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## This Is Forsaken

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## **Abstract**

In lieu of an abstract, below is the essay's first paragraph.

"Sophia: She is beautiful; dark hair draping around her delicate shoulders. Used to be a dancer, before college. She is tall, thin with sad, brown eyes. Twenty. Just turned in July. Sophia is surrounded by a crowd at the lunch table. She stabs a forkful and eats in silence, listening to the senseless chatter. Everyone talks around her, in front of her, behind her. Never to her. She sips her water. Every day a glass of water. She pulls out her phone, no missed calls. She returns to her dorm; her roommates lower their voices to a whisper. Sophia hopefully checks her computer. No messages. She wraps herself in a blanket and sinks into bed. 243-5467. No answer. She has a picture hanging next to her bed. A golden dog, a puppy. Passed away a few weeks back. 245-8759. Answering machine. Her eyes are wet as she opens her favorite book, settling in with Holden Caulfield. "

## **Cover Page Footnote**

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BY ERIN HURD

**Sophia:**

She is beautiful; dark hair draping around her delicate shoulders. Used to be a dancer, before college. She is tall, thin with sad, brown eyes. Twenty. Just turned in July. Sophia is surrounded by a crowd at the lunch table. She stabs a forkful and eats in silence, listening to the senseless chatter. Everyone talks around her, in front of her, behind her. Never to her. She sips her water. Every day a glass of water. She pulls out her phone, no missed calls. She returns to her dorm; her roommates lower their voices to a whisper. Sophia hopefully checks her computer. No messages. She wraps herself in a blanket and sinks into bed. 243-5467. No answer. She has a picture hanging next to her bed. A golden dog, a puppy. Passed away a few weeks back. 245-8759. Answering machine. Her eyes are wet as she opens her favorite book, settling in with Holden Caulfield.

**Claire:**

Claire is quiet. Nineteen, fresh and young. Sophomore in college. Drinks. Beer girl. Corona. They go clubbing, the girls. They all pick up men at the bar. Short skirts, high heels. She orders her fourth and watches. She is pale in the flashing lights; her friends all tell her to go tanning. Her hair is thin and simple; her friends all tell her to dye it. Something crazy. Red, perhaps. She is wearing eyeliner, thick black eyeliner; her friends all tell her to wear pink lipstick. She is dressed in black, breasts bulging. Pick-up lines. Clinking glass. Beer breath. Men. Idiots. 3 a.m. Her friends are crazed and laughing. Her eyeliner is smeared down her cheek. She orders another. With lime.

**Kristen:**

She thinks about it constantly. She's tried it twice. Pills. Her mother caught her. Hospital. She had her stomach pumped. A few weeks ago, it was a belt. She strapped it around her neck. Pulled. She was in the bathroom, looking in the mirror. Gaunt face; bony cheeks, gray eyes with constant purple bags under them. She kept her hair cut short, even though people called her a lesbian. They all hated her. At school, work, church. No escape. She was tired of the prim sixteen-year-olds walking around her school in minis and strappy sandals. Sluts. Counselor. Psychiatrist. Spilled her problems day after day. Heavy medication. Nothing seemed to help. Anti-depressants are psychological; she didn't believe in them. She wouldn't eat. An apple a day keeps the teasing away. Ambulance. Sirens. Hospital bed.