

Here is what happened

She was fifteen years old. She had to pay for college. She had to pay for this. She came to my apartment on a Saturday afternoon. Her parents didn't know. I didn't know her parents. Her girlfriends brought her up the stairs, holding on to her hands. They wanted to help. I told them, *Go; get orange juice.*

She was five months pregnant. Two days before, we reached up inside, pushed down outside. She breathed out like fire, she gushed out salty water. She was lucky it came soon: Saturday, no school, girlfriends who lied for her. When she called, contractions starting, I said, *Come over.*

She sat on the floor. She bent her knees. She rocked and pushed and rocked inside contractions: they were close. We were close. I never saw her again.

Her name was Rachel. She said, *I don't want to see it.* When I took it away, she cried. I washed her body, fresh water, holding her like the girlfriends. She drank her juice. She took her medicine. I drove her to a corner two blocks from her house. She walked home from there *Because*, she said, *you know.* She touched my shoulder: *Thank you.*