

I Have No Mouth Two Years Ago

The lights were on.

Evelyn glanced at the darkening sky and winced.

She'd lost track of the time. Hanging out with the gang, chatting and laughing and enjoying the summer warmth, she hadn't realised how late it was getting until she saw the sun on the horizon. And the walk home ended up taking a little longer than expected too, thanks to a stray cat demanding her attention and affection.

So much for her being home in time to make food.

It's fine. I'll just make it now. Vi won't mind.

Still, there was a pang of disappointment at herself, silly as she knew it was.

She unlocked the front door, entered the house, went in search of her sister. Dinner might be a little late today but, on the bright side, she'd be able to ask Vi what she wanted to eat. Make something especially delicious!

Only, when Evelyn found her sister, she didn't dare ask a thing.

Violet was sprawled out on the sofa, head on an armrest with her eyes shut. Her mouth wide open, soft snores sounding in time with her slow, gentle breathing. Wearing a white blouse with the uppermost buttons undone and a black pencil skirt, her shoes kicked to one side.

On the coffee table near the sofa, the remains of a Chinese takeaway meal. A box of half-eaten noodles. A small poppadom pile. An untouched fortune cookie.

"So much for me making food," Evelyn whispered.

There was some random film or show on the TV, which Evelyn turned down the volume of. Then she crept out of the room, returning a minute later with a thin blanket.

Violet didn't so much as shift when Evelyn placed the blanket over her.

Stepping as quietly as she could, she snuck out of the room and headed to the kitchen. Leaving Violet to her much-needed rest. On a kitchen counter, as Evelyn had expected, was a second takeaway meal.