

## Untitled by Mary Hansen

Keera's cell phone buzzed like an annoying mosquito on the bedside table. She swatted at it with equal annoyance and desperation, trying to silence the offending noise. Her head was splitting and her mouth was thick and dry from over indulging in wine at her going away party the night before. Almost a decade of training accumulating in a one night blow out before everyone set off from Vancouver to begin their legal careers. Her job taking her back to the other side of the country and her hometown of Halifax. When the phone rang for the fifth time she decided to answer, determined to make sure the person on the other end knew in no uncertain terms she was not someone they wanted to be speaking with.

She rubbed her eyes, gritty with sleep and pushed back a mass of sweat slicked curls. A quick check of the caller I.D. only made her confused. Her best friend definitely knew this was not the hour to be calling.

“Jess?”

“Keera!”

“What the hell? It is not even light out! Are you sleep dialing again?”

“What? No. That was once in university. This is serious. It's about Rachael.”

“Oh for fuck's sake. Please tell me you did not just wake me up to vent about Rachael. I thought we all said we were done.”

“Ker, she's dead.”

### **Editor's Critique:**

What a promising entry! The opening paragraph is provocative, and I like the way you show the heroine in her world, on her way to her new job, suffering from a night out, and now about to face something new. You describe her well with her irritation, her hangover, and her “mass of sweat slicked curls.” Then with the last sentence, you make the reader want to know what happened to Rachael or who she is. Nicely done. If I had to choose something to criticize, I would shorten the opening paragraph just a touch, tell the reader less, and get to the big moment, which is Jess telling Keera the bad news. Otherwise, this is such an intriguing beginning. Well done!