

THE  
GIRL  
WHO CAN  
FLY

OLIVIA OPAL

## PROLOGUE

‘Do you, Jennifer Bibenzyls, take James Black to be your beloved husband?’ asked the archbishop.

‘I do.’

James felt a tingly feeling in his toes and knew he would rise an inch above the ground any moment. So, he did a little hop of excitement instead so that nobody would notice.

‘And do you, James Black, take Jennifer Bibenzyls to be your beloved wife?’

Jen noticed James gave another little hop. That wasn’t unusual. James often hopped when he was excited.

‘I do.’ James was now hopping from foot to foot.

‘By the power invested in me, I pronounce you husband and wife. You may kiss the bride!’ His voice boomed around the clearing, echoing off chairs and people, seeming to reach up to the moon.

Before Jen and James’s lips could touch, a strange noise greeted them from the dusk full-sky. *Blip, blip* was the sound the noise made. Abruptly, an odd-looking white head with long golden hair appeared in the sky next to the constellation of Orion.

‘Alien and human, the two of many have combined the many to one. Take care of the beloved infant; it is mine.’ The head disappeared.

There were murmurs in the crowd; Jen and James's friends and family were shocked and confused. It didn't take them long to put two and two together and figure out which person was the alien.

'Alien! Alien!' 'Jen is an alien!' 'We should have known that good-for-nothing scumbag was not right. I told James not to marry her!' the crowd insisted.

Jen shrank in all the glares and suddenly she wished she were not wearing such a notable white gown. That was not the only thing that bothered Jen, though. James looked heartbroken; his brown eyes drooped and dark circles wrapped around his eyes as he withered.

Jen knew that she would be scorned and shamed, yet something kept her standing there, something that was drawing her to submission. She gave a sad smile but before anything more could happen, a tiny infant wrapped in silk with what seemed to be red roses covering it fell from the sky. The crowd gasped, shrieking about the soon-to-be dead child and telling other people to do something but not actually doing anything themselves.

Still, the baby kept falling and falling, wind lapping at the poor thing's face; she was only small but somehow dropped from the sky. Shock had captured many people now; it was only natural following the confused mess of apparitions, confessions and strange happenings. This was not supposed to happen in the human world. The baby was only a few feet from the ground, adrenaline – the sixth sense of a mother – pulsed through Jen's veins. She had to do something, anything, to spare such an innocent young soul from meeting that unexpected and early end in the most brutal manner. Jen didn't know what to do, but her instincts told her. Jen reached out

and caught the baby. When Jen touched the infant, something magical happened. Jennifer felt a warm tingle and happiness within her bones, the sense of fullness and relief, a joy she could not deny.

She enfolded the baby into a deep hug. Jen looked down into the baby's eyes and in a flash, the baby's eyes became the same as Jen's. The fantastic bright, brilliant indigo-blue eyes sort of glowed, the same frequency as Jennifer's. The baby giggled; she held tighter to the infant, not wanting to let go. She looked around. Everyone was staring at her and the child, but her eyes settled on James. He walked over and the confusion in his eyes was replaced by certainty.

'Alien or not, I still love you.' They both looked down at the baby, the miracle still ripe and young. The baby said something that could change the mind of the most stubborn person alive, 'Mama, Dada.' She pointed to her future parents.

'Oh, I don't know.' James raised his eyebrows and the child giggled.

'Seriously, James. She just fell from the sky into my arms. I think we have to keep her.' Jen was determined, set upon this. Somehow she knew that this needed to be done.

'Wait for a second, what's that?' He pointed to a note written in cursive writing on a piece of silk. 'Take care of my little girl.'

Jen started to cry from the swelling sadness and the love that the floating head had entrusted upon her.

'What are we going to call her?' Jen asked James, even though they both knew very clearly.

'Rosemary,' James concluded.

'And Rose for short.' She pointed to the silk cloth covered in red roses.

A sickening thought flashed upon both of their minds.

‘What about all the people that saw?’ Jen knew just the solution.

‘I keep a dust so that everyone who comes to know who I am will forget.’

She always did have the right thing for the right time. Jen pulled out a gold bag and pulled out gold dust. Before speaking, she whispered to James, ‘Block your nose.’ He did so. Then, Jen blew away the powder. Everybody in the courtyard except the family fell fast asleep, never to know or realise anything that had happened at the wedding.

## ✧ CHAPTER 1 ✧

# THE GIRL WHO CAN FLY

‘MUM!’ yelled Rose, pulling on her red leather boots.

‘Joey scribbled in my notebook!’ Rose’s little brother, Joey, undoubtedly had a gift for mischief. When Rose was seven, Joey ate fifty whole bananas! (To quote Rose and Joey’s mother, Jen: ‘accidentally’.) Joey left them on the floor but Rose knew it was on purpose; for one, Joey snickered and teased her about it afterwards. Anyway, Rose slipped on the banana skins and broke her collarbone! Rose’s parents said it was her fault for not looking where she was going. When her brother ate fifty bananas – fifty! Surely you would think Joey would get punished, even if only a little.

Besides, Rose had an excellent reason for being frustrated about Joey scribbling in her notebook. It was not just any old notebook. It was a special book, given to Rose by her late grandfather. It was filled with stories and poems, pieces of writing that essentially held her together, fulfilled her. Yet despite it being so important, she never shared her verses. The reason why: Rose was certain no one would understand and she was already the outcast.

Once she read one of her poems, *The Night Sky*, to her first-grade teacher at break when all the other kids were playing

outside. As the poem went on, she fell into the words, absorbed them, like every letter was her being: a persistent prickle tingled her fingers and toes. She felt like someone had given her the power of lightning. She noticed the growing power pulse through her veins. As this happened, the unthinkable occurred. Rose slowly rose off the ground! Her feet parted so slowly, almost unnoticeable. Then they dangled; still, the small girl carried on.

Then at the bit with wavy emotions like an aggressive sea, she... *flew!*

Following *The Night Sky's* pattern! Twisting and turning, up and down, the wind tickled her face. The rush of air against her skin, the leap in her heart – she was more happy than all the suns in the sky.

Mrs Keefe, who had frizzy red hair and brown eyes, screamed and fainted! Rose fell to the ground. In shock and horror, her instincts took over. She grabbed Mrs Keefe's phone and dialled 999 for an ambulance. It arrived with a screeching halt, loaded up Mrs Keefe and took her to the hospital. Once she regained consciousness, she told the doctors what she saw. They dubiously thought she had some sort of mental illness and sent her to a nursing home in Paris. Since then, Rose never shared her writing for fear someone might get injured or she might get damaged. Still, from that day on, Rose lay traumatised by this event when it snuck into her nightmares. Flying was unusual, crazy. However, truly the real reason Rose was scared was because she was worried that if she told anyone, no one would believe her.

The greatest fear of humanity is the fear of not being believed.

'Why do you still have that old thing anyway?' Jen – Rose and

Joey's mother – yelled back; this was a common debate and one of relatively good nature.

'It's my being!' Rose informed her in a matter-of-fact tone as she tossed her curly brunette hair to add to the effect. Jen rolled her brilliant blue eyes, a spitting image of Rose's, right down to their long dark lashes and the way their eyes sort of glowed. A strange but beautiful phenomenon.

'Okay, fine. "It's your being", but it's time to go to school.'

'Do we have to go to school?' Joey's sweet-like-sugar voice rang through the air as a slender blond boy with those same bright azure eyes peeped around the corner. 'I mean, I'm ahead of my class?' Joey used his hands to show him weighing his options.

'Well, that's because you got held back two years?'

Unlike Rose, Joey was behind in most classes; while he was clever in his own way, no one understood him, he preferred to be noticed, the polar opposite of his sister. He may have been very popular and adored by everyone when it came to school but he definitely was *not* the sharpest knife in the drawer. However, he did get a B+ in art, but that's only because his BFAMMJF (for the people who aren't fluent in annoying little brothers, it stands for Best Friend And Mischief Maker Journeymen Forever) Max spilled his paint all over Joey's terrible interpretation of a T-rex (which he always bragged about).

Rose, however, was two years ahead in school and at the top of her class. Which, of course, made her the nerd. She was constantly bullied; she always felt like the outcast, the puzzle piece that just didn't fit in. The one black swan in a flock of white ones. She sometimes wished this could be different, but there were some things that couldn't be changed. Rose loved the colour red and usually wore a simple red dress and coat.



Other than her eyes, there was nothing special about how Rose looked. She did have red apple earrings and a necklace that she rarely took off, however; they made her feel more confident and connected, though that did little to change her manner or the amount of friends she had. Rose was witty and had a sharp tongue. This, paired with her strange talents, made it difficult for Rose to make friends. Her family was on the more affluent side of England. That was because her mother worked as a doctor at St Joan's Women's and Children's Hospital, but they were famous for their father's job. He was the *prime minister*, helping run the country! Though the Black family never ran out of money, Jen, Joey and Rose only saw their father and husband on special occasions. Even then, he had to work in his office most of the time, but once he missed Rose's birthday completely, it was a meeting that was urgent.

Jen laughed. 'Okay, okay, but if I don't leave for work soon, I'm going to be late. You two better get going to the train station. Joey, if I get one call from the headmistress, then I'll tell your father and you will be lucky if you ever see the light of day again.' Handing him his bag. She gave Rose her red velvet bag.

'What makes you think that I would be anything but an angel!' Joey replied to his mother's first statement. Jen rolled her eyes.

'And Rose.' Jen's words were suddenly full of sympathy and sadness.

'Yes, Mother?' Rose replied in her British accent so crisp it sliced through the air like a newly sharpened blade.

'Oh, do make some friends.' A sense of pure love was buried within the folds of her worry.

Rose felt a sadness deep within her chest. 'Yes, Mother.' Rose

was on the verge of tears.

‘So...’ Joey rudely interrupted. ‘Are we still going to school today, or are we just going to wait until Mum’s words fade out of the air – hey, I’ve got a math test today! In that case, carry on?’

Jen just chuckled and kissed them both on the head. ‘Have a nice day at school, my angels.’

‘Mum, we’ve talked about this.’ Joey grimaced.

‘Goodbye, Mother.’ Rose made it clear she was the most sensible of the two siblings. Before she made her way outside, Joey slapped his mother on the back and said, ‘I’ll be home at ten.’

This made Jen raise an eyebrow, the corners of her mouth twitching with a smile at her hilarious son. ‘Any later than six and you’re grounded.’

Joey sighed at this new information and slouched all the way outside to join Rose. Jen stood by the door and waved; she was already in her blue scrubs. Jen jumped in her car and rode away.