

(MEGAN appears.)

MEGAN. The first man I ever loved. After my brother died, I ran away from home. Got into some trouble. I was arrested, for *(Stops herself.)*...

KAMAL. For?

MEGAN. Soliciting. I was fifteen. Then I met him. Craig McKenzie. He saved me. For a while, at least.

KAMAL. But he's no longer around?

MEGAN. I moved in with him when I was sixteen, into that old cottage in Holkham. Just Craig and me. Cheap cider and music.

We used to have little fires on the beach. Craig would wrap me up in blankets and we'd watch the sea.

KAMAL. So what happened?

MEGAN. I got pregnant.

MEGAN. It was too late, when I realised... We pretended it wasn't happening. Neither of us wanted it. I was only sixteen. I got bigger. Tired. We began to fight. I gave birth at home. We never even registered her. Only a handful of people even knew she existed. It was like she was a secret, right from the start.

I expected everything to be so hard, but it wasn't. I was surprised by how maternal I felt. How complete. I used to lie there, with her on me, and we'd sleep. Sleep like I hadn't slept since Ben died.

I've wanted to tell someone this for so long.

KAMAL. Are you sure it's me you want to tell?

MEGAN. I have to finish my story.

KAMAL. I can refer you to someone else -

MEGAN. Please. I can't start again.

KAMAL. Once it's out the bag, you can't put it back in. And now - the way things have become with us - you'll be dealing with it on your own.

MEGAN. We deal with everything on our own. When it comes to it. Let me tell you what happened, and then I'll leave, and we can go back to our own lives.

I've kept this for so long, it feels like the words could choke me in my sleep.

Please. Please listen.

The baby. We called her Elizabeth. Libby.

One night, we had a fight, Craig and I. He walked out. I remember the roof was leaking.

*(The sound of water, dripping into a bucket.)*

It was cold, the wind driving off the sea.

*(We hear the wind. Curtains billowing.)*

Whistling through the cracks in the window panes. It'd been raining for days, we had no heating. I started drinking, to warm up...but it didn't work so I filled the kettle and saucepans with water, to make a bath...

*(Reliving it.)* I got in, Libby with me, and it was so warm. She lay on my chest, her head under my chin.

I can feel her.

*(KAMAL waits. Lights shift. A candle flickers. We hear the sounds as described.)*

There's a candle, flickering, just behind my head. I can still smell the wax. Feel the chill of the air, round my neck, my shoulders. I'm heavy. My body's sinking, into the warmth, into the...and I'm so tired, I'm so tired...

*(The candle goes out.)*

When I wake up, I'm cold, really cold. The house feels like it's shaking, the wind screaming, tearing at the slates on the roof.

KAMAL. And Libby?

MEGAN. She was wedged between my arm and the edge of the tub. Her face in the water.

I killed her.

Scott wants us to have a baby. I keep putting him off but now...

How could I ever have a child? I lie there at night, still feeling her on me. I hear her crying. I smell her skin.

We buried her in our garden, beneath the daisies. I'd put my cardigan round her, I couldn't bear how cold she was. We used stones to mark her grave.

I never saw Craig again.

KAMAL. Did you ever try to find him?

MEGAN. Why would he want to see me? He must have nothing but hate for me.

KAMAL. Perhaps he left because he felt guilty too. He took in a young, vulnerable girl, and left her alone when she needed support.

If you did speak to him, you could forgive each other. Would that give you permission to forgive yourself?

MEGAN. I don't want to forgive myself.

KAMAL. Is it too late to try to find him?

MEGAN. Do you really think I should?

KAMAL. It might help you understand that it wasn't all your fault.

*(He holds her.)*

*(Then she slowly disengages.)*

MEGAN. Do you think I'm a monster?

KAMAL. Monsters don't exist.

MEGAN. This is the last time we should see each other. Isn't it?

KAMAL. It's the right thing to do. For you and Scott.

MEGAN. Will you be all right?

KAMAL. I'm a grown man.

*(Beat.)*

MEGAN. So you think I should find Craig. For closure.

**KAMAL.** You can't obliterate a memory. They're always there, in the shadows, sneaking into your dreams. For you, it would be about saying the things you never had a chance to say to him.