“P.M.” (168 words)

by Megan Weiss

6:32 P.M: I get the call. As soon as the phone lights up with mom’s number - I know. She’d just dropped me back off at school two hours ago.

6:35 P.M: I punch the callback button. I listen to the dial tone. The voicemail picks up after 38 seconds.

6:37 P.M: The busy signal sounds. A fist crashes into the wall.

6:40 P.M: My head hurts. Everything feels heavy.

6:45 P.M: Why did she make me come back? We knew this would happen.

6:47 P.M: I want to scream – I need to scream.

6:48 P.M: “Your call has been forwarded to an automated voice messaging system…”

6:49 P.M: My chest heaves. I think I’m suffocating.

6:57 P.M: I jab at the end button and toss my phone across the room.

7:00 P.M: Music blares. It’s ringing. I retrieve my phone from the carpet.

7:04 P.M: The line goes dead. I take a shuddering breath.

7:05 P.M: A knock on the door. My best friend’s face.

“She’s dead.”