

of me, but he says I am too driven, and life is too short. Then, he insists on driving us back to his house, and he hits a lady with his car.

It's a light tap, right on her hip bone, and she smacks her umbrella against Grandpa's windshield in anger. Grandpa rolls down the window and leans across the center console. He sticks up his middle finger at her and shouts, "Get out of the way, you fucker."

In the backseat, my brother and I freeze. Daddy stifles a laugh, and Mommy screams until our blood stops. If there is a Heaven, it is unclear if Grandpa will make it.



Daddy finds Grandpa's body on New Year's Eve. He is alone in Florida taking care of him, and all I can think is, it's my fault, it's my fault, it's my fault. Grandpa was peeing orange. Grandpa could not leave the bed.

I do not know what OCD is yet—only that Monica from *Friends* has it—but I know if I did not read *The Last Lecture* five times, did not spend middle school obsessing over a man who died of pancreatic cancer, Daddy wouldn't have to call 9-1-1 on New Year's Eve, and Grandpa would still be here, and if Grandpa was still here, he'd still call me Grandpa's girl or fag or he-she when he learns I am trans, the way Daddy talks about trans people on TV, and if Grandpa was still here, we would still play board games like Uno or War, and he'd still call me a cheater cheater pumpkin eater every time I make a play, and I wouldn't have to feel this hollow in my body at his funeral, like my skin is made of paper mâché, and everything Daddy says about Grandpa's life is a lie. I wouldn't have to stop and remember this one shimmer where he walks my brother and me out to the pond at the end of the street—the one with the crepe myrtles all around it and the sign that says, BEWARE OF THE ALLIGATORS! KEEP OUT!—I wouldn't have to remember how he broke off all these chunks of stale bread for us to feed to the snapping turtles, how we flailed the pieces out and out and out, only for those ancient snouts to never surface, for the bread to float there on the dark water like drift wood, until it filled all the way up like pieces of a sponge, then slowly disappeared.