

You Don't Have to be Drunk

By Erin Wentworth

I know a girl

Whose brother killed

His friend

In an accident.

Around the corner,

High on life

(but not on drugs),

In the dead of the night.

Crash.

Sirens.

He called the police,

The correct thing to do.

911, what's your emergency?

But it was too late.

There was nothing that could be done

To save him.

How could my friend's brother be the driver

But not even get a scratch

While his friend,

A son,

A nephew,

A boyfriend,

Was killed as the passenger?

And what if,

What if,

What if they had been high?

Or distracted by more than just

Each other?

Would there have been two deaths

Instead of one?

You don't have to be drunk.

They were just on a road

Unfamiliar to them

In the dead of the night.

A road less traveled,

Dare I say.

They had plans the next day,

School, in fact

(They went to the same college).

But neither could attend:

One because he was being questioned by the police,

And the other because he was lying dead on a hospital bed

With his devastated family surrounding him.

Driving with one's friends

Is a milestone most people

Look forward to

When they are a teenager.

But they get comfortable,

Overconfident, cocky,

Lose their caution.

I understand why mothers

Always tell their kids

“Drive safe, please,”

As they leave the house.

I'm glad my mom does.

Because who wants to get that phone call

In the dead of the night?