

'Rain' by Romily Ellis

Rain

The wipers on the front of the old brown ford worked furiously to clear the hundreds of drops that pounded against the glass. Rain fell on the car sounding like the drums of a marching band, and the two people inside shivered despite their winter wear. The driver, a woman travelled silently down one of the dark, twisting roads of Wreccsam, each breath coming easier as she neared home.

They had been on their way back from a family get-together, a dull event the two sisters preferred to avoid. The day dragged on and had taken its toll on the sister. She was worn out and couldn't wait to curl up on the warm sofa with her sister – they lived in the same tiny flat but loved each other dearly. Now, she sat clutching her knees to her chest in the back seat, shivering like a little leaf, and wrapped her coat tighter around herself.

The cold mist had already crawled up part of the windshield, which made it next to impossible to see. The woman knew she should have found somewhere else to sleep ages ago, pulled over for the night and not face this rainy nightmare. But she carried on through the storm. Her mind was clouded, her eyes barely open. That was why she didn't see the truck. Behind the wheel of that vehicle was a man, weary from the days work, eager to deliver his load and get home. On any other day, he would have parked the truck back in its space and left. But his delivery had to be in tomorrow, and he had no other choice but to carry on. He hummed quietly to his radio, unaware that his concentration had frayed from the road. The man turned the corner too quickly.

The truck slammed straight into the tiny ford, sending it flying across the wrong side of the road and halfway over the railing, all the time rolling again and again. Glass flew in every direction and the brown car smashed into the barrier on the other side. Crash, crunch the vehicle came to a stop with a sickening thud, crumpling the back end of the car as if it were cotton wool. The sister was knocked unconscious, but the driver was still in her seat.

When the woman woke up a short time later, she was confused. Her whole body hurt, but she scanned her surroundings carefully. She saw her sister in the driver's seat. "Jane," she whispered, and shook her gently. "Jane? Someone help, please!" Her voice broke on the last word. Who would hear her? She may as well have been whispering against the raging storm. She heard a few cautious steps outside, and a man peered in. "Help," she croaked. The man looked at the pleading woman, and the broken girl in the driver's seat. He wiped the rain from his face with a frantic swipe. His shoulders slumped, and he took a step back. "I... I'm sorry. I can't go to jail. Not today. I'm sorry," he murmured, and ran to his car. The truck had survived with minimal damage. Nothing a lick of paint couldn't fix. His foot hovered over the accelerator pedal, but he couldn't find the strength to use it. He knew he should call an ambulance. But he didn't. The man took a deep breath and drove on.

A pool of rain was starting to gather around their feet in the car. Tears ran peacefully down the woman's cheek, echoing the calm drips that fell through the shredded roof. Hopefully the debris around the road would alert someone soon. The woman grasped her sister's hand, who still hadn't moved from her sleeping position. "It will be fine, Jane. Somebody will help soon," but the hand she held did not belong to her sister. Her sister's hand was warm, and always curled her fingers around her own. Her words were to convince herself though, as well as her sister. Her eyes closed slowly.

The sirens of an ambulance woke her up a while later. She was pulled out of the battered car very carefully and loaded onto a stretcher in the back of an ambulance. The doors slid shut and drove her away. "What about Jane? Where is she? Help her first!" she demanded frantically as she realized Jane wasn't with them. The paramedic slipped a neck brace over her head and looked at her face. "I'm sorry. Your sister is gone." The world turned a dull grey color through the woman's eyes. No Jane. Her entire world fell apart. She felt no reason to be in the ambulance, to fight to live. The person she loved the most had just disappeared.

