

## MOTORTOWN

Simon Stephens

*She barely dares look at him.*

DANNY: I like your jacket.

JADE: Thank you.

DANNY: Is it new?

JADE: No.

DANNY: It looks it.

JADE: It isn't.

DANNY: It looks all shiny. Clothes are funny when they feel all new, aren't they? When they smell new. It's a good feeling, that, I think.  
Take it off.

JADE: What?

DANNY: I wanna take a photograph of you. On my phone. Would you mind if I took a photograph of you, Jade? Here.  
Take your, your, take your jacket off, will ya? That's better. There. That's lovely. Gissa smile. Lovely. *(He pulls a mobile phone out of his pocket and takes a photograph of her.)*  
Do you want a Coca Cola? Do you? You want some Coke? I've got some Coca Cola in the car. Or how about a smoothie? Do you want a yoghurt and honey smoothie? I love yoghurt and honey smoothies, me.  
Put your hands down. On the ground.

JADE: -

DANNY: Put it there.

JADE: Don't

DANNY: Jade. Now.

*She puts one hand on the ground. He takes another photograph.*  
Now keep it there.

JADE: -

DANNY: I'm going to go and get some Coca Cola and a yoghurt and honey smoothie from the car. I'm not going to tell you when I'm coming back. But when I come back I want your hand to be there.

JADE: Please don't.

*He smiles at her briefly, then leaves. She keeps her hand on the ground.*

*He comes back in with a bottle of Coca Cola, a small honey and yoghurt smoothie, a canister of petrol, a body bag folded up, a cushion and a cigarette in his mouth.*

*He lights the cigarette. He smokes it for a while, watching her. He puts the cigarette out on her hand. She screams. Starts crying.*

DANNY: Did I say that you could move your hand?

JADE: No

DANNY: No, I didn't. I didn't tell you you could move your hand. So why- Jade, jade, look at me- why did you move your hand, Jade?+-

JADE: Because you burnt me.

*DANNY bursts into a giggle. Then stops. Gathers himself. Takes another photograph with his phone. Looks at her for a while.*

DANNY: Sometimes there are days when my heart fills up. Here. Take your shoes off. Take your socks off. We had. There was. Our sergeant-major. He was a funny man. I quite liked him, as it goes. You hear all these stories, don't you? Attention! But, no, no, he was alright. He'd get drunk. Do this to you. *(He hits the soles of her feet with the butt of his gun.)* With a hammer. Never did it to me. Hurts does it? And then he shouts at you. SIT FUCKING STILL, JADE! The feeling of spittle on yer face. Here. I'll wipe it off. *(He wipes her face.)* And you can't tell anybody. You can't pull rank. You can't do that. Get a bucket of shit and piss from the slops of the drains there. Get some little geek cunt. Pour it over their head. It was quite funny. And out there. Everybody says about the British. How fucking noble we are. I used to like the yanks. At least they were honest about it. At least they had a sense of humour. Yer get me? *(He imitates the famous Lynndie England 'Thumbs up!' sign right in her face. And takes an American accent.)* Thumbs up, Mac! Some of the things we did, down in Basra. It was a laugh. I'll tell yer that for nothing. Here, Ali, Baba. Get that down your throat, yer raghead cunt. You never know. Fucking fourteen-year-old girl? Don't matter. Could've strapped herself. Underneath her fucking burka. Take it off!

JADE: What?

DANNY: take it off! Take your burka off, this is a body search. I've seen boys with their faces blown off. Skin all pussied up and melted. Eyeballs hanging out on the cartilage. Yer helmet holds it all together. Bits of yer skull held in. Will you pretend you're my sister? Jade?

JADE: -

DANNY: Will you, Jade?

JADE: If you want.

DANNY: Thanks. *(Takes another photograph with his phone.)*

JADE : It's muscle.

DANNY: What?

JADE: It's muscle, not cartilage - that holds the eyeball into the skull.

*He looks at her for a bit.*

DANNY: Yeah.

*Looks at her for a bit more.*

Course you come back. Go up London. Fucking burkas all over the place.

*He picks up the petrol canister.*

Now here's a question for you. Is this really petrol or is it water?

*He opens the canister. Holds it open, under her nose, for her to sniff.*

What do you think? Jade? What do you think? Answer me.

JADE: I don't know

DANNY: No, I know. But have a guess. What do you reckon?

JADE: I think it's petrol

DANNY: Do yer?

JADE: It smells like petrol

DANNY: Are you sure that's not just your imagination?

JADE: No, I don't know.

DANNY: Your imagination plays terrible fucking tricks on you in situations like this.

*He pours some over his head.*

You look quite funny. Your hair's all wet.

*Takes another photograph with his phone.*

You want a cigarette?

*He pulls a cigarette out of his packet. Offers it to her. She doesn't take it. He pops it in his mouth.*

*Crouches down. Pulls out a box of matches.*

JADE: No.

DANNY: Should we?

JADE: No, please, no, don't, don't, don't, don't. Please

DANNY: Chicken. Coward.

*He pulls out his gun and presses it into the cushion against her chest. He shoots her in the chest four times. There is no scream. Not much blood is apparent at first.. Just four dull thuds. She slumps over a bit. He takes another photograph with his phone.*