

I learnt when they were in and when they were out, when one was in and one was out.

I waited until they were both out and I climbed in through an open window.

I wandered into the lounge and looked through her glossy magazines. *Cosmopolitan*, *Marie Claire*, *Vogue* and so on. I read an article about a woman who'd spent fifty-grand on surgery to make her look like Cher. She didn't look like Cher.

I opened a Snickers bar and wandered into the hall. I went upstairs. I looked at the photos on the shelf in their bedroom. There were Rhys' parents, his sister and the family dog (deceased). The others I assumed were The Lovely Abigail's family. A sister, much like her, a mother, a father, a cat with glowing red eyes. A couple of the pair of them. All chocolate box.

I went down to the kitchen. I wondered what The Lovely Abigail would do now. If she were at home for the day without a care in the world. Would she watch TV? Read the magazines? Whatever it was, I was going to do it. I took the last bite of the Snickers, flipped the bin lid up and dropped the wrapper in.

I heard a key turn in the front door. Rhys entered the house. He looked surprised, then his expression became harder to name. He wasn't pleased.

"Hi," I said.

"Madeleine?" He said. "Madeleine! What the hell are you doing here?"

"I came to visit. I...um...missed you and I wanted to visit. I wanted to show you what I look like now. I've changed my hair, I do my make-up differently. Isn't this the way you like it?"

He said it didn't work like that. He said it wasn't up for discussion. He said if I left straight away he'd say no more about it. But if I didn't, he would call the police.

I asked him to listen, but he said "Not listening!"

So I lunged. Arms open, at the speed of light. I kissed him full on the lips. I even got a bit of tongue in before he got away from me. He gripped my wrists and held them tight. But at arms' length. He began to shout. But only for a few seconds. After that he began to gasp for breath. He made a choking sound and tried to say something. Probably "help". He let go of me and dropped to the floor. He started to turn blue.

Rhys was allergic to nuts