



# Temptation

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## Theme - Resisting Temptation To Do Wrong

At the end of the day, the 'Gang Of Three' were first out of the school gates - as usual.

'Race you to the park!' yelled Connor, already half way down the road. Within a couple of minutes he was hiding behind a tree in the park, waiting to ambush his slower companions. As Shaun and Dean came level with the tree, Connor leapt out to scare them, but his foot slipped on something smooth in the grass. Shaun laughed as Connor fell onto all fours, growling like an angry chimpanzee, until he noticed the flat brown purse that had made him slip.

'What's that?' asked Dean, pointing at the purse.

'An elephant, stupid!' jeered Connor. 'What d'you think it is?'

Connor opened the purse, and shook it. A few coins spilled out on to the grass, which Shaun and Dean immediately grabbed.

'Oi! They're mine!' yelled Connor, as he checked for anything else worth having in the purse. The other two dutifully handed over the coins, and - having found nothing of interest - Connor tossed the purse into the bushes.

'Actually,' said Dean, 'the 'Gang of Three' are supposed to share everything!'

'So it's time for the 'Gang of Three' to take a trip to the sweet shop!' grinned Shaun.

'Race yer!' shouted Connor. The 'Gang of Three' sped off as fast as lightning.

Meanwhile, back in the playground, Paul was getting more impatient by the minute. He was supposed to be taking his younger sister Anne and her friend Georgie home, which meant he didn't really have time to go to the park with his friends Adam and Saleem, to play football.

'Hey Paul!' yelled Saleem, across the playground. 'Hurry up! We're ready to go!'

'Be there in a minute', Paul yelled back. 'Got to wait for my sister and her friend.'

But he didn't have to wait much longer. Almost immediately Anne and Georgie sneaked up behind him, prodding him in the back. 'Ouch! Wotcha do that for?' Paul snarled at her.

Anne was grinning cheekily at him. 'Don't forget mum said we have to go straight home.'

'Girls!' thought Paul. 'Why do they have to be so annoying?'

The five children set off across the crowded playground, strolled out the school gates and started walking along Park Road. Home was only half a mile away - less if they went along the footpath through the park. As they reached the park entrance, Georgie took everyone by surprise, grabbing the football out of Adam's hand and giving it a hefty kick. It soared out onto the grass and Georgie chased after it like a mad hare!

'Oi!' Adam shouted, but Georgie was shouting 'Let's have a kick-about!'

Anne grumbled, knowing they were supposed to go straight home, but there was nothing she could do. The boys were off, charging after the ball, passing, shooting, and tackling, with Georgie in the thick of it, as if there were no tomorrow. Soon even Anne joined in, forgetting they needed to go straight home.

Paul made some goalposts with their bags and challenged the others to get the ball past him. When it was Anne's turn, she was allowed to shoot from very close range, because she had a very weak shot - or so Paul thought. With the prospect of scoring against her older brother, Anne gave the ball a mighty kick. Before he could move, the ball hit Paul on the head, then bounced off into the bushes behind the goal. The others burst out laughing as he rubbed his now muddy forehead. He stuck his tongue out at them, then trudged off to fetch the ball from under the greenery. They watched as he picked up the ball, stuck it under his arm, then reached back under the bush to fetch something else.

'Cor - wotcher got?' called Saleem, as Paul walked back towards them holding a battered old brown purse.

'It's an old purse.' said Paul, as he opened it up to see if there was anything inside. There wasn't, except for what looked like an old library card with a number on it, and an old person's bus pass.

'Oh chuck it back in the bush!' sighed Adam. 'Let's get on with the game.'

'Yeah, but some old person must be missing it,' replied Paul. 'They'll need the bus pass.'

'And people might have seen us with it,' Georgie added, looking around the busy park.

'Let's drop it in at the police station,' Anne suggested. 'Someone might be missing it, and if you hand it in then you obviously aren't a thief! It's only the other side of the park, and if we're late home we can tell mum that's where we've been.'

Suddenly realising how late they were, Paul decided this was a good idea. He stuffed the purse into his school bag and they headed off towards the police station.

Near the gates they passed the 'Gang Of Three'. Connor, Shaun and Dean were scoffing a huge bag of sweets between them. As they passed, Paul thought he heard one of them say: 'Good job you slipped on that purse!'

At the police station the children handed in the purse, describing how and where they'd found it. Paul kept quiet about the 'Gang Of Three'. He wasn't entirely sure whether he'd heard right. The policewoman took the children's names and addresses and thanked them for being so honest and responsible. Paul and Anne's mum was cross with them for being late, but she did soften when she heard what they'd done.

The following morning, passing the Head Teacher's office, Paul's eyes widened. Through the window, he glimpsed a policewoman standing in the office, waving a familiar-looking brown purse at Mrs. Harper. Paul's heart pounded, because a sickening thought had struck him: 'Perhaps she thinks we took some money out before handing it in!'

The assembly began with Mrs. Harper saying she had an important announcement to make. Paul found himself going red as his name was read out to join his sister Anne, Georgie, Adam and Saleem who were already on their way to stand alongside Mrs. Harper.

'Yesterday morning', their Head Teacher solemnly announced, 'an old lady went to her bank and took out a lot of money – ten £50 notes! When she got home she realized she'd lost her purse.'

Paul's heart thumped as he did the maths. A huge amount of money had been in that purse. Even though he knew they were innocent, how could they prove it? Mrs Harper glanced down at Paul, and then she continued, in a very serious tone.

'These children found the purse. They could have kept it, or thrown it away, but instead they handed it in at the police station.' Here she paused. Paul and the others looked down at the floor. They knew they'd done nothing wrong, but this didn't look good.

'Someone,' Mrs. Harper went on, in a serious tone, 'took some coins from the purse.'

Paul was about to blurt out that it wasn't him, but Mrs. Harper was in full flow.

'The interesting thing,' she said, 'is that inside the purse was a secret compartment where the notes had been placed – and they were still there! The lady who owns the purse has asked me to pass on her thanks to these children, and also to give them this reward to share.'

Everyone watched in amazement as Mrs Harper held out £10 notes to each of the five children. At the back of the hall sat a very quiet 'Gang Of Three', all staring down at the floor.

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