



What would YOU do
if the whole world
just stopped?

Yes. The **WHOLE WORLD**. Birds in the
air. Planes in the sky. And every
single person on the planet -
except you!

Because that's what keeps happening
to Hamish Ellerby...

Read on for a sneak preview
of Hamish's adventure in this
EXCLUSIVE extract from

HAMISH

AND THE
WORLDSTOPPERS

by **DANNY WALLACE!**



Hamish tumbled to the ground, grazing his knees
and rolling over until he went slap-bang into a fence.
His bike skittered and clanked to the ground. The
shopping went everywhere.

'Are you all right?'

He looked up to see a girl about his age. She was
wearing blue combat trousers and a blue military
jumper. She had a bag over her shoulder with the letters
'PPP' written across it and a small badge stuck to one
side - a badge with the St. Autumnal's school sign on
it. And, strangely, she had one blue streak through her
otherwise jet-black hair.

'I'm fine,' said Hamish, looking around, panicked.
He had nowhere to go and Grenville would be here
any second. 'I'm sorry, I'm...'

'HA! HAHAAAAH!'

The laugh was loud and **malvolent** evil.



Grenville was here. He dropped his bike to the ground. His associates did the same. The three boys each cracked their knuckles menacingly.

They had Hamish right where they wanted him. Up against a wall and just out of earshot of any nosey grown-ups, busybodies or blotter-jotters who might stop them undertaking their evil deeds.

Grenville sauntered forward, still in his El Gamba mask. Evidently, he thought he looked pretty cool in that.

Either side of him, Lurgie and Roger seemed to grow taller.



‘Get up . . .’ said Grenville, putting his hands on his hips. ‘Get up right now—’

‘Excuse me,’ said the girl, interrupting. ‘Why are you wearing a mask?’

‘What?’ said Grenville, who really didn’t want to be distracted right now.

‘Is it for dramatic effect?’ she asked. ‘Only you look like a doofus.’

Roger and Lurgie were shocked. Who was this girl? No one spoke to Grenville like this!

‘I’ll have you know this is a Mexican wrestling mask,’ said Grenville, patiently. ‘The same one worn by . . .’

El Gamba!

He made an impressive face. The girl scrunched up her nose.

‘My cousin lives in Spain,’ she said. ‘Doesn’t “El Gamba” mean . . . the Prawn?’

‘What? No!’

‘Yes it does,’ said the girl, “‘El Gamba” means “the prawn”. What kind of name is the Prawn? The Prawn is pretty much the least frightening name of all time.’

‘No it’s not,’ said Grenville, who felt like he was losing some of his power here. ‘Shut up.’

‘Oh, no, the Prawn, the Prawn!’ she said, sarcastically. ‘Well, I better do what you say, seeing as you’re known as the Prawn and all. I wouldn’t want to get light-to-moderate food poisoning or anything.’

Roger laughed. Lurgie pushed him to tell him to stop, then had to wipe his hand.

‘Look, I’m pretty busy here,’ said Grenville.

‘Sorry,’ said the girl. ‘I must remember not to be so *shellfish*.’

Roger laughed again and even Lurgie had to admit that was a pretty good gag. *Who was this girl?* wondered Hamish.

‘Now, *Ellerby*,’ said Grenville, firmly. ‘You need to be

punished for what you did to my associates.’

‘I didn’t do anything to your associates,’ said Hamish, who felt a little braver with this girl around. ‘Honestly. They just ran at me and missed.’

‘Scratch and Mole said you made them look stupid in front of everybody,’ said Grenville. ‘And so now I’m afraid you must pay.’

The three boys were very close to poor Hamish now. He took a deep breath, ready for whatever they had in store. Grenville suddenly took Hamish’s hand, lifted it up to eye level and said . . . ‘Now *that’s* a nice watch.’

‘It’s my dad’s,’ said Hamish. ‘Or it was. Please, Grenville, look—’

‘Well, if it was your dad’s, it’s not like he needs it now, is it?’

Hamish started to panic. He wanted to fight them. He could feel his chest tightening with rage. This was so unfair. And they were going to take the one special thing Hamish had.

But there were three of them. And they were so much bigger than him.

‘I’ll just borrow it, I think,’ said Grenville, pulling the watch off Hamish’s wrist and tossing it casually to Roger. ‘I could do with a nice new watch.’

‘Leave him alone,’ said the girl. ‘You’re a bully in a mask. The only thing you’ve got in common with a prawn is the size of your brain.’

Oh, don’t make this worse, thought Hamish.

‘I bet you’ve never punched anybody in your life,’ she said. ‘I bet you’d just hurt your knuckles if you did!’

What was this girl doing? Why was she winding Grenville up?

‘Oh, yeah?’ said Grenville, smiling. ‘Well, Hamish, prepare to find out. . .’

And as the nasty little thug raised one chubby fist to do just that . . . and as Hamish cursed that strange girl and closed his eyes in anticipation . . .

A bright . . .

. . . brilliant . . .



Hamish took in the scene around him.

Grenville with his fist in the air. Roger about to wipe his nose. Lurgie with his hands on his hips. The girl with the blue streak watching it all take place.

He began to laugh, out of nothing but sheer relief!

Twice the pause had saved him now!

Oh, thank you! Thank you!

He could do anything he wanted now. He could tweak Grenville’s nose if he liked. He could kick Lurgie in the shin. He could swap everything in Roger’s pockets around so he didn’t know where anything was any more. He could pull down his pants and show them his bottom if he wanted to.

Hamish had the power.

Hamish had the control.

Hamish was the greatest force in the universe!

But what Hamish wasn’t banking on was this.

The most awful, horrible, blood-curdling noise. . .

A noise so awful, so horrible and so blood-curdling it is impossible to tell you exactly what it sounded like.

Except that it was awful.

And horrible.

And it could curdle your blood.

A kind of

FVAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAR!

A sort of

PHWAAEEEEEEEEEEER!

A type of

PHFFFVAAAEEEEEEER!

It was the sound of pain and fear. Of nightmares. Of hope disappearing down a screaming plughole.

The noise was everywhere, almost like it was solid. It ran through Hamish's body, making his teeth ring. It was sharp and spiked and almost too loud to handle.

He raised his hands to his ears to block it out, but it was no good. The noise was stronger than he was.

Looking around him, he saw the sky darken – how was this possible, when the world was still? This had never happened in the other Pauses. Suddenly it wasn't so great to be the only one moving around. He wanted to ask questions, to talk to the others . . . which was when he heard something else.

A roar.

The terrifying clatter of hooves.

Hundreds of hooves.

The whispers, growing louder by the second.

The hum of a huge and approaching horde!

Hamish began to feel very frightened indeed. He wanted to run. To hide. To get inside somewhere, anywhere. He wanted to be in his own room more than anything in the world. He wanted his mum. He wanted his dad.

What was coming? What was round the corner?

These were questions Hamish would quickly realise he actually did **not** want the answers to.

Because the truth was so much worse than anything he could imagine.

