

All In A Second

My car unlocks and I pull open the driver's door. I duck into my car and turn the key. I plug in my phone and text my mom "leaving now," just as I do whenever I'm out late at night. After spending a few minutes scrolling through my music, I finally decide on a song, even though it's only a short drive home. Because all of us have work and school, late at night is the only time my friends and I could all get together. After talking and playing games until three in the morning, I can't wait to get home and curl up in bed with my dog.

I pull out of my friend's driveway and down the road, only my headlights guiding the way. As the song ends, that annoying song that plays every day on the radio comes on. I can't stand that song. It's an open road and there are no other cars in sight, so I decide it's okay to pick up my phone to change the song. Besides, it will only take a second. What I didn't think was that this second would be one of my last.

As I take one hand off the wheel to grab my phone, the car begins to drift to the side, through the next lane, and into the railings of the bridge I'm driving over. The car bursts through the barrier and down to the stream below. I can't feel what happens within those next few moments. Next thing I know, there is an airbag in my face. With what little movement and sight I have around the airbag, I pull up my messages and text my mom the only thing that comes to mind in that moment, "help."

My mom wakes up my dad and they run downstairs, put the dog in his crate with a kong full of peanut butter to keep him occupied while they're gone, and jump in the car, still in their pajamas. My mom calls 911 and explains what they think happened as they drive along the short route to my friend's house, keeping an eye out for my car the whole drive. Once she's off

the phone, she checks to see if I've texted her again. The three dots bubble that indicates I am typing has appeared. She anxiously awaits another message but after a few minutes, realizes it probably will never arrive. She snaps back to reality as my dad pulls over to the side of the road after spotting the hole in the railing. As they run down the hill and their feet splash through the stream surrounding my car, sirens wail in the distance growing closer. As they pull open the drivers door, they hear my favorite song playing throughout the car. My phone lights up the car when I receive a text from my friend asking everyone to let her know when they get home. They find my phone in hand, my thumbs still hovering over it. They take it from my hands and unlock it to find my message just waiting to be sent to her: "I love you."

As rescue pulls me from the car and loads me into an ambulance, they can already put together what happened. They can already tell why my car is sitting in a stream on the side of the road. They can already see that it's too late.