



Personal Stories

The morning of May 19, 2000, started off like any other. I'd started my early morning commute to work. Half way there two speeding sports cars passed me at a very high rate of speed, I had set my cruise 5 miles over the limit and these cars still passed me as if I were staying still all while weaving around me and each other. I'd thought to myself they were going to get themselves killed.

A few more miles down the road they were already out of my mind when I came upon one of the cars, a Nissan 300zx in an awkward position in the middle of the road, it was then that I realized I had missed the other car, which was on its roof in a ditch. I immediately called 911 then got out to see if there was anything I could do. Everyone in the Nissan was ok, just very hysterical. I then ran to one of the victims of the other car who had been ejected, I could not find a pulse and he was not breathing. I attempted CPR but to no avail. The boy was dead; I'd later learned he had broken his neck.

In the rolled over car was his girlfriend who had been wearing her seat belt. She had a few minor injuries, lots of cuts and bruises but she was ok. It took nearly 10 minutes for police and an ambulance to arrive, it felt like hours. I later learned that all the passengers in both cars were or under 17 years old. They were all friends, and after a night of fun the drivers of both cars decided to put these machines to the test and started to race each other home when the cars clipped each other causing the 3000GT to lose control, roll over a number of times until finally coming to a rest upside down in a ditch.

The decision to go home in this way turned out to be a deadly decision for one of the boys, and a memory that will be with the rest of them and mine for the rest of our lives. Before parents buy their kids these cars, they should be able to trust that they won't go out and do this sort of stuff, but of course if you buy your kid a sports car what else do you expect? Driving recklessly and fast is just stupid and often times have deadly consequences. Before you go out and drive like that THINK! Not only for your own lives but for everyone out there on the road. AND ALWAYS WEAR YOUR SEATBELT!

-Francis Taylor

Car: 1988 Ford Thunderbird

Date: 3/14/97

Driver and age: Daniel, 17

Passengers, ages, and location in car, (relation to driver): Tommy, 17, middle of back seat (cousin), Shane, 14, front seat (younger cousin), Rob, 17, behind front passenger (friend), Jamie, 16, behind driver (friend)

Story:

My cousins and two of our friends were taking the long way back from the mall. On the way home I was goofing around in the car and jumped a railroad crossing. Then my cousin told me about "Thrill Hill." "Thrill Hill" is a bridge that was poorly designed, so that a car going over forty mph will go airborne. I decided to try it.

My cousins showed me the way to the bridge and I saw a football field of length in front of me before I got to the bridge. I floored it. The odometer stopped at eighty-five but the engine was revving higher so I knew we were going at least a hundred. The car went over the bridge and into the air.

My cousin in the passenger seat said he could see the power lines along side the road drop below the car and rise back up. In other words, we were over twenty feet off the ground, but I cut the wheel to the left a little while in the air. We came down with a loud bang. The car went left so I turned the wheel to the right. The car went right too far and I turned it back to the left. Then the car spun and the passenger side was going forward. I heard a loud bang and I closed my eyes. I opened them to see a spider web across the windshield. I looked at my window to see it was gone.

My cousin was strapped in the seat next to me with his hair standing straight up in the air. On the ceiling I saw my cigarettes, tapes, my jacket and broken glass. That was when I realized we rolled. It turned out; the loud bang was the back of the car hitting a three-ton boulder in front of a house. The car came to a rest on its roof back in the street. All five of us walked out of the car through the rear window with minor injuries because we were wearing our seatbelts. The car on the other hand was totally destroyed.

- Daniel





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The accident happened on 6/12/99. It was midnight and I still to this day don't know what really happened. I lost a lot of memory and have many pains because of it.

Here is what I was told what happened.

I was quote "Street Racing a Mustang Cobra I spun the tires on the launch but still tried to beat him, shifted and didn't notice that the road narrowed to one lane from two at about a quarter mile mark, and there was no street lamps or visible signs. Well, going I guess 100 mph they said 130 mph but I don't think so not in a quarter mile.

I hit the curb loosing control and spun over the center line, just at the same time a Ford Probe was coming in the oncoming lane of traffic and smashed into the driver side five inches behind my seat.

Destroying my car, it snapped my rear axle off, my rear hatch off, my whole exhaust system, and the impact knocked me unconscious and ripped my seat belt causing me to smash into the windshield and be thrown about the car and then ejected out of the car and onto the pavement. I was found 50 feet from the car, the axle was found 100 feet from the car and the exhaust system in a tree 150 feet away.

I was hospitalized for a few weeks, however the person that I hit got trapped by his dash but only suffered a broken ankle and only spent a day in the hospital. Lucky him."

I learned a lot because of this accident. I no longer race, and whenever I get the chance, I try to help those who tell me they have done these things and I try to teach them from my situation.

-John

The spring of 1998 I was in a car accident where I was going too fast on a gravel road and ended up wrapping my car around a telephone pole. They say that I slid sideways down the road for a bit before flipping it twice and hitting the telephone pole dead center. The pole was right underneath my back when the car finally stopped and my steering wheel was jammed up against my bottom of my seat. I don't remember any of it, but they say that I was lucky that I drive with my seat reclined a little. The steering wheel ended up missing both of my legs and my seat back broke backwards so I avoided crushing my head on the ceiling, which got stretched down. The drivers side was facing up towards the sky at this point and I guess that I wriggled out of my seat and pushed off of the ceiling to drop out of the back passenger window to the ground. I manage to flag down a vehicle that I was passing by that happened to contain four teenagers that I actually knew and am forever indebted to.

To make a long story somewhat shorter, they got a hold of 911 and got an ambulance out there. I was brought to Granite Falls Hospital, moved to Rice Memorial in Willmar, and then eventually it was decided to airlift me to Hennepin County Medical Center in the cities. This was all on a Thursday night on my way home from watching the Jr. High Band/Choir concert.

They found out that I had six broken ribs, five broken vertebrae, a badly sprained ankle, a REALLY cut up tongue, needed stitches in my elbow, chest tubes in each lung, and various other things. Luckily, it ended up being that after I was stabilized nothing was life threatening and I was only in the hospital for 9-10 days. A very long week and a half.

Something that I've learned from this: Don't speed, especially on gravel, and always wear your seatbelt. It IS worth it.

-Josey



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April 14, 1999 I was involved in an auto accident with a later model Dodge 1 ton pickup towing a piece of farm equipment. I was traveling approximately 65 mph in the opposite direction, in a Porsche 911, when a pheasant flew at my windshield causing me to swerve into the oncoming lane.

The driver of the truck was traveling approximately 55 mph when we collided head-on. At impact my vehicle was torn into three separate pieces and I was ejected from the vehicle. The driver of the truck suffered minor injuries and was transported by ambulance to a near by hospital. In critical condition I was life-flighted to a hospital 60 miles away. Fractures included: both femurs, right hip, left fibula, left foot, left radius, left ulna and multiple metacarpal fractures. Other injuries included damaged tendons, nerves, and muscle. By grace I am here today to share the story. Please be aware, prepare and safe.

- James G.

I was driving through an abandoned parking lot, going a little too fast, probably 40 maybe 50 mph when I hit a pothole. The car went out of control and while I attempted to make a last minute turn to save my life from the median ahead I swerved my car to the left, too late and in my attempt to save my life, I instead increased my speed two times, so I hit the median a curb and the car flipped.

I guess I got knocked out and the car then upside-down hit a tree then landed on top of the tree. I woke up about 10 seconds after my car halted to the stop I unlatched my seatbelt, fell to the bottom of the car and cut my knees from the glass shattered all over the place. I was fine though. I walked away from the crash and I lived to tell the tale that seatbelts are the greatest thing ever.

- Ryan

Lucky to Have Been Caught Speeding

By Lt. Leo Murphy, Naval Safety Center

During my commute to work one morning, I witnessed an event that has become all too familiar. A car traveling at a high rate of speed came up behind me, passed, and then swerved around a long line of cars in an insane attempt to get somewhere just a little quicker. As this guy sped out of sight, I thought, "It would be great if a police officer was sitting around the next bend to catch this guy before he killed someone or himself." No such luck, as I never saw the car again and the incident was soon forgotten.

My story continues when, later that day, a colleague told me about when his son was ticketed for speeding during his return trip to college months ago. Apparently a police officer was waiting around the bend for his son, and the son was ticketed for going 95 mph in a 65 mph zone. In addition to a \$250 speeding ticket, the youth was summoned to traffic court. The sentence handed to him included a 90-day suspended driver's license, he received five points on his driver's record (which stay for seven years), and he had to perform 250 hours of community service. The youth also had to pay \$50 court costs, was ordered to attend a driver's course (at a cost of \$150), and was sentenced to 10 days in jail. Fortunately for him, jail was suspended on the condition he completed the driver's course and was not ticketed for speeding in that particular city for the next six months. The judge made it clear that, not only would the young fellow serve 10 days in jail if ticketed again, but an additional 10 days would be added to his sentence for a second offense. As is often the case, my colleague was paying his son's auto insurance. However, he was notified shortly after this incident that the entire family's auto policy was being dropped. His son's annual premium more than doubled when he reapplied at another auto insurer.

This youth, I am quite certain, learned his lesson. Others, though, have learned the perils of speeding in much harder way.

Source:

www.safetycenter.navy.mil/media/fathom/issues/JulSep01/lucky.htm

