran out of the car park into the street.

'Run!' shouted another boy. All the boys who were kicking the football started to run away.

Chris started to run away too. But two teachers were coming towards the car park. One was Mr Smith, the teacher Chris didn't like. The other was the science teacher in the white coat.

'Chris Jones!' called Mr Smith. 'I know it's you. Stop!'

Chris stopped. He turned towards Mr Smith. The other teacher was talking to the two girls who were still sitting on the wall.

I'm in trouble now, Chris thought.

Chris was late home from school. He walked around the side of the house and in the back door.

His sister Rose was watching television in the living room. She was twelve and had red hair. The television was very loud. Rose was watching something about girls and horses.

'Hello,' said Chris. 'What are you watching that for?'

Rose stuck her tongue out at him. When they were younger, they were good friends. But when Rose started at the high school with Chris, things changed.

Chris threw his school bag down on the floor then went into the kitchen. He picked up an apple and took a big bite out of it. His mother, Donna, was sitting at the kitchen table. She was drinking a cup of coffee and reading a magazine. The radio was playing a country song that Chris didn't like. His two four-year-old sisters, Milly and Tilly, were playing in the middle of the kitchen floor. They were twins – they both looked the same and they both had the same red hair as Rose. The little girls were hitting pots with spoons and singing loudly. They shouted, 'Hi, Chris!' then started singing again.

'Oh, hello, Chris,' Donna said. 'I didn't hear you come in.'

'This place is so noisy,' Chris said. 'No one can hear anything.'

'Did you have a good day?' Donna asked. She smiled at him. She was tall and thin like Chris but she had red hair like the twins and Rose.



‘It was okay,’ Chris said. ‘Did anyone from school phone?’

‘No,’ said Donna. ‘You aren’t in trouble again, are you?’

‘No, of course not,’ Chris said. ‘When’s dinner?’

‘At seven. I’m just having a rest,’ Donna said. ‘The shop was very busy today.’

‘When’s Dad coming home?’

‘Oh, he phoned – he’s going to be late. He wants to finish putting the doors on the house he’s building.’

‘He’s always late,’ Chris said unhappily.

‘He works very hard,’ Donna said.

Milly and Tilly hit the pots even harder.

‘It’s too noisy in here,’ Chris said.

Milly and Tilly laughed at him.

‘I’m going to my room.’

Donna went back to her magazine. Milly and Tilly started singing another song. The television and the radio continued to play.

Chris picked up his bag and marched to his bedroom. He closed the door loudly.

This is the German version of **Stranger Danger**

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