

My engine starts with a jolt - the frigid winter air has the malice of a blade and renders me incapacitated to function at my prior efficiency. I see you through the window, fumbling with your keys as you step out and let me warm up for a few minutes before our routine drive to work. I wouldn't say I like driving on the 401 - such a big highway with so many opportunities for accidents - but the familiarity draws me to it. It's familiarity that comforts me in this world of depravity. Every other day, I spectate another car crash; every other day, I'm driven to our next location with the fear that we'll be next. I can't help but imagine the endless scenarios - thinking of what might become of you, or even me - but we've been together for the last nine years, and we've been all right. I guess there was the time you recklessly drove through the McDonalds drive-through, but at least you had the decency to duct tape my wing mirror back on. I trust you. I know we'll be fine.

I wonder what's taking you so long. You come later than expected, frantically trying to lock the front door, not spill your coffee, and hold on to your laptop bag - all unsuccessfully. You heave a sigh of exasperation and collapse into your seat. We pull out of the driveway and begin our drive to work. You aren't playing your usual daily podcast today - maybe you're trying to focus on the road. We start to approach the intersection of Thompson and Main St E. You look straight ahead while the traffic light remains its unwavering shade of bright green.

The world begins to move in slow motion. One by one, the cars waiting to turn left begin to go. You see them, too, but you stay calm - you believe we can make it. We enter the intersection going straight the same second I see the red Honda Civic enter the intersection at an alarmingly high speed to turn left through the corner of my eye. There's nothing you can do; there's nothing we can do.

My MEMS accelerometer senses the magnet, and before I know it, it's over. Within a split second, your hand that was blaring the car horn was forced back with a force I didn't know I was capable of. I didn't mean to hurt you. I promise this was all to save you - I couldn't save you, though. You slump forward, unconscious and unaware of the others who got out of their cars to help you. While I hope you're all right, I'm glad you can't see me in this state. With my front bumper lying in front of me, the tire skewed on its axis, and the driver's side door caved in; I can barely peer over my crumpled hood and cracked windshield.

I hear the sirens coming closer. An ambulance arrives first. The paramedic comes close and examines you, but he yells something unintelligible to his partner and walks away. I see him walk towards the other car and the other driver. How could he do that to you - why would he ignore you? Maybe he thought you were beyond the point of saving. Shortly after, a police car, firetruck, and another ambulance arrive. This time, they secure you onto the stretcher and wheel you inside. I have no choice but to entrust you in their hands now.

You leave me. You leave me to suffocate in that nauseating blend of talcum powder and burnt rubber. The dust settles on my dashboard by the time the tow truck leads me to the junkyard. This is what I am now. I'm a sedentary write-off with barely any usable spare parts - I'm worthless. The whole situation plays out like a first-person video game. Anywhere we had to go, we needed to drive on Thompson - the road might as well have been ours the sheer number of times we passed it. How did the accident take place that close to home? I replay the accident over and over again - every time, I try to recall more details. It's always the same red Honda speeding up, the dissonant car horns, and you yelling before you fall silent. I need more. I need to know what happened. I need to know I did everything I could - I can't stand seeing the one person I cared about hurt and not being able to do anything about it.

Maybe it was my subpar safety features - but I deployed my airbags as best as I could. What if it wasn't my fault? What did you do? What if you braked in the intersection? I know you considered it - you briefly let go and stepped on the accelerator upon seeing the Honda, so you chose to go ahead with this. Perhaps it was the Honda that executed the improper left turn - why would the car turn if it wasn't in the right of way? Playing the blame game is useless - you're gone, I will be soon, and who knows what happened to the other car and its driver. Hopefully, the other car doesn't have to suffer a fate as humiliating as mine.

The nine years we had together were gone just like that. I thought we'd be together forever, but no. Trips to high school, then university, then work, sometimes driving you and your friends to the movie theatre - it's all pointless now. With both you and I gone, who's going to cherish all our memories? I'll Miss you. I took our trips for granted, and now I'll have to live with the guilt. I was your first car - the one gifted to you on your 16th birthday - and I prided myself on that, but I never wanted to be your last.