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Before you read the story

1 All kinds of stories

a) Which kinds of stories or films do you prefer?

historical • fantasy • sci-fi • comedy • true-life/
biographical • adventure • drama/soap • documentary •
animation • Western • detective/crime • psycho thriller •
mystery/ghost • horror • ...



b) Why do you like this genre or these genres? Talk to a partner.

These ideas can help you:

interesting facts • ruthless murderers • exciting/fast-
moving plot • weird characters • authentic • makes your
stomach churn • CGI effects • famous/everyday people •
space/the future • crazy/funny ideas • horror/dread •
science • romantic/happy/sad • outcasts

2 At the World's End

a) Where or what do you think the 'World's End' could be?

Choose from here or make up your own theory:

most western/eastern/ ... part of a country • where land
meets the sea • somewhere extremely remote • a fantasy
land • where you learn to use equipment/survive •
where space begins • a world is destroyed by
catastrophe • when you lose someone important/
beloved • when aliens take over the Earth



b) Decide which kind of story 'At the World's End' might be.

Discuss your ideas in class.

ruthless ['ru:θləs] skrupellos • **weird** [wiəd] seltsam • **it makes your stomach churn** ['stʌmək 'tʃɜ:n] Dir drehte sich der Magen um. • **CGI** [ˌsi: dʒi: 'aɪ] computeranimiert • **space** [speɪs] Weltall • **outcasts** ['aʊtkɑ:sts] Ausgestoßene • **dread** [dred] Furcht

Part one: Outcast

1 Window

- 1 It was forbidden, but Caz had been working on it for weeks now. And today she'd do it – she'd look out of a window. It had been very hard to find one. All the walls in Murphy's Department Store were grey and smooth, and the windows
5 were hidden behind metal grids.

The grid she had chosen was tiny and it was at the top of the building, in the Toy department, in the wall of a small white room, and Caz had told everyone it was her new bedroom. The door even had a lock. Caz had dragged a bed
10 up here along with all kinds of other stuff from the House and Home department. Then she'd chosen two new purple blankets from Bedding.

Every night Caz had worked on the window. Now she climbed up on a stool and looked at what she had done.
15 There was a gap in a corner of the window frame where the grid wasn't fixed well to the wall. Two small rivets held it, but Caz had broken one with a screwdriver. Now she leaned hard into the other rivet with the screwdriver, forced it down. Nothing moved. Caz tried again. Snap! It broke.
20 She pulled the grid back and saw a bit of glass.

"Look out," Caz told herself, fighting her fear.

If Marky found out, he'd cut Caz's food ration again. But Caz had spent nine long years locked inside the Store with Marky controlling everything. She'd had enough. She
25 put her eye to the glass and looked down.

Below her, she saw a street. At least, it used to be a street, a high street with shops ... and a park with a playground. Caz could remember all that.

Now it was a frozen world.

30 Ice covered everything. Street lamps rose from the frost.

smooth [smu:ð] glatt · **gap** [gæp] Lücke, Loch, Öffnung · **frame** [freim] Rahmen · **rivet** ['rivət] Niet · **screwdriver** [skru:'draivə] Schraubenzieher · **to rise, rose** [raɪz, rəʊz] herausragen

1 The park was full of spooky, dead trees. A fierce wind shook their branches. A car lay on its side. It was frozen deep within the ice and its windows were cracked.

Caz stared in shock. She had expected it to be bad, but
5 not like this. No one could live out there. Then she looked up and saw a blue sky and huge clouds moving across it.

Clouds! She had forgotten how huge and fast clouds were. And the wind! What would it be like to feel the wind on her face? Not to be stuck within these grey walls?

10 Caz was five the day the Blue Star had come to Earth. She'd been out at the shops, holding her mum's hand in the crowded street. Then the strange icy flakes had fallen like burning snow, bright and cold and bitter to taste. Caz had laughed and danced until she had seen how the
15 people around her had started to cough and choke and die.

Then someone had grabbed her and dragged her into the Store. And the Store had closed itself shut.

Why hadn't she dragged Mum into the Store with her? Where had she gone in that storm of burning snow? Had her
20 mum survived? These questions kept Caz awake at night, but she knew the answer. No one on the street could have survived. Dad had been far off at work in his office down by the river. What about Dad? The thought of him haunted her.

30 Caz looked back at the frozen street. She'd been afraid she'd see bodies out there – bodies gone to rot. But if there were bodies, they were buried in the ice, lost for ever in this frozen world.

No bodies, no movement. No birds. No insects.

And no Blue Star.

40 Just a few dead leaves moving in the wind. As Caz listened to the moan of the wind, she realised this was the first sound in nine years that she'd heard outside the Store.

branch [brɑ:nʃ] Ast • **to crack** [kræk] zersplittern, zerbrechen • **flake** [fleɪk] Flocke • **to choke** [tʃəʊk] ersticken; würgen • **to haunt** [haʊnt] verfolgen; heimsuchen • **go to rot** [ˌgəʊ tə ˈrɒt] verwesen • **moan** [məʊn] hier: Heulen

1 Then, just above the icy trees, she saw something.

It was far off. Caz could just hear it humming. It flew across the sky on silver wings. A smoky trail spread out behind it. Then it flew behind a building and was gone.

5 Amazed, Caz drew back from the window, then looked again. The sky was empty.

Could she really have seen that?

A bang on the door made her jump.

“Caz! Are you in there?” a voice called.

10 Her heart pounded as she turned.

“Caz, didn't you hear the bell?” called Will, fear in his voice. “Marky's holding a meeting. They're all waiting!”

Caz unlocked the door.



Will and Caz raced off towards the stairs. She wanted to
15 tell him to stop, to tell him what she'd done, instead she just said, “Slow down! What's the big rush anyway?”

Will ran down the steps of the still escalator, to Furnishings and its musty piles of soft, rotting carpets. At the bottom he turned and looked up at her.

20 “Marky wants another Sacrifice.”

“What!” Caz stopped and stared at him. “But Rose ...”

“Rose was a month ago. Things are worse now.”

The sudden sharp sound of the alarm bell rang out.

“That's two already,” she whispered. “How many more
25 will he kill?”

Will turned, his face pale. “Maybe all of us, in the end.”

wing [wɪŋ] Flügel • **bang** [bæŋ] hier: Knall • **to pound** [paʊnd] hämmern, schlagen • **furnishings** [ˈfɜːnɪʃɪŋz] Inneneinrichtung • **musty** [ˈmʌsti] muffig • **sacrifice** [ˈsækrɪfɪs] Opfer • **pale** [peɪl] bleich, blass