

Ellery Herrick

## Her Sorrows

That was it. My life was over. I made one stupid mistake, and I knew everything was gone. Scholarships, offers, and opportunities are all out the door. I killed her. Karmen was my best friend. How could I let this happen? How was I supposed to tell her parents? Then, suddenly, as the sirens roared closer and closer, everything went black. It appeared peaceful. Karmen and I were dancing through a field of daisies, not a worry in the world. I liked this. I liked this reality. I wished it would never end.

When I woke up, I was in the hospital surrounded by my family. “Why am I here?” I asked, trembling with fear. Where were the daisies? More importantly, where was Karmen? Was she here with me? Why was I in the hospital? Why was everyone crying? Nothing could have prepared me for the news I was about to get—the news that my best friend was gone.

It was 6 p.m. on a Friday night in the middle of winter. Basketball had just let out, and we were on our way home. Karmen and I had carpooled that day to make it easier for the plans we had later that day. As we were driving home we talked about going out and partying to celebrate the beginning of winter break. Little did I know, this decision would come back to haunt me forever. When we arrived home, I went to shower first while Karmen sat scrolling through her phone. After I got out of the shower it was Karmen's turn. Soon as Karmen got out of the shower she dried my hair for me and straightened it, and I did the same for her. Approximately twenty minutes later, I got a text saying there was a party fifteen minutes down the road from us.

Karmen and I decided that we were going to attend. As we put on our outfits and got in the car, my stomach started to churn and I couldn't pinpoint exactly what it meant.

As Karmen and I drove to the party I just couldn't shake this weird feeling. At the party, I watched Karmen drink and drink till she could barely even stand on her own. I kept beckoning to her, motioning that it was time for us to go for three whole hours. I tried to get her to leave, practically having to drag her out. Karmen drank, so I decided that I was going to be the 'designated driver' home. After finally prying Karmen out and getting her ready to leave, Karmen said to me, "Are you sure you're okay to drive home? You seem off." "I'm fine," I responded, my once somber voice cracking.

As we walked outside the cold winter air nipped at my nose, with the slightest breeze blowing a puff of white through the air. When we got in the car I texted my mom, letting her know we were on our way. I made sure to let her know I hadn't had anything to drink, just so she wouldn't worry. I listened to the purr of the frozen engine as we waited patiently for it to warm up. About 10 minutes later, the car was warm and we were on the road heading south toward my home. With the subtle sound of the radio on, I could still make out the snoring coming from the passenger seat. "Karmen?" I wondered if she'd even hear me, "Karmen," I repeated this time being a little louder.

As we were driving home, Karmen suddenly woke up and started yelling, distracting me. My phone buzzed with a notification, and I stupidly checked it, thinking it was from my mom. It was the worst mistake I could've made. The moment I checked my phone, the car hit a sheet of

black ice. By the time I grabbed the wheel with both hands, we were already flipping. The next thing I saw was darkness. Nothing could have prepared me for what was to come.

As my eyes opened, everything was blurry but I could slowly make out a figure in front of me—Karmen, her body mangled and her face red from the blood gushing out of her head wound. I no longer felt cold. As the sound of sirens roared closer and closer everything went black again. Next thing I knew I was waking up in the ICU with wires coming out of me like tentacles. My life as I knew it, was over. That one moment ruined it all. My stupidity took it all—everything, gone. I already knew she was gone even before they had told me. My best friend was gone because of me, because I picked my phone up, because I got distracted. That feeling in my gut before we even left had been right, I should've listened to it then. Now it was too late. She was dead.