

A Reason

"Careful!" warned John from the passenger seat. "Watch that ice patch."

Vincent was already driving intently, and replied coolly, "Don't worry— I can handle this." He carefully maneuvered around the hazard.

Meanwhile, Kyle began to get impatient in the backseat. He looked past the comfortable interior of the luxury car with the heat turned high and into the unencouraging torrents of snow; he then plopped back down again, depressed. If it had been a sunny day, he soon be in the city, glad as could be. *That was not to be. Not with this weather*, he concluded.

A heavy snowstorm stood between them and the great New York City, causing accidents left and right. Major roadways were closed, and detours had to be taken. When they began late, they knew it was a mistake: their trip would take much longer than they thought it would.

The road conditions were becoming dangerous, and news stations throughout the tri-state region advised extreme caution and warned against driving unless absolutely necessary.

It was, however, essential for the teens to face the danger. They were auditioning for an important soccer all-star state team in New York City. This was a team that could change their life and springboard their future careers. There was little debate as to whether or not they should go.

"Surely we're almost there now? You said it'll take an hour and a half, but we're already two hours in. We're almost late!" whined Kyle, although he foresaw the answer.

"No such luck," replied John. "With the road conditions the worst they've been in years, we won't be able to drive over thirty miles per hour. I'm sorry, but we're going to be late."

"But... at this rate, we'll be an hour and a half late— they told us to be there by ten o'clock *sharp*. We can't be late!"

"Serves you right for eating breakfast for an hour this morning," Vincent mumbled.

"Hey, that wasn't—" Kyle blurted out.

John, the oldest and the pacifier for the three, interrupted quickly. "You two, stop! Vincent needs to focus. Don't worry, Kyle. It's all going to work out."

The amicable atmosphere shattered, and the next few minutes passed in a painful silence.

Still indignant, Kyle broke the quiet. "It isn't fair! The *one* time I have a chance to shine, it's taken by a snowstorm! Why didn't you listen to the weather forecast? We're going to lose our chance."

Then, he naively threw a tantrum with strings of curses for the next few minutes, while John and Vincent remained quiet. Suddenly, the yelling stopped as Kyle pulled himself together.

"On second thought, we can get there. We're in Greenwich now, and we have another two hours until registration ends— we can get there on time," Kyle thought out loud. "Vincent, drive faster. You're a speed-demon; show it! We don't have to go at ninety miles-per-hour like we do sometimes, but sixty will do— plus, it's within in the speed limit. Let's not be late. I know you can do it. Please?"

John, with a constant phobia of the breaking the law, quickly exclaimed, "Vincent, don't listen to him! He's implacable and puerile: he doesn't know the danger of speeding. You know they issued a thirty mile-per-hour speed limit in most of Connecticut- there's a reason behind any law. If we don't get there on time, I think they can cut us a little slack, given our situation."

The car suddenly accelerated and then stops to an abrupt halt. Vincent said, "The road is getting dryer- I can feel it. I think my *superior* driving skills can handle some more speed."

John gave him a look and said, "I don't think you should do this, Vincent. I have no respect for those who break the law. Plus, not all of the road is the same— and who knows—"

Kyle interrupted: "Majority rules! Vincent and I say we can go a little faster. Let's go!"

"Kyle, stop being so autocratic! In the name of the law and safety's sake, I really feel—"

Vincent started driving, and John's last attempt to change their mind failed. He turned to an apathetic standpoint of the subject.

"Listen, you two. You always want to speak, never to listen. Suit yourself. I don't agree, but I'm going to get some rest now. You guys tire me out," he said, and dozed off.

Kyle smiled and sat back in his seat. He didn't exactly despise John, but there was a mild sense of antipathy between the two, more of a dislike and uneasiness, a clash between two strong-minded people. Therefore it wasn't often that he won an argument against John, and every time his success excited him. He spent the next half an hour in bliss.

Soon, they were moving at sixty miles-per-hour on the deserted Merritt Parkway.

"When exactly will we arrive? My calculations weren't off, were they?" inquired Kyle.

Vincent glanced at the screen in the dashboard. "Well, the GPS says we'll be there in just over an hour and fifteen minutes. That means we'll be on time, arriving at approximately—" He looked down at his watch, briefly calculating. "—nine forty-five. Pretty good timing, don't you think? It'll be WHOA"

The car swerved, and Kyle grabbed onto his seat. John woke up, eyes wide open.

In the next moment, time slowed down. There was a metallic crunch, then a few smaller booms. Vincent and John's heads were punched back by airbags, and they groaned simultaneously and fell unconscious. The car rammed into the railing, stopped unexpectedly, and the hood began smoking, a giant wooden block upon it. Kyle was groggy and disoriented, but the situation soon dawned on him. There was a tree trunk, enormous in diameter, lodged onto the top of their hood. He immediately pulled out his phone and dialed 911.

For a moment, as the dial tone rung, Kyle looked outside at the snowdrifts and leisurely, drifting snow, he contemplated the real situation, and began to empathize with John. *Nature is powerful. Could we really have avoided it? The law knew best- was I wrong?*

"Hello? ... I'm reporting a car accident on the Merritt Parkway, between exits fifteen and sixteen ... I'm in the car, and my friends are in the front. They're both unconscious. What should I do? ... Okay ... Yeah, we were speeding a little bit, because we were already late to an audition ... Yeah, I realize we're not going to be there on time now. It's my fault in part ... Okay, thanks a ton." He sighed and reported the situation to his family.

I should have listened to John. He was so right: the law and safety— what could be a better incentive than that? An audition doesn't matter compared to this. It's all my fault! A strong feeling of pathos for his innocent friends began to arise in Kyle.

He went on to check on Vincent and John like the policeman had told him to. Luckily, they were alive and breathing; their breaths were slow and irregular, and he could tell that they were in pain.

Why did I do this? Why am I so impulsive? Why does my day have to be ruined... in so many ways? I engendered this entire, terrible situation. I'm a terrible person. John was right.

The sound of sirens came and blared in his ear. Firefighters inspected the engine for possible danger, and deemed it safe. A policeman and nurses walked up to the car. Kyle was interrogated fiercely but briefly, and the two other boys were moved into the ambulance.

The policeman informed Kyle that his friends' legs were badly broken in multiple spots, and they wouldn't be able to play soccer or even stand for a long time.

Kyle broke down, sobbing, in front of the emergency crew.

"It was all my fault! Between my arrogance and the wisdom of time-tested law, I'll take all the blame! I didn't realize how inimical I was— the law is broken all the time! How was I supposed to know that the speed limit, being a law, was there for a reason?"

Reflection

In my short story I decided to base my ideas on the themes of obedience to the law, as well as arrogance. I combined the two (and used two quotes from the book), so that my main character was arrogant and broke the law, with consequences: Kyle was supposed to be an allusion to both Antigone and Creon. He was stubborn and he had influence in some ways (like Creon), but he also broke the law and ended up paying for it (like Antigone). Because he has some of the characteristics of both of them, he illustrates the arrogance and the law-inobedience that makes him make a mistake to become the tragic hero, and he is misfortunate, similar to both Creon and Antigone. Also, to make this story a little more similar to *Antigone*, I tried to use dialogue extensively in this story. I came up with this storyline because we had been driving to New York City just a few days ago, on a day when the roads were incredibly icy, and I had an important concert that I had to play at. The difference is that we went slow and didn't miss anything. This is an example of a situation that may have happened had we not slowed down for safety and ignored the time-tested and rational law (of a speed limit). And lastly, the names in the story were not totally random; they were the names of the others at my table when I began my story.

The underlined text in the short story is either key words (including extra Latin ones) or quotes.