

She

She found herself on the Askew Road watching the girl's hands fold, push and press at the dough. It wasn't the first time. She wasn't sure how many times, and she wasn't quite sure how she got here, but here she was. Again. The girl sprinkled more flour on to the marble top. Fold, push, press. Fold, push, press. Fold, push, press. She lifted her head to look at her reflection in the glass, the transparent shield separating her from this young working girl.

This is me. Trying to break into a smile. Side on. The shape of...

She looked down from her eyes to the body that lay below. She placed both hands on her belly, felt the empty flesh of her stomach, slid her hands to its lower fold, lifted it gently, letting her fingers find their way to its warmth. There. She began to press, to squeeze. She wanted her thumbs and fingers to meet. To touch. For whatever might lie left between them to disappear. Harder. Pain tracking from belly to heart to head. Harder. She began to cry. Sound absent, just tears falling from her eyes. Her hands dropped from her stomach. She looked to the girl. Gone. There were marks in the flour where she had worked, but she had gone.

Are you alright?

The girl stood in the doorway, white hands hanging at her side.

Sorry

I just wanted to see if you were alright. You looked upset

I...

D'you need anything? A glass of water?

No. Sorry. Thank you.

Has something happened?

I was watching you work.

She turned and made her way up the Askew Road.