

Ultramarine

He looked across at her.

- What's the colour called? he asked.
- What colour?
- The thing there, he said. – The pendant, is it?
- Oh, she said.
She held the pendant – whatever it was – in her fingers.
-It's lovely, isn't it?
-Yeah, he said, although, really, he didn't know if it was lovely or not.
-It was my grandmother's, she said.
-Really?
He knew. Something – the way she held the pendant. The way she held it out slightly, to show him – that tiny gesture, or offer. He knew: this was the start.
-Yes, she said. – She died last year.
-I'm sorry.
-It's ok. She'd been sick for a good while.
He'd always have to know that the thing hanging around her neck had once belonged to her grandmother.
-Did she give it to you?
-Yes.
-When she was still alive, like? Sorry –
-No, I understand, she said. – Yes, she did.
-That's nice.
-Yes.
He'd have to remember where they were eating, what they were eating, how much it was going to cost, the weather outside, her hair, her smile, her habit – already a habit – of touching her chin with her finger as she spoke.
-It's lovely, he said.
_Ultramarine.
_What?
-The colour.
-Ultramarine, he said. –Never heard of that one. That's a colour, is it?
-Yes, it is.