

## Agonizing Seconds

“Please don’t. You’re gonna get yourself killed, think of th-”

Dillon’s best friend rudely interrupted him at this moment, hardly able to stand much less mind his manners.

“Man, shut up. If I’m not home in ten minutes or my mom is gonna kick my ass. It’s not that far, I’ll be fine.”

Indeed, the drive from this house party back to Elijah’s house was not far at all, the GPS predicted it would take ten minutes. Still, Dillon felt how wrong it was. Dillon knew they were both drunk, and he felt in his heart that if Elijah drove off tonight it would be the last time they would ever speak.

Despite his protests, Elijah was heavy with drunken strength and powered through Dillon’s much smaller figure. Eventually, Elijah found his way into the driver’s seat. After wrestling the keys into the ignition, he was ready to disembark. Dillon ran out in front of the car, tears spilling from his sunken, drunken eyes.

“Don’t do this dude, it’s not worth it and you know it. Please get out.” Elijah would have none of it.

“You’re starting to piss me off, get out of the way.”

Dillon looked on in horror as Elijah eased the car forward, feeling the car push against his torso softly, yet with the strength of a vice. He scuttled away, fearing he would be run over. He witnessed Elijah attempt to gain his bearings, the car jerkily swerving out of the driveway, miraculously missing the cars of those who decided they would rather live to see the morning. Elijah tentatively eased on the gas and steadily made his departure into the night. Dillon, sobered with panic, was wracked with sobs. Agonizing seconds turned to minutes as he frantically tried to gain a hold on himself, reassuring himself again and again, hoping and praying that Elijah would get home safe. Any semblance of peace of mind went out the window when Dillon heard it.

Sirens. Dillon heard them, faintly in the distance. Where were they coming from? Was Elijah in that direction? Did he really screw it up big time? Panicked gasps and sobs flooded from his body. Each second lasted a lifetime as Dillon sat on the step, melting into anxiety soup. Seconds seemed like minutes, minutes seemed like hours, hours of sitting on the step, stewing in his own hysteria.

Eventually the sirens faded away into the distance. Had it been a mere coincidence? Maybe it was. Maybe a cat had gotten stuck in a tree and that was all. Or maybe Elijah had smashed into an oncoming car and burned to death in the aftermath. Again Dillon reassured himself, over and over, trying to regain control of himself but to no avail. Dillon knew in his heart that he would never forgive himself if his best friend didn't arrive alive. All he could do was wait.