



## **BLACK AND WHITE OP**

### **by Tom Palmer**

**The Squad - kickass teenage spies with the perfect cover. They are also part of an England youth football team. Wherever trouble is kicking off, the Squad are sent in. They're more than a match for any kind of enemy.**

In this special story, the Squad are sent to the North East, in the last week of the football season.

The noise coming from inside St James' Park was impossibly loud.

Lily and Adnan had to focus extra hard as they climbed metal walkways and perilous ladders to reach the top of the Gallowgate Stand, in which thousands of people below were watching the game.

Arriving at the stadium after kick off had been a good idea. Everyone's attention was focussed on the football and on that big question: could Newcastle win AND qualify for the Champions League? Because of that, nobody saw two thirteen-year-olds ascending the stand, the girl carrying a large ruck sac on her back.

On the top of the Gallowgate roof, the two children had to keep their bodies low. A fierce wind was coming in off the North Sea. They also had to ensure the ruck sac was secure. If its contents blew away, the whole mission would be ruined.

'Remind me why we're here,' Adnan shouted, trying to make himself heard above the wind and the noise of the Newcastle fans' raucous chanting.

'To put this banner up,' Lily replied, patting the bag.

Adnan nodded, then began to crawl with Lily down the sloping stand to the front of the Gallowgate, where they knew SPORTSDIRECT.COM was painted in blue and red lettering. They were both camouflaged in light grey to try to avoid being spotted. They moved slowly and carefully, knowing that fans sat in the Milburn and Leazes Stands might see them if they took their eyes off the game.

‘Okay,’ Adnan said. ‘Let’s do this.’

As they reached the edge of the top of the Gallowgate, they could hear the noise of the crowd grow louder and louder. They looked down at a beautiful rectangle of green, at the pitch and at the two dozen men moving about down there.

Lily smiled. She wished they could stay and just watch the match. But she knew that was not an option.

Carefully, the pair pulled a huge banner out of their ruck sac, one holding each end. They had to keep it low, so the wind didn’t catch it and blow them both away.

Suddenly a loud noise shocked them both. Lily slipped, but managed to grip onto the edge of the stand, but Adnan had lost his footing and slid quickly downwards, dangling from the top of the Gallowgate, a huge gap between him and the fans below.

‘Help,’ he gasped, terrified that he was about to fall. ‘I... I don’t... think I can... hold on.’

Lily moved swiftly, sliding down to a place where she could grasp Adnan’s hand, but still keep her footing, then she reached out and used all her strength to pull him to safety.

The pain in her arm was intense, but she knew that she had to feel the pain to rescue her friends.

Soon Adnan was safe, giving the pair time to re-evaluate their mission.

The loud noise had been the crowd celebrating a Mike Williamson goal. A header from a corner. All eyes were on a group of black and white shirts in a huddle on the pitch, celebrating. No-one had seen Adnan nearly fall to his death.

As the fans celebrated, Lily and Adnan unfurled their banner, fixing it at both ends, covering up the words written below.

Lily smiled and looked at Adnan. They had done what they had come to do. But she saw immediately that *he* was not smiling. He was looking past her and frowning.

Lily glanced back and saw a row of ten security guards barring their way back to safety. None of them daring to come out onto the roof of the Gallowgate.

‘What now?’ Adnan shouted.

Lily smiled and spoke into the small microphone in her wristwatch. ‘Pick up,’ she said calmly into the mic.

As she spoke, the noise of the crowd changed. People had started to notice the banner that Lily and Adnan had put up. The cheers rose in volume.

‘NEW-CAS-TLE! NEW-CAS-TLE! NEW-CAS-TLE!’

‘I think they approve,’ Adnan said.

Lily smiled, noticing that the security guards had still not dared to come out onto the roof after them. Not in a wind like this.

Then another noise began to drown out the crowd, stunning everyone into silence. A fluttering at first, then a repetitive thumping. A huge helicopter loomed over the pair, lowering itself in the wind, closer and closer.

Lily heard a voice in her earpiece.

'Ready,' she said, speaking into her mic.

At the same point a thick wire came dangling from the helicopter to within feet of the children.

They both grabbed it, Lily above, Adnan below.

As Adnan waved at the security guards, Lily looked below at the players and fans all staring at them. Then she looked at the sign she and Adnan had fixed on the top of the Gallowgate.

ST. JAMES' PARK.

Lily smiled.

Another successful mission for the Squad.

But there would be little time to celebrate: their next mission was about to begin nearly a thousand miles away, at the heart of the Sahara Desert.



**Read more about Lily, Adnan and the rest of the Squad, risking their lives to tackle the world's worst villains.**

In the first book in this exciting new series, ***Black Op*** from *Foul Play* author Tom Palmer, the Squad are sent to Krakow, Poland just before the Euro 2012 tournament

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