

CHAPTER THREE

Crash

Grandma reaches for my shoulders and presses against me to break the impact. The car screeches to a halt in a cloud of dust.

My body jolts forward then back again as the seatbelt catches me.

For a moment we all just sit there. I know exactly what's flashing through our minds; images of Mum.

A sharp pain fills my head, not because I hurt it, but because of the memories filling it. I rub my palm against my forehead and wait for the wave of wooziness to pass.

'Everyone all right?' asks Dad, turning.

I nod but my ears ring and my fingers tingle. The second thing I've been scared of since Mum died is driving.

'Yes,' says Grandma, rubbing her chest.

'What is it?' I ask, peering at the mound in the middle of the road.

'A kangaroo,' says Dad. 'Someone must have hit the poor thing earlier.' He glances back at me.

'We should move it out of the way so no one else gets hurt,' I say.

Dad nods. 'Help me?'

Grandma opens the door and I drop to the tarmac, landing on shaky legs. The kangaroo is lit up by the headlights. It's still and dark blood coats its nose. Flies rest on the corners of its open eyes. I want to close them.