

Mom Was Right - Christian Butler

Coming home my mom gave me all the warnings, like “Don’t speed, don’t make any dumb decisions, and text me when you arrive to your destination.” These warnings that I needed to hear were covered up and thrown out due to my excitement. I had just gotten my license and aced my test. Even with my excitement, one thing did resonate with me. She spoke up, “You know you can’t drive anyone else but family for nine months right?” Suddenly my excitement faded and I heard her warning. *I wasn’t going to be able to drive my friends*, I repeated to myself. I didn’t understand the reasons why. I got my license, passed the test, and did well. This insulted me, made me feel as if I was a child again. After receiving my mother’s questionable look, I realized I hadn’t responded to her yet, “Yeah, I know” I said dismissively and then drove to soccer practice.

After finishing up practice, I was walking to my car, when my close friend from the team walked up to me. “Hey I heard you got your license man, you wanna take a couple of us into town for a post-practice dinner?” Remembering my mother’s words angered me. I am not a kid anymore, I’ve grown and earned my license, my freedom. Nothing should stop me from being able to drive whomever I want. “Sure dude, who are you bringing?” I questioned. Suddenly the soccer team's trio of Sophomores, known for trouble, walked up. Staring at me, they wait for signs of anything close to a yes. I have always tried to stay out of trouble here at the school, never drank, never smoked, I’ve barely even dated. Never have I hung out with them and for good reasons. I knew I couldn’t trust them. Talking myself back into it I said the drive isn't that long and they won't be able to do anything in a twenty minute drive down the road. I have to impress these guys or I won't get close to the whole team. “Hop in boys” I announce to the group.

Getting in I realized immediately why they have these rules in place. With my shaking hands, I could barely turn the car on. My head locked on the field in front of me, stress fills my body. “Hey are we gonna head out, or do you want me to drive?” Hearing everyone laugh, I try to push my fears to the side. Again, I said the phrases to myself. I earned my license, I have grown, I am free now.

Slowly as minutes passed on the road I eased up and relaxed. The windows were open, the music was loud. I started to pay less attention to the road and more towards the people in the car that I wanted to impress. They don’t seem stressed at all with me driving and they helped me lighten up with their jokes. One of the sophomores in the back even sat halfway out the car basically sitting on the rolled down window. I relaxed, and started to know what real freedom felt like. Driving became secondary to having fun as that moment began to captivate me. The bass from the music rattled my body and the cold wind rushed past my hand. “Hey, let me try,” my friend says as he reaches from his seat next to mine and grabs the wheel. He swerves left and right as we go sixty on the backroads just outside of town. Everyone laughs, me too, I can’t stop laughing.

The laughter stops and as I turn to see the blaring lights in front of me. My rush of emotions has now stopped dead. I realized my friend in the side seat had let go of the steering wheel and that I didn’t have my hands on it either. Mere seconds was all it took in order to shift the car left towards the oncoming traffic. I could feel my heartbeat stop as I realized what was about to happen. The seconds passed like minutes but still it was not enough time for me to do anything. My car made contact with their BMW, a woman and a young girl sitting in the side seat. I see them as we flip onto their car and off, crunching the

top of the BMW. Quickly my car tumbled, flipping two and a half times until it made an abrupt stop against a tree.

Snapping out of my headache I endured from the impact. I checked my body and I am fine, a bit bumped up but okay. Looking down I see blood was dripping from my hand. I unbuckled, falling onto my car's ceiling and frantically I looked around. My best friend's head hit the airbag hard, and his arm was scraped up from the glass shards of the windshield. Watching I saw each drop of blood drip from his arm to my hand. I checked his pulse, he was unconscious but breathing and so were the other two sophomores in back. Luckily they all had their seatbelts. Remember that, I looked in the back for the sophomore who was hanging out the window during the crash, he wasn't in the car. Anxiously I searched around the car and luckily he had somehow rolled out of the car and off the road before the car made contact. *We are the luckiest kids in the world*, I said to myself. Standing there, I was terrified of my mom and what she'd say, but I could breathe better knowing everyone was okay.

Breaking the silence, a woman cried in pain. I turned around and collapsed when I realized. I can't believe I had forgotten about them. I see the woman holding her daughter, who was bleeding from her skull. The woman's ear piercing cry only means one thing, she can tell she had just lost her daughter. I sat paralysed, as tears began to streak down my face. My eyes were fixated on what I had done. It felt unreal, thirty seconds ago I could have chosen otherwise, to save the daughter instead of focusing on my own entertainment. But I can't go back, I can't change what I have done. The freedom I wanted. The freedom I was given. Was Used to kill a mother's daughter. Mom, you're right, I should have never ignored your warnings.