

Mary I know all about damage. Everywhere I turn I hit a blank where Dan used to be. The fridge is full of the food he liked, those plastic cheese slices, bright pink yogurt. Joe won't eat them. Why am I still buying this stuff? It's as if I'm saying, don't worry, you may be dead but I'm still taking care of you.

Pause.

Does she have any idea what she's done? The stupid, ignorant, selfish — I looked at her in court and she looked about twelve. I could strangle her. I could beat her to a pulp. I wish she had never been born. She's a waste of space, she's using up resources that could be put to better use. I mean, what is the point of her being alive? Why should she be walking around breathing when Dan is ashes in an urn?

She looks round the room and takes a pot from a cupboard. Bangs it on the table.

There. That's Dan. That's the son I gave birth to. That's what she's done. And even like that he's a better person than she will ever be.

She takes the lid off the pot, and takes out a handful of ash.

I thought it would be just grey, but look, it glints in the light, there are flashes of green and blue, like jewels, can you see them? Look how he catches the light, even now.

Pause.

We don't know what to do with him. So he sits here on a shelf. And every so often I take him down and run him through my fingers.

*She looks at **Elizabeth**.*

Mary I had an idea the other day. I thought I'd mix him in with the muesli, and I'd eat a bit of him every day, and for some deranged reason, this was very comforting to me. I mean, he's my son, he was inside me once before, he'd be coming home, in a way. It seemed quite logical. And then it occurred to me that they'd lock me up if I did that.