

Contents

Chapter 1	Rose at home	4
Chapter 2	Dave and Grace	10
Chapter 3	Rose and Grace	15
Chapter 4	The night at Rose's	20
Chapter 5	Market day	23
Chapter 6	The homecoming	30
Chapter 7	Grace's secret	34
Chapter 8	Saving Grace	40
Activities		46
Glossary		54
Key		56

Rose at home

Rose couldn't see anything at all. The night was dark. There were no streetlights, and there was no moon in the sky. It was just Rose and Mum in the car. Rose tried to tell Mum that she was driving too fast, but she couldn't speak. She couldn't move. Then there were lights coming towards them. Rose opened her mouth to call out and tell Mum to slow down, get out of the way, stop. She couldn't make a sound. The lights came closer. It was a big truck, right in front of them. It hit their car and pushed it off the road and into the water. Rose began to scream. She screamed and didn't stop.

Dave Feeny dropped his pencil and ran into his daughter's room. The afternoon sun shone through the window. Rose was lying on her bed with her eyes closed. She was screaming. Dave sat on the bed and took her hand in his. 'Rose, it's Dad. Wake up!' He repeated his words twice before the screams stopped.

His sixteen-year-old daughter opened her eyes and sat up. Her face was wet with tears.

'Was it another bad dream?' asked Dave.

'Yes,' said Rose. 'I just lay on my bed for a minute. I must have gone to sleep.'

'Were you dreaming about Mum again?'

'Yes. This time there was a truck...We went into the river.' She looked at her father with sad brown eyes.

'This is the first time you've had one of those dreams in the daytime. I'm sorry you dream these terrible things, Rose.'



‘Me too,’ said Rose. ‘I don’t want to dream about car accidents. And I don’t want to dream about Mum.’

‘Susan said you need to talk about Mum,’ said Dave.

Susan Stevens was Rose’s counsellor. Rose went to see her twice a week. She and Susan talked about Rose’s life.

Rose didn’t go to school. She refused to go. She didn’t want to go out of the flat at all. And she refused to get into a car. Dave had to take her to Susan’s on the bus.

When she first started going to see Susan, Rose didn’t speak to her. But Susan didn’t get angry with Rose. Instead she played soft music and talked to Rose – about the weather, a book, her garden. She was always interesting. After a while Rose began to talk to Susan. But she also began to dream.

‘I *do* talk about Mum to Susan,’ said Rose. ‘But I don’t want to dream about her too.’

‘I wish you could talk about Mum to me too,’ said Dave unhappily. ‘I like to remember the things we used to do together.’

Rose looked at her father. His curly hair used to be black like Rose’s. Now it was grey. It had been a terrible time when Rose’s mother died. Rose was badly hurt and was in hospital for a long time. Dave did everything he could to help her when she came home. Rose didn’t want to talk about her mother or the accident, so Dave didn’t. Perhaps that had been a mistake. Her counsellor said she shouldn’t run away from the past.

Rose got off the bed. ‘Sorry, Dad.’ She wasn’t going to talk about her mother today. ‘Grace will be here soon and I want to have a shower first.’

Dave said, ‘We’ll have a cup of coffee when she’s here. That will wake you up.’

Rose heard the doorbell when she was getting dressed. She looked at her watch. Grace was early. Grace Anderson was a teacher from Rose's school who lived nearby. She brought schoolwork to Rose after school most afternoons.

Rose heard her father open the front door. Her bedroom was untidy. She quickly tidied her bed, found her school books on the floor and put them on her desk. She went towards the living room, but stopped. The door was half-open. Dave and Grace were sitting on the sofa and talking.

'She had another bad dream about a car accident this afternoon,' said Dave.

'She told you that?' said Grace.

Dave nodded. 'She's beginning to talk about her mother and the accident.'

'That's good, isn't it?'

'Yes,' said Dave. 'But if she starts dreaming in the daytime I won't be able to go out.'

The teacher put her hand on his arm. 'It must be hard to leave Rose alone when you go to work.'

'It is,' he said. 'I'm an architect and I can do a lot of my work at home. But I have to go to the office sometimes.'

Rose listened. *I haven't heard Dad talk about this before*, she thought. *Why doesn't he talk to me about it?*

Grace looked up and saw Rose in the doorway. 'Hello, Rose,' she said, and stood up.

'I'll make the coffee,' said Dave, 'and bring it in to you.'

Grace picked up her bag and followed Rose into her room. Rose gave her the schoolwork that she'd finished.

'That's good, Rose,' said Grace. Then she said, 'Your friends were asking me about you.'

'I haven't been to school for months. I don't have any friends,' said Rose.

‘They haven’t forgotten you,’ Grace continued carefully. ‘You must be lonely. Your father says you won’t go out of the flat.’

‘I’m not lonely. Dad’s here most of the time,’ said Rose. ‘And I do go out sometimes. Dad takes me to see my counsellor twice a week.’ Rose saw the question in Grace’s eyes. ‘We go on the bus because I won’t go in the car.’

‘Is the counsellor helping you?’ Grace asked.

‘I don’t want to talk about it,’ said Rose. She heard her father coming and turned away from Grace.

Dave brought in their coffee and then went back to his work.

Grace had some coffee and then she said, ‘I’ve got a new assignment for you from Mrs Jessup.’

‘What is it?’ Rose asked. Mrs Jessup was her English teacher. She usually gave her interesting things to do.

Grace took a piece of paper out of her bag. ‘She wants you to choose four people who you don’t know very well – not family or friends – and write about them. You have to find out about them and their lives, and describe them.’ She gave Rose the paper. ‘This tells you what to do and how to do it.’

Rose stared at her. ‘I can’t do this assignment. I don’t know four people to write about.’

‘Just think about it, Rose,’ said Grace. ‘You could describe your neighbours...your counsellor...Maybe you could describe me!’

Rose didn’t say anything. She thought the assignment was too hard for her.

‘Okay, Rose, I’ll be back tomorrow,’ said Grace. She picked up her bag. ‘Try to begin the assignment before then.’ She smiled and walked out of the room.

After a minute Dave called out, 'Rose, will you be okay for a couple of hours? I have to go in to the office.'

'Okay,' she said unhappily. 'Don't be too long.'

Rose felt lonely after Dave left. She went into the living room and took her father's binoculars out of a cupboard. She took them out onto the balcony and looked through them at the street below. She watched Dave's car drive out from the car park under the building. Then she saw Grace walking away towards her place. She lived in a building in the same street near the Brisbane River.

Rose stayed on the balcony and watched Grace all the way home. She often looked through the binoculars like this. She usually just watched for her father. Now she looked carefully at all the people down below. Who could she write about for her assignment?

