

...she urged Spanner into a canter, then a gallop. Archie raced along with her and the bracing air whipped at them, stinging their cheeks. She let out a whoop of joy, relishing the sheer abandon, letting the exhilaration and the danger mingle with the safe strength and warmth of the horse, as one with him. As one with the man alongside too.

They reached the rise, slowing down to look out towards the lake. The galahs were rising in great flocks, their crimson breasts brilliant against the building bank of dark clouds to the south. Their cries echoed across the golden fields and deep into the shadowed recesses where the gnarled trees would give them shelter when the rain came, or so Joanie had explained to her as they'd watched them in flight the other day. Every creature had a home to go to in Rainbow. Everything here made wild, and perfect, sense.

Molly drank it all in before circling Spanner around to face Archie. Her hair was in disarray and she pushed at it self-consciously, supposing she looked rather wild and unkempt herself, but she found only admiration in his expression. It was difficult not to get flustered again, so intense was that look. It was as if he were memorising every detail of her to think about when she left. Molly knew that each trace of his handsome face above his open shirt and those piercing blue eyes would remain with her as well.

Molly flicked her gaze away. 'I think this may well be my favourite spot on your farm,' she said lightly. 'So much space. It's like the sky never ends.'

'You said that last time we were here,' Archie said.

'Did I?'

'Yes,' he said, gazing out. 'Funny really. I've looked at this view my entire life yet it was like I was seeing it for the first time.'

There was something in the way he said it that forced her gaze back to his, finding herself pinned yet again. 'I...I suppose it will feel like that when you see it from the sky.'

'I reckon so,' he said as the breeze whipped at them both. 'I'm starting to think I'll never look at things in the same way again.'

Molly felt a shift within her and something passed between them in that breeze, like an enchantment...