

I could barely get a grip, my mouth was open but not a sound could escape. "Ma'am, I am truly sorry and can assure you, that we did everything we could to save your husband." He had a look on his face, as if he was trying so hard to be empathetic; which I admired but the growing weight on my chest was too extraordinary to show any acknowledgement. "We will give you a moment to grieve Ms. \_\_\_\_\_, when you are ready there will be some paperwork for you... I think there are some things we should go through, answer any questions you might have as well." He paused, and in that moment my eyes rose from the grey hospital tiles, and we locked eyes. "Again ma'am.. my dearest condolences."

I was filled with anxiety, palms sweating, stomach turning so aggressively I feel as if I could faint. Leaning on the cold wall I begin to slowly fall to my knees. I can see the tears drop but I don't feel like I'm crying, the numbness quickly rushes through me, with one powerful lunge, I rise to my feet. Putting one foot in front of the other I was the few steps to a desk, a very petite, blonde nurse resides there, typing so quickly and with ease. With a strong but soulful voice I ask; "Where could I find doctor \_\_\_\_\_'s office?" And quickly with hesitation she points to my left down a long narrow hallway, full of running nurses and eager patients waiting to hear their news. "Fourth door to your left dear." I nod proudly, and away I went.

As I approached his office, I could feel it all coming back up, I took one last deep breath and forced my way through the large, dark wooden door. Dr. \_\_\_\_\_'s eyes quickly glare up at me, with a confused look on his face he begins to organize the papers on his desk. "Have a seat." He demanded, his eyes follow me as I find myself to one of the two desk chairs that reside in front of him. "We assume he had a heart attack, but there is so definitive evidence." He explains whilst handing me papers and a pen, "Do you have any questions before we wrap this up ma'am?" He asks with a look of relief as I answer him "No, where do I sign?"

My first step out of the hospital doors lands me at the emergency entrance, scanning the parking lot for \_\_\_\_\_'s four door grey pickup. Well I suppose it's mine now, although I barely can see over the steering wheel. My eyes lock on the truck and as I make my way through the parking lot my pocket begins to vibrate. \_\_\_\_\_'s mother, she must have gotten the call. I can't face her, I dig the keys from my purse and do a large hop into the drivers seat. When the door shuts, a stammering cry escapes me, "What have I done...?"

As I arrive home I can see familiar cars outside, the closer I get the more I can see the group of worried family members crowded around the front yard. Not ready to face them, I ran my foot on the gas and zoom past, catching a small glimpse of his mother looking eyes with me through the review mirror. I continued down \_\_\_\_\_ Street, the Main Street of our little town. I've lived in \_\_\_\_\_ my whole life, I left for college once but it only lasted a year. I took a writing course, hoping to be a part of the making of the news here in \_\_\_\_\_. Then I met \_\_\_\_\_ and everything changed.

I moved back into town, \_\_\_\_\_ lived an hour away in \_\_\_\_\_ where the college resided. About a month after we met my mother got sick, he came with me, got a job and started a life here. We were in love. "Stop!" I tell myself, I did this, we were miserable, I was miserable. Guilt flooding my body, I begin to cry again, but as suddenly as I started, I stopped. My phone vibrates from the cup holder next to me, "\_\_\_\_\_", his Mother again. I press ignore and continue down the road, almost reaching the highway. Before reaching the open road, a small gas station at the end of the town is just ahead of me, not knowing how long I'll be on the road I decide to stop. I pull in the lot, park my pickup and shut down the gas. I begin to take a moment, I rest my hands on my face and suddenly my phone rings once more. Without hesitation, I throw it out the pickup window. Full of frustration and confusion, I adjust my seat back and close my eyes. "I just need a minute" I say to myself, and a minute I take.

I jump startled by a loud knock, I open my eyes and rub them until the view becomes clear. "Hey! You can't sleep here! Go home we are closed!" An angry man yells, I nod apologetically, as he walks away I watch him. He looks so much like my father I pondered, long beard, large brown steel toes, and a look on his face in which makes his angry voice still come off as sweet and soft. I go to check the time on my phone and realize I chucked it, I quickly spring my neck to the side and notice my phone was gone. I reach for the key and turn it in the ignition, as I pull the truck out, I get to a standstill; do I turn left and go home? Or right into the open road? Leave my life and be free, it's what I wanted isn't it?

Yes, it's what I wanted. With that thought, I make my way onto the highway without a destination in mind. I check the dashboard, "8:07pm" it reads. Without a map or phone, and having only left this town once in my life, I had absolutely no idea where I was headed, I just knew I couldn't turn back. I skip every turn and stay on the main highway, telling myself to get as far away as possible, to not look back, not even in the review mirror. As hours pass I can feel my legs cramping and my eyes dropping, without a stop for miles, I decide to turn into a small farm land. No lights, no sign of crops or animals, I assume it's abandoned. I grab a bottle of whiskey from under the passenger seat, knowing my husband there had to have been alcohol in here somewhere.

I open the truck door and proceed to the backyard of the main house, walking past the side, lightly glancing in the windows searching for movement; but nothing. As I reach the yard I notice an old picnic table next to a fire pit, "Perfect". I rather some sticks, dry leaves and really anything burnable, I pull the lighter from my pocket and begin to light what I can. As a little fire begins to catch I reach in my other pocket for a smoke, putting it between my lips, lighting and taking a strong inhale. As I reside back to the picnic table I notice the whiskey bottle staring back at me, without hesitation I crack it open and take a swig. "Ahhhh" I exclaim, disgusting but refreshing. I place the bottle down and begin to start into the flames, watching each stick catch fire slowly, the crackling noise gets louder and louder as the fire grows.

A loud bang comes from the back of the main house, "Hey! What do you think you're doing!" A man yells. Startled, I jump and instinctively grab the bottle and run, reaching the truck I feel myself smiling, heart beating, a small thrill I think. Feeling young again, I let out a small giggle, stopping me in my tracks. The man continues to follow me until he reaches the driveway, "Can I help you!?" Angry and distraught the man is holding a IOgauge aimed at my feet, "I'm sorry, I thought the farm was abandoned". Not a word comes from the man, nothing but a empty stare that goes on for what feels like minutes. "Go on, Get." He says calmly, I jump in the truck and hit the road again. With that moment stuck in my mind, the silence, the look he gave me, the calm way he told me to leave, he looked...Sad. I stop the truck instantly and begin to turn back to the farm. "What am I doing?" I think aloud, trying to convince myself not to go back but for some reason I couldn't stop. As I arrive, the man still resides on the porch steps, I jump out and stand with a stare. Silence falls over us again, as he looks up at me, his mouth begins to open "Get in there, there's soup in the kitchen, you look hungry".