

Josh Lehmann

Ms. Stein

English P1

10/30

Arrive Alive

"Lets go, we're gonna be late!"

"Ok give me a second I need to grab my mask."

Swiftly, I get into my car while looking down at my watch, it's 7:40am. "I can't be late," I muttered. Yelling again "come on we can't be late!" Jake walks out of the front door and down to my car seemingly unfazed by the situation. We both had woken up 10 minutes prior and were panicking trying to get everything done quickly. The frigid overnight had left one of the first frosts on the ground. I didn't notice this thin white sheet covering everything that wasn't sheltered. Trying to heat up the car quickly I turn on every heater in sight to help defrost the car, I look down again, It's 7:41am. Desperate to get out the door we both started scraping the windshield until we made a clear section just large enough to see through. Taking one final glance around before leaving and seeing a once green landscape covered in a shining sheet of white. Pulling out there was only a space the size of a sheet of paper to see out of, the rest of the car was still completely covered in frost. The space felt tighter than ever, but we needed to go.

Getting to the top of the street I take another glance at my watch, 7:43am. Looking out of the frosted windows I could one see the general shapes and colors of cars passing by, but there was no time to get out and scrape the windows again. Out of the neighborhood we turn left and immediately pin the gas pedal to the ground. There is no one in front of me, "there's still a chance," I think to myself. Getting up to 60mph and setting cruise control, I begin to relax, I check my watch again, 7:44am. I'll make it.

Unanticipatedly we're jolted forward, my breath stolen from me. Both of our half awake selves know exactly what is happening, but cannot believe it just happened. The last thing in my memory was the windshield showering us both in shards of glass.

Waking up I was disoriented, I went to ask "where am I," but nothing came out. I was still strapped into my seatbelt. All sense of time has been lost so I look down at my watch, it's 7:51am. There was no recollection of where or what I collided with. All I knew was that it was head on. Now panicking, I try to get out just to realize any kind of movement comes with more glass being rubbed deeper into my skin. At this point I haven't even thought about looking over to see Jake, afraid of what I may see, but I couldn't live with myself if anything had happened so I look. Looking over there he was, just a slumped over body. I grab him, shake him a little, try calling out his name, nothing. Pushing past any kind of pain, I get out of my seat to get a better view of what happened. The front right side had been pushed so far in it had crushed Jake. I couldn't stand to see this, it made me sick to my stomach, but there was nothing to throw up. There was no way of handling what had happened.

It wasn't until another 5 minutes later where both of us were helped out of the car by police and bystanders. It turned out that I was the only one helped out of the car. Jake was killed on impact, pronounced dead on the site of the crash. There was so much going on, I had no way of processing anything. I regret everything I did that morning, but that wasn't enough to save Jake. What happened was done and now I had to live with the consequences of what happened. Now I'm left to rethink that situation every night that I try to sleep away the pain I've caused to myself and the people around me. No one should ever be put in danger because of someone else's actions for any reason. Nothing is more important than someone's life. Jake had no reason to die that day, so tell your teachers, tell you friends that you'll be late. Never rush a drive, arrive alive.