

**'The Only Ones Awake'**  
**Ian Seed**

We walked up the steep pavement, with each step sinking to our knees in snow. It was past midnight. Holding tight to her hand, I worried that if one of us slipped, then the other would slip too. When we reached the alleyway at the top, I kissed her for the first time. Yet however hard she pressed against me, our thick coats and the silence around us made her seem distant, unreal. The snow started to fall more heavily – huge, curling flakes.

‘Don’t wake the others,’ she whispered. Shivering, naked from the waist down, we lay on our coats on the kitchen floor. I wasn’t ready for her, so she pushed me onto my back and sat on me to make it easier. She moved slowly, knowingly. The only part of me that was warm grew inside her.