

From One Good Thing
By Don Zolidis

ERYNNE, 17, a punk girl.

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When I was twelve, my older sister Dierdre was killed in a car accident. It wasn't exactly an accident. Her and her friends were car surfing, which is where one kid gets on top of the car and either stands up or just holds on as they drive around like crazy. And so they were doing this in the park, and I guess some of her friends had gone already—and I never really knew if she was drunk or not while she was doing this, but I guess she probably was, anyway, they went around a corner and she rolled off and hit her head on the pavement really hard—cracked open her skull, left part of her brain on the road—the doctors thought they'd be able to save her life for a while, just that she'd have some permanent brain damage from the... you know, from the leaving part of her brain on the pavement—I guess you expect to not be all that all right when they're picking little pebbles out of your skull—but the surgeon who was in charge of putting her brain back together screwed up and she died on the operating table. My Mom sued. The case was dismissed. We ended up with nothing. So, anyway, now I'm an only child—so... so there it is.

So there's life and there's death, you know? There's a legend... about a woman named Dierdre... well I mean, like we're Irish and everything, and Dierdre was supposedly the most beautiful woman on the whole island—But anyway, she was so beautiful that people kept on fighting over her and killing each other in order to kidnap her. So finally this guy kills her true love and takes her away to be with him. But instead of being his wife, Dierdre kills herself by smashing her head on a rock repeatedly.

I think about that. About having the guts to be able to do that. I mean, to not just hit yourself once, but to do it again and again... and maybe that's what happened to my sister... maybe she had just had enough—of this place, of the ruin, of this slow crumble.