

# What They Shared

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short fiction, editor's pick

LINDSAY JUMPED OUT OF THE DODGE DART'S BACKSEAT AND INHALED deeply. Her mother's cigarette smoke streamed out the passenger window. Dan, her mother's boyfriend, sat in the driver's seat blasting Metallica so loud that women carrying laundry baskets in one arm and their children under another turned towards them. Lindsay stepped closer to her mother to tell her about today's soccer game, but Dan popped the trunk and shouted for her to unload the four garbage bags of dirty clothes. Her younger sister Michaela had disappeared already. Figured. She'd have to drag the laundry herself.

As soon as Lindsay closed the trunk, Dan waved, his forearm's bass guitar tattoo already glistening. He screeched out of Washland's lot. Across the street, the Western Federal Credit Union sign read 89 degrees. A few seconds later, it switched to 9:57 a.m. Lindsay blew her dampening bangs off her forehead. She needed to be done by 12:30 p.m. in order catch the cross-town bus to get to her soccer game. The coach wouldn't let her start if she didn't warm up with her city youth league team, the Carson Hornets.

She grabbed the first stuffed plastic bag and dragged it across the alligator-scaled asphalt. By the fourth one, sweat soaked her underarms. She wiped the moisture from her eyes with the back of her hand. Why did Dan stop the car so far from the laundromat door? Ever since he lost his job he seemed to take everything out on her. And her mom had also changed, even before the miscarriage. Pill bottles had shown up too. Her mom barely knew Lindsay was around anymore.