

I curl into a tight ball and eventually I must manage to fall asleep, because when I open my eyes the flat is quiet.

I creep into the sitting room. Mum's sleeping on the couch fully clothed. A cigarette is smouldering in an empty wine glass. I stub it out and pull off Mum's boots. One of her big toes is poking through a hole in her tights.

All the lights have been left on, and the window is still wide open. Icy air whistles through the flat.

I close and lock the window and fill the dishwasher with as many glasses and dishes as I can fit into it – if I don't turn it on, we'll have nothing clean to eat or drink from tomorrow.

On the floor is a blue baseball cap. Egan's. I lift it to my nose and sniff. It smells of sweat, like any other hat would. I put it on my head and wipe down the worktop, dusty with ash.

Mum stirs. 'Apple? Why did you disappear? Everyone was asking for you.'

'I got tired, Mum.'

'I don't blame you.' She yawns and sits up. 'Egan wanted to thank you for the party. I told him it was all your idea.'

'Really?'

Mum stands up. 'Yeah. I think he likes you.'