

Positive

Sonia Overall

i)

She gets on the number 14, finds a seat near the window. The glass is fudged. She feels her way towards the stop; bends in the road, counting backwards. She presses the bell. The connection is faulty. The bus sways on. She gets out at the next stop and walks the extra fifteen minutes back across town. She adds on a street. She crosses roads. She meanders. The light changes. She pulls up her collar. A sign outside the George and Dragon advertises bands. She doesn't stop to read it. The bands will have names like Mickey Dee or Midge and the Moon. There is an upturned pint glass on the railings, a crisp packet flapping at the wall. She turns the corner, scuffs her boot-toe on the curb, reaches into her backpack for the keys.

It is there, under the freeads, the QuickMart flyer, static against the nylon fibres of the orange doormat.

ii)

She gets on the 17.38. There are no seats. She puts her bag on the floor, pincers it between calves. Anchors herself against the handrail, against the ebb and flow. The train empties. When she arrives it is dark. She crosses roads. She meanders. She fishes gloves from her pockets, winkles in fingers. A sign outside the George and Dragon advertises a club night, DJs with names like Mick E Dee and MC Moon. She turns the corner. At the door she taps in numbers, ducks her head passing the mail slots.

It is there, between the metal ridges, blue-inked franking throbbing like a vein.

iii)

She doesn't go out.

She waits on the sofa, staring out of the window until the sun sets.

There is no point in going anywhere. The tiny light pulses whether she looks at it or not. Yes, even in her pocket.