

Jason met Kelly when she was killing herself. They were at the National Gallery, Kelly seated in front of a print of Frida Kahlo's *Broken Column*. She had a pistol in her lap.

"Yo," Jason said.

"Hey," Kelly said.

"What're you doing?"

"Killing myself."

"Oh," Jason said. "I see."

Kelly put the pistol below her chin and pulled the trigger. Brain and bone decorated the back wall like Jackson Pollock.

The next day, Jason asked Kelly to grab a coffee at the place on the corner by the Statistics Department. When they sat down together in the morning, she poured cyanide in her macchiato. Jason watched her do it over the rim of his long black. He talked to her about his investment banking while she sipped her coffee.

After about forty-five minutes Kelly was face down on the table between them, her macchiato drained and cup rolling on its side. Jason put her number in his phone. "See you soon," he said, and went to have a meeting with his boss.

"What got you into finance?" Kelly said. She and Jason were hiking in the hills outside the city.

"My father," Jason said.

"What did he do?"

"Finance."

Kelly kicked a rock off the trail; it knocked on four different stone outcroppings on the way down to the bottom of the valley.

When Jason told her about the new engine in his BMW, Kelly jumped from the ridge. She dived headfirst and shattered her orbital on a smooth piece of orange rock jutting from

the dusty cliff face, and then broke her tibia in fourteen different places when she hit a tree at the speed of a car in a school zone.

“Carry this,” Jason said, and handed Kelly a box of youth rugby trophies. He walked into his new apartment, the one Kelly would be living in, too, and chucked his keys on the black marble kitchen island. Kelly plodded in behind him, trophies towering over her face.

“Where do you want them?” Kelly said.

“Put them in the bedroom,” Jason said.

“Okay,” Kelly said, and put the box in the bedroom.

That night, after everything was moved in, and Jason was enjoying a glass of wine, Kelly went to the kitchen and took the bread knife from the knife block and ripped the serrated edge across her throat. The blood from her jugular covered the window overlooking the lake, and dripped like drizzling raindrops from the black marble.

Jason knelt in front of Kelly. It was winter, and he wore a black coat over a blue turtleneck, and she wore a thin duster with a loose, flowing skirt. There was a ring in Jason’s hand.

“Yes,” Kelly said. “Of course.” She bent down on the stool she was standing on and presented her hand.

He slid the ring on her finger. He smirked and said, “Amazing,” then left to check his stocks.

Kelly inspected the ring, and wondered how much it was worth. Then she kicked the stool out from under her and hung from the rope she’d attached to the ceiling fan, and all the blood vessels in her eyes burst.

They were at the hospital because Jason and Kelly were having a daughter.

They pushed as hard as they could, and after fourteen hours, Jason was holding his child. Kelly asked one of the attending nurses to fill her body with morphine, but the nurse

said no, so Kelly, still bleeding, walked up to the hospital's roof and jumped off. She pancaked on the pavement in front of a wheelchair-bound grandmother, who cackled at her with cracked, mottled lips, and two black gravestones for teeth.

"I don't know if I can keep doing this," Jason said.

Zoey yanked at Kelly's hair and started climbing over her shoulder. "I understand."

"It's just been really hard for me, these past few years."

"I'm sorry I didn't see it."

"I have so much responsibility with work."

"I should have paid more attention." Zoey threw Kelly's keys under the couch. She clapped and giggled.

After Kelly cooked a beef stir fry, got Zoey to bed, and put the washing on, she fell asleep in her car, engine started and exhaust blocked.

The next year, Kelly found her pistol in the back of her dresser in her new one-bedroom apartment. She carried it with her when she caught the train into the city. Halfway to her stop, when the sun was warm on her back through the window, and a group of girls were giggling about the boys at school, Franklin sat himself down next to her.

"Afternoon," Franklin said.

"Hey," Kelly said.

"What's up with that?" he said, and nodded to her pistol.

"I'm killing myself."