**Kyle's story:**

'It was my brother, Dante, who got me involved, really. I'm not blaming him though. It's not like I don't have my own mind or anything, but the way things were, it was sort of like, if you weren't part of a gang, you were nothing. You got no respect.

I didn't have to do much at first, maybe just drop some weed off to a house the other side of town. It was always the kids on bikes that did this. I guess we were less likely to be stopped. I didn't always get a cut of any of the money they made - it felt enough just to be seen to be around the older gangmembers - like no one could touch you. No one would even dare look at you the wrong way - they knew who you were with; who had your back - they protected their own.

Or at least I thought they did.

I didn't know what had happened the night before, but Dante had come into my bedroom really early before school. He was still wearing the same clothes from the night before and acting weird. He looked exhausted. 'Brov, I gotta ask you to do somet. I don't want to - but,' he started to whisper, 'Rage-Boi needs you to step up.' Rage-Boi was one of the older gang members. He was 17 at the time. My brother was 15 and I was just 12.

My brother handed me this object wrapped up in a newspaper. I could tell by the shape of it is was a shank.

'What you want me to do?' I was pretty concerned at this point and I could tell something bad had gone down.

'Just keep it on you for the day. We're gonna sort it all later - just go to school, be normal. We just need this out of the way the while.'

Dante never told me anything about what had happened the night before and when I got into school and heard some boy in the year above had been shanked, I didn't really think nothing of it. That kind of thing happens round here a lot, so I just carried on to my French class.

Then I saw these girls crying their eyes out in the corridor. There were people hugging each other. One girl was hysterical. She was sort of screaming and crying at the same time and then she curled up on the floor.

When I got in the classroom I asked my mate, Chelsey, what had happened. She said Dijon McClaren had been stabbed last night and died. No one knew why or when exactly. Just that some random guys had jumped him and he was dead by the time he was found. Probably selling on rival turf, I thought to myself.

Although I did get that this was sad news, but I didn't really know who he was so just sort of carried on my day. Teachers made announcements about people being allowed to leave to see the school councillor if they needed to - and we had this special assembly too. None of it really touched me. I didn't know the guy, I just sort of daydreamed through the assembly.

Later on we had PE and were playing football. I saw these two coppers and the Headteacher coming our way up the field. I thought they probably wanted to ask someone some questions about that boy that got shanked. It dawned on me very slowly, that they were actually only coming for me. While we were out all our bags had been searched in the changing rooms.

Looking back now, I realise what an idiot I was. The very thing that gave me that buzz, that feeling of respect; being linked with people like Rage-Boi,was the same thing that ruined my life. My brother was arrested. He's doing eight years; concealing a murder weapon and accomplice to murder. Rage-Boi's doing twenty. I was taken into foster care. Social Services decided my mum wasn't capable of looking after me and my brother. She started drink more and more after Dante's arrest. She just couldn't cope.

I found out later that Dijon McClaren wasn't some petty drug dealer or rival gang member. He was just a 14 year old on his way home from football training. He had his hood up, it was a cold night, and unfortunately he just happened to have the same new shoes and bag as a rival gang member Rage-Boi was after.

He was stabbed in the back. He was wearing the new shoes as a birthday present from his mother. The girl crying on the floor at school had been his sister. She lived at their Dad's and had the news broken to her by a teacher.

**Challenge:**

Why did Kyle's brother ask him to look after the knife?

How many lives have been ruined (that we know of) by Dijon's murder? How do you know?

How did Kyle feel when we was part of Rage-Boi's gang? Are there any other reasons he was in the gang?

What kind of jobs did the gang usually get Kyle to do? Why?

What does 'shanked' mean and what is a 'shank'?

What does 'selling on a rival's turf' mean?

**More challenging:**

Why wasn't Kyle affected by the murder when he first found out about it?

What does 'accomplice to murder' mean?

Why didn't Kyle ask any questions when his brother asked him to keep the knife with him at school?

Explain what Kyle should have done at this point.

**Mega challenge:**

What does Kyle's reaction to Dijon's murder tell us about the prevalence of knife crime? Explain your ideas in full.

Analyse what could be done to help prevent the rise of knife crime. Why do you think these measures haven't already been put in place?

Does it make any difference to how tragic this story is, whether Dijon was an innocent victim or a rival gang member selling drugs on a rival's turf?