

Rebecca Brunner

Ms. Stein

English P8

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### Arrive Alive

I step away from the dancing and laughing, my head hurts. I catch my breath and grab a bottle of water. I fumble through my purse looking for my phone. Two missed calls from my mom and a text from my boyfriend, Wade, both just checking in. Finally, I've found the bathroom and look at myself. My eyes are bloodshot, mascara blacked out around my eyes: I am a drunken mess. Pushing my way through the crowd, getting wiffes of alcohol off everyone, I grab my keys. My friends catch a glimpse of me heading out the door, they're trashed. No one would have known it was their last time seeing me walk, or stumble as I was.

The cold air hits me hard when I step outside, so I quickly find my car through my blurred vision and get in. "Push to start", I sit there and debate for a second, I should be okay. "Head straight for 300 feet and turn left," said my phone navigating me home. My estimated time is fifteen minutes and everyone who has me on Life360 can see I've started my drive. They'll receive a notification when I arrive home and Wade will know I'm safe.

Half an hour later, my shattered phone rings out of the reach of my cold, blood covered hand. This is what woke me up, I didn't know where I was. My eyes adjusted and I was at the entrance of my neighborhood just around the corner from my designation. The only thing I could feel was my heart racing and head pounding. The panic sets in when I realize I can't move. My car is flipped over, trapping me inside, I think that's why I can't escape. I yell "Hey Siri" and my phone lights up in response. Commanding it with fear in my voice, I tell it to call mom. Realizing

it was 3 a.m, I knew I wasn't going to get a response. Suddenly flashing lights strike my sight and I immediately black out.

“Senior of Gorham High School, Rebecca Brunner, was in a deadly car accident at 2:30 a.m. The teenager was taken by flight to Boston Hospital in critical condition.”

The news continues on giving details of what happened, filling me in on what I had missed last night. I was speeding when I had turned into my neighborhood. Being so drunk, I failed to look for traffic as I went to cross the road. Someone had hit me going 50 mph and flipped my car. Both were totalled. The other driver was just down the hall from me. Her name was Bailey, she had just gotten her license that afternoon and was taking a drive on her own for the first time. Bailey still hadn't woken up. I slowly turned my head to the window looking out to the hospital hallway, watching my mom speak to the doctors. She looked like she hadn't slept in days, but it was just from crying. They walked in and her eyes light up seeing me awake. Hysterically crying into my shoulder.

I've spent the last three months attending group meetings and physical therapy. I didn't want to try anymore. My mom was a wreck trying to take care of me and Wade broke up with me saying I was too much to handle emotionally. Walking had become something unknown to me. I can't cheer anymore like I have the past twelve years. I can't show my cows at fairs. My life was basically over. The worst of all is, Bailey had died that afternoon. I ruined my life and ended others, just because I chose to drink and drive.