

# REAPER'S RHYTHM

HIDDEN: BOOK 1

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Published by Smudged Ink Press  
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First Paperback Edition: July 2013

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For Mum, Dad, Mark and Louise.  
Thank you for your unending belief and support.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Edited by Rebecca Taros Dickson

Proofread by Megan Payne

Cover illustration by Bramasta Aji and Ina Wong

Thank you to everyone who supported me while I was writing 'Reaper's Rhythm', especially Tom, Eleanor, Katy, Ruth, Sharon, Clare and Monica. Also thank you to Louise, for giving me some much needed courage.





## CHAPTER ONE

The warm light seeps through the closed sitting room curtains when I step into the drive. The muffled thump of dance music grows louder as I approach the familiar front door. I push the key into the lock, but the door swings open on its own. My breath catches in my throat, but I force it into a growl. Not only has my sister, Charley, not bothered to lock the door, she hasn't latched it. Whatever she rushed home for must have been important.

I step over the threshold and a blast of warm air hits me, enveloping me like one of Mum's overprotective hugs. My wind-chilled face tingles, as I close and lock the door.

"Charley, I hope you've set the table." My voice competes with the din of the deep bass of my sister's music.

I toss my keys into the wicker basket on the hall table. As I peel my coat off, I see Charley's in a crumpled heap on the floor. Rolling my eyes, I scoop it up and hang it, then place her discarded boots in the shoe rack beside my own. Why am I the conscientious sister? I'm only sixteen. Charley will be heading off to university next year.

Stomach rumbling, I snatch up the Chinese takeout I'd picked up on the walk home and wander into the kitchen. Frowning, I flick the switch to light up the pristine room. Mum is a clean freak now that Dad doesn't live here. The table isn't set, even though Charley promised she would do it before she rushed off ahead.

"Charley," I call out and then dump the bag on the kitchen table and stomp across the hall to the sitting room, shoving the door open.

The music hits me first, making me jerk my head back, then the smell. An odd odour, metallic and rich, overpowers the air freshener on the mantel.

"Charley?" She must be trying to scare me. "Charley, stop messing around." I grit my teeth, expecting her to jump out at any second.

My body shudders and my flesh tingles as if an army of ants is marching beneath my skin. I back out of the empty sitting room and bolt upstairs. The smell is stronger, snaking down my throat, making me want to gag.

"Charley?"

I shove her door open, hard.

Charley's lying on the bed, her blond hair fanned out over the pillow. Her arms are spread wide, palms up. Crimson blood drips from deep slashes on her wrists. Her blue eyes are open, staring at the ceiling. But they don't see. They're dull, empty. Dead.

The room spins. My stomach lurches and bile rises up my throat. I swallow and clap my hand to my mouth. Sagging against the doorframe, I can't tear my gaze from the single lock of hair resting over Charley's porcelain cheek. What should I do?

Charley would know what to do.

As I stumble down the stairs, my mind clicks into gear. A scream rips out of my throat, eclipsing the pounding music. My foot slips on the beige carpet, sending me tumbling down the remaining stairs. My shoulder and back slam against the wall. I scramble to my feet, screaming, sobbing, then stagger into the hallway, colliding into a young man with the darkest eyes I've ever seen.

My own force knocks me backwards. His strong grip clenches my arm, preventing me from falling. I try to scream again, but the sound is trapped within my constricting chest. My sister is dead. A stranger is in my house.

I writhe against his grip, lashing out with my foot. My toes crumple and sting when they hit his shin. I'm thrown off balance, but he holds me fast.

He raises his thumb to my forehead and applies gentle pressure, as he sweeps his thumb towards my brow and then hooks it back up.

"Sleep." His quiet voice acts like a sedative.

My head flops forward until my chin touches my chest. A new scent replaces the sickly metallic tang of Charley's blood: freshly cut grass. Inhaling it makes my head fuzzy and my heartbeat slow.

I want to see his face, memorise every detail. The contours of his cheeks and jaw, the shape of his nose, the colour of his hair. The police want to know those things, don't they? The only feature I can see for sure is the impossible darkness of his eyes.

My own eyelids droop, my limbs turn liquid. A strong arm loops round my back and lowers me to the floor. I fight against sleep. Each time I force my eyelids open, they flutter shut again.

"Forget," he says. The word is nothing more than a whisper at the edge of my hearing. "Sleep."

## CHAPTER TWO

My eyes are closed, but I hear a soft, repetitive bleep. Where am I? Something sharp irritates the back of my right hand. My scalp itches, like my hair hasn't been washed for a week. I'm lying in a hard, uncomfortable bed, on a mattress that rustles with the slight movement of my head. Wherever I am, it stinks like an overdose of flowers. I can tell it's light because the insides of my eyelids glow red.

"Is she waking up?" Mum's voice sounds strangled. "Kim?"

"Give her some space, Cath." Dad's voice. Why's he here?

I twitch my forehead into a stiff frown. Why would Dad be here? Where am I? Prying my eyes open, I grunt through my nose. Bright morning light pours in through the large window, revealing the unfamiliar room. The top half of the walls have been painted white, the bottom half mint-green. A plastic rail runs round the walls. Dark scuff marks stain the white paint. My bed is narrow, with raised metal sides. I can see the back of a board, clipped to the end of the bed. My head and shoulders are propped up on rustling pillows. I'm covered in a white sheet and a lemon-yellow blanket. Why am I in hospital?

"Kim?" Mum's face hovers at the corner of my vision. Her eyes, normally bright as sapphires, are red and puffy. She isn't wearing any makeup and her blond hair has been hastily pulled back into a bun.

Dad approaches and leans over the other side of the bed. He grips my left hand. "Welcome back, Kimmie."

I grimace at the nickname. He knows I hate it. I try to speak, but my tongue sits in my mouth like a sanding block. I cough instead. Something tugs against my right hand. I glance down and realise why it's itching so badly. An IV protrudes from my skin. I follow the tube upwards to a clear bag of fluid. I try to speak, but only manage to croak. Dad hands me a cup of water. I sip it slowly, allowing it to soothe my sore throat.

"Why am I here?" My voice is nothing more than a weak rasp. "What happened?"

Mum and Dad exchange a glance.

Dad takes the cup from me and sets it down on the bedside cabinet. He exhales. "What do you remember, Kimmie?"

I stare at him, running my tongue over my cracked lips. My body shivers. "I was walking home with takeout." I prop myself up on my elbows, still dizzy, and gaze around the room. Flowers adorn the bedside table, the window sill, the wheeled table and even the floor. "Why won't you tell me what's happened?"

I don't think anything's broken. I don't feel any pain.

Mum massages her forehead with her thumb and forefinger while Dad dips his gaze to my blanket. Their silence terrifies me.

"How long have I been here?"

Dad lets out a long sigh. "Two days."

My eyes widen. "Two days? What happened? Where are Charley and Chris?" Knowing my sister, she's probably out shopping while I'm lying in the hospital.

Sobbing, Mum claps her hand to her mouth. She squeezes her eyes shut and shakes her head over and over. "I can't do this." She flees the room, leaving me staring at her back.

"Dad, please, tell me what's going on." My whispers quiver in the air.

He clears his throat. "Kimmie... Charley, she..." he wipes his hand over his eyes.

I clutch his hand, unable to breathe. My head spins with thoughts. "Tell me."

"Charley is gone."

I blink. Charley wouldn't leave without telling me. She wouldn't. "Gone?" My mind feels like it's been stuffed with mothballs.

Dad blows air through his clenched teeth. "She's dead, Kimmie."

My elbows give way. I crash onto the bed, staring at the ceiling. My entire body has gone numb. I don't believe it.

Dad squeezes my hand. "You found her. Do you remember?" He strokes my hand. "It must have been a terrible shock for you. I'm so sorry."

I tug my hand from his grasp. "I was walking home with takeout." The words trip out of my mouth mechanically. "Charley went ahead. She rushed off after she got a text message. She said she would set the table." Tears sting my eyes. I won't believe his words. "She can't be dead."

Dad strokes my lank hair away from my sweaty forehead. "I'm sorry, Kimmie, but she's gone."

I turn my face away from his touch. It can't be true.

"How did she seem?" Dad's voice trembles.

The IV stings my hand when I clench my fists. "She was fine. She was happy." I frown. "You know, Charley. She'd dragged me on one of her crusades."

A strained smile spreads across Dad's lips. "What was it this time?"

"Some girl at the record store sold an 18 certificate game to an under-aged kid."

"Did anything else happen? Anything at all?"

"She flipped a guy off." I can remember the crestfallen expression on that guy's face as though it was seconds ago, so why can't I remember arriving home? Why can't I remember finding my sister?

My lower lip shudders. It's true. Charley is gone. I flick my head round to stare at Dad. "How did she die?" Anger makes my voice shake. Grief makes tears collect in the back of my throat and behind my eyes.

Dad bows his head. It's only then I realise he's not bothered

shaving. Salt and pepper stubble covers his strong chin and angular jaw. "Kimmie, she..." He curls his hands around the bed's guard rail, exposing the whites of his knuckles. "Charley took her own life."

My breath is forced out of my lungs in a gasp. "She was happy. She wouldn't... she was happy."

"Kimmie." He grasps my shoulders.

I struggle and scream, wrenching myself from his grip, almost tearing the IV from my hand.

"Kimmie." I've never heard Dad sound so lost and afraid.

"Charley was happy." I gulp in air, even though it stings my throat. "She would never. She wouldn't." I can't bring myself to say the words.

Dad stares at me. His shoulders are slumped, his eyes hollow. "I'm sorry." He touches his index finger to his lips. Tears gather in his eyes and drip down his cheeks. "She slit her wrists." His fingertips graze my bare arm. "Don't you remember, Kimmie? You found her."

"You keep saying that." The words explode from my lips in a scream. I flatten my palms over my face, covering my eyes. Violent sobs shake my body and choke my throat. How could I forget?

"The police think you fell down the stairs, after you found her. Shock." He pats my arm. "Maybe it's best you don't remember."

"Charley was happy," I whisper, not able to look at him.

He taps his nails against the guard rail a few times. The metallic clink makes my skin crawl. He strikes the metal bar with the palms of his hand. The force sends vibrations rippling through the bed.

"Kim, listen to me..."

I cut him off with a sharp shake of my head. "You're lying. Why are you lying?" I glare at him. "Get out. Leave me alone."

Dad steps back and wipes his hand over his chin. A sad sigh escapes him. "I'll leave you to get some rest."

My crying intensifies once he's gone. I can't control the tears.

I don't want to control them. My memories hone in on the silent news programme I'd watched while waiting for takeaway. All the senseless deaths. Stuff like that was meant to happen to other people. Not to anyone I knew. Not to my sister.

I clench my hands into fists and press them against my eyes.

Charley was happy. We'd been laughing and joking. She'd been happy.

\*

The day drags by. It's impossible to keep track of the time without a clock in my room, and no watch or phone. The TV only has limited credit and I don't have a debit card to pay for more viewing time. Losing myself in mindless drivel is far more appealing than facing my muddled thoughts right now.

All I can think about is Charley. I need her to walk in the door, laughing as she tells me it's all been a joke. *"You should see your face. I should take a picture and post it on Facebook."*

She wouldn't pull such a cruel prank. None of my family would. But I still can't let myself believe she's gone.

I don't know how long I have to stay here, surrounded by constant noise. Trollies are pushed back and forth. Nurses chatter. Machinery beeps. A phone rings. Rain patters against the window. It's dark outside, but as it's the end of October, that means very little. It could be early evening or the middle of the night. I'm not sure I can stand to stay here a second longer.

Mum and Dad drift in and out. I ignore them both. I can't even look at them. How can they believe Charley would kill herself? Anger bubbles inside me, making fresh tears blossom in my eyes, robbing me of sleep. I want to sleep. Maybe when I wake up, this will all have been a horrible dream. I'll tell Charley. She'll hug me and we'll laugh about it. Please, let it be a dream.

My door opens again. My head is already turned towards the window, but I squeeze my eyes shut for good measure. Footsteps wander around my bed. A hand presses into the plastic covered mattress beside my legs. Curiosity gets the better of me. I crack one eye open a fraction just as Sophie, my best

friend, hops onto the bed. She sits cross-legged, a carrier bag cradled in her lap. Her expression is solemn. Her green eyes sparkle with tears. She sniffs in an attempt to hold them back. Raindrops have collected in her caramel brown hair, which has been swept back into a ponytail. She slides her black coat off her arms and tosses it onto the armchair beside my bed.

"I didn't bring flowers," she says, gazing around the room. Her nose wrinkles. "You could start your own florist shop with this lot."

A garbled sound springs from my mouth—something caught between a laugh and a sob.

She opens the carrier bag and pulls out a pair of plastic spoons. "I brought something better than flowers."

Frowning, I take one of the spoons from her. She lifts two tubs of ice cream out of the bag.

"Don't tell the nurses," she whispers, handing me one of the tubs. She pops the lid off the second one and scoops a little of the dark brown ice-cream onto her spoon. She raises it to her mouth and then pauses, watching me intently.

The tub freezes my fingertips. I turn it round until I can see the flavour. Strawberry. My favourite. I force a smile to my lips. After flipping the lid off, I plunge my spoon in and stuff a heap into my mouth. The cold hits me before the creamy flavour. "Brain freeze," I mumble through the goop in my mouth.

Sophie eats a much more modest spoonful. We don't talk. We just eat. With every mouthful comes the realisation this couldn't possibly be a dream. Strawberry ice cream wouldn't taste so good, or so real, if I was dreaming. Tears track down my cheeks, forcing me to sniff in between mouthfuls.

"It's true, isn't it?" I ask. "Charley's dead."

Sophie squeezes my leg and gives me a small, understanding smile. My sobs grow stronger. She puts her ice-cream aside and shuffles beside me, draping her arm over my shoulders. She hugs me while I continue eating, her silence more supportive than Mum's tears.

Once I've finished, she relieves me of the empty tub and spoon but doesn't leave my side. I huddle against her, sobbing, shaking, sniffing. Safe in her arms, my eyes grow heavy and I eventually sleep.

## CHAPTER THREE

Three more days go by before they let me out of hospital. A private room. The constant monitoring. No one said anything, but I think I was on suicide watch.

Dad and I don't speak during the drive to Mum's house. I'm almost relieved to get home. When I get out of the car, the first thing I notice are the neighbours' twitching curtains. I stare back, too numb to glare. The curtains drop in response.

It's odd when I walk into the house with Dad in tow. A quietness hangs in the air. I expect Charley to run down the stairs or shout to me from the kitchen. Instead, electronic music draws me towards the sitting room. Chris is cross-legged on the sofa, staring at the TV while hammering the buttons on his Xbox controller. I lean against the doorframe and stare at him. He's eleven years old and a real pain. That's how Charley would have described him. I blink moisture away from my eyes, focusing on my kid brother instead of my grief. His chocolate brown hair is currently spiked up with half a tub of gel. His eyes are completely focused on the screen.

"Hi, Chris."

He grunts in response and gives me a half-hearted wave. I haven't seen him in days—Mum wouldn't let him come to the hospital. Then again, given his overwhelmingly warm response to my homecoming, he probably didn't want to visit me.

I linger in the doorway a little longer, watching Chris's game character battering the heck out of its opponent. The match

ends in a K.O. Chris remains mute while his character does a victory routine.

I wander into the kitchen. The crisp tang of disinfectant almost knocks me off my feet. I wrinkle my nose and try to breathe shallowly so I won't pass out from the fumes.

Mum is at the kitchen table, her head in her hands. Dad slips in behind me and wanders over to the counter. He lifts the kettle to check the contents, sets it down and flicks the switch.

"Chris has done nothing but play those stupid games," Mum says. "You should talk to him, Dave."

"Why don't you send him back to school?"

Mum lifts her head and stares at Dad's back. She narrows her red and puffy eyes. "It's too soon."

Dad pushes his hands down on the work surface, hunching his shoulders. He drags in a long breath. Finally, he turns round and slouches against the cupboards. "We thought you might like to say something at the funeral, Kim."

I blink and straighten my back into a rigid line. A lump forms in my throat.

Mum nods. "Maybe you could read a poem or something? I've picked a few out." She grabs a black folder that's lying on the table in front of her and opens it, revealing several loose pages. Some are printed. Others have her flowing handwriting. Receipts, lists of addresses and phone numbers, poems and readings. She tugs a couple of poems out and pushes them across the table towards me.

"I don't think I could," I say. I can barely get through ten minutes without crying.

Mum's chin quivers. She shoves the paper back into her folder.

Dad thumps two mugs down onto the worktop. "Have a think about it, Kim."

The water babbling in the kettle fills the awkward silence.

I don't intend to change my answer, but I don't want an argument either.

"I'm going upstairs," I say, but I remain frozen for a couple of seconds.

My parents don't even acknowledge I've spoken. Mum continues to flick through the papers in her folder, while Dad pours the boiling water into the mugs. It's as good a time to leave as any.

I take the first few steps two at a time but slow down when Charley's bedroom door comes into view. It's shut. Her red "keep out" sign is still hanging on the door. I edge up the final few steps and pause outside her room. Mine is the next one along. My brain tells me to keep on going, but my hand raises and knocks on her door. The silence that responds pours salt on my grief. I turn on my heel and take a couple of steps towards my own room, but something drags me back. Curiosity. Longing. I don't know, but I let my hand fall onto the door handle, push the door open and shuffle inside.

Nothing seems out of place. Mum has put fresh linen on the bed. The sash window is open a tiny crack, allowing a gentle breeze to disturb the cornflower blue curtains. A makeup bag sits on the dressing table, open with pots, tubes and brushes spilling out. A hairbrush is beside it. The sunlight bouncing off the window shimmers on loose strands of curly blond hair that have been trapped in the bristles.

I was jealous of Charley's hair. I told her once. She laughed and ran her fingers through my auburn hair. *"Seriously? I'd love to have red hair. It's far more interesting than being blond."* My shoulders shudder. More tears threaten to spill. I'm surprised I have any left.

I wobble on jelly legs to Charley's bed and flop down, perching on the edge. Dad told me she died in here. That I found her. I squeeze my eyes shut and try to remember, but my last memory is the moment I walked in the front door that night. It's like someone took a pair of scissors and chopped those ghastly minutes out.

Frowning, I bounce up and down. Then it hits me. The mattress feels wrong. It's too soft. Charley hated soft beds. I untuck the sheet. The mattress looks brand new. I shiver. I don't want to think about why the original mattress was replaced.

I dig my knuckles against the surface and push myself up. My feet take me towards the window. My gaze gets tangled up in the tree. The copper and bronze leaves have prematurely scattered to the ground, leaving the twisted branches completely bare. I shudder, but can't place why. It's not cold, but my skin prickles. I grab the curtains in my fists and tug them closed. The metal rings screech across the slender pole.

Body trembling, I lurch round, intending on escaping the room. I stop dead.

"What are you doing in here?" Mum's eyes are wild and accusing.

"I..." my voice chokes.

"Get out."

"But..."

"Get out," Mum flings her arm out, pointing to the door. "Go to your room."

I don't argue. She steps aside to let me pass. I dash past her into my own room and slam my door shut behind me.

\*

A soft knock on my door disturbs my uneasy sleep. The room swims around me when I open my bleary eyes. The squat red numbers on my alarm clock tell me it's just past 9 p.m. My temples ache and my skin is tender where I've been laying on the folds of my clothes, which isn't surprising as I've been asleep for over four hours. The knock is repeated.

"Come in." I swing my legs out of bed and sit up, rubbing my eyes.

Dad slips in, shutting the door behind him. He plops himself on the bed beside me. I'm grateful when he wraps his arm over my shoulders. "I'm heading home in a sec."

I lean my head on his shoulder. His embrace holds a comforting strength, which I've missed since he and Mum split up.

"Do you have to?" I ask.

His chin knocks against my head when he nods. "Have you thought anymore about saying something at the funeral?"

I hadn't. I don't want to. I'm exhausted from grief, the long

days in hospital and the questions the police asked me—questions I couldn't answer because of the gigantic gap in my memory.

"You don't have to. But I think your mum would be grateful if you did. You and Charley were close." His words are like a knife twisting in my gut.

I pull away from him. "Did she leave a note?"

Dad stares at me, his lips parted like he wants to speak but can't. We haven't talked about how Charley died since the day I woke up in the hospital.

I dip my gaze to the quilt, focusing on the red and black geometric pattern. "People who commit suicide normally leave a note."

Dad breathes in sharply. He clasps his hands in his lap. "No. No note."

"Then maybe she didn't kill herself." I stop when Dad puts his hands on my shoulders.

"Kim, the police are satisfied Charley took her own life. No evidence suggests anything else." He tucks my hair behind my ears, like he did a thousand times when I was a kid. "I understand why you don't want to believe it, but that's what happened." His voice is weary and worn.

I tug my hair back over my ear.

"You need to let this go."

I run my fingertip around the black part of the pattern, as though it was a maze.

"We all miss Charley. And I know it's hard to understand why she took her own life."

"She didn't. She wouldn't." I focus in on nothing but the quilt. I don't want anything else in the room to exist.

"She wasn't as happy as we all thought she was." Dad's voice cuts through the protective bubble I'm trying to create around myself. "Maybe the divorce hit her harder than we all thought."

I twist the quilt in my fingers.

Dad sighs. "Promise me you won't mention this again, especially not in front of your mum. Okay?"

I'd never realised how fascinating the quilt cover pattern was before. Six geometric shapes interlock in a repeating pattern, alternating between red and black. You could probably use it to hypnotise someone.

"Kim?"

I shudder, roll my shoulders back and look up in time to see his Adam's apple wobbling. The strength in his voice is not mirrored by the quivering expression on his face. I can't let it go.

I break away from Dad and cross over to my desk. I boot my computer up, tapping my fingertips against the keyboard while I wait.

"What are you doing?" Dad says.

Ignoring him, I open up an Internet browser. My home page is set to Facebook. It only takes me a second to navigate to Charley's page. I blink at the screen as I'm confronted by dozens of messages on her wall from friends: *I can't believe you're gone. OMG Charley, why? Missing you so much.* I rub the tears from my eyes and scroll past the messages, searching for Charley's last posts.

"Look," I say. "Read them. She was happy."

With a sigh, Dad stands and trudges over to me. He rests one hand on the back of my chair and the other on the desk.

"I've read them all, Kim. Over and over."

My eyes sting as I read the last message she posted, the night before she died. *Cinema tickets booked for Saturday. Treating Kim to the posh seats.*

"Don't do this to yourself," Dad says, his tone gentle. He spins my chair round, so I'm facing him.

I tuck my chin against my chest and squeeze my eyes shut. "She wouldn't have killed herself, Dad. She wouldn't. How can you believe she did?"

He sucks in a deep breath. "Because there's no other explanation. The police checked everything. Her phone. Her Facebook posts. They even searched through her school books, Kim." He rubs the bridge of his nose. "I didn't want to believe

it." His eyes dance with unshed tears. "The police said it was natural to feel that way."

I shake my head, as though the action will banish his words from my mind. I slam my hands down on the arms of my chair. "Charley wouldn't kill herself."

Dad grabs me and pulls me against his chest, holding me so tightly I can't break away. I press my face against his shirt and sob into the soft fabric.

"I keep thinking it was my fault," he says, voice trembling.

I peer at him through tear-drenched eyes.

"For leaving."

"Dad..."

He hugs me for a few seconds longer and then holds me at arms length. "I know it's hard to accept. It's difficult for all of us." The intensity of his stare makes me shift uncomfortably in the chair. "You can talk to me whenever you want, okay? If you want to scream, or cry, just call or come round. But please, don't talk like this in front of your mum."

I lift my head. The expression on his face melts my resistance. His brown eyes are bright with tears, his eyebrows slope upwards, slashing across his furrowed forehead. His mouth, slightly parted, waits for my response.

"Promise me?" He says, when I fail to say anything.

Turning away, I nod. "Okay."

The corners of his mouth upturn in a forced smile. He squeezes my shoulder and then stands. "Your mum and I agree you need some time to adjust to being home. With just her and Chris."

I open my mouth to object, but he cuts me off.

"I'll see you in a few days, at the funeral."

My brow crumples. "You're staying away until then?"

His eyes shimmer with tears. "Your mum thinks that's best and I agree."

"But that's not fair." I clamp my lips shut. Shouting isn't going to help anything. I take a couple of deep breaths. "You should be here, too."

"I'm not going to do anything to upset your mum."

Except breakup with her after twenty years—I still don't know why their marriage ended. A knot forms in my lungs, making breathing hard. Getting angry at Dad won't bring Charley back any more than it got my parents back together a year earlier.

"I'll see you at the funeral," he repeats. "Get some sleep." He waits until I return to my bed, before he starts to leave.

When he's halfway out the door I call him back. "Dad?"

He hovers on the hearth of my room, fidgeting with my door handle.

"I'll read something at Charley's funeral."

This time, his smile is genuine. "Thanks, Kimmie."

I don't smile. I don't think I'm capable of it right now.

Once he's gone, I flop onto my back. The mattress springs make me bounce a couple of times. I stare at the ceiling, locating patches that have become dull with age and exposure to the sun. When we were little, Charley and I would pretend there was a separate world on the ceiling. The dull patches became islands in a pure white sea. The dust motes we saw dancing in the sunlight became fairies.

I lay my clenched fists on my stomach. Charley didn't kill herself. I don't care what Mum and Dad believe—I don't even care what the police believe. My sister didn't take her own life. Somehow, I'm going to prove it.

\*

Thank you for reading this sample of *Reaper's Rhythm* (Hidden: Book 1). If you would like to continue reading, please visit [www.claredavidson.com](http://www.claredavidson.com) to find out where you can buy a copy.