What Happens Now?
By Brenna

What happens when you make a mistake?
Not a little one, like showing up to a meeting five minutes late
Or forgetting someone’s birthday
What happens when you fly out to see a man you love
Your first time travelling alone
You are excited, the warmth of the sun is nothing
Nothing compared to the glow of your smile
And when you arrive there, you discover that this guy
Not only has a girlfriend, but doesn’t in fact live with his parents
Like he told you.
What happens when, after you arrive
You call your mother, saying you’re cutting your stay short
I wonder if your hands were unsteady as you held the phone up to your ear
Your voice taking a concerned and uneasy tone
I wonder if this call was sort of a warning of what was to come?
What happens when that night, the guy you flew all this way to see
Is throwing a party in his trailer
A party full of alcohol, drugs, among other things
That you promised yourself you’d never partake in?
So you, feeling uncomfortable, leave the trailer to go for a walk
(You often went for walks to clear your head)
What happens when you go for a walk
And that walk becomes the infamous walk
The walk from which you never return?
What happens when 24 hours after you were last seen walking
The guy who all your friends knew you were
Head over heels for
He reports you as missing
Why did he wait?
Why did he wait that long?
What happens when a huge search party ensues
Your parents back home in Minnesota
Praying that everything will turn out alright?
And what happens, when she looks back at that night
Your mother remembers hearing your voice
Clear as day, calling out for her?
But you were nowhere near her?
And what happens, when after a few days of searching, hoping
For the best outcome
Tell me, what happens when they finally find you in a field
On the road you were last seen walking on
Oh, Lord, there you are! But...
You're as still as a silent night with no breeze
No breeze to reassure the animals that morning will soon come
The police say you died from losing too much blood
It's cold-blooded murder, they conclude
What happens?
What happens after that?
The years go by but the investigation fails to bear any fruit
The truth remains hidden
As you toss and turn in your heart-shaped grave?
What happens when it's 2024 now
Next year marks 40 years since that night
And we still don't know exactly what occurred?
Your father has passed
He holds you as you both watch over your mother and brother
Your family desperately rallying for answers
What happens if answers never come?
What happens then?
What happens if you live a life for nothing?
If you are born just to die?
Like a lamb to the slaughter
To be killed, maimed
And tossed away like you were nothing
As if your short life didn't even matter?
Tell me, what happens when even though
I have no relation to you
But I feel like I knew you
And I care for you
What happens when
Whenever I remember how people have spoken of you
Saying that you deserved such a brutal end
That I feel my heart being stabbed, lacerated
As if I existed
Within the same lifetime as you?
Tell me, what do I do?
How do I help?
Where do I go from here?
What happens now?