

# UNSTOPPABLE



## Questions:

Understanding the book and its characters

# UNSTOPPABLE

by Dan Freedman

## QUESTIONS

Understanding the book and its characters

Prologue – 14 Years Ago

### Factual Questions

1. How are the two newborns related?
2. Was the girl or the boy born first?

### Reflective Questions and Conversation Starters

- The title of this book is “Unstoppable.” After reading the prologue, explore the different ways in which the title could be interpreted.
- What does the fact that the newborns “clasp one another’s hands” suggest?
- What significance do you think the quote “They are one” has?

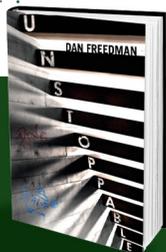
## Chapter 1 – Sunday (Pages 5-13)

### Factual Questions

3. What does Roxy see Kaine taunting an opponent for?
4. Despite having “drifted apart”, how can Roxy know what was happening in the lives of Jasmine and most of the other girls?
5. What is Noel Kerrigan’s role at Compton Academy?

### Reflective Questions and Conversation Starters

- Why do you think that Roxy feels the urge to cut Kaine’s football boots? Would you have done the same?
- After scoring, Kaine immediately celebrates directly in front of Rufus. What does this, and his remarks afterwards, tell us about Kaine’s attitude?
- AJ compliments Roxy on her appearance while at the Campbells’ house. What do you think was the main reason as to why he did this?



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## Chapter 2 – Monday (Page 17-51)

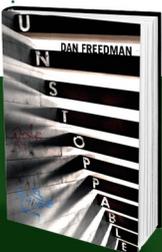
### Factual Questions

6. What does Daryll tell Roxy she needs to work on in order to beat Annabelle Taylor?
7. What was the occupation of Roxy and Kaine's grandmother?
8. Other than his connections with football, what is the reason why people respect Mr Kerrigan?

### Reflective Questions and Conversation Starters

- Though Sheldon Statham simply smiles and nods at Kaine, why do you think the topic of the conversation between Mr Kerrigan and Kaine changes immediately afterwards?
- What would you do in Roxy's position – feeling like Daryll has made the game you used to love to feel like a prison?
- Within just a couple of hours, Kaine smashes a glass and swings a tennis racket into his Daryll's back. Daryll kicks a chair and powerfully slaps Kaine.  
What sort of emotional resemblances can we see between Kaine and his father?

Roxy



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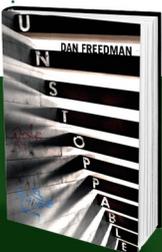
## Chapter 3 – Tuesday (Page 55-90)

### Factual Questions

9. What are Kaine's actual feelings about the Principal of Compton Academy, Mrs Buckland?
10. In his school report, what does it say Kaine must achieve in order to remain in the school football team?
11. What does Kaine tell Sheldon is the only thing that scares him?

### Reflective Questions and Conversation Starters

- What are the "alarm bells" that ring in the back of Kaine's mind after his confrontation with Mrs Buckland symbolising?
- Despite the fact that there are a lot of differences between Roxy and Kaine, there are lots of similarities between how they feel. Give some examples of these. (Use Pages 72-76 to help you)
- Very quickly in their encounter, Sheldon seems nice to Kaine. He helps Kaine tidy himself up, asks him about his football, buys him a nice meal and gives him £50 to buy new shoes. So why does Kaine "feel his blood shiver" when asked to join Sheldon's team?
- What does Sheldon mean by "It's the beginning of always"?



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## Chapter 4 – Wednesday (Page 93-115)

### Factual Questions

12. Why was Roxy so cross after the fire alarm was set off?
13. What makes Roxy feel so guilty before Kaine's football match?
14. What does Mr Kerrigan suggest to Roxy and Daryll?

### Reflective Questions and Conversation Starters

- Why do you think AJ is so quick to shut Kaine down after he insults Roxy?
- Kaine lashes out at Daryll and Roxy while playing football. Consider why he did this. Was it the right thing to do? If not, then how should he have acted differently?
- "If you think it was because you missed a penalty then I'm not sure you've understand a word a single word I've said" – Suggest some reasons as to why the Southampton scout passes on Kaine.

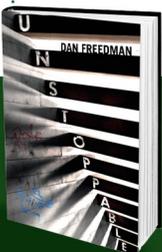
## Chapter 5 – Thursday (Page 121-134)

### Factual Questions

15. Who is Ellis Small?
16. What does Small threaten to do when he catches Kaine?
17. How is Roxy planning to go to the party without being caught?

### Reflective Questions and Conversation Starters

- Why do you think Kaine feels "sick to the core of his stomach"? What kind of things are going through his head?
- Despite Kaine saying he hasn't been speaking to anyone, Mr Kerrigan appears to see right through him. How?
- What do you think causes Roxy to be so frustrated with her dad using the term "we"?



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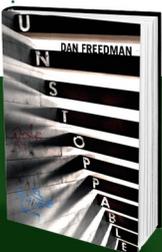
## Chapter 6 – *Friday* (Page 137-147)

### Factual Questions

18. Why is AJ so concerned at the start of the chapter?
19. What does Samantha do to try and please the whole family?
20. What does Roxy think her mum “doesn’t get”?

### Reflective Questions and Conversation Starters

- Why does Kaine change his mind about the knife? Given the circumstances, was this the right thing to have done?
- What does AJ mean when he says, “My mum says there’s a lid for every pot”?
- The opening paragraph of Page 143 is key. How is Samantha feeling here?
- How do you think Roxy is feeling, writing her diary after the events of dinner beforehand?
- “Not everything in life is quite as it seems”, “I started with nothing and no one”, “The pupil always wants to imitate the master...”  
- Sheldon appears to be speaking very wisely. Why do you think this is?



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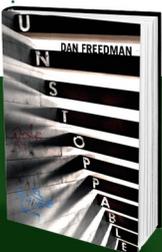
## Chapter 7 – Saturday (Page 151-164)

### Factual Questions

21. What does Kaine buy himself as a birthday present?
22. Why does Roxy decide against going to the party?
23. Why does Kaine think that Mamma would be angry at him?

### Reflective Questions and Conversation Starters

- Why do you think Kaine arrives at AJ's house so early?
- Why do you think Kaine immediately felt weird when alone in the empty flat? How would you have felt?
- Do you think there was a reason why Roxy answered AJ's invitation in such a unique way rather than just texting him?
- Before checking her social media, Roxy couldn't wait to go to the party. Would it have been right to have gone? Consider the fact that she has the finals the next day but also the feelings she appears to have for AJ.
- How would you have felt if you had been threatened by Rufus and the three other big lads, like Kaine was? What would you have done in that situation?
- Roxy feels like she "doesn't even want to play in the Finals tomorrow". Why do you think this is?
- What is it that drains "every bit of strength" from Kaine when Mamma's favourite song comes on? Why does he leave the party so abruptly?
- What does the author mean by "darkness and danger"?



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## Chapter 8 – Sunday (Page 167-189)

### Factual Questions

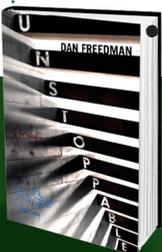
24. Briefly outline Kaine's dream.
25. What is Ellis' initial response after Mr Kerrigan orders him to put Kaine down?
26. What's seemingly the final straw for Roxy, causing her to have an outburst at Daryll?

### Reflective Questions and Conversation Starters

- Throughout this chapter, Daryll hardly seems to care about Kaine, who is missing. What does this tell us? Is Daryll being a good father?
- AJ says that Roxy was the whole reason he had the party. What is he implying here?
- Describe the "panic that rises through Kaine".
- Express the significance of Mamma towards the end of Chapter 7 and start of Chapter 8.
- In this Chapter, Kaine disposes of his knife. Explain why this is a vital moment in the book.
- Is Annabelle telling the truth when saying "I'm not trying to put you off... I feel sorry for you"?
- "He could feel the web closing in on him with every passing second." What does the author mean here?
- Why do you think the other people on the street "just look the other way" when Kaine pleads them to do something? Would you have done the same?
- "He was suffocating Roxy again. She almost couldn't breathe." Why is this so important?
- What does the author mean by "Kaine was barely alive"? Is it literal?
- Think back to the prologue where it says, "They are one". How is this shown in Chapter 8?

How would you feel if you were in Mr Kerrigan's position, speaking to Small?

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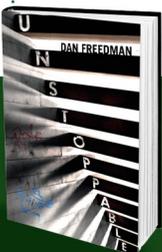
## Chapter 9 – Sunday 24th June to Tuesday 10th July (Page 195-221)

### Factual Questions

27. Why does Malin suggest Kaine should speak to Roxy, who is unconscious?
28. Why does Samantha want to go to the police after Kaine tells her about Sheldon?
29. What is the reason as to why Samantha reluctantly sells her mother's wedding ring?

### Reflective Questions and Conversation Starters

- How do you think that, when Malin tells Kaine about the past and future, it feels different to when Kaine's had these sorts of conversations before with different people?
- Why does Kaine initially find it hard to speak to Roxy?
- Why do you think that Daryll is reluctant to take the temporary job in the PE department?
- Why do you think Kaine states that "It's like it's not real"? What does he mean by this?
- At the beginning of Page 208, we see that Kaine still hasn't cried since Roxy's accident. Why do you think this is the case?
- Explore the different emotions Kaine feels from when he first reads Roxy's diary to when he speaks aloud about the death of Mamma.
- "His mum was cleaning the surface by the sink even though it wasn't dirty"  
– why is Samantha Campbell doing this? Is she aware of what she's doing?
- In this chapter, we begin to see the dark side of Sheldon and the "young boy" side of Kaine. What are the key events which help us see this?



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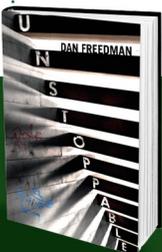
## Chapter 10 – Tuesday 10th July to Saturday 21st July (Page 227-250)

### Factual Questions

30. What “ridiculous” thing does Daryll ask Kaine to try out?
31. What causes Roxy to wake up?
32. How does Daryll feel when told Roxy will never be able to move her legs again?

### Reflective Questions and Conversation Starters

- How was the way that Kaine used to be with Roxy “not cool”?
- Daryll’s feelings and attitude towards Kaine seem to have massively changed.  
Why do you think this is the case?  
Who or what do you think might have influenced this?
- Kaine writes in Roxy’s diary not knowing whether she will ever get the chance to read it. Explain how “Kaine after writing the passage” is different to “Kaine before writing the passage.”
- Although Kaine’s footballing abilities haven’t changed, Southampton finally offer Kaine a trial. Why do you think this is?
- “It made me realise how much I love it” – explore how Roxy’s feelings to tennis echo both Kaine’s feelings to his family, and Daryll’s feelings to Kaine.



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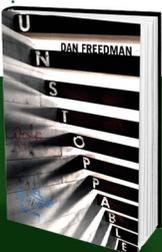
## Chapter 11 – Saturday 21st July to Monday 6th August (Page 251-297)

### Factual Questions

33. Why does Roxy politely reject going to watch Kaine's trial?
34. What causes Kaine to realise the fact that his mother had dealt with Sheldon?
35. Why does Rufus want a fresh start with Kaine?

### Reflective Questions and Conversation Starters

- Mr Kerrigan evidently tries to bring a sense of humour during his chat with Kaine. Why might this be?
- How is Sheldon trying to make Kaine feel in his intimidating text message?
- If the accident hadn't have happened, do you think Annabelle would still have apologised and complimented Roxy? Why?
- Would you think the same as Roxy – that your life was over – if you were in the same position as her?
- How would you feel if you were in Samantha's situation; speaking to Sheldon? Do you think she took the right precautions?
- In this chapter, Daryll admits that he pushed Roxy too far. But why do you think he did this?
- Why do you think Kaine finally decides to have a haircut having been so reluctant to do so before? Keep in mind he has recently been thinking a lot about his grandmother.
- Why do you think Kaine is so keen to help Rufus, considering what has happened in the past?
- Why is Kaine so nervous about making a mistake? Is it just because he might not impress the Academy Director or is there more to it?
- At the end of the novel, Mr Kerrigan takes "a new family photo." Explain why this is so much more than just a photo.



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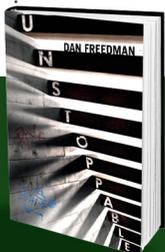
## Epilogue – *One Week Later & Seven Years Later*

### Factual Questions

36. What was it that confirmed Sheldon's participation in the murder of Anthony Augustine?
37. How do Daryll, Roxy and Kaine surprise Samantha Campbell?
38. After winning PFA Young Player Of The Year, who does Kaine name as his hero?

### Reflective Questions and Conversation Starters

- " "Sure", they said simultaneously." - Again, think back to the prologue, and suggest why the last line of the novel is so important.
- We see that Kaine becomes an ambassador for a charity that fights knife crime. Express how his feelings towards this sensitive topic change throughout the book.
- What qualities of Roxy are we shown by the fact that she has now become a successful wheelchair tennis player?

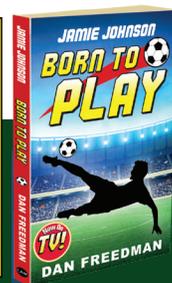
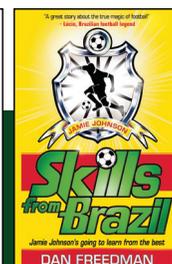
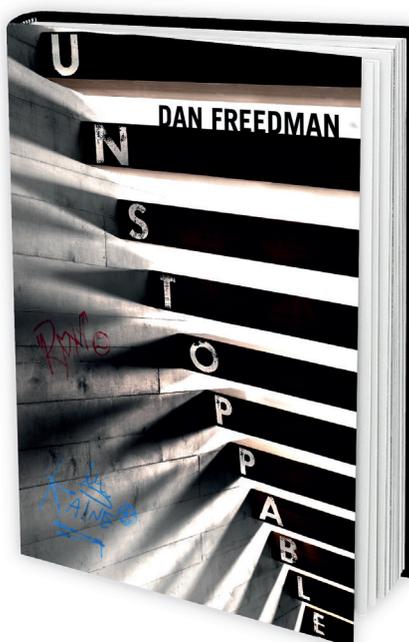


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Dan Freedman is best known for his hugely popular series of **Jamie Johnson** football novels (Scholastic UK) which have been adapted for TV by the BBC.

The **Jamie Johnson** books have sold more than 800,000 copies worldwide. Before becoming an author, Dan was managing editor for The FA for seven years and has been to two World Cups as part of the official England Team group. He was also part of the official delegations to meet the Queen, the Prime Minister and Nelson Mandela. When not writing, Dan gives talks at schools and sports clubs around the country. He has made around 2000 school visits during the last ten years and it was those experiences that inspired him to write **Unstoppable**.



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