

Chapter Fourteen

'Let's see your list then,' Gaia said as we turned off down the road towards the shops.

The thing is, Mum had stopped giving me lists by then. I knew the right stuff to get, it wasn't a big problem or anything, but I knew Gaia wouldn't approve. When I first started going shopping, Gaia had said that at the very least Mum was making sure I was getting proper food by giving me a list so I wasn't just buying rubbish like crisps and chocolate and nothing else.

I didn't want Gaia to get cross with Mum about it, so I said, 'I get the same things all the time now. I know what to get,' and hoped she'd leave it at that.

She didn't say anything, though, and I felt glad until I realized why she was so quiet.

We were standing in front of one of the fallen buildings.

I'm not sure what it used to be because it had been empty for quite a long time, even before it fell. It was big and had crumbling red bricks and large windows with lots of panes that had been smashed.

Now that it had gone, it was a massive empty space. The police had put up lots of red-and-white tape all around it and we could see a couple of men with yellow hard hats on who were having a look at some of the rubble left on the ground.

'Let's keep going,' I said, and I tugged at Gaia's arm. We kept walking and then we passed the old pub, the first building that had fallen.

Gaia stopped to look but I kept walking, so she had to run to catch up with me.

'Did you notice ...' Gaia started. I waited but she didn't carry on.

'What?' I asked.

'Did you notice something funny—' Again, she stopped herself. She looked behind her to where the pub once stood. 'I don't know,' she said. 'I don't know.'

'What?' I asked again.

'I thought the bricks looked a bit ... this is

going to sound really strange. But I thought they looked a bit ... blue.'

'Blue?'

'I know it sounds weird but I'm sure I saw it.'

'We'll have a look on our way back.'

'OK. Well. It's just ... I don't know. I get the feeling that we shouldn't hang around there. There's a funny feeling about it.'

I'd felt it too. Was it just because we knew what had happened in those buildings or was it something else? I couldn't explain but I didn't want to stand there for long either. Something was telling me to move away.

We did the shopping as quickly as we could and headed home.

We didn't see anyone on the way back. There was no sign of the two men in the yellow hard hats who'd been sifting through the rubble and we only stopped briefly to look again.

'Maybe,' I said. 'Maybe it is a bit blue.'

'Do you think there's something on the bricks?' Gaia said.

'We'd need to get closer to really see.'

'Maybe we could do it tomorrow. After school. Not now.'

'No, not now,' I agreed.

We hurried off down the road.

'Thanks for coming with me,' I said.

'It's OK,' Gaia replied. 'We were probably getting scared over nothing. I mean, apart from being unlucky if your building falls down when you are inside it, people aren't getting hurt just by going past the fallen down ones.'

'Yeah, you're right,' I said.

We said goodnight and walked off in opposite directions, back to our own homes.