

## Traffic

A white car rolls along the vacant road, passing by dead trees as they stand there like stick figures swaying in the wind. From above, the little cotton candy clouds cross the sky faster than a concord jet racing its sonic boom, and a crow flies above the car and follows it into the empty town. The sun shines upon the white car, blinding any living creature with its squeaky cleanliness.

Spark drives by a silent gas station and approaches a four-way traffic light. He pulls up to the edge of the crosswalk and stops at the red light. Another gas station sits on the far right corner of the four-way, and the town's local bank is on the far left. His white car sits in the whistling wind, but he sits inside of a steamy sauna. Spark wipes the salty sweat from his forehead with the sleeve of his sweatshirt. While his right foot pushes down on the break, his left foot bounces and rattles the car.

"It's okay, Spark," he says to himself. "Everything's going to be okay." Spark takes a deep breath in, and then a deep breath out. He moves his head to the passenger seat and looks at his hockey helmet. The rest of his gear lies in the back seat within his hockey bag.

The crow lands upon the far traffic light. It turns its head to the side, placing an eye towards Spark.

Spark clenches his jaw, squeezes his eyes shut, grabs the face mask of his helmet, and beats it against the dash. The crow watches as a bloody goop pours out from the red traffic light. Spark bashes and bashes his helmet against the dash as he screams his mind away. He throws the helmet against the passenger side window as it falls down to the floor. He looks out the windshield and notices the red goop falling from the red light and flooding the pavement.

Spark looks up to discover the crow on the traffic light. It twists its head at Spark in interest. Spark turns his attention back to his helmet while it lies on the floor. He bends down and picks it up. He brings the helmet right out in front of him and looks through its cage.

"Nothing can change who you are," Spark says. "Just keep doing what you love, and nothing will be able to stop you."

Spark props open the cage to his helmet and pushes it on his head. He buckles the straps on and looks back up to the falling red goop. He takes one final glance at the crow.

The light turns green, and green slime crashes down from the traffic light. Spark accelerates forward and rushes his clean, white car through the bloody red goop. He smashes through the green waterfall and pushes on to a clean road, exiting the town.

No matter what sufferings we are living through, never let anyone or anything take away what you love.