

Stay Awake

By: Katelyn Cyr

Taylor Swift plays through the radio as seventeen year old Molly drives home from The University of New Hampshire. She is on her way home from watching her best friend, Gracie, play in her first college hockey game for the Wildcats, the same team she had committed to play for two weeks prior. Not only would she have the opportunity to play her favorite sport at her dream school, she would also play alongside her best friend; a dream she had since she was six.

Rain began to softly fall as Molly merged onto the highway. It was around 9pm, and the sky was pitch black with only the fluorescent glow of headlights illuminating the road in front of her. She still had an hour drive back to her house. However, as exhaustion from staying up till 2am the night before to finish an English assignment fell over Molly's heavy eyes, that one hour trip home started to feel like it could take a century. Molly thought to herself *I'm a good driver, I only need to stay awake for the next hour and then I'm home. Stay awake, keep your eyes on the road. You've driven home from UNH multiple times. Stay awake.* Molly kept repeating the words *stay awake*, to herself in hopes it would force her to keep her eyes open. About ten minutes later she decided it would be a good idea to call her mom, thinking that talking would wake her up. The phone rang for 4 seconds, her mom picking up almost immediately. "Hey Molly, everything okay?"

"Yeah, I'm just tired. I'll be home in about 50 minutes, would you please make me some spaghetti to have once I get home? I didn't eat much at Gracie's game."

"Sure, I will, but honey if you're tired pull over at the rest stop to get some food, and to walk around a bit, it will help your exhaustion."

Although Molly would never hear the suggestions from her mom, the exhaustion had already taken over her body, leading her to lose control of her vehicle. The second she regains consciousness to take in what is happening, it is too late for her to recorrect, she is already headed into the guardrail. Her car strikes into it with such force that it crushes her vehicle. “Molly? Molly, are you still there? Molly?” Her mom, still on the other side of the phone, begins to grow panicked as her daughter doesn’t answer.

Other cars pass the scene, many stopping to call 911, and others stopping to help in any way they can. The blare of the sirens grows louder and louder as emergency vehicles speed towards the crash. Shards of glass piercing her skin and pools of blood surrounding her, Molly’s body lay lifeless, still buckled into her seat, the rain now pouring down. There is nothing the first responders will be able to do once they arrive.

“Molly, Molly, please be there Molly.” Cry’s begin to fill the sounds coming from Molly’s phone as her mom hears sirens and the screams of bystanders coming from the other end. “Molly, Molly, please say something so I know you are okay.” Reality starts to set in as she hears EMTS and police pronounce a female, approximately seventeen years of age, dead on arrival. Molly’s mom hopes that what she hears is not true but deep down, she knows her daughter is never coming home.