

Bourne
toWrite...
creative writing
workshops

Darrel

by Martin Bourne

Did you hear that? That was me making a decision in my head. Should I turn right or left? My choice, yes my choice. Never going back, turn right, it's obvious really, but feels good that I decide. Can't turn left, only more houses that way, so turn right towards town, so come on, don't hesitate.

"Darrel."

That's it, that's what I needed and I'm on my way. Not far into town, could catch a bus but need to save my cash so I'll walk. Find my mates, crash on a sofa. I look round, is he coming after me, no, good. Blood on my hands, wash it off with the cola. My ear is still ringing and my ribs hurt, but I got him, this time I got him and he won't be 'teaching me a lesson again'. Did I hurt him badly, should I go back and check. No, fuck it, he used me as a punch bag for too long. If he needs a doctor too bad, if he dies tough. It was knock for knock. He started it and I ended it, and that's what I'll say, if he's in a bad way.

Where are you mum, could really do with you now?

Could go to Auntie Vi's, she'd probably let me stay the night, but need to make a break, no family, word will only get back to him. Yeah, find my mates, they're probably at the chicken shack, Jacob, yeah, ask Jacob, he's alright and his mum is really nice, like my mum used to be.

Only about another half a mile, feel like running. I'm laughing, why am I laughing. I've got fifteen quid, it's the arse-end of a Sunday and I've got nowhere to stay tonight.

Is that a siren. yeah deffo. Could be police, could be an ambulance. Could be going to him. So what if I hurt him, he had it coming. It's been worse this last couple of years and I told him after the last time that if he did it again that would be it. No way am I ever going back.

Nearly there now, head to the chicken place first, if they're not there, where would they be, ding-dongs maybe. Suppose I could stay there, nah too many weirdo's. Gibbo told me he kipped there one night and woke with some guy out of his head swinging a machete about.

Can't hear the siren now.

Why did my dad have to be such a bastard? Blamed me all the time, blamed me for everything but especially for mum. He said I wore her out playing up, getting into trouble. Why did she have to go up the school every time there was a problem? Why couldn't he go? He said he was always too busy but just once it would have meant something, if he had stood up for me, tried to sort out what was going on. If he just once had spoken to me, but his answer was always a smack in the face.

Mum always said he had his demons, said he'd had it tough. Was that why he had to piss his wages away, but mum never took sides? She just said 'Darrel, try to be a good man when you grow up', and I said I would even though I wasn't really sure what being a good man was, just not like my dad I suppose.

Not far now. I can see the chicken shack and I think I can see some of my mates there. Hope I can find Jacob.