

DJ AMBITION

CHAPTER 1 A BAD MORNING

'And that was Beyoncé with 'Me, myself and I' on *R&B Today* here at Capital Radio ...'

'Come on, Ali. Wake up!' called Ali's mum. 'You're going to be late for school!'

Ali didn't move. She thought about last night at the Foxx Club. Her mum was always angry with her because she went to clubs in the evenings. She wanted Ali to do homework instead.

Ali opened one eye and looked at the clock next to her bed. 7.45. Suddenly she remembered: her first gig as a DJ was only three days away and today she needed to practise! Before she left this morning, she had to collect all her records together.

She jumped out of bed quickly and put on her clothes. She was still wearing her jewellery from last night. 'I'll have to take it all off for school,' she thought. The teachers didn't like earrings or nose rings in class.

Ali got her records then went downstairs to the kitchen. Her 14-year-old brother, Calvin, was sitting at the kitchen table. He was eating his breakfast noisily.

Their mum, Veronica Zuri, was busy in the kitchen. 'Ah, you're here finally!' she said. 'I've got to go to work in ten minutes. What do you want for breakfast?'

'Oh, nothing thanks. I'm not hungry,' said Ali. 'I haven't got much time this morning.'

Ali's brother, Calvin, laughed. 'That's because you've been to a club again, "Miz Ali".' He used Ali's DJ name.



'You always wake up too late after you've had a night out.'

'Shut up, Calvin!' said Ali. Like a lot of younger brothers, Calvin usually said the wrong thing.

Veronica Zuri looked carefully at Ali. She worried about her daughter.

'You have to eat something in the morning,' she said. 'Here, have this.' She gave Ali some bread.

Ali took the bread and quickly put some butter on it.

'You seem tired this morning, Ali,' said her mum. She gave her a cup of coffee.

Ali looked at her mother. She didn't want a fight today. 'I've got to run,' she said. 'See you later!'

Her mother saw the records next to Ali's school bag. 'Wait a minute!' she said. 'I want to talk to you.'

Ali got her things and walked to the door, with the bread in her hand.

But her mother didn't stop. 'You know, Ali,' she said, 'you're 16 now. You have to make some plans about university.'

'Not again,' thought Ali. This was her mother's favourite conversation. 'Please, Mum,' she said, 'not now ...'

'You're clever,' her mother said. 'Maybe you can be a doctor one day, or a ...'

'See you later, Mum,' said Ali. She walked out of the door and onto the street.

Her school, Tottenham Place, wasn't far. It was spring and the weather was warm. But Ali felt unhappy. She always felt bad after this kind of conversation at home. Her mother just didn't understand! Ali wanted to become a DJ – nothing else. She loved music. R&B and hip-hop were her life. R. Kelly, Beyoncé, Usher ... she loved them all. Ali wanted to do a really good set at the Tottenham Place end-of-year party, her first gig. But she didn't want to stop there. She wanted, more than anything in the world, to be a real DJ in a real London club.

A little way down the road, she saw her best friend, Kat.

'Hey, Ali!' Kat always joined her on her walk to school. 'Last night was great! But I'm so tired!'

'Yeah, me too ...'

The two friends talked until they got to the school entrance. There, Ali heard:

'Look at her! It's Miz Ali.'

Ali didn't turn round. She knew that voice. It was Nik Galas. He called himself 'Da G'. He was a DJ, and he was

already getting some work in clubs. He thought he was really cool.

'Hey, Zuri!' he called. 'So you want to be a DJ?!' He ran in front of Ali. He was with two other boys.

Da G was tall, much taller than Ali. He stood right in front of her.



'You'll never be a DJ!' he said. He laughed and looked at his friends. They had stupid smiles on their faces.

'Shut up, Galas,' said Ali. She tried to push past him.

Da G laughed. Ali walked faster. Da G was always trying to fight with her. And it was worse this week, because Ali was practising for the end-of-year party. There were two other DJs doing the party. One of the other DJs was Da G.

'Girls aren't DJs, Zuri!' shouted Nik.

Ali walked into the school. She didn't have time for this.

It was only eight-thirty, but it was already a bad morning.