



## CHAPTER 1

# AVALON TOWER

There are times when I think the building is watching me. It feels alive with its creaks and groans, its little judders in the high winds.

It's called Avalon Tower. A metal monster, the tallest luxury apartment block in London.

It's built out here on a wasteland, looking out across the city. They chose the site well. The people on the highest floors can look down on the city in the evening, see tiny blue and orange lights glow. The little fireflies of life, showing them where all the little people live, skulking down there in their flats and houses, far beneath them.

Bel, my mum, wants to live in Avalon Tower more than anything. It's safe to say I don't.

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When we first came to it, driving across the strip of half-built road, I could not believe how ugly it was. Three tall cylinders of glass and steel stuck together, like something out of a sci-fi movie.

“There?” I said in disbelief. “That’s the famous Avalon Tower?”

My mum’s face was blank behind her sunglasses. “Don’t be like that, Taz. It’s very sought-after.”

“I don’t care. It’s horrible. When you said tower I was thinking of something more like... well... a castle. Like Rapunzel’s tower.”

My mum allowed herself a little smile. “Don’t worry, my little Rapunzel. You’ll have plenty of chances to let your hair down.”

“Ha ha. Very funny. I’m not a kid.”