

Lunch with Lenin and Other Stories by Deborah Ellis

Matthew worked hard to not look conspicuous. His goal at school was to not draw attention to himself. Tidy, short hair, cargo pants, an ordinary shirt. He looked younger than 14, which always worked to his advantage. Guys in denim over layers of T-shirts, with streaks of blue and orange in their hair and bits of metal gleaming from their ears, eyebrows and noses. Guys like that were always suspect, but not him. Matthew got good grades, always returned his library books on time, paid attention in class, and spoke respectfully to teachers. Not too respectfully because then they would wonder. "What is with this kid who is always too polite?" Matthew's goal was to blend in.

Today the pick up was in the library. He headed to the Religious Studies shelf. It was positioned in such a way that whoever standing there had a clear view of the library door and any approaching teachers. The librarian behind the desk could not see what was happening in this particular section of the library. No kids would come close as soon as they saw Hammer.

Matthew had a 50 dollar bill folded up in the pocket of his pants. Hammer was probably overcharging him, but what was he going to do about it? He handed the 50 dollars to Hammer. Hammer handed him the plastic Ziploc bag. He quickly put it in his cargo pants. Just then a teacher showed up, but Matthew managed to tell a lie about helping Hammer find an appropriate prayer for the football locker room. As he was leaving Hammer said, "Hey what about some Meth, I can get you a good price for some!" Matthew walked away. Business was over.

Read from page 5 – "There was still the afternoon to get through

To Page 6 – but it was the best he had so far."

Matthew has purchased drugs. Will he get caught? What kind of drugs did he buy? What is he going to do with them? The answers to these questions will surprise you.

This is just one short story called *Through the Woods* in a book of short stories about kids' involvement with different kinds of drugs. Deborah Ellis has interviewed hundreds of young adults all over the world, and has fictionalized many of the stories she has heard in this book. From the opium fields of Afghanistan to Moscow's Red Square to Hay River in the Northwest Territories, read about young people directly or indirectly affected by drugs. Deborah Ellis is the author of the Breadwinner Trilogy, The Heaven Shop, and Jakeman, and many other books about the plight of young people all around the world.

Read [Lunch With Lenin](#) to find out what happens to Matthew and others in this thought-provoking book.