

sticks and protein balls.

I start moving the remaining jars down from the top.

"Leave it," Annie Rose says. "I can do it, when—"

"No," I say sharply. "You can't reach them up there. You could fall." And I need something to do. My head's spinning, thinking about Etiene getting caught by Street Patrol. Getting caught and dragged away, just like Ms Endo was.

"Jul!" Bear stops me. "We missed one of the books."

I glance over. It's the book I looked up Silvan in. Bear's flicking through it curiously. "*Baby Names!* Am I in it?"

Annie Rose scoffs. "*Baby Names!* Do we still have that old thing? No, Bear, you won't be in there. Your name wasn't from any book."

Bear puffs up proudly. "What about Juniper?"

"Not Juniper either. Your names are both from real things. Real wild things. That's the book I used to pick your mum's name."

Bear finds the page for Marian. It's easy — the corner is folded over at the top and there are flowers drawn around the name.

"Marian. Wished-for child," I say, not even needing to look. I know the entry by heart.

It means rebellious too. That was the sting in the tail. Annie Rose loved her so much, but she was too wild to keep.

When the fire alarm sounds, it's piercing and

overwhelming and my stomach, which has been tied in a knot since Friday, comes loose. I run to the bathroom and throw up into the toilet.

Etienne said we should wait five minutes to give the Border Patrol guards time to leave their posts and when I come back into the kitchen, Bear's counting out the seconds. Annie Rose is nodding, prompting as he stumbles over the hundred boundary. One hundred and one. One hundred and two.

At two hundred she takes our hands in hers, and Bear and I join hands too so we're one perfect circle. Annie Rose doesn't cry. She doesn't get overly emotional. She's not like that. She knows it would distract us, weaken us. Now more than ever is a time to be strong.

Three hundred and it's time to go. Annie Rose lifts Bear's rucksack on to his back. The pans are strapped to the bottom and they jangle against each other.

"My little tin man," Annie Rose says and she kisses him softly on the head. "I hope your school shoes are up for the challenge!"

Bear looks small, stunned, unsure whether this is actually going to happen. "Can't you come too, Annie Rose?"

Annie Rose doesn't falter. She keeps her voice light, says that one day soon someone will develop a vaccine and she'll come then. Someone could come and get her, bring her to us. To Ennerdale.