

# SHIVER POINT

A TAP AT THE WINDOW

THE **SHIVER POINT** SERIES

**IT CAME FROM THE WOODS  
A TAP AT THE WINDOW**

*Look out for more soon!*

# SHIVER POINT

A TAP AT THE WINDOW

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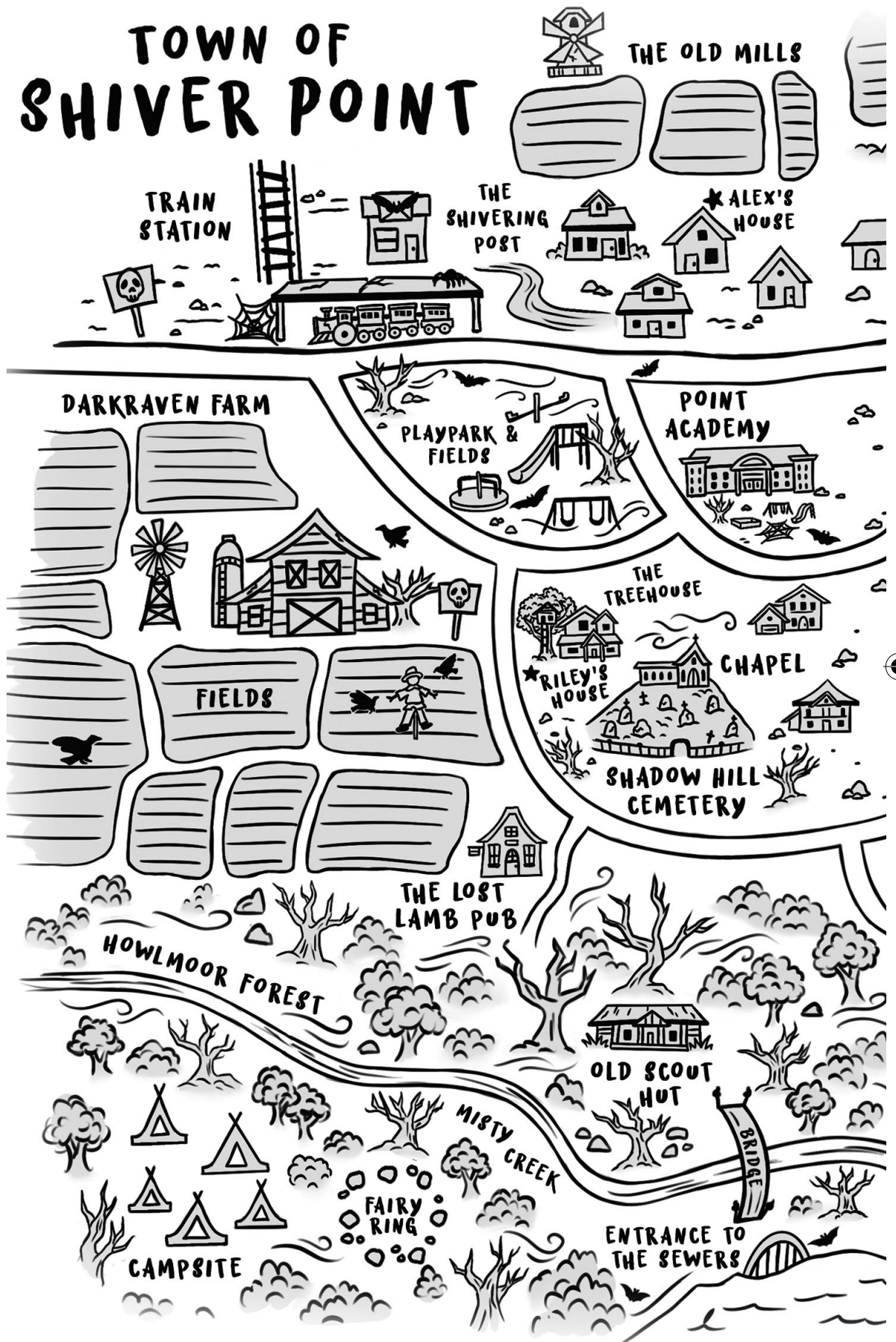


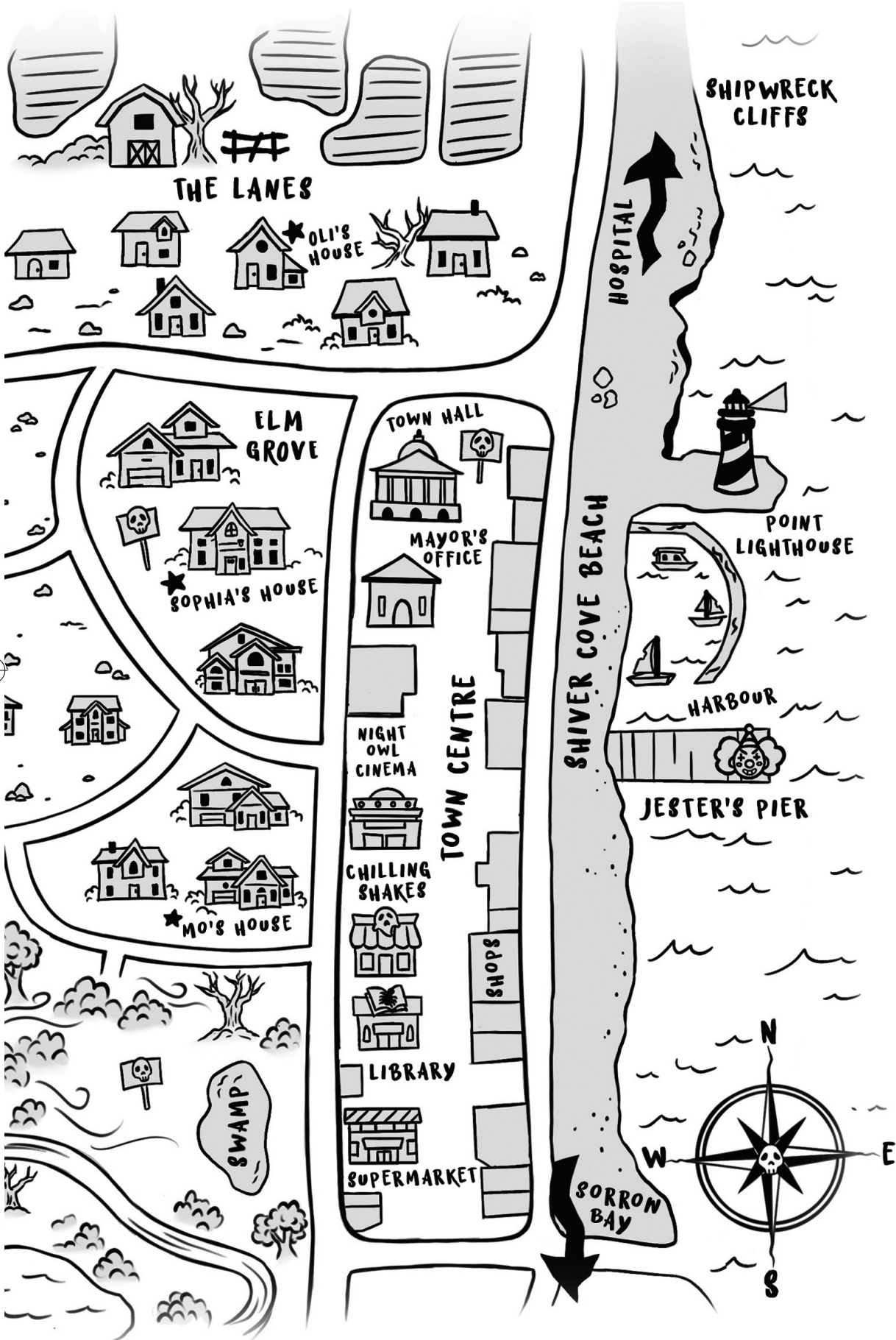
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*For Coco,  
our little sunbeam after rain*

# TOWN OF SHIVER POINT











# 1

## ONE STORMY NIGHT

It was almost dark when Riley heard the screams.

They whipped across the fields, carried on the wind, towards the treehouse where she was working on her latest invention.

Riley moved away from her bench to the window, her skin turning cold. Had she imagined the noises? Or had she *really* heard someone screaming?

A moment later the sounds came again, echoing from somewhere in the distance. But now that Riley listened more closely, she realised that there were other noises too, yells



and laughter, rising over the low rumble of thunder in the distance.

Riley rubbed her eyes, stared out into the dusk, and tried to work out where the sounds were coming from. Her grandad's house backed onto fields, miles and miles of them, stretching away as far as she could see. A storm was forecast for tonight, a big one, and with the dark skies that loomed overhead it was hard to make out anything at all.



Riley's curiosity took over and she moved back towards her bench, digging through a mass of wires and screwdrivers and circuit boards until she found what she was looking for: an old set of binoculars she'd boosted one night when she was bored, improving their magnification while also amplifying the light so they could work in the dark. Switching them on, Riley studied the scene out of the window again.

*There.*



Five small figures making their way through the empty fields.

But why?

Riley fiddled with her binoculars, zooming in so that the grainy silhouettes took shape. The



group were all kids, around the same age as Riley, laughing and joking as they crossed the fields. Their torches were fixed on a shadowy outline in the distance – an old farm that had sat abandoned for as long as Riley could remember. Slowly, Riley moved her binoculars from one figure to the next, trying to work out what they were doing. Why were they out so late? She couldn't see their faces, but there was something familiar about them. She shifted her focus to the leader of the group, who had a quick, confident walk and instantly recognisable long blonde hair tied up in pigtails.



Riley felt her breath catch in her throat.

It was Bethany Blight, Shiver Point's local bully.

But why was she heading towards Darkraven Farm?

From a distance, the silhouette of the main house looked like a skull, its shattered windows resembling empty eye sockets, the boarded-up door a toothless mouth. Deserted fields surrounded the farm and its outbuildings: bare, barren stretches of land dotted with skeletal trees. It certainly wasn't a place Riley had ever wanted to visit.

There were whispers about Darkraven – silly stories that Riley had heard in the playground for years. Rumours that if you listened closely enough on dark winter nights, you could hear ghostly cries and wails from somewhere inside the old farmhouse. That the farm was cursed, and anyone who set foot on the land would suffer a terrible fate. That there was a reason the family who'd once lived there had vanished, and no one new had ever moved in.

But they were just stories, weren't they?

Riley felt a chill prickle her skin, slowly fading as she remembered where she lived.

Shiver Point.

And nothing remotely exciting or interesting *ever* happened here.

At least, that used to be the case.

Riley glanced at her phone, sitting on the edge of the workbench, and at the small yellow sticker glued onto the case, the one designed by Alex.

Two S's and a wide, toothy grin.

*Shiver Squad.*

It still felt strange to be part of something, to have friends, after so long on her own. Riley felt like she finally fitted in somewhere, like she'd

found people who really understood her, who helped her to forget her problems.

And with everything going on in her life right now, she needed that.

Riley's eyes drifted towards the bulky shape on the workbench – the invention she'd been working on when she'd been distracted by the noises from outside. If she was honest, she was happy to have an excuse to take a break. She'd been fiddling away on her new project since she'd got home from school, and tonight was one of those times when she just couldn't get things right. Inventing normally came easily to her, but not with this, and Riley knew why. Her new invention mattered, it *really* mattered. Maybe that was why she was finding it so hard.

The air was growing colder now, flecks of rain darting through the treehouse windows and making goosebumps rise on Riley's bare arms. She flinched at another rumble of thunder from above, threw on a hoodie, then checked the time on her watch.

Almost eight. Time to go and help her grandad get ready for bed.

Riley jumped as a flash of lightning lit up the night sky. Nervous about the ferocity of the

storm, she crept back to the treehouse window, checking on Bethany and her little group one last time. They were inside Darkraven's farmhouse now, the telltale flicker of a torch beam just visible through gaps in the boarded-up windows.

Riley felt an edge of uncertainty, pattering across her scalp like tiny footsteps.

What were they doing in there?

And what if the old farm wasn't as empty as everyone thought?

The place was probably littered with cobwebs, spiders as big as dinner plates hanging in the centre. Riley wouldn't be surprised if there were rats too, nests of them waiting to scurry in the direction of any visitors in a squeaky, bristling wave. But what if there was something *worse* in there?

Riley gripped the windowsill, her eyes locked on the distant farm. Something just didn't feel right about this, about Bethany and her friends exploring the abandoned house, about the storm that was raging above her head. She had an odd conviction that something very bad was about to happen.

Suddenly the torches reappeared. The beams darted left and right, jerking frantically as

Bethany and her little gang sprinted away from Darkraven Farm, back towards Shiver Point. But there was something strange about the torch beams now, the way they blinked and sputtered and flashed on and off, as if they'd all developed some weird malfunction. There were more screams, although this time they were *definitely* scared, as if all the fun Bethany's gang had been having earlier had abruptly drained away.

Riley wondered if this time Bethany had bitten off more than she could chew, and there really were giant rats and spiders living in the old farm. With a bit of luck, one of them had dug its fangs into Bethany. Despite herself, Riley felt a mischievous smile pull at her lips.

Lightning lit up the sky again, and Riley noticed that Bethany and her gang didn't look quite as clean as they had minutes before. Their clothes and faces seemed to be covered in something thick and dark and gloopy. Riley wasn't sure what it was, but as the group passed her grandad's house and the wind changed, she was sure she could smell something, and it wasn't good.

Riley lowered her binoculars and turned away. Whatever had spooked Bethany and her friends at the farm, Riley had bigger problems.

She switched off the heater, turned off the light, and took one last look at her new invention before she climbed down the ladder.

Tomorrow, she promised herself, she'd fix all the things that were wrong with it.

Tomorrow, everything would feel a little brighter.

In the distance, Darkraven Farm sat alone once more. Overhead, the storm rumbled on, rain trickling through the broken windows and shattered tiles. With its visitors gone, the old farm was still and lifeless.

But not for long.

A figure crept out from the shadows, hunched and bedraggled, like a rotten corpse pulling itself out of a grave. A rusty pitchfork lay forgotten by the doorway, its three sharp prongs buried in the soil, and the figure reached down, pulling the old tool free.

Then it turned and shuffled towards the open fields.

Towards Shiver Point.