

"I wish Etienne was here," Bear says.

"Well, he isn't, is he?" I snap. "You have to make do with me." Bear flinches. I don't know why I'm so angry all of a sudden. Maybe because I wish it too. Not that Etienne could do any of this any better. Maybe help cajole Bear, he could do that, and share the load on our backs. And be our friend, someone to talk to, help make the decisions. Etienne would have the whole route planned out. We'd know exactly where we're going and how long it should take.

Bear's eyes are shiny. I shouldn't have yelled at him — we're out here alone with no Annie Rose to console him. My stomach clenches with guilt. "Come on, Bear cub. We'll get back on track and then find somewhere to make camp."

"Can I collect sticks tonight, Ju? We can make the fire." Despite everything, he's still excited.

"I don't know, Bear," I say slowly. "I want to as well, I do, it's just with the drone nearby it'd be like sending out a signal."

"We need the fire to keep the wolves away."

The wolves came from the zoos. They escaped, or maybe their keepers let them go, because it was better than the alternative, better than what happened to all the pets, back in the city. Rufus, Jamie and Leo. Smoky, Poppy and Bo. "We'd have heard them, Bear. We were OK last night.

Nothing came." And wolves know to stay away from people, don't they? Surely people have shown them that enough times in our long bloody hunting history? Can a species remember that? The rabbits obviously not, but wolves... Wolves are so much cleverer. That's why they're in so many of the old stories.

"You promised we'd make a fire and I'm cold, Ju."

"I know, Bear, and we will. Just not tonight."

Bear puts his face into a sulk. A scared, sad sulk.

"You can make the tent. We'll need stones to weigh it down at the edges. Let's go and find the right spot."

"It's too dark," he says flatly.

He's right, but we can't use our torches in case more drones come. We just have Etienne's GPS, which I hold out before us, a soft globe of light.

"We'll go by moonlight," I say, "like real explorers do." "And starlight?"

"Yeah, exactly, so we have a million lights to see by. We're actually quite lucky. Let's just do a couple more miles and then we'll make camp, I promise."

We pick up our legs and keep walking. There are no drones, we'd hear them, but I look back anyway. I can't shake the feeling we're being followed.