

# PART I

AMSTERDAM,  
7 FEBRUARY 1941

## CHAPTER ONE

Christiaan Brouwer waited as the last passengers disembarked at Victorie Square. An elderly lady made her way down the steps, giving him a little wave as their eyes met in his rearview mirror. It's why he'd applied to become a tram driver straight out of high school four years ago—he loved interacting with his fellow *Amsterdammers*. No day was ever the same, even if the routes were.

He pushed his tram into gear and crossed a small bridge over the Amstel Channel. Traffic on the other side had come to a standstill. Another tram blocked his path, its driver standing outside, smoking a cigarette. Christiaan stepped out of his own tram and walked toward his colleague, whom he didn't recognize.

“What's going on?”

The man shrugged. “Some kids getting into a fight, I guess.” He pointed at a gathering about 100 meters ahead of them and took a drag from his cigarette. “I hope they clear it up soon, I want to go home.”

A bone-chilling cry pierced the air, followed by a woman's wail. Christiaan didn't hesitate and sprinted up the street. Something was

off. He quickly covered the distance. His heart sank when he spotted the black uniforms of the *Weerbaarheidsafdeling*, the WA. They were the paramilitary arm of the Dutch National Socialist Movement, the *NSB*. The organization had seen a surge in membership recently—people were keen to pledge their support to the Nazi oppressors, to which the *NSB* was closely aligned.

He pushed through the crowd to see two Blackshirts on either side of an older man lying face down on the cobblestones. One of the thugs viciously kicked the downed man in the ribs. He doubled over, coughing violently. A woman in the crowd let out a cry, while another shielded her child between her skirts.

“There, you Jewish piece of shit! That’ll teach you to get out of the way the next time!” The Blackshirt couldn’t be older than twenty.

Christiaan felt the blood rush to his head. He scanned the crowd and saw another half a dozen Blackshirts looking on. The other people looked terrified: they were mostly women and children. A few elderly men wearing kippahs stood in the back, looking on helplessly. When the other Blackshirt used his boot to lift the stricken man’s face off the ground, Christiaan couldn’t stand it any longer. He broke from the crowd.

“What the hell are you doing?” He squared his shoulders as he approached the Blackshirts. Their eyes showed surprise as they turned to him. “Feeling big beating up an old man?”

The man groaned in pain as he turned his face to meet Christiaan’s. He was shocked to see the man was even older than he expected—he was well into his seventies. Dark patches were already forming around his cheeks and eyes. Christiaan felt his temples throbbing with anger. His eyes went back to the nearest Blackshirt, and without another thought, he swung a fist at the man’s face. It connected with his jaw and Christiaan felt a sharp pain radiate through his hand and arm. It was quickly suppressed as adrenaline kicked in. The man reached for his jaw, and Christiaan swung again, this time hearing the satisfying crack of the man’s nose breaking.

The Blackshirt went down howling in pain, blood gushing from his nose.

Christiaan turned to the other man, whose eyes now burned with fury. “You should’ve stayed out of this.” He growled, then came at Christiaan, his fists up like a boxer’s. Christiaan stepped back, avoiding a flurry of jabs. *This one is better trained.*

“Come on! What are you waiting for!” The man roared and attacked again, grazing Christiaan’s cheek as he managed to avoid full impact. The man grinned as he paused. “You’re mine. And when you’re down, we’re going to finish you.” He nodded at the other Blackshirts in the crowd.

Christiaan’s eyes went between the group and his opponent. He knew he didn’t stand a chance against all of them. Then he looked at the old man on the ground, his face turned toward the fight. He was shaking, there was defiance in his eyes. The man balled his fist, stoking a fire inside Christiaan. *Might as well take down as many as I can.*

He returned his focus to the Blackshirt, and for a moment, neither of them moved. Then Christiaan let out a roar and charged forward. The move surprised the Blackshirt, and they tumbled onto the ground together. The crowd gasped and moved back as they wrestled on the ground. The Blackshirt was now on top and struck Christiaan in the face twice. Christiaan lifted his hands and caught one of the man’s wrists. Locking it with both hands, he pushed himself sideways, twisting the man’s wrist as he turned onto his stomach. There was a sharp crack before the Blackshirt howled in pain. He rolled away clutching his limp, broken wrist. Christiaan breathed hard, a numb pain building around his eye. With an effort, he got to his feet, in time to see the other six Blackshirts surrounding him like a pack of wolves circling their prey.

Christiaan gritted his teeth. For a moment, nothing happened as they decided who would attack first. From the corner of his eye, Christiaan saw the glint of a knife. His blood ran cold. He wouldn’t stand a chance. He swallowed hard and looked at the men’s faces. All

he saw was pure hatred. There would be no talking his way out of this.

The man with the knife slashed at him, but Christiaan stepped back, deftly avoiding the attack. Adrenaline rushed back as the world appeared to slow down. He focused on the man with the knife, then felt a blow to the back of his head. Stars clouded his vision, but he forced himself to stay on his feet, keeping his eyes on the knife-wielding Blackshirt. The man thrust this time, but Christiaan stepped aside, the knife narrowly missing his groin. On instinct, Christiaan reached down for the man's arm. He grabbed his elbow and squeezed with all his strength. The knife clattered to the ground, and Christiaan kicked it away. It disappeared into the crowd. Still holding onto the Blackshirt, he crashed to the ground, landing on the man's chest. The sound of distant whistles filled the air, but Christiaan hardly noticed. He furiously rained down punches, turning the man's face into a bloody mess. Suddenly, he felt strong arms gripping his arms and shoulders. As he felt his strength ebb away, he knew this was it. The other Blackshirts would finish him off. *At least I took down three.*

He waited for the inevitable flurry of punches as he was dragged from the unconscious man. Then he spotted two of the Blackshirts on the edge of the crowd, looking on impassively. Christiaan was confused. A deep, baritone voice shocked his senses back to the present.

"What the hell were you thinking picking a fight with them?"

Christiaan looked into the face of one of the police officers hauling him away. His head was swimming and felt his right leg throbbing. He looked down. His pants were torn and soaked in blood.

"You're lucky we got here just in time. They got you good."

Christiaan wanted to say something, but his tongue felt too thick to talk. His eyes felt heavy as the world started spinning. The last thing remembered was being pulled into the ambulance. Then his world went black.

## CHAPTER TWO

**N**ora Brouwer rushed through the wet streets, carrying the day's meager harvest in a small bag on her shoulder. *Floris won't be thrilled.* She'd arrived at the market early enough, when the sun was still out, but she'd been disheartened to find the queues for most stalls snaking through the narrow passages. She gambled on her favorite vegetable stall, most people were queuing for meat, but when it was finally her turn, there was little left to choose from. She decided she'd make the best of it tonight; carrots, onions, and potatoes would make a nice *hutspot*, even if she didn't have any sausage or ham to serve alongside it. She shook her head, unable to remember the last time she tasted ham. Besides, Floris would probably be home too late to enjoy whatever she prepared anyway.

The raindrops increased in frequency and she pulled up the hood of her coat. It didn't help much, only delaying the rain seeping through to her long black hair underneath.

As she left the Nieuwmarkt behind her, she noticed people loitering around in the streets. This area of the city had a lot of Jewish citizens, and even though they were banned from patronizing

the market, they were still allowed to go outside. They would often find non-Jewish Amsterdammers to go to the market for them—still the best place to find the freshest produce, even though the supply had dwindled dramatically. People would entrust their precious ration coupons to these food runners—often in exchange for a share of the produce. Nora looked at the faces of the people shivering on the side of the street. Some looked nervous, most were praying. She knew the risks they took. A food runner could easily disappear, leaving them with nothing.

She hurried on, anxious to get home and out of the rain. A few hundred meters ahead of her the road was blocked by several trucks. She sighed. *Perhaps it was just a checkpoint?* As she neared, German soldiers were ushering the people ahead of her away from the main thoroughfare. Nora stopped in front of the blockade to see what was going on.

“Move along, ma’am,” one of the German soldiers said in a stern voice. Nora met his eyes and even though he looked intimidating in his full army outfit—including a sidearm—his face wasn’t unfriendly.

Nora decided to risk it. “I need to get to the Weesper. Is there no way through here?”

“Afraid not.” The soldier shook his head. “You’ll have to take the long way around. We’re doing some checks in the Jewish quarter. All the streets to and from are blocked.”

As the soldier motioned for her to move on, Nora felt discouraged. This would not only add at least half an hour through the now-pouring rain to her journey but would mean she had to pass through De Wallen, an area she tried to avoid at all costs.

She was shaking as she followed the small procession. Everyone kept their eyes focused straight ahead. These random checks appeared out of nowhere, especially around the Jewish neighborhoods—you never knew when or where. Whenever she was asked to show her papers she was always waved on quickly.

Nora neared the water and, as the soldier had predicted, her

route directly south was blocked, forcing her to cross a small bridge. She took a deep breath as she reached the other side, where people went their separate ways. Nora decided she'd try the shortest route, following the water south, and then cross one of the bridges to make her way home.

She kept her pace fast and her eyes down as she navigated the quiet streets. She was startled by laughter as one of the doors of the many cafes opened and a couple of men stumbled out. They seemed oblivious to her as two scantily clad women followed them and helped them up. They soon disappeared into an alley farther down the street.

Nora continued along the water until she found her path blocked by a group of men some 50 meters ahead. There were at least twenty of them, talking to a number of police officers. Even though it was Nora's shortest route home, she decided to give them a wide berth. She turned into one of the side streets, its cobblestones slick with rain. Nora hurried on, anxious to return to the main thoroughfare alongside the canal. As she navigated the alleys, a familiar building loomed up ahead. Nora stopped in her tracks, her heartbeat shooting up. The red lights above the front door hummed softly as Nora took a deep breath.

The building had been her home for almost three years. She closed her eyes as the memories came flooding back. The heavy make-up and perfume that made her feel well beyond her eighteen years, the endless stream of strange men: touching her, using and discarding her after they'd sated their carnal desires. But worst of all, living in constant fear of the woman running the brothel. Madam Nel had taken her in when she was no longer welcome in the orphanage. At first, Nora had been grateful to the woman giving her food and shelter. That quickly changed when Nel told her she had to earn her keep.

The door opened and a man stepped out, quickly scanning the street before scampering away. The smell of cigarettes and sex snapped Nora back to her senses. She shuddered and hurried away.

Clasping her small bag tighter, she returned to the main thoroughfare, the sound of the rain clattering on the canal providing some comfort.

“Rosa, is that you?”

The words came like a punch to her gut, and Nora reluctantly turned to find a heavily built man following her. *Where did he come from?* There was recognition in his eyes, and she felt her chest tighten. She had trouble breathing, but still managed to croak, “I think you have me mixed up with someone else.”

The man’s eyes narrowed, looking her up and down, and she instinctively wrapped her coat tighter. “No, I’m pretty sure—” the man started, but Nora was already walking away. *Keep going, don’t encourage him.* She took large strides as she prayed he would leave her alone.

It wasn’t to be. Heavy footsteps caught up with her easily. “I don’t forget a pretty face like yours, even if I haven’t seen you here for more than what, two years? Nah, probably even longer. Four years, surely. You haven’t aged at all. You still look the same as the last time I had the *pleasure* of seeing you.”

Nora didn’t stop and looked at the water to her left as she tried to block out his words. It was impossible. Mustering up all her courage, she stopped and turned. “Please leave me alone. I’m not who you think I am, I’m just trying to get home.” She recoiled when she saw the lecherous look in his eyes.

“You know, why don’t you stop lying and we can go and have a good time,” the man said, stepping closer to her. “For old time’s sake.”

Nora took a step back, edging closer to the canal. There was nowhere to go, no way she could fight off this man twice her size. He sensed her fear, which only aroused him more. He grabbed her hand, his grip strong, making it clear she wasn’t going anywhere.

There was only one thing left to do.

“Help! Help!” she shouted at the top of her lungs, dropping her bag, a carrot rolling out and into the canal.

The man's face contorted in rage, and he readjusted his grip on her wrist. He tightened it so much it hurt, and she felt the tips of her fingers tingle. To her horror, there was nobody to come to her rescue; the street was abandoned.

"You little whore," the man hissed as he pulled her away from the water and toward one of the alleys across the street. "You just have to make this difficult, don't you."

Nora struggled to free herself from his grip, but it was no use. He dragged her across the cobblestones, twisting and turning, the world turning hazy from her tears.

Then, just before the man entered the alley, she saw the door to a cafe down the street open. With everything she had left, she screamed across the empty street one more time, praying whoever exited wasn't too drunk to hear her. "Help! Please, somebody!"

She was pulled into the darkness of the alley, the man muttering at her. "Think you're too good for me now all of a sudden, don't cha'. I remember you, even if you've forgotten about me."

Nora tried to control the terror washing over her body. *Don't make him even angrier. It'll only make things worse.* Even though she tried to look calm outwardly, she felt hot tears rolling down her cheeks. With her free hand, she wiped them away.

The man's eyes shot up and down the alley, confirming what they both knew: they were alone. Satisfied, he loosened his grip for a moment, only to lower himself on her, grabbing both of her hands and holding her down.

*Don't give him the satisfaction.* Nora tried to control the urge to fight—fearing it would only arouse him more—and for a few seconds, she managed to stay completely still as he fumbled around. Then, as one of his hands released hers and gripped her breasts, she snapped.

"Let go of me, you piece of filth!" she shouted in a voice she didn't recognize. Her fury erupted from deep within as she lashed out, scratching at his face. Blood appeared as her nails made small cuts, and he seemed taken aback for a moment. Nora continued

clawing at his face and throat. She kicked out but hit nothing but air. She was breathing hard and screaming at the top of her lungs.

“Get off me, you bastard!”

He relaxed his grip for a moment and Nora lunged forward, biting his hand with so much fury she thought she’d break his fingers. The man roared in pain as he punched her in the head with his other hand. The force of the blow was devastating as Nora’s world flashed bright white before she slumped onto the cold ground.

“You bitch!” he hissed inches from her ear, and the alcohol on his breath made her nostrils flare in disgust. “You shouldn’t have done that.”

Nora groaned in pain, her head pounding as all strength was sapped from her body. The man unzipped his fly, his hands now pulling at her skirt.

“Hey! What the hell is going on?!”

At the end of the alley, four or five tall figures approached. She was so relieved she could cry. She called out, but only managed a whimper. She tried again, this time with a bit more strength. “Help!”

The men didn’t immediately move, and Nora’s heart skipped a beat. *Are they not coming?* They stood there for what felt like an eternity until everything happened at once. The pressure on her body eased as her assailant got off her and ran in the opposite direction. Heavy footsteps passed as the men gave chase. She took a deep breath and was startled to see an outstretched hand in front of her. “Are you all right, miss?”

She recoiled from the hand, then looked up to see a young man—he couldn’t be older than eighteen—with soft eyes looking at her inquisitively. She took his hand and he helped her up. “Any injuries? Did he hit you?”

She rubbed her head. “You got here just in time.”

At the far end of the alley, a triumphant cry was followed by a howl of pain. Nora turned her head to see the younger men had caught up with her would-be rapist. He was on the ground, the men mercilessly beating him.

“He won’t be bothering you anymore,” the man next to her said, holding Nora’s bag. “I suppose this belongs to you?”

Nora reached for the bag but failed to grab it. Her hands were shaking, and she suddenly felt very cold. She trembled, her teeth chattering. The man looked at her with concern.

“Maybe we should go inside, get you some water? You’ve been through a lot. See if we can get the police?”

*Not the police!* Nora shook her head. “If you don’t mind, I must be on my way. I’m sure my husband is wondering what’s keeping me.”

She thought she detected a flash of disappointment in his eyes, but he recovered quickly, shaking his head. “You’re not going anywhere.” Nora raised an eyebrow, and he quickly continued, taking a step back, raising his palms. “Sorry, I didn’t mean it like that. Please let me take you home.”

“That really won’t be necessary.” She took a step toward the street when her knees buckled and she lost her balance. He caught her just in time.

“I’m afraid I won’t take no for an answer. You’re in no state to go home alone.”

Her head was spinning and she rubbed the spot where the man struck her earlier. A bump was forming. She decided the young man was right. She gave him her address.

“Please take me home.”

## CHAPTER THREE

It was well past sunset when Floris Brouwer adjusted his cap and pulled up the collar of his blue uniform. He glanced at his partner, Hans de Vugt, next to him, who looked just as keen to get off the street and back to the station.

“Pretty chilly now that the sun’s gone, won’t you say?” Hans said in his thick, drawling Amsterdam accent. Floris’ partner was born and raised in the Jordaan, one of Amsterdam’s predominantly blue-collar neighborhoods, and proud of it. It annoyed Floris, who preferred to speak clearly and eloquently, as his position as a police officer required.

“You forgot about the rain earlier already?” Floris said, curling his lip. “It’s been a miserable day.”

“Yeah, well, at least it was nice and quiet. I love days like these, when people stay inside and don’t cause too much trouble,” Hans said.

Floris hardly heard him. “Say, do you want to join me at De Bever? We’re meeting up with some of the others from the station.”

Hans frowned and avoided Floris’ eyes. “I don’t know. I told Maja

I'd be home in time for dinner. She left early this morning. Apparently, a butcher in De Pijp got his hands on some bacon."

Floris frowned, and his younger colleague looked mortified. "All right, maybe I'll join you for a quick one. Let's get back to the station and clock out."

Floris slapped him on the shoulder. "That's the spirit." He looked forward to meeting his colleagues—who were also close friends—tonight. Despite the German occupation, life had carried on much like before, albeit with some restrictions. Sure, there were food shortages, but this was to be expected in wartime, with the Germans procuring a lot of the produce for their armies. For most Dutch people, life carried on almost as usual, with businesses profiting from the increased German demand.

Life had perhaps gotten slightly better for Floris and his fellow police officers. They had kept their jobs and carried on much as they did before. *Except for those arrogant clowns who think they're too good to work with our German colleagues. I wonder where they are now. Probably—*

"That doesn't look good," Hans said, interrupting his thoughts. Floris followed his partner's gaze and gritted his teeth in frustration.

Only 50 meters up the street, a crowd had gathered. People had their backs to them, their attention drawn to what was happening in front of a cigar store. Floris could hear raised voices.

"I can bloody well decide for myself. You don't have the authority to do this."

As they neared, Floris looked over their heads to find a small middle-aged man gesticulating wildly in front of the store. He was surrounded by five young men wearing black uniforms. *That man doesn't know what he's up against.*

The store owner glowered at the fascist thugs. "Get out of here, you bastards!" He yelled.

Floris considered his options. Nobody had noticed him. He gauged the situation—nothing had happened yet. He decided to hang back just a little longer; perhaps this problem would resolve

itself. He looked over at Hans, who hadn't moved either. Floris shook his head, and Hans nodded. *Good. He understands.*

Floris scanned the faces of the people crowding around. Most looked on disapprovingly but made no effort to get involved.

"You know what you're doing is illegal," one of the Blackshirts said, taking a step closer to the shopkeeper. Floris noticed all five Blackshirts were young—none older than twenty, a good five years younger than him. "Do as we say, and we'll be on our way. You don't want us to hang around much longer, right?" The young man spoke calmly, but the threat was clear. Tension rose as the people at the back of the crowd inched forward, some standing on their toes to get a closer look. All eyes were on the shopkeeper.

Floris was tall enough to see the man's eyes darting between his store and the Blackshirts, looking at the crowd for support. Nothing. He opened his mouth, and at that moment, he spotted Floris. His eyes lit up, and he appeared to grow slightly taller.

"Officers, I'm so glad you're here. These men are blocking the entrance to my store," he said, extending his arms in front of him. "Look, all these people behind you are unable to come inside. They're quite intimidating, the five of them." There was a hint of sarcasm in the man's voice, which was lost on the young Blackshirts.

The crowd, including the Blackshirts, turned to Floris and Hans, and one of them addressed Floris: "We're just making sure this man upholds the law." He sported a blocky mustache, not unlike that of the Führer himself.

"What law is he breaking?" Floris asked while Hans shifted on his feet.

"He's selling cigarettes to filthy Jews," one of the other Blackshirts spat.

The shopkeeper stepped forward, his face now red with rage. "It's not the law because you say so, you stupid boy."

Floris moved forward, the crowd parting. He kept quiet as the same Blackshirt from earlier responded, his voice now full of contempt. "Why are you helping them? You're not Jewish. If you

were, you wouldn't be running this shop anymore. So why don't you fall in line and stop selling to them? Put up a sign like the other shops in the city." Two Blackshirts made their way into the little store, jumping over the counter and opening drawers.

The shopkeeper rushed after them. "Get out! What are you doing?" He turned back and, with an effort to control his frustration, said to Floris, "Are you going to let them get away with this? Now they are breaking the law!"

"We're helping you. Let us put up a sign, and then we'll leave you alone." One of them said mockingly.

Floris slowly entered the store, Hans following nervously. *A little longer. Let's see what happens.*

The Blackshirts shifted their attention to the exclusive cigars behind the counter. "Boys, why don't you step away from the cigars now? I'll take it from here," Floris said.

Holding a box each, the young men stared at him for a moment. Floris raised an eyebrow, and Hans—finding his nerve—took a step forward, hands on the baton hanging loosely from his belt. The youngsters dropped the expensive-looking cigars and joined their friends outside.

The shopkeeper sighed in relief. "Thank you so much, officer. You're going to make them pay for those broken—"

"Shut up," Floris said with a harsh tone. "We're not done yet."

The man looked confused. The crowd had fallen silent, and Floris felt twenty or so pairs of eyes following his every move. The Blackshirts crowded around the door.

"You brought this onto yourself," Floris started, and the shopkeeper's face fell. "You should know what's good for you, and continuing to sell to Jews certainly isn't."

The man looked crestfallen, and for a few seconds, everything was silent. Then, one of the Blackshirts spoke up. "So, are you going to make him follow the law, officer?" Floris cringed as he turned to him.

"I can't make him do anything. He's right about one thing. It's

not the law. Yet. But I think you've made it clear to him what will happen if he doesn't put up a sign." Floris kept his face neutral as he turned back to the shopkeeper. "You'll take care of that, right?"

The shopkeeper looked up, meeting Floris' eyes. He was surprised to see a hint of defiance—hidden from the people standing outside—as he slowly nodded. "I don't think I have much of a choice."

Floris nodded, pleased with how he handled the situation. He was ready to break up the crowd when Hans spoke up.

"Gentlemen, just one small thing before you go. You are going to pay for those, aren't you?" He picked up one of the cigar boxes and placed it on the counter. He then purposefully picked up two broken cigars. "How much were these?" he asked the shopkeeper.

The man appeared surprised at the turn of events and took a moment to respond. Then, Hans turned back to the Blackshirts when he named the price. They looked back in surprise as their eyes went between Floris and Hans.

Floris cursed inwardly. *Why did Hans have to make a big deal out of a few cigars?* It was the shopkeeper's fault for foolishly continuing to sell to Jews. Before the situation could escalate further, he said, "Why don't you boys get out of here? He promised to put a sign up." He felt Hans' eyes burning into the side of his face but ignored him. "If I hear about you coming back here and causing more trouble, you will pay for more than a few cigars. You got that?"

The Blackshirts looked relieved, all mumbling assent before scrambling away through the dispersing crowd. The excitement quieted as people returned to their regular business.

Floris turned to the shopkeeper. "I'll be back tomorrow. Make sure you don't give those boys a reason to do the same."

"Yes, officer. Thank you, officer," the man said, his face now set in hard lines.

Without another word, Floris stepped out of the shop, Hans in tow. When they were clear of the shop, his younger colleague opened his mouth, but Floris raised a hand. "You were pushing it. The shop-

keeper was foolish standing up to them; a few broken cigars are nothing compared to the beating he would've gotten had we not shown up."

"You think this is okay?" Hans countered as he struggled to keep up with Floris, who was keen to clock out. This little altercation had delayed him longer than he cared for.

"I think sometimes people need to sort things out themselves," Floris said. "And we stopped it before it got much worse."

Hans wouldn't let it go that easily. "So you think those boys can terrorize anyone who disagrees with them? You know as well as I that this nonsense about not allowing Jews into stores is just NSB propaganda. Nazi bootlickers."

Floris felt his cheeks burn and abruptly turned. "Careful now, Hans. Before you say something you'll regret."

Hans looked at him. "Sorry. But I believe we're still police officers that follow the actual law."

They reached the station without another word, and Floris used the short walk to calm down. It wasn't Hans' fault for not seeing the sense of the NSB party line—the approach of the Blackshirts wasn't for everybody. *He'll come around. He needs a bit more time.* Floris needed to keep his partner on his side and stopped at the station's door.

"Look, sorry about earlier. You're right. We can't have those boys roaming around like that." Hans looked unsure but slowly nodded, and Floris opened the door. "How about we clock out and grab that beer, huh?"

Hans didn't follow him inside and, to Floris' surprise, said, "Actually, I think I'm going to head home. I'm sure Maja is waiting for me with dinner. Maybe next time."

"Sure, no problem. See you tomorrow," Floris said. Then, as he went inside to get changed, he smiled as he imagined telling his friends about the afternoon's events. He was sure they'd agree he did a fine job.