

Chapter 1

A car ride

‘You can’t go out tomorrow night, Jo!’ shouted Jo’s mum.
‘You must look after Amy for me.’

‘But I *want* to go out,’ Jo shouted back.

‘Jo, I work all week. I want one night out,’ said her mum.

‘I work all week. I want to go out with my friends.’

Jo went into the kitchen. Breakfast was short and loud. BANG! She put her plate on the table. BANG! She shut the fridge door.

The radio was on. They were playing an old song by The Killers. Then it was the news. Jo went to get her bag from her room. She came back into the kitchen.

‘... *escaped after scientists* ...’ the radio was saying. She turned it off.

BANG! She put the coffee back in the cupboard.

‘Stop it, Jo!’ shouted her mum from the sitting room.
‘You’ll break something!’

Jo called Merlin. The dog ran up to her and she put her arms round his neck.

‘I love you, Merlin,’ she said.

BANG! went the front door.

Jo walked along the road to the bus stop and then stopped.

‘Oh no!’ she thought. She remembered her English homework. It was on her bed in her room. ‘Mr Bates will kill me. I’ll have to go back. Now I’ll be late.’

Cambridge University Press
978-84-832-3503-4 – Killer Bees
Jane Rollason
Excerpt
[More information](#)



She walked back to the house. Her mum and sister were coming out.

‘What’s wrong?’ said her mum.

‘My homework’s upstairs,’ said Jo.

‘Oh, Jo! You never think!’

‘Can you take me to school?’ she asked her mum.

‘We’re going with Sam and his mum today. There isn’t room for you in their car.’

‘Thanks a lot,’ said Jo angrily and she went into the house.

‘And remember to take the dog for a walk when you get home,’ shouted her mum.

A few minutes later Jo came out of the house again. Mikey was going by.

‘Hey, Jo,’ he called. ‘How’s things?’

‘Yeah, OK,’ said Jo. Mikey came up to the front door.

‘You don’t look very happy,’ he said.

‘Oh, you know,’ said Jo. ‘My mum never lets me do anything.’

‘Have you got time for a coffee?’ he asked.

‘We’ll be late for school,’ Jo replied.

Jo quite liked Mikey. He was in the year above her and he lived in the next street. He was always in trouble at school, but he was funny. And today, ‘funny’ was good.

‘What’s your first class?’ asked Mikey.

‘What day is it? Thursday. It’s maths,’ said Jo.

‘Maths is boring,’ said Mikey.

She thought about maths. ‘OK, then. I’ll go into school after maths.’

They had coffee in the kitchen. Jo put the radio on again. They were talking about bees, so she turned it off.

‘Who wants to know about bees?’ said Mikey. He looked out of the window. Jo’s mum’s car was in front of the house.

‘Hey, I’ve got an idea!’

‘Oh yeah? What’s your idea?’ asked Jo.

‘Can you drive?’ asked Mikey. He didn’t wait for an answer. ‘I can,’ he said. ‘I drive my dad’s car all the time.’

‘I’m not old enough,’ said Jo. ‘But I *have* ridden a scooter.’¹

‘Let’s go out in your mum’s car. Your mum won’t know. We’ll drive round for ten minutes and then come back. Come on!’

‘Mikey, that is the worst idea ...’ Jo said.

‘Come on, it’ll be fun,’ Mikey said.

‘Why shouldn’t I have some fun?’ she asked herself. People shouted at her all day – at home, at school.

‘What will my mum say?’ she said.

‘She won’t know,’ said Mikey.

‘People will see us,’ Jo said.

‘Nobody will see us – everyone’s at work or at school,’ said Mikey. ‘Where are the car keys?’

She pulled on her big winter coat over her school uniform. Mikey was already in the car. She got in next to him.

‘I don’t believe this,’ Jo said. ‘Why are we doing this?’



‘You were feeling sad. Remember?’ said Mikey. ‘Now you’re having a fun day! Ready?’

‘OK, let’s do it,’ she said.

Mikey started the car. He drove carefully along the road and stopped at a red light. He turned left and started to drive out of town.

‘What do you think?’ he asked.

‘What do I think about what?’ Jo said. She was beginning to feel sick.

‘Am I a good driver?’ Mikey said. He was smiling.

‘Mikey, this is really stupid,’ said Jo.

He started to drive faster. Jo was really afraid now.

‘Mikey, can we turn round, please? Now! This isn’t funny.’

Mikey laughed.

They were in the country now. They drove through some woods.

‘How fast can this car go?’ said Mikey.

‘Mikey, stop! Please stop the car.’

‘Watch this!’ he said. The car went faster.

‘Mikey! Stop!’

Then the road turned to the right. Mikey tried to turn but he was going too fast.

‘MIKEY!’ Jo screamed.

The car went off the road and into the woods. It went faster and faster between the trees. Jo and Mikey banged their heads on the roof. They were screaming. Then there was a tree right in front of them ...

Jo opened her eyes. Everything was quiet. There was a smell of smoke. She opened her door and got out. She went round to Mikey’s side and opened his door. His eyes were

Cambridge University Press
978-84-832-3503-4 – Killer Bees
Jane Rollason
Excerpt
[More information](#)



closed. She put her hand on him. He moved. He wasn't dead.

'Come on, Mikey,' she said. Mikey opened his eyes for a moment but then closed them again.

'Wake up!' she shouted at him.

But he didn't. Jo looked for her phone.

'Oh no!' she thought. 'I left it in the kitchen.'

She found Mikey's phone in his pocket. She called 112 and asked for help.

'There's been an accident,' she said. 'It was a boy in a car. He's not dead, but his eyes are closed.'

She told them where the car was.

'What's your name?' asked the woman.

But Jo couldn't say her name. She couldn't say 'I was in the car too'. This was starting to feel like a bad dream.

'My name's ...' she started to say. 'It's nothing to do with me ... I'm just walking my dog in the woods.'

'OK. Can you wait there for an ambulance?'

'Yes, I'll wait.'

Jo put Mikey's phone back in his pocket.

Fifteen minutes later Jo heard the ambulance. She sat high in a tree, about fifty metres from the car. She didn't move.

Two paramedics got out of the ambulance.



‘Has he broken anything?’ asked one of the men.

‘I don’t think so,’ said the other.

They carried Mikey to the ambulance.

‘Who called us?’ one of them asked.

‘A woman,’ said the other. They looked around quickly.

‘Was she in the car, too?’

‘No. She said she saw the accident. She was walking her dog. Do you want to look for her?’

‘No, let’s get back,’ said the first one, ‘the soldiers² are coming and they ...’

Jo couldn’t hear the end of the sentence.