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Opening extract from

# Persist

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CHAPTER 1

## My Own Face

**MARIANNE**

People come in and out of the room. I don't move so I can't always see where they are, but when someone comes up close in front of me then I can see them properly.

There's a woman with a fat little face and short black hair. She's always staring at me. For a while I thought she was looking at

me, but in fact she is looking at herself. One time, she looked at me very close up. Then she turned round and spoke to someone else. "I look and look at her, but all I ever see is my own face," she said.

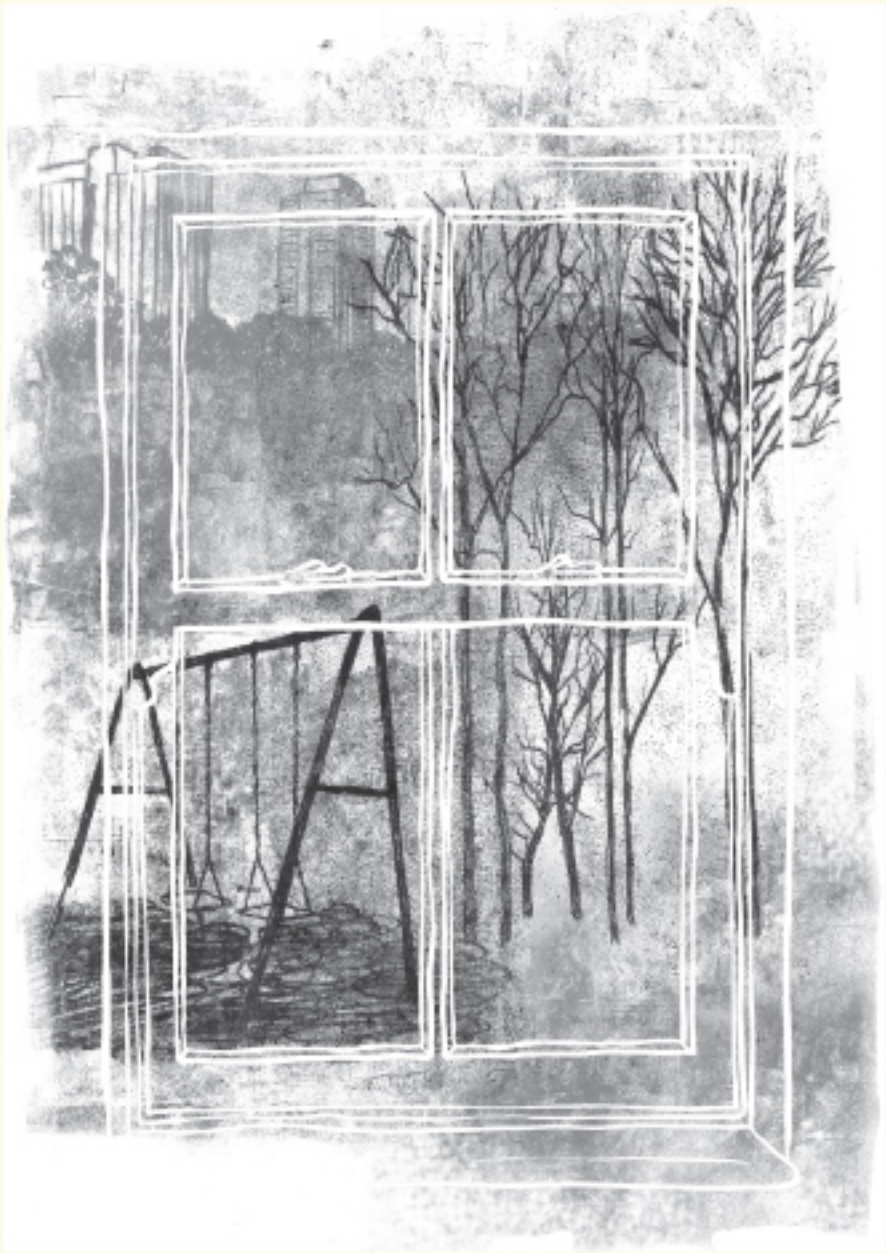
I don't know what I am.

Not a person.

Not a picture.

I must be something shiny.

A Christmas tree bauble, perhaps. A window. Or perhaps I'm a mirror.



The woman with the short black hair is always holding things up in front of me – a teddy bear, a CD, clothes, photos of people. She talks a lot as she sits next to me, although there's no one here to talk to. She's



looking for someone called Marianne. She calls for Marianne over and over again.

I'd like to tell her that Marianne isn't here. There's no one here. But I can't speak.

