



The Letter

Tyler woke suddenly. The dream was fresh in her mind. She could still hear that voice: "Return the key."

Why did she feel so afraid? It was only a silly dream.



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Tyler reached under her pillow and pulled out a star-shaped object. It was solid silver.

Holding it made her think of Gran. She had given it to Tyler for her seventh birthday. It always made her feel better. Tyler smiled. Then she remembered. How could she have forgotten? Today was her 13th birthday.



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Brand New

Keisha had just got a ZZone mp3 player. The ZZone had just come out. It was sleek and blue. Keisha had saved up for months to buy it.

It sounded even better than it had in the shop.

Her best mate Shelly came over to check it out.

“That is *so* cool,” grinned Shelly.
“Give us a go.”

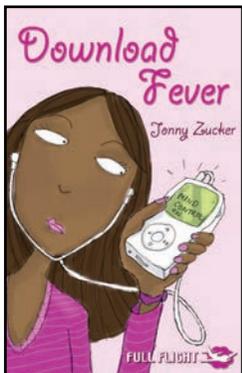
They hung out for two hours, listening to music and talking about Keisha’s new mp3 player.

That night Keisha slept with the ZZone on her bedside table.



She slept very deeply.

So she didn’t see the weird flashing letters and numbers that appeared on its screen in the middle of the night.





A New Handbag

“That is so lush!” Stacey said.

“They had it in blue too,” Becks said.

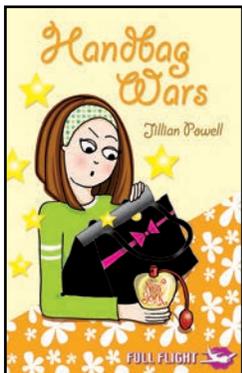
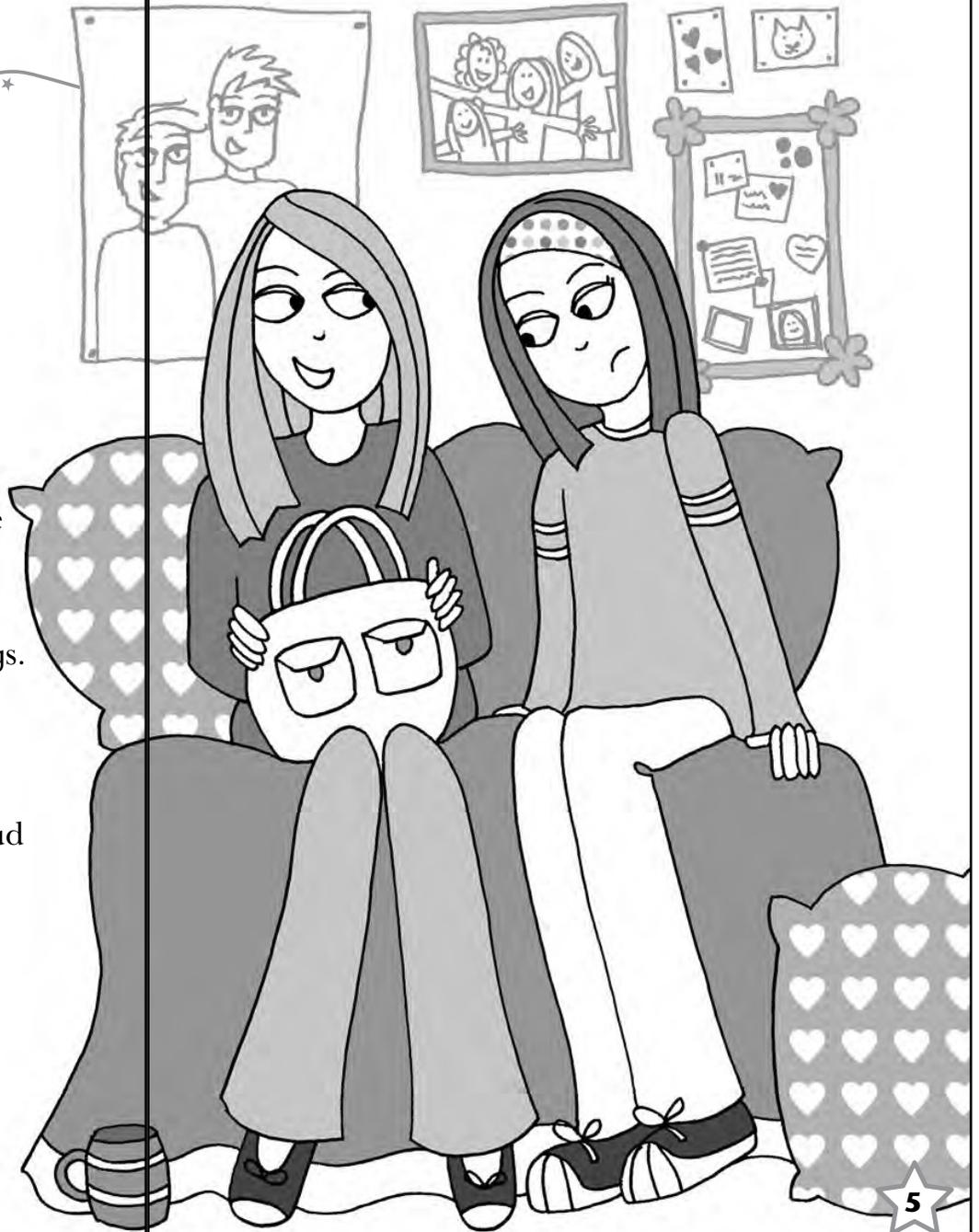
“No. Pink is perfect,” Stacey agreed.

Becks held out the bag. “You should get one,” she said to Stacey. “They are *so* now.”

Stacey and Becks were mad about bags. They had a handbag war going on.

Right now, Becks was winning. She always had the cutest new bag. She had hundreds of them. But it was easy for her. Her mum worked in a shop. She got good deals.

Stacey was losing the war.





Sunday

Back to school tomorrow. Real pain!
Why do we have to work when it's so
good outside? Still – I get to see Simon
again. Haven't seen him for a whole
week!



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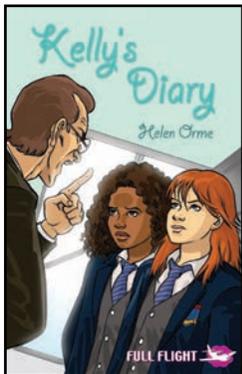
And there's activity week. Mel and I
are down for outdoor activities. We get
to go to Wales to do canoeing, rock
climbing and all sorts of good things.
And Si is down for the same trip.

Bad news – Mrs James has said if we
don't start behaving we won't go.

This is so unfair. There are people in
our tutor group far worse than us!



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The Boat

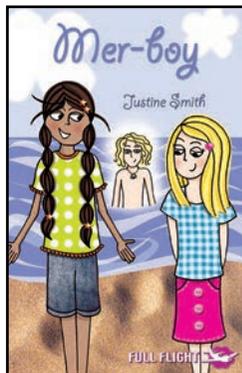
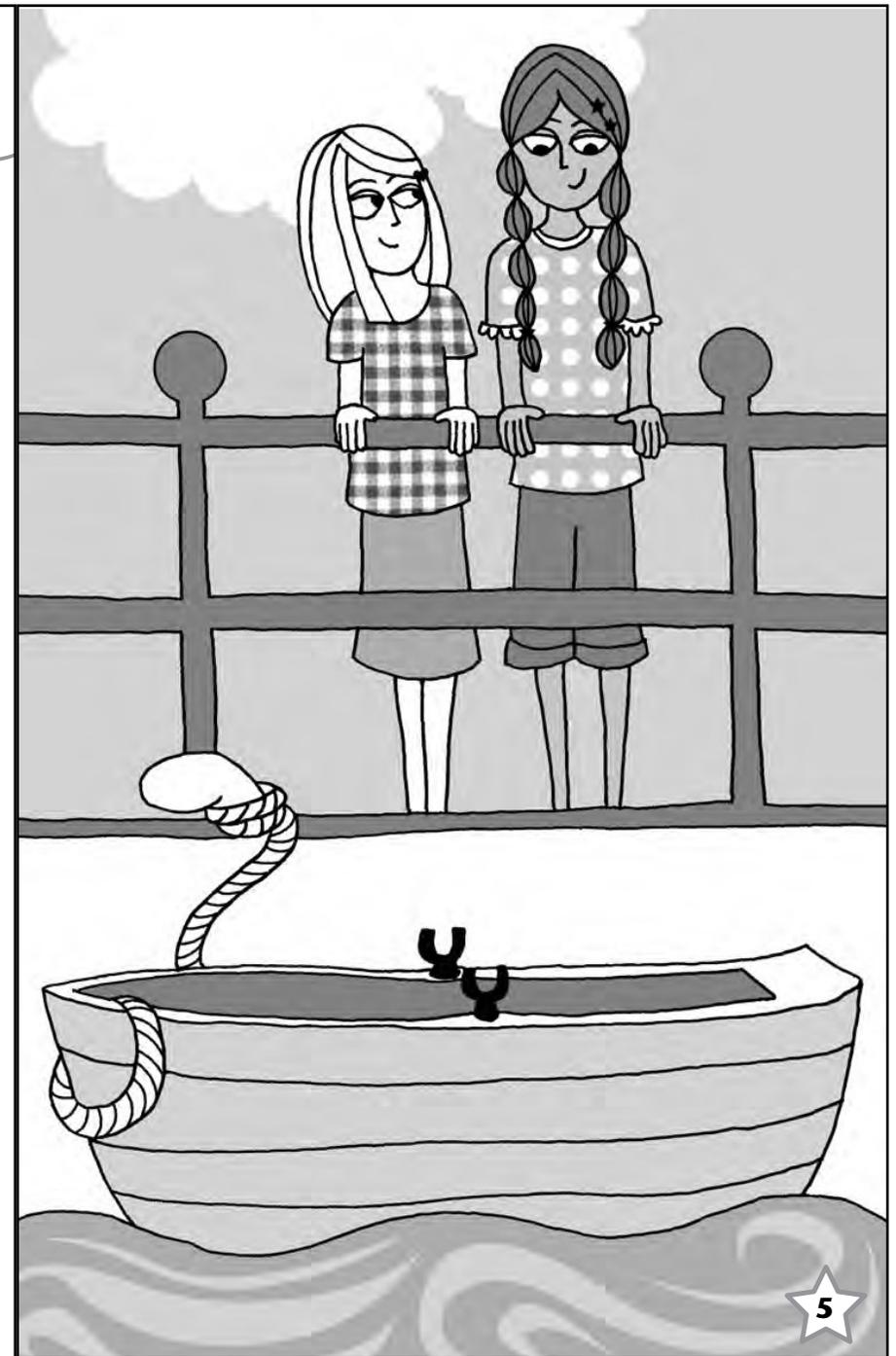
Tara grew up by the sea, and had always loved the water.

“You are my water-baby,” her mother would say.

“More like a smelly fish-baby!” teased Aisha.

Aisha was Tara’s best friend. They were very different – Aisha was outgoing, and Tara was the shy one – but it worked. They did everything together. Playing music, watching television, out on the bikes. They were like sisters.

Now, the two girls stood and looked at the boats.



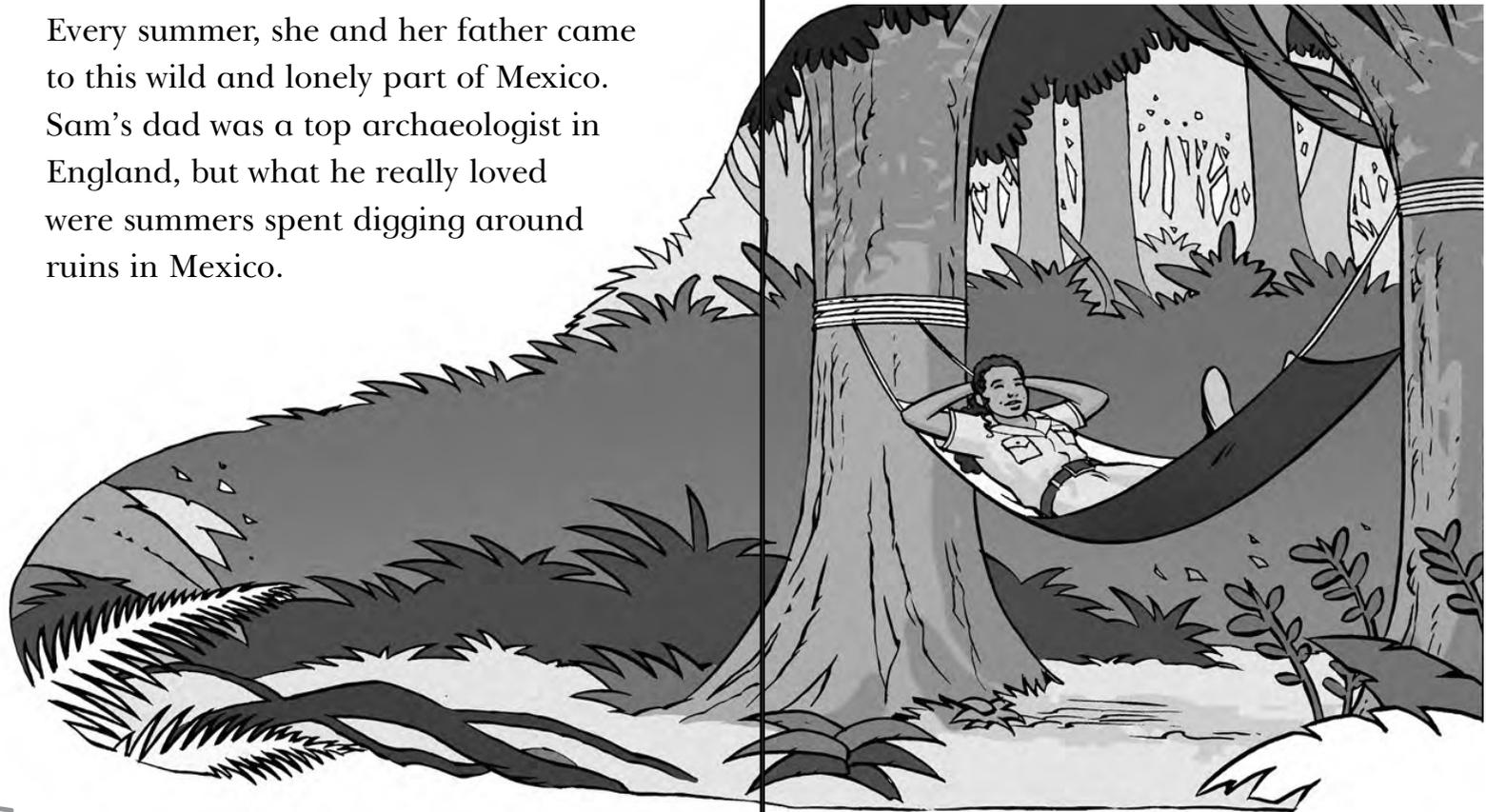


Midday Heat

The midday sun beat down. Sam lay in her hammock. Everyone else was having a sleep – that was what they did in Mexico when the sun got too hot.

Every summer, she and her father came to this wild and lonely part of Mexico. Sam's dad was a top archaeologist in England, but what he really loved were summers spent digging around ruins in Mexico.

Sam normally enjoyed a rest at midday. She liked rocking in the giant hammock under the shade of a large tree. Today she couldn't sleep. She was wide awake.





A Party

“Is this Holly’s house?”

“I think so. I’ll text her and check.”

“No need!” Lexie said. “I can hear the music.”

The girls went inside. The party was in full swing. “There’s Callum,” Saira said. “He likes you.”

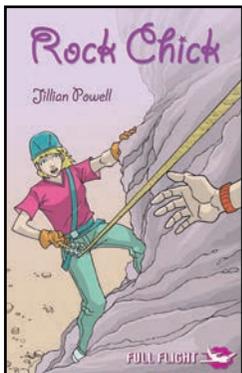
“Well, I don’t like him!” Lexie said. “Looks like he needs a good work out!”

“You are harsh!” Saira said. “Look, he’s smiling at you.”



Lexie smiled. But she wasn’t smiling at Callum. She had just seen the best looking boy on the planet. Who was he? “Who’s that?” She asked Saira.

“Dunno. Better ask Holly,” Saira said. “Let’s get a drink first.”





The Olympic Dream

“Look at Martha Malone go! The snow’s flying off her board as she rides at high speed down the freestyle run. Just listen to the crowd cheering snowboarding’s brightest new star!”

“Martha! Martha!”

“Martha! Did you hear me?”

Martha looked at her mum.
“Sorry, what did you say?” asked Martha dreamily.

“I’ve-ordered-us-hot-chocolate!” said Martha’s mum slowly.

“Thanks, Mum!”



Martha stared happily out of the café window at the snow-covered mountains. She was finally here!





New School

In September, Tess would be going to a new school. Again.

Tess was used to her dad changing jobs. Along with the new job came a new house, new friends and a new school. Tess had been to five new schools. Everyone said it would be easier next time – it never was.

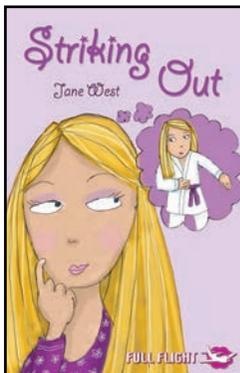
The first day of term wasn't too bad because two girls had been chosen to look after her.

“Hi! I'm Mandy,” said the one with glasses.

“And I'm Vaz,” said the one with the long, dark hair.



They smiled at her and Tess began to relax. “I'm Teresa,” she said shyly, “but everyone calls me 'Tess'.”





TV Heat

Kate Alton slammed her bedroom door and flopped down onto her bed. Her mum, Debbie, was driving her mad.

Debbie was a famous TV star. She had her own show called *At home with the Altons*. On the show, a different group of famous people came to live in their house each week. Ten TV cameras were in the house all of the time to film Debbie and Kate and the people who were living with them.

Every night, Debbie did a 'Diary Spot' where she talked about the things that had gone on in the house that day. Millions of people watched *At home with the Altons*.

