Alan reached into his backpack to find the camera, but pulled out the picture instead. It was creased from the amount of times it had been folded and unfolded. This photograph was his favourite out of them all. As he stared at it for what was the third time in fifteen minutes, he wondered what had gone wrong. The woman in the picture looked so happy, but not anymore. He just wanted her happy. He looked across at her sitting at the dining table.

‘Grace, what do you want for dinner?’

She just looked at him, unable to answer. Her eyes were puffy and he noticed her nose had begun to run. He folded the picture and put it back into his backpack. He pulled out a tissue from his pocket and offered it to her. He laughed.

‘Oh right, your hands. It’s okay, I’ll do it for you.’

He reached towards her face; she jerked to the right, avoiding the tissue.

‘Now that’s not nice, I’m only trying–’

‘I don’t want you to.’

‘Fine, sit there with snot running down your face.’

He put the tissue back into his pocket and went over to the backpack. He picked the picture up again, stroked it carefully this time then put it back down. He grabbed the camera.

‘How about a nice picture to go along with the others? Don’t worry, we can always Photoshop the bits I don’t like. Smile and say cheese.’

She didn’t smile but the camera flashed anyway.

‘What is it, Grace? Are the ropes too tight? Come on, give me a big smile and I’ll loosen the ropes.’