

"You said the ReWild was a good thing."

"It wasn't a good thing exactly," I say slowly. "Not everyone dying, but it was better than what we were heading to."

"It was the Wild or people?" Bear asks.

"No. It was the Wild or nothing."

"Because we need trees to breathe?"

"Yeah, but more than that." Even the scientific arguments, the real tangible things – that trees give out oxygen, filter the air, help control the climate. Even after all that, there's more. You just need it. The Wild. You need to know it's there.

I shake my head. "Come on, let's get off this thing, it's making me dizzy."

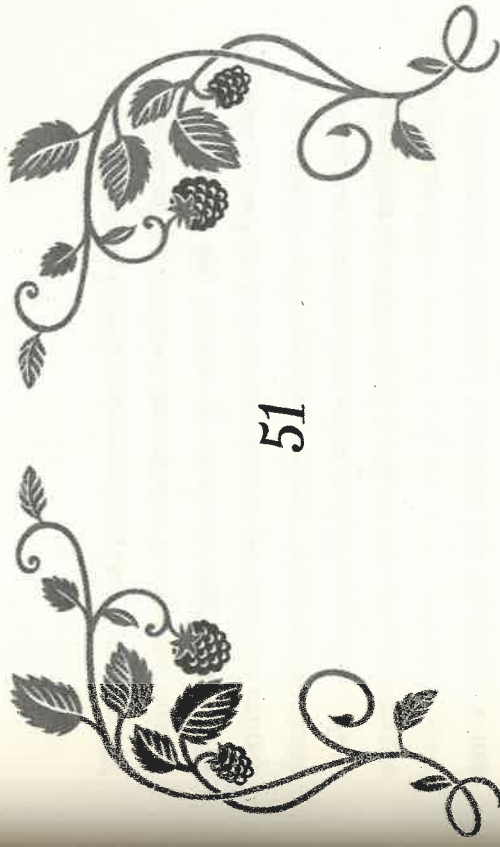
Bear's so intent on staring out into the city that he's crept forward again.

"Bear! Come back, you're too close."

He turns back, surprised. "I'm not." Though he comes over anyway and takes my hand. Maybe he knows I can't deal with another argument right now.

"You were," I say softly.

"You just don't like heights, Ju."



Even once we're off the overpass there are miles of city to trek through. We're at the perimeter. The edge lands, where it was all factories. Now it's a different kind of landscape entirely – tendrils of ivy and bindweed, blankets of moss and lichen. Some of it you wouldn't guess was ever buildings. They're just weird shapes of green, like the city's been choked up and softened at the same time.

We come to a wide span of railway lines with rusting metal trains – engines and carriages side by side and one after another, like they were gathered up for something. Something that never happened since they're all still waiting. The paint's faded now, but you can still make out the letters on one of them.

"Intercity," I read aloud.

"What does it mean, Ju?" Bear asks, staring at the word. I shrug. "Inter means between. Between cities, I guess."