

Jonas has his hand on Ying's tummy, trying to feel for the baby's kicks, when they both see the effigy on the threshold of their five-room HDB flat. He scans the doorsteps of the other units along their common corridor. Their home seems to be the only one to have had this mystery bestowed upon it. He supposes he could ask the neighbours but that would mean taking that relationship to a whole other level, and he is not sure he will ever be ready for that. His hand lingers on Ying's stomach, still hopeful for that little kick that has so far eluded him; he kicks himself for giving in to her idea of keeping the child's gender a surprise until the birth.

The pitched, incessant yelps of their dog Creamy filter out from the other side of the locked door. Jonas imagines the mutt hopping around in circles, losing its mind trying to work out why its humans haven't come in yet. A nudge from Ying reminds him of the effigy. He removes his hand from her belly. He picks up the figure. He makes it sit in his palm. Creamy continues to bark like it does every evening when they come home from work, but weighing the figure in his hand, Jonas senses something shifting, has shifted, will shift.