

Brooke Gordon

Looking Left

Gone, gone, gone. Sirens became louder by the second, my head felt like it was spinning. It was not just my head, my entire car was rolling. I could not remember what happened. What went wrong so fast? My breathing became heavier, unrelenting fear struck through me like the slash of a whip. What if I never see my mom and brother again? I could not think straight anymore. My head and arms felt sticky and slick, but there were no drinks in my car and nothing could have spilled. Not unless it was my blood, slowly spilling out of me from the crash. *The crash, that is what happened, I must have crashed my car.* My thoughts went back to my mom and brother. Brandon was going to show up to the scene and see his little sister covered in her own bright red blood. That thought broke me more than being in this crash. My brother is a firefighter so I know what he goes through and sees everyday. I could not even comprehend how I could have been so foolish. He has taught me better than that. Now he will see I have betrayed my promise to him. To always pay attention and not put myself in a situation that I would become distracted.

These are the thoughts that ran through my head like I was being chased trying to escape what was slowly, dreadfully coming after me. Was that what would have happened to me if I did not stop at the last minute? How could I have been so stupid? I was rushing around the house this brisk early morning, trying to get ready and find everything I needed for school. Of course running around I did not think to go outside and start my car so it could heat up and defrost before heading onto the road. Doing my best to get to school on time, I figured that it would warm up fast enough for me to only have to drive down my street mostly blind. Thinking to myself that I have driven down this road a million times. By each passing second the windshield

cleared up more and more. Within two minutes almost all of the windshield was clear and I could see just fine.

Still rushing to school to get to class on time, I slowly pull up to the stop sign. This was the worst part, trying to turn left on a busy morning with people trying to get to work and school. I was getting annoyed at all the cars, they seemed never ending. One after another the cars passed in a blur, but never giving me an opportunity to turn. While waiting for my turn, my eyes glance over at the clock, my heart rate increases as it seemed the time was flying by. I was frustrated, there was usually never any cars coming from the left but always in the direction of which I wanted to go. Keeping my head turned to the right looking as far down the double yellow line as I could I watched and waited, inching forward every once in a while to see when it was my turn. Finally after what only could have been a couple minutes but felt like an entirety and a burden weighing on my shoulders more and more as the clock ticked by. It was my turn, or so I thought it was. I went to hit the accelerator to squeeze myself in between two cars. I forgot one important thing though, I never thought to look back to my left to see if there was anyone coming. Turns out there was a vehicle but not just any vehicle, a dump truck. I had a fast enough reaction time to remember to look to my left again at the last second before I went, to see the truck right there. My heart dropped in my chest, my lungs ripping the oxygen out of me, as I pressed hard on the break to stop before going fully into the road.

I got lucky and it did not even register right away what almost just happened. If I had not looked left at the last second the dump truck would have t-boned me. From the speed that he was going and how close he was to the road if I had gone he would have hit my door going 50mph. I had to shake the shock from me and continue my drive to school. All the way to school I was distracted and thinking about what almost happened. I could not believe that I forgot to look left.

It was something that I had done from the very beginning like muscle memory. However, my only thoughts were about getting to school on time, tired and not thinking about what I was actually doing. Knowing that I drive to school the same way at the same time every morning. From that day on, I made a promise not just to myself but to my brother and mom. I will do everything I can to be cautious and safe while on the road. It is important not just to me but to the people around me that care, that I make it to my destination safe and sound.