

# 1



There is a rasher of pink, fatty bacon, an egg with a golden yolk and buttered toast on my plate.

“Aren’t you hungry, Cara?” asks Tina.

I’m sitting at the table, hands in my lap staring at the luxurious food. I haven’t eaten properly since we flew over the wall, the breakfast smells delicious and I’m starving, but I just can’t bring myself to eat this food. It’s a reminder I’ve been lied to my entire life by my family, school teachers and the government – life *is* better on this side of the wall. There’s more food, more opportunities and more *freedom*.

“Yes, thank you for cooking breakfast,” I croak. Leon and Ava are sitting opposite me at the polished wooden table, digging into their exotic breakfasts, so I decide to try some bread – it looks like the same chewy loaf Lilith and I used to eat – and reach an aching hand out to pick it up. Upon

closer inspection, I can tell it is the same, but toasted with butter its texture and taste are so different.



After Leon and I flew over the wall and reunited with Ava, we started our journey to safety. The moon cast a silver glow over everything, guiding our way through the night. Our mission was to make it to Leon and Ava’s Aunt Tina’s house (who wasn’t actually their Aunt Tina). Marco – Ava and Leon’s father – had arranged it with her beforehand, on the one day Tina was allowed to cross the wall to visit family and friends.

Each night, we travelled miles and miles by foot, not wanting to risk getting a taxi and giving away our position – we could be arrested, sent to a re-education centre or worse if we were caught, after all. Each day, we rested in alleyways, rotating between who had to stay awake to keep watch and who got to sleep. We arrived at Tina’s yesterday around midnight.



So here we are. Two 12-year-olds and a fifteen-year-old sister stuck in a war-torn city, separated from our parents by the Wall.