‘The Mark’

Chapter One

 The Saturday crowds forced him on as they surged forward, the groups of laughing teens indifferent to him.

 Not many loners here. No obvious target.

 He looked round carefully and chose a spot out of range of the surveillance cameras then he shrugged his backpack off his shoulders and sat down against the wall.

 Who would his mark be this time?

 A girl. He knew that much.

 Jack coughed, ignoring the pain in his chest, and took out his new sketchpad. He started drawing.

 A few minutes later a figure blocked the light. A security guard, arms folded, stared down at him.

 ‘What you up to, son?’

 Jack looked up, startled, tightening his grip on his sketchpad, seeing something familiar in the man, the thick neck, the tall powerful body.

 A flashback. He was there again, terrified, running ….,

 *Stop it!*

 He held up the sketchpad.

 The guard bent down and squinted at it, then he straightened up, giving a quick glance at Jack’s frayed sleeves and stained jeans.

 ‘Art student, are you?’

 ‘Yeah.’

 Sketchpad. Messed up hair, dirty clothes.

 *Good call.*

 The guard nodded and moved away. Jack watched until he was out of sight.