

because she deserves it, because she would have used that knife on Bear, I know she would.

"Juniper!" Bear's screaming out at me from the trees, calling my name, and it's louder now and I'm terrified he'll come back and I never ever want him near that knife again.

The woman lets go of my ankle to go for the rifle, but she's still splayed out beneath me. I lift my foot up and bring it right down on to her, right into her knee, my full weight right on her, and there's a sort of snap, like that air rifle made when she broke it back to insert the silver pellets.

Then I'm off and running too. To the trees. The air rifle banging against my back as I run, the leather strap across my back.

"I'll get you! I'll get you both!" the woman screams at me, and then the cottage door bangs in the wind. A moment later a shot sounds out after us. She must have gone back for another gun.

I lurch forwards to Bear and the sweet tea pools on the forest floor at his feet. Bear looks terrified but I pull him after me and we run on. Zigzagging through the trees because now the shots really are coming.

We can't keep going. Or I can't. My head's spinning. Spinning fast and I need to be sick again.

The woman's still coming. She won't give up. I could see it in her eyes.

"We have to hide," I gasp. "I can't run any more."

There are twigs breaking behind us and Bear's looking up, and before I can stop him, he's climbing – disappearing high into the canopy. And I follow – even with my fear of heights, even without the climbing centre's soft, spongy floor, even though everything's moving – I clamber after him. Foot on branches, testing them for strength and then trusting them and reaching up for the next branch with my hand.

We're twice the height of Violet when we see her. She's breathing loudly and wincing as she stumbles on. Her left leg's dragging. I don't think I imagined the snap of her knee.