

Kat's head went into her hands. She groaned. 'This is a waste of time.'

'On the other hand,' I continued, 'there's this other boy whose mum picks him up from school and she wears a T-shirt with GARDENS FOR THE DISABLED on it. The letters circle around a big daisy. And it's the organization where she works.'

Kat's head came up. 'True,' she said. 'ONTLI ECUR,' she muttered. 'Is it where he works – or a club or a society? Something he's part of? Something that just might lead us to him?' She looked at the fuzzy torso, the faded white letters. She leaped up like a jack-in-the-box.

'Security!' she yelled.

'Sorry?'

'The second word, dumbbo! It's security.'

My head went off to one side.

'He works in security.'

'Security,' I agreed. I was impressed and disappointed at the same time that I hadn't seen the word before Kat. 'What about the first word?'

Kat sat down again, frowning in concentration.

'ONTLI... ONTLI...' she muttered like a mantra. 'Kat,' I said, 'there's something I don't understand. About photos.'

'Shush,' she said and continued the mantra.

'Why aren't the letters the wrong way round, Kat?'

'Hey?'

'You know. When you take a photo. Why don't letters appear back to front, like in a mirror image?'

She didn't answer. 'ontli... ONTLI...' she went. Then she stopped. 'What did you say?'

'I said – why aren't the letters—?'

I stopped. Kat was staring at me, her eyes large and round, her mouth open.

'Sorry, sorry, Kat, I didn't mean to put you off...'

'No, no—' she began. But what she was about to say was cut off by an ear-piercing screech from downstairs.