



## **NOW**

### *Immigration Centre — Dover*

“Tell us again exactly how old you are.”

“I already said. I am 15.”

“And how did you get to the UK?”

“Your police found me. In a lorry. Please, can you tell me where my brother is?”

“We just need you to answer a few more questions first.”

The grey-haired man in the dark suit reminded Samir of his maths teacher — same lines at the side of his eyes, same steely hair, same way of firing questions like bullets across a room.

“You say you are originally from Syria, right?”

“Aleppo. Yes.”

“And you claim you are underage and seeking asylum in the UK?”

This was the younger man. The one in the uniform — light blue shirt, navy lapels with shining brass buttons — the one with the soft eyes and shy smile who wrote everything down.

“Yes, with my brother. He is only six years old.”

“You understand that I am from the Home Office and my colleague here is from Immigration Services.” The older man spoke like he was posing a maths problem. “We are here to assess your claim for asylum. Do you need a lawyer?”

“No — yes — I don’t know.” There was no clock on the wall and Samir felt as if he had been sitting in the white room with the white desk and three metal chairs for hours and hours. “My brother, please. I promised my parents I wouldn’t leave him.”

“Ah yes, your parents. Tell us about them again?”

“I’ve already told you. I need to find my brother, Moosa. Do you know where he is? Please.”