

Lex Bethany

Stein P6

11/2/22

Concert Crasher

Jess sighed as she scrolled through her photos, stopping at a specific picture. The picture was of one of her and her friend Alex on the night of the concert. A single tear slipped from her eyes as she began to reminisce on the worst night of her life. It all started on the drive home.

The two teens climbed into the vehicle, buzzing with excitement. Alex drummed his fingers on the steering wheel as his friend gushed over their experience. Jess had been given free tickets to her favorite musician's show and had instantly invited her best friend along on the condition that he would drive. Initially, Alex declined, as he didn't particularly care for the artist. If anything, he insisted that he found them distasteful. Only after multiple days of constant pestering did Alex finally relent, agreeing to be the designated driver.

After the concert, the two friends became physically drained, only awake from the pure adrenaline. They pulled out of the crowded parking lot, only narrowly avoiding a few pedestrians. Alex breathed a sigh of relief and exhaustion as he stared out at the long stretch of highway ahead of them. Jess was still chattering beside him as he listened half-heartedly.

“UGH, Alex, it's too QUIET!!”

Jess groaned, slumping in her seat. Alex grimaced.

“Don’t worry. You’ve solved that issue”

She pouted at him, faking offense before opening the glove compartment.

“OMIGOD! EW!?! Do you still use CDs? Who still uses CDs?”

Jess squawked, flipping through the small variety of albums from various pop artists. Alex yawned and rolled his eyes. She ignored him as she slid a disc in, turning the volume on full blast. The car swerved slightly as Alex quickly reached over to lower the loud music.

“JEEZ JESS! are you *trying* to kill us?”

Jess just laughed, dismissing her friend's dismay with a wave of her hand.

“Omigod, *chill*, Alex! Don’t be such a buzzkill!”

She sang along to the music at an obnoxious volume and loudly cracked jokes. Alex chided her, good-naturedly bumping her arm with his elbow.

The farther they drove, the more it felt like the road was stretching into the darkness. Grogginess pulled at the teen’s face, and he struggled to keep his eyes open. He unknowingly

sped up above the speed limit. However, Jess took no mind to this and continued her distracting behavior even as the car approached a busy intersection. She flinched in surprise when her phone rang, squealing with glee when she saw her best gal friend's name appear on her phone screen. Jess answered the phone with seemingly unimaginable energy.

“OH, MY GAWD LOOK WHO IT IS!”

Without thinking, Jess shook Alex by the arm right as he pulled out of the intersection. This caused him to unexpectedly turn the wheel and into oncoming traffic.

Blood pounded in his ears, muffled sirens sounding in the distance. He heard screaming and saw the blur of flashing lights. He felt himself being lifted into an ambulance and heard his friend being questioned. He heard, felt, saw, and breathed, until it all stopped.

When their car sped into oncoming traffic, a car crashed full speed into the driver's side of the car, killing both Alex and the other driver. Jess barely survived. She went on to blame herself, to hate the world that had taken her best friend. She wished over and over that she could go back and fix it as she lay awake at night. Please, don't drive distracted, and don't be the reason others' lives are at risk.