

~~WRITE~~ LOST MESSAGE

Fear gripped me like thick coils wrapped around my heart.

My breath quickens.

I feel tears threatening at the back of my eyes, stinging.

"I can't do this today, not now." I think to myself.

~~Please~~ Don't let me be too late.

Please.

The car tumbles as it passes ~~over~~ across the broken surface. Jolted by uneven ^{filled} tar, and ~~gap~~ holes ~~filled~~ now, with water.

I press my foot down harder, willing the car to move faster.

Faster.

I have to get there. I don't know how much time I have left.

The car hurtles down the highway, it seems to be struggling now, ~~vying~~ straining to reach the 140 mark.

The rain splatters against ~~myself~~ the windscreen, clouding my vision

until it is pushed away by the wipers.
~~But~~ For a moment it is clear, but the
rain is too insistent, too relentless.
It returns as quickly as it left.
left?

I left.

All these years ago, I walked out
the door, didn't even ^{hesitate to} say goodbye.
I believed I was doing the right thing.
They made me ~~think~~ ^{think} he was a
monster, made me leave for fear of
what he'd do next.

I left him behind, leaving no trace
~~behind me~~ that I'd even been there.
I left him nothing.

Nothing...

The car swerves violently, ^{barely} avoiding
the side of the Volkswagen to my
left. I brush past him, leaving a
chorus of blaring horns behind ~~me~~ ^{me}.

I don't breathe until their lights
fade ^{away} ~~out~~ ~~behind me~~. I leave them
behind, just like I left him behind.
The dark road ~~road~~ disappears,

replaced by the ^{light} ~~dark~~ of a spring
afternoon. Strong hands clasp around
my little waist as they throw me
into the air. Up and up, until I
~~can~~ feel like I can see above the
treetops. He throws me up like I'm
a doll.

weightless.

Fragile.

But his hands are always there again,
catching me. ~~to prevent~~ ~~falling~~.

So I never have to fall.

I snap out of my reverie just as
I swerve to make the exit. I don't
slow down to read the blue sign.
I know my way to the hospital.
The car silences as I turn the
engine off, barely caring to ~~check~~
~~the~~ lock the door behind me. I burst
into the emergency ward, racing
down the corridor.

It's been ^{twelve} ~~n~~ ~~tw~~ minutes since I've
received the call.

The walls are painted a sterile white.

It reminds me of a horror movie, where the victim runs from the monster. But then, the ~~victim~~ girl is never fast enough to get away. The monster always catches up, ~~a~~ ~~putting~~ tearing at her skin, so it can clamp around ^{its victims} her organs, tearing it apart from the inside...

I ~~a~~ tumble into a nurse rushing around the corner. Her ^{expression} ~~face~~ softens as she takes in my tear-stained face.

"Are you okay, dear?" she asks gently.

"My... my. Mis, his name is... Sam Lewis. I need to find Sam Lewis.

Please, where is he?"

Her ^{little smile} ~~expression~~ falters as the name registers with her.

"Come this way sweetie, he's in here."

I burst into the hospital room, falling against the side of the bed.

I can't stand any longer.

I clasp my hands around his.

"I'm here, Dad. It's me. It's Jessie.
It's your little Jessie. Everything's
going to be okay, Dad. I promise."

I tighten my grip on his hands,
willing them to make him reply.

But there is only silence.

I suddenly notice how cold his hands are.

Like wrapping your fingers around ice.

Wiping away the tears I look up at
his face.

His eyes are closed.

I realize then, that he isn't going
to respond.

My words will no longer reach him.

Like a message in a bottle lost at
sea.

He'll never forgive me now.

Dad will never hug me again.

Never will I get to ~~to~~ look into his
eyes and see understanding, to see
his forgiveness.

~~It's~~ ~~like~~

I can't breathe.

It's like ~~like~~ I'm being held

underwater. Gasping for air, but
there is none. ~~My body feels tired~~
My body struggles helplessly under
the pain. Frantically trying to breathe
again. Darkness fills my vision, as
I stop struggling, now limply floating.
The pain is too much,
I have to let go.
Just like I let Dad go.
How could I have been so wrong?