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Your Girlfriend as a Murder Mystery // Your Girlfriend as Good Little Soldiers // Your Girlfriend as The Hollywood Sign

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Cathy Ulrich

Your Girlfriend as a Murder Mystery

She will be podcasts, thinkpieces, *the guilty look in his eye*, the uncovered truth, the uncovered lie, breaking of the fourth wall, the clothing the victim wore last, draped in dust and dirt, bestseller *based on true events*, casting call for pretty actresses who can *disappear into the role*, who can *play dead*, the dip and fall of split-tail swallows at their nesting bridge, their soft, fluttering echo, the disappearance and haunt, the whisper, the call, the soft, sad sigh of the last person who sees the girl alive, *such a pretty girl*, *such a tragedy*, *such a sad, sad thing*.

Your Girlfriend as Good Little Soldiers

She will be the way they know to turn off the classroom lights, to duck under desks, hold erasers in their hands, hide the waver and shrill of their frightened breaths, the way they dial their gifted phones, whisper the number of the dead, she will be DNA tests and pleading parents, she will be the *nothing that can be done*, the huge and empty weight of the nothing that *will* be done, she will be what we make them carry, what we make them endure, and her eyes will reflect the freedom, the god-blessed freedom, we have been granted.

Your Girlfriend as The Hollywood Sign

She will be a land of *dreams-come-true*, of make-believe, she will be actors in face paint, blazing klieg lights, string quartets and mood music, she will be leading ladies and matinee men, little, lonely Norma Jean, *dreaming the hardest*, Peg Entwistle as she climbs to the *H*, Elizabeth Short and the names in her black book, she will be American Royalty, repossessed mansions, dark sunglasses, boardwalk stars and handprint marks, she will be William Desmond Taylor's unsolved murder, she will be forgotten names and *the cutting room floor*, she will be directors with bullhorns and casting couches: *Action, action, action.*