

Story for performance #694
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Source: Alissa J. Rubin, '[Iraqi military faces hurdles in its quest to take charge](#)', *New York Times online*, 15/05/07.
Tags: [child/parent](#), [intimacy](#), [forbidden love](#)
Writer/s: [Sam Williams](#)

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Not yet, not for a while since I told you last time. I can't. She's just not there. There's a young girl. I think I said before, this young girl there. She comes everyday after school to visit. Her mother, I think. She's in the next room. The next room but one, maybe. And every time she comes in the corridor, it's. I don't know. Like if only she had hiccoughs, I could show her how to hold her breath. Put down the cryptic, fetch a glass, teach her to drink backwards. Dumb things, you know. I don't know, I feel paternal. Felt, rather, paternal. She's just so like that girl from school, the one I can't remember, that's what I realized. After I said about her last time, the girl from school, I went and tried to find the Year 3 photo to find out, you know. But it didn't have the names, so I still don't know, but she was exactly like I've been thinking about

her. But she was only 9 or 10. It's like. And I'm there thinking, I've been falling asleep every night beside you in the wet weather shelter and how you touched my knee and I remember you exactly, and I must see that you're 9 or 10 as I'm falling asleep, I must see you're a child as I'm thinking of you and yet I keep your hand on my knee and fall asleep with you. I can't even look at her now, the girl at the clinic. I'm all eyes down, 5 across. It's so dumb. And besides that, besides that I've just been there by the bed, beside her there, all day with the crossword. And I look at her mouth and there's nothing to say. I just can't. At least not for a while, not yet.

Adapted for performance by Barbara Campbell from a story by Sam Williams.