

Unsent Messages

It was a late Saturday night in the summer. The sun was beginning to set causing vibrant streaks of orange and yellow to be painted across the sky. Brooke grabbed her keys from the hook in the kitchen and her phone from the charging cable that lay next to the granite island. Her mother peered around the corner as Brooke opened the front door and called to her daughter, "Be safe!" Brooke dismissed the comment and hopped into her brand new 2019 white Jeep Wrangler. She placed her keys in the ignition, turned the music onto volume level 40, and drove away from her home.

Brooke proceeded to pick up two of her friends, Maggie and Sandra, and they drove downtown to the local ice cream shop. She ordered her usual, soft serve vanilla with rainbow jimmies in a dish. The next stop of their outing was unknown and they decided to finalize their plans as they went. Maggie used her phone to connect to the GPS and Sandra's phone was used for music since she was the only one with Spotify Premium. Brooke heard the ding of her phone and immediately wanted to know if it was the boy she had been talking to. She thought of asking Maggie to check it for her, but she was too enthralled in finding directions. Brooke glanced in her rearview mirror where Sandra was jamming to some old 2000s music. The sun had nearly set and other driver's began to switch on their headlights, so Brooke followed, still thinking about the ding on her phone.

Brooke grabbed her phone and glanced at the bright screen for a few seconds, enough time to see who the text was from. She saw the name Jeremy, smiled, and began to place her phone back in the cupholder when another ding sounded - this text was from her mom. It read, "I hope you are having a good time. Let me know your ETA. Love you!" Her mom even added the red heart emoji at the end of her sentence. Brooke took a look up the road and saw no one coming and began to reply to her mom, when she saw a flash of headlights from above and quickly moved back to the center of the road, as she had begun to drift towards the other lane. *Just this last message and I'll put my phone down*, Brooke muttered to herself knowing her mom would have a fit if she knew she was texting and driving.

The second Brooke removed her eyes from the road her hand subconsciously turned the steering wheel back to the other lane. She saw the flash of headlights, but this time her reflexes were not fast enough. Her Jeep Wrangler slammed into a small, red Honda Accord, completely destroying the front bumper of both cars. The airbags inflated upon impact, tires screeched, and screams from the passenger's seat broke through the noise. Then everything went dark. Brooke's hearing was muffled and her eyesight was blurry. The Jeep's roof hung low after the car had rolled upside down and then rightside up again. Sandra layed limp in the backseat, holding on to every breath. Maggie had been thrown from the car and was nowhere to be seen. Tears rolled down Brooke's cheeks. *What just happened*, she wondered. The last thing Brooke heard were sirens coming up quickly from behind. She took a quick breath and closed her eyes for the final time. They didn't open again. Her phone screen was cracked, but the unsent message to her mom still glowed brightly on her iPhone screen.