

GIRL IN BLUE

You're looking at me and you're thinking that I'm playing a children's game. 'Look at her,' you say. 'How sweet. She's playing 'Hide and Seek'. That's what little children do'.

Then I heard some else say, 'No, no, no. That's not true. She's listening into an adult conversation. One that is not meant for her. I bet her parents don't know.'

But you are both wrong. My parents don't know, because they don't know anything about me anymore.

The year is 1836. It happened so many days ago now. It was the middle of the night when I woke up and went for a walk because I could not sleep, because I never could. I don't know why, but this time I felt different.

Then it happened.

The horse and cart came up behind me and one man spoke to his horse to stop him, while the other took me up in a blanket and put me in the back of the cart. 'No Poor House for you,' he said, 'You deserve far better. You are coming to work for us.'

I wanted to scream, but I was too frightened to utter a single sound.

So that was the end of my old reality.

Now you are watching my new one, just as I am watching the rest of the world, through a gap in the doorway.

All I have for comfort, all I have had for such a long time, are the pail and the brush. I have even given them names. The brush is called Joseph and the pail is called Mary.

I know you may think this is wrong, or childish, but I have called them these names to give me comfort, because I now have nothing but my faith.

If you can see me, and I know that you can, please help me.

Do not walk away. Please do not.

Stay with me, say something to me, be with me.

For every moment you look at me and stay with me, that is my moment of happiness.

I am not just a painting.

I am me.