

The Mom Hand

By: Kayla McLean

Crumbs slipping through the cracks of my mom's fingers as I attempt to fill her antsy hand, stretching behind her driver's seat. As soon as the familiar crinkling sound of my snack's packaging erupts from the comfort of my booster seat, I can expect to see the "mom hand." A hand so unabashedly empty and demanding of whatever morsel it can reach. My adolescent fingers expel all their length, despite my locked seatbelt and uneven booster seat, I always manage to fill my mom's hand with something to hold her over.

Already running late to my dance recital, my mom and I take cover from the all-consuming rain in our 2007 Toyota RAV4. Looking down I notice I clumsily splashed into a puddle in my ballet slippers before getting into the car. The pale pink shoe now reddened by the puddle's saturation. I start tearing up from stress as I unsuccessfully wring out my shoe. To make me feel better my mom gives me a little bag of popcorn she was saving for the recital. Knowing I would probably miss the first part of the show, I took great comfort in the salty kernels sitting in my lap.

Naturally, my mom began to pick up the pace and switch to a faster, more direct route to the recital. The wall of water coming down from the sky did not make conditions any easier. And the crying child in the backseat only added to the chaos of the morning. To soothe myself I shoveled handfuls of popcorn into my mouth and chewed loudly out of anger. I was three quarters of the way done when I remembered this was my mom's snack for the day. Shamefully, I offered her the last handful. Without hesitation, the "mom hand" curled around the center console and lay patiently in front of my seat. The awkward handoff did not go as expected when

my mom spilled every kernel on its way back to her seat. She looked down at the mess that she made, and took a moment to watch the road before reaching for a new handful.

As she went to grab for the popcorn, she crossed over the solid yellow line into oncoming traffic. Seconds of braking, swerving, headlights, and screaming all came to an abrupt halt when we found ourselves in the woods. We were knocked unconscious and I was awoken to the sounds of the sirens coming to our rescue. Our beloved RAV4 was laying on its sunroof, meanwhile I had nothing but a measly scrape on my elbow. Though all drivers came out uninjured, the incident gave us the shock of our lives. I can not remember the last time I saw the infamous “mom hand.” She does not take chances like that anymore. After our encounter with distracted driving, I think we silently agreed that the “mom hand” is better off staying on the wheel.