

Chapter 1

THE SNOW IS getting thicker and deeper as Bella and I plough our way endlessly through it, trying hard to find our way home. I can hardly see anything in front of me. The snowflakes are blocking my vision.

Bella is snorting and prancing as the snowflakes completely cover her head.

I desperately need to get my bearings. It has only been half an hour since we left Mrs Evans' to head back home, and the little white flakes had only just started to fly gently through the air.

I squint hard and rub my eyes with my riding glove, trying my best to wipe the snow away. The snowflakes are getting larger by the second. I look around. Where are we? Everything is covered in pure white snow. It all looks the same.

Which way do we go?

"Bella, we need to find our way home as quickly as we can. This blizzard is not going to stop", I tell her, with panic in my voice.

I try as hard as possible to keep focussed.

I am sure ahead of me I can see the outline of a figure.

"Help, help, we are lost", I call out loudly.

I can just about make out a dark figure walking towards us through the snow storm.

Bella suddenly stops.

Her body is quivering as she stares directly ahead of us.

"Come on baby, it's ok", I tell her, as I try to comfort her.

I scream as loudly as I can, but no sound comes out.

I freeze.

An enormous black wolf is running towards us with his jaw wide open. His eyes are red with anger, and he is drooling and growling.

I scream once again, but all I can hear is silence.

He is getting closer and closer.

"Emily, wake up, wake up. Come on, you are just having a bad dream", Mum's voice calls.

I slowly open my eyes.

Mum is looking at me. I feel hot, sweaty and disorientated.

"It's ok love, deep breaths. You were screaming so loudly. What on earth were you dreaming about?" asks Mum.

"Me and Bella were lost in a snowstorm. We were trying to find our way home and then from out of nowhere, a fierce looking wolf appeared. He scared the heck out of me. His mouth was wide open. He had so many huge, and sharp teeth showing. I thought he was going to eat us both", I tell her whilst still trying to wake up.

"Oh Emily, what a horrid dream. You and Bella are both fine, love. Come on, up you get. I shall go and make you a nice cup of coffee, as I am sure that will make you feel better", she reassures me.

I lie where I am for a few minutes. It seemed so real. Thank goodness it wasn't. What a horrible nightmare.

I try to put it to the back of my mind.

I glance at my watch to see it is ten past seven. I immediately jump out of bed to get washed and dressed as quickly as I can.

"There you are love", says Mum smiling.

"Morning Ems", says Aunty, as I head over to them both to give them a kiss.

"Your Mum was telling me about the horrible dream you had", continues Aunty.

"It was horrific Aunty. It felt so real. I hate having dreams like that", I tell her.

"Well thankfully Ems, horrible dreams are very rare for you. You tend to have more adventurous ones, which I must say I am very envious about. I am sure somewhere in the loft, I still have your Uncle's dreamcatcher. He used to swear by it. I will try and dig it out for you later", smiles Aunty.

"What is a dreamcatcher?" I enquire.

"It is like a hand-woven web, with feathers and healing beads around it. You hang it above your bed, and it is supposed to catch all the good dreams and block out any bad ones", she replies.

"I wish we weren't going home today", sighs Mum.

"I wish you were staying longer too. It has been truly awesome having a complete break from kitchen duties. You have been absolutely amazing, and I am going to miss you, bro and Suki", says Aunty.

"I am going to miss you too Mum. Aunty will have to mop my brow if I have another bad dream. Fingers crossed Uncle's dreamcatcher will work if Aunty can manage to find it. What time are you thinking of leaving?" I ask her.

"Your Dad wants to leave around twelve o'clock. He reckons it should be an ideal time to avoid the work traffic on the motorways", she replies.

"I bet you have a lot to organise for your fundraiser on Saturday for the shelter?" I ask Mum.

"Everything is under control. This year, I am totally in charge of the tombola and I can assure you Emily all the prizes are ready and waiting in the spare room. I have managed to get forty-two prizes donated, and it is going to look fabulous", grins Mum.

"Well done you for being so organised", replies Aunty.

"Where is Dad?" I ask Mum.

"He is still in bed and I forgot to close the bedroom door again. When I last took a peep, Tinker and all five dogs were asleep on top of him as usual. I am not sure who snores the most, him or them! Someone had most definitely passed wind too, as it smelt disgusting", says Mum as she scrunches up her face in utter disgust.

I can't help but laugh out loud and Aunty joins in too.

"Well I might pop off and do my session with Specks now so I can spend some time with you, Dad and Suki before you leave", I smile, as I get up to wash up my cup.

"Ok, love. Off you trot then", says Mum.