

Charlie Gay

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The Wave

“Bye Mom, bye dad! I’m headed to Billy’s house!”

No one answers back.

Out of pure excitement, I grab my keys and dash out the door to my 2015 Honda CRV. I adored this thing, mainly because it never fails at getting me from point A to point B. I get into the car and prepare my drive to Billy's house, while I’m thinking all about the day we have planned. I already knew we would do the usual, eat loads of junk food and play video games. Later tonight we are going to the high school homecoming soccer game and following that we have the homecoming dance! This is something I’ve been looking forward to all week.

I turn my key and the beast starts up. I put her into reverse, and I back up slow and steady to make sure I don’t hit anything. Then I put it in drive and begin my journey to Billy’s house. My mind was all over the place and exploding with thoughts around the night to come. As I make my turn onto the main road I felt a soft vibration on the steering wheel. Out of the corner of my eye, I see my phone light up and feel the steering continue to buzz. Although I know I can’t pick up the phone, I can’t resist looking down to see why it’s ringing. As I’m focused on the small letters trying to make out who the message is from, I suddenly hear the loud sound of someone honking. When I look up, I see that the entirety of my car had made its way in the bike lane and headed for a ditch. I swerved back into my lane, and let out a sigh of relief, very grateful there were no bikers or pedestrians.

I think to myself, “that could have ended a lot worse.” Luckily somebody honked to alert me. I know I've always been a good driver but it only takes a distraction like that to send me off the road. Anyways, as I'm getting closer to Billy's house I approach an empty intersection. As I'm driving through the intersection I look to my right and see my grandma stopping at the light. My head lost the road again and I begin to wave at her to try and get her attention. She still doesn't see me as I'm almost past, so I wave a little more aggressively. She still doesn't signal back to me. I look up and realize I'm five yards from a telephone pole, with a heavy foot on the gas.

My back is aching and the cuts on my body can't be missed. I lay in the hospital bed as my grandma walks through the door. “I saw you waving at me, I just didn't want to distract you so I ignored you”, she says trembling, looking at her little grandson. My night has been ruined but these distractions will forever remind me to pay attention while I drive so I can arrive alive.