

Lucky to be alive

Two years ago on Boxing Day, as I stopped for a right turn at Keele and Davis, I watched a wheel come flying off a dump truck barrelling eastbound on the highway. It came bounding toward my car like a mad buffalo.

In the second I had, I wondered if it might veer off. It didn't. At the last moment I ducked. The sound of crunching metal and shattering glass told me I was alive. I shut the engine off, kicked the driver's side door open, stepped out and called 911, who misunderstood and sent a fire truck.

In the twilight zone of shock, time stops. Everything happens at once. I was a bit high on being alive. The woman who stopped told me she had seen the dump truck pull over some distance further west, but then disappear. A young man gave me not one, but two bottles of water. The friendly EMIs pulled the broken glass out of my scalp, but I declined a hospital visit.

It was a bit of a street celebration. We could all see the wheel lying against the fence about a football field past my car. The police arrived, took a report and reluctantly drove me home when I asked, because I lived nearby.

My car was totalled and written off.

My follow-up call to the police informed me that they had not located the truck and had closed the case. I am sorry now that I did not push harder, because two years later, I am subject to migraines that I had never had before, and neck ache.

What I would say to anyone in a similar situation is to follow through with both a thorough medical exam in hospital, perhaps a lawyer, and also with the police. It leaves a bad feeling that had I died, my situation might have been taken more seriously.

Seems the squeaky wheel really does get the grease: the negligence of owners and operators be policed and ended.

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