I checked the clock above my mantel. It was an antique that my six year old niece had picked out for me as a house warming gift. I didn’t particularly like digital clocks and my niece somehow understood that. I hated how digital clocks left an iridescent glow in the dark and how the numbers were never whole but unnaturally segmented and angular. This analog clock was perfect... But right now my clock looked as if it had suddenly stopped and the hands had fallen under the pressure of gravity, just hanging limp. Six thirty. He would be arriving soon. I resisted the urge to check if the clock was indeed dead and instead entertained another clawing compulsion. Guided by my subconscious mind, I pointedly wandered into my room and slid the desk drawer out of its rectangular fitting. My hands fell limp at my side, as if I too were broken. But my subconscious mustered the energy to lift my right hand, reach into the depths of the drawer, and gently pull out the folded paper. I had to read it, just one more time before I saw him. I opened the article delicately. The paper was lighter than when I had first cut it out and stole it from the Quarry Union Public Library six years ago. The librarians wouldn’t notice its absence. As I read, it occurred to me that I wasn’t really meeting him and that it was all in my head, like I had created an imaginary world to feed my hopes. This world was filled with the possibility that he wasn’t dead, mutilated beyond recognition. But this world couldn’t survive forever; my hopes were consuming me. Angered that I had tricked myself into believing in this fake world, my body tightened in a last attempt to squeeze out my final hopes. *I need this world to be real.* I could hear the hopeful thoughts and wishful thinking rush out of my head.  *It just has to be.* The door bell rang and merged my two worlds. The suffocating grip I had masterfully subjected myself to loosened. *It is real, I knew it.* With haste (but extreme care) I folded the article up and slid it under my seat cushion. I would have to remember that I left it there.

Have you ever thought about dying? I’m sure that’s a yes. Have you ever thought about dying just to think about how other people would feel about your death?

I think about death all the time. Not just my death either; people around me, my family, my friends...

The night was peacefully... I got pregnant when I...

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“Did you get in touch with that guy yet?”

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About two years ago I read an article from 1998. It was about an accident. I don’t know why, but it caught my attention. I mean, among all the other disasters I had read about, this one—for some reason—I just couldn’t get over. There were four passengers, all killed and mutilated beyond recognition.