

Junior Division, Prose

Ava Hodder, Pasadena

When The Street Lights Go Out (an excerpt)

She was going to be sick. The man was following her, and all she was doing was walking further away from home. Annie had meant to double back around a few blocks to get back to Ninth, but she'd ended up on the main road that led out of town and onto the highway. Her children most certainly were not out here.

Hands shaking, she reached into her pocket and pulled out her phone. She'd been hoping he would turn back, but she wasn't taking any risks. She was only worried he would see the glow of her phone and start running after her. Annie tucked her phone close to her body and looked at the time. Eleven o'clock was approaching and the streetlamps would be going out soon. Darkness could be an advantage for her or her pursuer.

Fighting the urge to glance behind and make sure he was still a good distance away, she pressed the emergency button in the bottom left hand corner of her lock screen. Now it would only take one click and the authorities would know her location and that she was in trou-

“Calling someone?”

Annie flinched and her phone fell from her hand. The masked pursuer caught it quicker than her eyes could see. There was no hiding the shakiness of her limbs or voice anymore, he was only three feet away.