A close-up photograph of a hand holding a pen, poised to write on a sheet of crumpled, light-colored paper. The paper is wrinkled and textured, and the hand is partially visible on the right side of the frame. The background is dark and out of focus.

I'd been looking forward to the weekend since Monday. Now it had come, I'd spent ages straightening my hair and getting my eyeliner just right,

*and I had a tenner from Dad to go into town.*



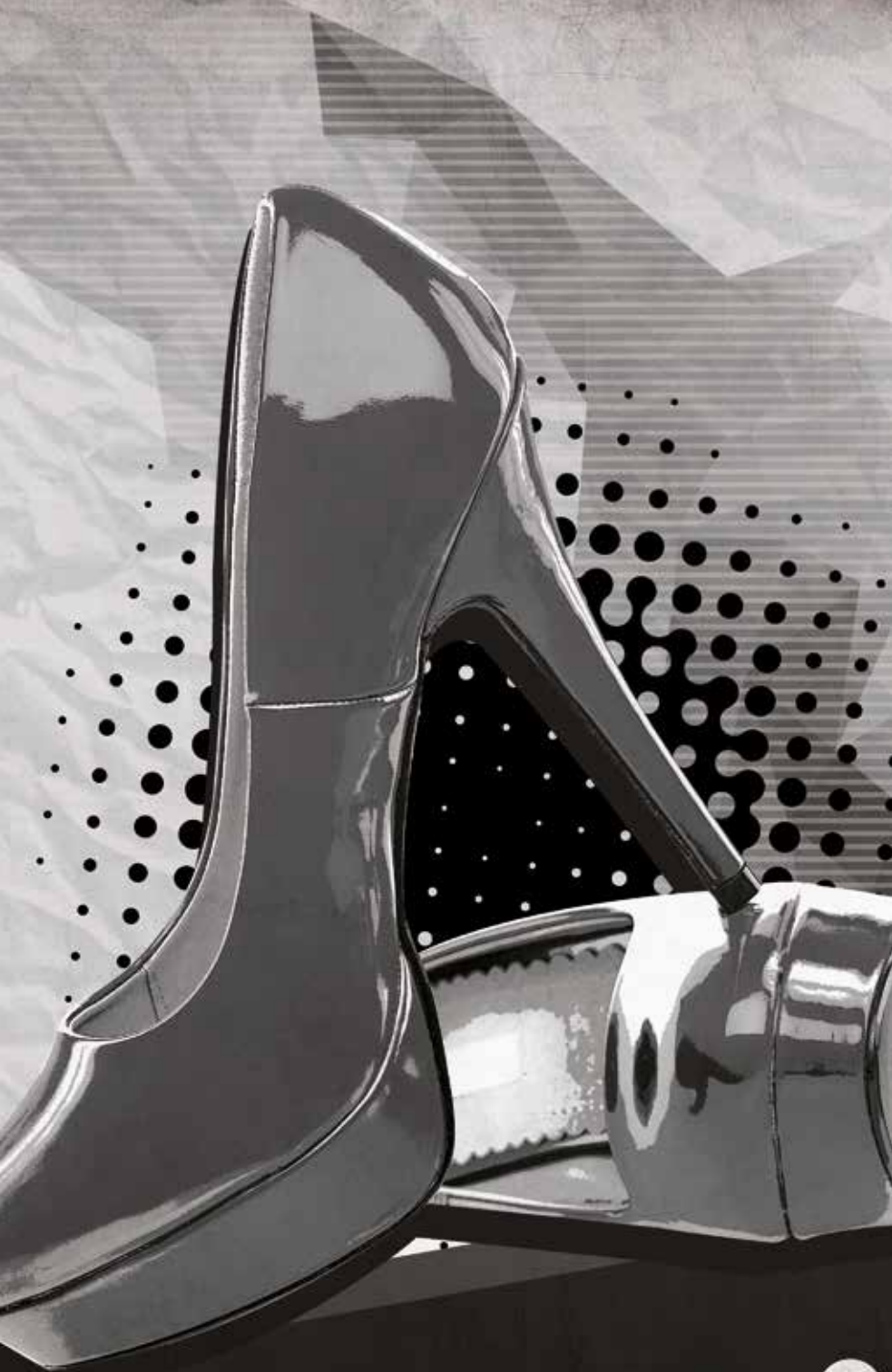
Alastair was going to be there and he's SO fit. I've had my eye on him for ages, and this was my chance to wow him. Ellen and Cassie were meeting me for support – it would be too obvious if I was there on my own. How accidentally-on-purpose would that look?

No, we needed to bump into him as a group. With my high heels and short skirt, I looked nothing like my school-uniformed self. He'd see me differently and –

**wham!**

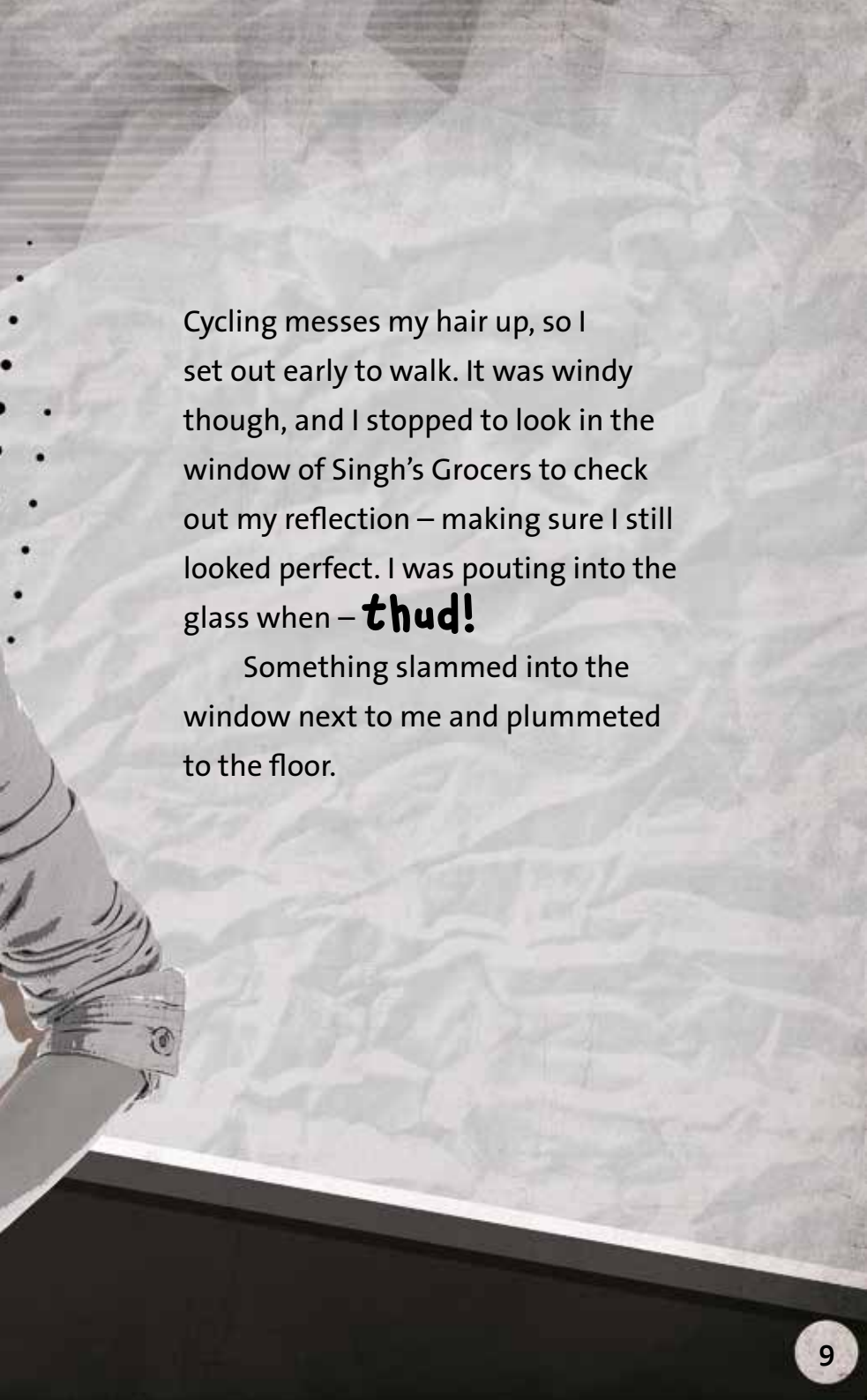
I imagined him flashing those brown eyes at me.

'Hey, Immy,' he'd say.  
And I'd look down and smile, mock shy;  
he wouldn't be able to resist.



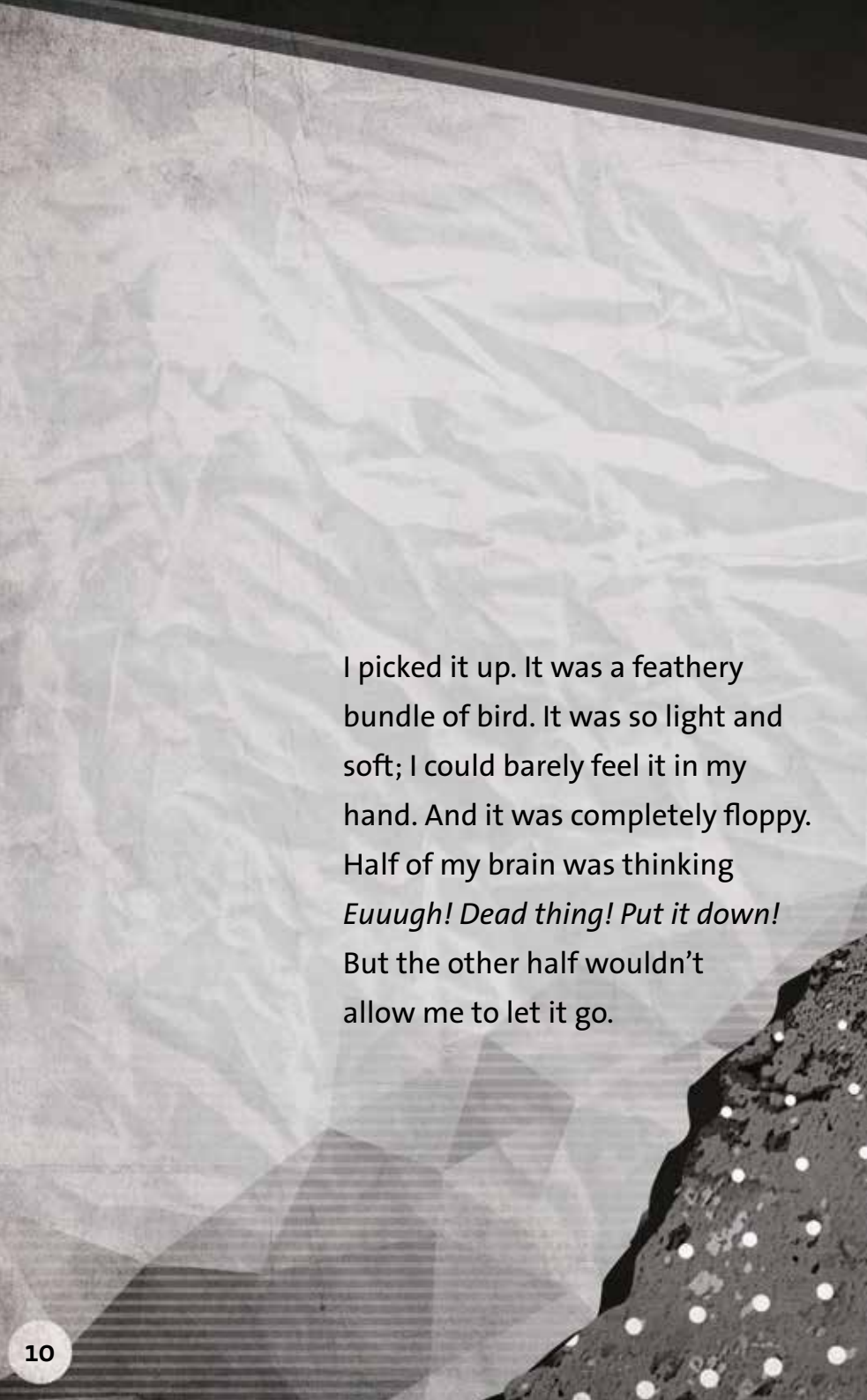






Cycling messes my hair up, so I set out early to walk. It was windy though, and I stopped to look in the window of Singh's Grocers to check out my reflection – making sure I still looked perfect. I was pouting into the glass when – **thud!**

Something slammed into the window next to me and plummeted to the floor.



I picked it up. It was a feathery bundle of bird. It was so light and soft; I could barely feel it in my hand. And it was completely floppy. Half of my brain was thinking *Euuugh! Dead thing! Put it down!* But the other half wouldn't allow me to let it go.



