

ust press down. The soft pad against
flow.

ore the pad colours bright red and
let her bleed out again into a fresh

touched her, touched anything this
tremble passes into my fingertips.
body.

her heart beating too fast and too
s out of her.
o wet her soft fur. "We should put
keep her warm." The tremble's in

ely. He finds our blanket – the old
ne that Annie Rose stitched back
ound new yarn in the Emporium.
ost, talking fast. "It's good it's her
not her heart. Or her head?"

do? "We can't stay here," I say, my
ks at me aghast.
is."

he won't be able to follow."

gun, Bear. She'll come after us.
Maybe she's strapping up her knee
come back. Or the drones will.

She's called Steel. You heard her!"

If my head was clear, if I hadn't drunk that stupid tea,
I could think what to do. I'd know what to do. How did
Ghost even get mixed up in this? In her world bullets
shouldn't even exist. Humans shouldn't even be out here.

"Ghost saved me. She saved you too, Juniper. We can't
abandon her!" Bear's yelling at me, frantic, horrified that
I'm even suggesting leaving her.

Ghost has dragged herself deeper into the thicket and
she's almost hidden, camouflaged against the fallen leaves.
Black and brown, like the markings on her coat. That's
what gives me the answer.

I take a deep breath, to pull clean air back into my body
and help the nausea pass. "We have to clear the campsite,
OK? There can't be any trace left, of the tent or the fire or
anything. Then we hide too. We can wait for her to recover."

"Violet will see us, if she comes."

"She won't," I say. "Because that's what we'll do." I point
at Ghost. I don't crawl in after her, I don't want to freak her
out, but there's another thicket nearby, a tangle of bushes
or shrubs, and I climb inside it on all fours. Bear passes the
bags in after me.

Once our things are hidden, I scatter leaves over
everything, and then I crawl back to where Bear is hidden.
We've spread out one of the tarpaulins and we put the
space blanket over us.