

Cameron Gasbarrone

Mrs. Stein

English P5

November 7 2024

How Simple Things Were.

My entire life came to a screeching halt. I hammered on the brakes, the car slowed down as fast as it could, but my efforts were soon proved futile. Just about every one of my belongings were thrown into the dashboard, and I watched the hood of my car crumble before me, resembling a sheet of aluminum foil. My vision was heavily blurred. I couldn't tell if anything that just happened was real. It seemed as though the cars in front of me had stopped so quickly. The door creaked as I opened it, and I heard the gentle wind whistle behind me. I couldn't help but just cry as I watched people drive by and stare. They scoffed, and they chuckled. Like I'm just another irresponsible kid.

Tuesday 11/05/24

The sun blinded my newly awakened and sensitive eyes, as I stretched my arms and legs. Deep breath in, and I felt a release of pressure in my sleepy, lazy muscles. I crawled out of my warm throne and snatched my phone off the thick white carpet that always feels awfully weird on my hands in the morning. As I looked for the button to stop my alarm, I squinted hard because of the light. The phone screen felt like a flash grenade. I saw 7 missed calls, and a horde of texts swarming my homescreen like a million bees. It finally clicked in my tired brain that I had slept through my alarm for 3 hours and missed my tee time. Stress sprints through my veins like a raging wildfire. I throw on whatever clothes I can find and drive to the golf course frantically. As I settled

into my round I started to feel good until I was reminded of the fact that I had two dentist appointments in a row. This means that directly after golf I had to drag myself across 4 towns for the next 3 hours. Long story short, I left golf early (against my better judgment). My first appointment went smoothly, clean pearly whites. Although as I Started on my way to the second appointment, I pondered how things felt particularly off. For an early November afternoon, the sky was oddly dim. Everything looked so cold and uncomfortably blue. I ignored my itch, despite the devil on my shoulder, that I can imagine was cackling, tapping me in a panic as I cluelessly drove my car through the suburbs with no cares in the word. Stop and go traffic gets boring. My brain will constantly focus on anything but on how bored I am. The names of stores, writing on signs, “Is my shoelace untied?” I ask myself.

“How long have I been looking away from the road? ...”

It took maybe a second to register the situation in my head, although to me it was an eternity. My foot reflexively slammed the brake pedal to the floor, and I felt the bass of *Tyler, The Creator* poetically murdering a beat. I watched my life crumble before me, while listening to a song about life. I felt beauty, fear, joy, anger, and there was a part of me that believed, or hoped for my own sake, that everything would be okay. Despite the positive thoughts, I couldn't help but feel as though my mind had caved in on itself. “The important thing is that you are not hurt.” I hear. But in reality, I wished that I had broken a bone instead. My memory of the situation is still twisted. I have barely any idea what happened during the crash. The only thing I can recall from that moment is the upsetting sound of the door grinding against the fender, and the fact that the airbags never went off.

A huge blur clouded my brain as I was on the phone with my mother. She questions my health and my safety as I try to figure out why my head hurts so much. I can barely look the fellow

teenager or his calm and friendly father in the eyes after I just rammed the young man's car because I was distracted.

The realization finally set in. I had a pretty sudden and scary end to my childhood. Suddenly there were expensive, scary bills to pay. Suddenly everything became not okay. I was always able to squeeze myself out of tight situations. Tonight, I realized for the first time in my life that sometimes things will not always be okay. Deep down, I know for a fact that I will figure everything out, and for now I need to work on being dedicated enough to do things right the first time, and not wait for consequences to teach me. However the real lesson in this situation for me is; things can change in a split second. Never assume anyone's intelligence, or think you can predict their next move. I learned that I truly will never be able to predict where someone will go next. It's crazy to go around assuming that everyone else is crazy, but it allows me to be prepared for situations like this. An even crazier thought is; this is a true story. It did sadly happen only a few weeks ago. Which taught me that your environment and the people around you, will change hundreds of times when you drive. The only way to truly "Drive Safely" is to pay 100% attention to the road. It doesn't matter if you are a new driver, an experienced driver, if the car is paid for, a rental, or a lease. There is never an excuse for using your phone or being impaired while you are behind the wheel. As humans, we need to stop putting other innocent lives in danger and start paying attention. The only important thing when you are operating a vehicle, is Arriving Alive.