
The accident

It was dark. Nobody saw the accident. The small white car was found on its side by the bridge. A river ran underneath the road there, and the car was lying next to the bridge wall, below the road. Inside the car was a dead woman. Her name was Karen Silkwood and she was twenty-eight years old. It was November 13th, 1974.

How did the car come off the road? Why was it on the wrong side of the road? Why was it so far from the road? There was nothing wrong with the car. Karen Silkwood was a good driver. Everybody knew that.



How did the car come off the road?

The police thought that there was an easy answer to these questions. Karen was tired after a long day, so she fell asleep while she was driving. It could happen to anyone very easily. They took the car to a garage and they took Karen's body to a hospital.

But some people were not happy about the accident. First of all, her boyfriend, Drew Stephens. Also a newspaper journalist from the *New York Times* and a Union official from Washington. These three men were waiting for Karen on the night of the accident. She was bringing them some papers and some photographs in a big brown envelope. The papers were very important. The men were waiting for Karen in a hotel room a few miles from the accident. But she never arrived. When they heard about the accident, the men looked for the brown envelope at once. They looked for it inside the white car. They looked for it at the hospital and at the police station. The next morning they looked all around the wall and in the river, but they never found it. Nobody ever found that brown envelope.