

ONE

The atmosphere is tense. MAJA, SAM, MALIN, FREYA, TUVA, EVE and EVIE are watching, judging KLARA, KIM and ALVA. Excited, desperate to stay, ALVA, KIM and KLARA are determined to convince this strange audience to keep them. All except KLARA, KIM and ALVA bear a pseudo-tribal handprint mark somewhere prominent on their skin.

KLARA. We should start by saying that we followed you.

KIM. Two of you.

ALVA. In a boat.

KLARA. We followed two of you in a boat by stealing someone else's boat.

ALVA. We didn't steal it.

KIM. But the engine wasn't very good so we lost sight of you.

KLARA. Yeah, we lost sight of your boat, you were too quick, so then we were totally lost.

ALVA. We're gonna give the boat back.

KIM. But we kept going even when we couldn't see the shore, we kept going.

KLARA. We thought we might run out of fuel, not be able to get back, starve, die.

KIM. But I started rowing.

ALVA. Is this 'The Community'?

KLARA. Yeah, Kim kept rowing until we saw it, finally, this place.

KIM. Cos we couldn't turn back, we had to get here.

ALVA. We're looking for a place called 'The Community'.

KLARA. Of course it's 'The Community', Alva, they're living in the middle of the sea!

ALVA. Right. Wow. This place is like an urban legend.

As if watching a movie, EVE and EVIE open a bag of crisps and begin sharing them with each other.

KLARA. She means that when you all disappeared, it was on the news, on the front of papers, all these theories about how you'd all just vanished. All on the same day. There were some clues, not many, but some and these rumours started, about a place called 'The Community'.

ALVA. We've been trying to find it for ages.

ALI, EBBA and BASIC JANE arrive to watch. ALVA, KLARA and KIM feel the pressure.

KIM. Klara, you'd better start at the beginning.

KLARA. Okay. So before we followed you in your boat, whoever that was, we'd basically been obsessed with those rumours for –

ALVA. For ages.

KLARA. Everyone was saying, that there was nothing to link most of you to each other. People were asking 'How did they plan this?', 'How did they communicate?', 'Where did they go?' and my dad's in the police and this is something we'd never normally do, we're not –

KIM. We photocopied some files, got your names, addresses, passwords –

KLARA. We used your social media to find people you knew, ask them stuff, and finally –

ALVA. After ages.

KLARA. Finally we started finding all these encrypted conversations which Alva decoded.

ALVA. After double ages.

KLARA. She's stubborn, Alva, she's good at codes. And what you were writing to each other about, your ideas for this place, for the world – It was addictive reading.

KIM. So by the time we found the coordinates –

ALVA. It took ages to work out that they even were coordinates.

KIM. By the time we found them, we knew, you'd actually done this.

KLARA. We thought about telling my dad, the police, your families but... we didn't.

KIM. We couldn't.

KLARA. Because we'd found you. Us. We're not exactly top of our classes, we're not cool or confident or – And we'd done it. We just knew that if we'd managed to find these bright, clever, amazing people with huge ideas –

ALVA. After ages.

KLARA. After ages, that maybe we might deserve to join.

ELIN, MOA, AGNES and HENRI arrive to watch.

KIM. We were careful. Coming here. We were really careful.

KLARA. We worked it all out. We ditched our phones so that we couldn't be tracked, avoided CCTV, changed our hair, clothes, sneaked onto the backs of trains, the ones that take cargo, we slept rough, we took a crazy route to get here just in case but we really did –

KIM. Vanish. We disappeared.

KLARA. But the coordinates were just a beach. That's all. And we couldn't go back, we didn't know what to do, we hid in a little fisherman's-hut thing, we were stuck.

ALVA. For literally ages.

KLARA. Until last night, Alva heard raised voices, shouting about 'The Community'.

KIM. She was too scared to speak to them, just woke us up.

KLARA. So when we saw two of you getting in a boat this morning –

KIM. And there was another boat, nearby –

ALVA. We borrowed it. And we're here. And we'd like to stay. Please.

KIM, KLARA and ALVA wait expectantly for a response.

It really did take ages.

KIM (*asking her to be quiet and wait for a response*). Alva.

A silence as the tribal-painted faces all look to one another.

AGNES. Ask them about Hanne.

EVIE. Shh.

All the tribal faces return to looking at ALVA, KLARA and KIM.

ALVA. Hanne? Who's Hanne? We didn't meet anyone called Hanne.

A short, tense pause while ALVA tries to think of something to say.

We didn't even meet the two people we followed. Who was that, by the way?

The tribal-painted faces all look at SAM and MAJA.

SAM. Why should we let you stay?

KIM. We saw, you've only got one boat, you can have ours.

ALVA. Our boat? It's not our boat.

SAM. There's no room for newcomers. You have to go.

KLARA. Are you in charge?

MAJA. No one's in charge.

SAM. But we can't support three more so you have to go.

TUVA. We should vote on it.

MALIN. Okay, great, everyone, thanks, now let's just hear them tell us why they should stay, okay?

Everyone looks at KLARA. Although KLARA initially feels the pressure of being watched, as she speaks, she finds the lucidity of conviction, her genuine enthusiasm becoming more and more clear and inspiring.

KLARA. We should stay because... We know why you came here. Everything back home is wrong. A few rich white men making decisions for loads of people who are not rich and white and men and those decisions are always about money while stuff's running out, people are fighting over oil, water, food – Wars are coming, riots, police violence, it's all coming unless we change how we all live, not just in little token ways but completely. We have to come up with entirely different ways of living here and what you were talking about in the conversations we decoded, fairness, equality, it all makes sense. And now we've read those, now we know all that, we don't belong back there. We can't fit in, we belong here, away from exam results, timetables, choosing what job we should do, trying to fit in to a broken system. We should stay because we can help, because we want to, because we're not just little girls, we're people and we want to change everything. With you. That's why we should stay.

KIM. And I've got a Taser.

KIM takes out a Taser.

For your animals. If you've got animals. Mum said it was cheaper than a cattle-prod.

KLARA. I'm sorry about Kim, she's from a broken home.

KIM. I've used it on cows before. They're pack animals, you have to let them know who's boss.

ALVA. Herd animals.

KIM. It's for when you go into the pens to kill the injured ones or males.